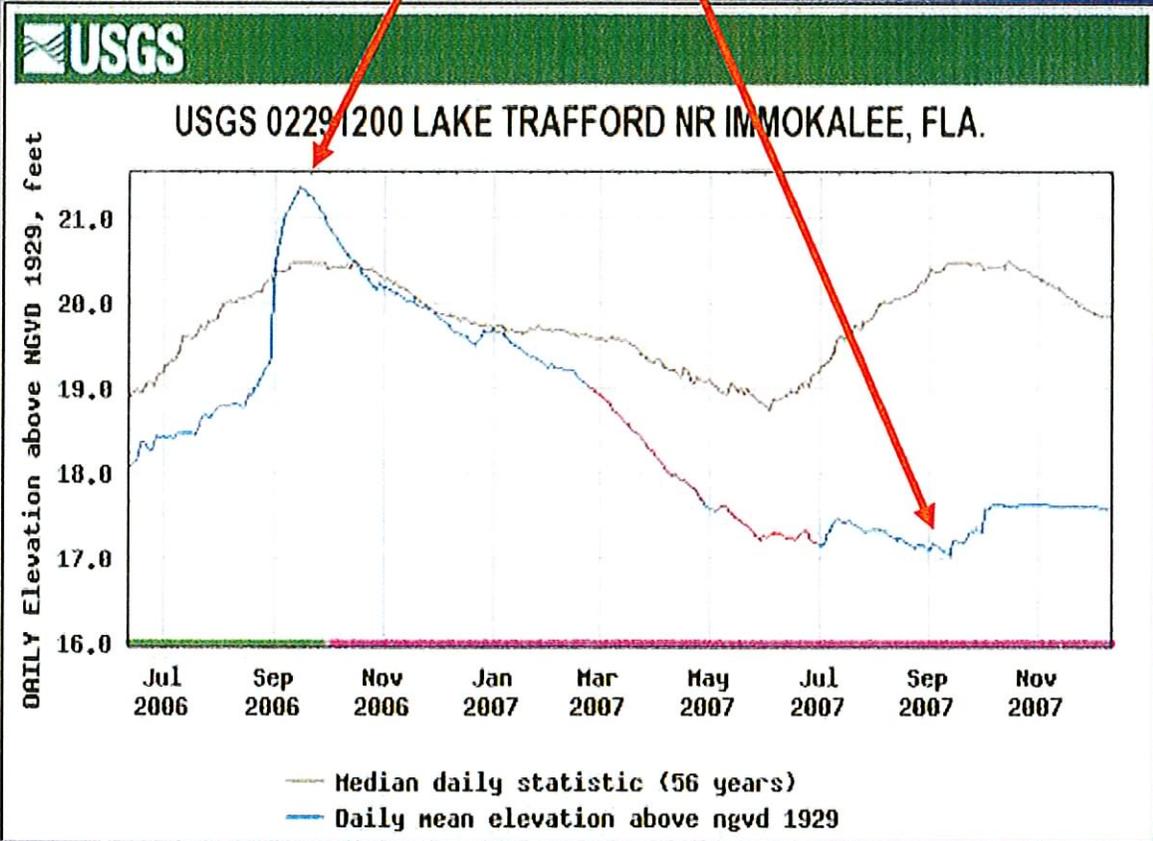


# BIG CYPRESS BASIN

South Florida Water Management District

# Annual Report 2007



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## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

2007 will be remembered as the 'Year of Extremes'. Still reeling from the effects of Tropical Storm Ernesto, we waded into 2007 with regional flooding in many parts of the Basin. However, that event marked the end of the rain. By April, Phase II water restrictions were in place for Southwest Florida and everyone was hoping for rain. As it turned out, 2007 was a summer without rain. Water levels in Lake Trafford dropped to historic lows. Fakahatchee Strand had very little ponded water until September and not one drop of water flowed across the Henderson Creek Weir.

In response to the localized flooding from the Post Ernesto Storm Event, the Basin participated in numerous meetings with homeowners and stakeholders to review conditions in the Golden Gate Canal Basin. Several tasks were identified in our Post Ernesto Storm Report and most of those tasks have been completed.

The severity of the drought and administration of water restrictions posed significant challenges in public outreach activities to instill water conservation education and a broader appreciation for this ever vulnerable resource.



The efforts to achieve our mission were, however, relentless. The first phase of road removal and filling of Prairie Canal marked another milestone of incredible progress for restoration of Picayune Strand. The completion of the construction of an obermeyer gated spillway at Golden Gate Weir No. 2 now provides an enhanced water storage and flow regulation device for restoring the health of Naples Bay.

We also hosted several groups at our Lake Trafford Restoration project before the efforts were temporarily halted.

BCB/SFWMD were highlighted in several film events this year, most prominently the Big Cypress National Preserve video and 'Aqua Kids', a nationally syndicated children's TV show.

We ended the year with a very aggressive community water conservation education campaign. Realizing we can't do it on our own, we continue to strengthen our existing partnerships and develop new ones with the community at large.

Thank you all for the pleasure and opportunity to serve this great community. We look forward to meeting the future challenges with a staff second to none.

Clarence S. Tears, Jr., Director

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Purpose**

The Big Cypress Basin Annual Report presents a reflection of the activities and accomplishments of 2007, overview of programs and projects, and identification of activities for the upcoming year. This annual assessment of past activities provides an opportunity to re-evaluate the existing programs as they relate to emerging issues and concerns based on the Basin's primary missions of enhancing water supply, flood protection, water quality and environmental resources. Annual reviews provide an effective evaluation of the current program, better direction for formulating and implementing future projects, and allow for use of adaptive management techniques to achieve the best results.

### **Mission**

The mission of the Big Cypress Basin is to manage water resources of the region for public health, safety and welfare. The elements of this mission are water quality protection, flood protection, water supply, environmental protection and enhancement of natural resources. This mission is accomplished by: informing the public of water resource issues, programs and policies; conducting efficient operation and maintenance activities; formulating plans for the conservation, preservation and development of water resources; funding acquisition and construction of Basin works to improve the management of water resources; and, assisting other entities' efforts in the management of water resources.

### **Big Cypress Basin History<sup>1</sup>**

The Central and Southern Florida Flood Control District was formed by the Florida Legislature in 1949 to act as the local sponsor for a flood control project conceived and carried out by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The District obtained local funding through the levy of property taxes within its defined boundaries.

Some two decades later, it was obvious that Florida needed to manage its water resources, rather than simply respond to floods and droughts. Therefore, the legislature conceived a plan to designate five water management districts with all of Florida's territory divided among them. Three new districts would be created to join the existing Central and Southern Florida Flood District and the Southwest Florida Water Management District, which was created in 1961.

When the courts declared that the two existing districts were illegally levying property taxes, the legislature delayed implementing its expansion plan until after the voters of Florida approved a constitutional amendment authorizing a property tax for water management purposes. The amendment was approved in March 1976 and became effective January 1977.

During its 1976 session, the Florida legislature enacted amendments to the Water Resources Act of 1972 (Chapter 373, Florida Statutes) to fully activate its plan for designating the five water management districts. The Central and Southern Florida Flood Control District was renamed the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to better reflect the increasing emphasis on water management.

In 1976, the Florida Legislature made some changes to the legislation originally written, including the creation of two basins within the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD): the Big Cypress Basin (BCB) consisting of Collier County and a small portion of Monroe County, and the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades (KOE) Basin consisting of the remaining counties in the District.

The five water management districts, together with their basins, were officially created at 11:59 PM,

December 31, 1976. The Big Cypress Basin's five-member board of Basin residents was appointed by Governor Reubin Askew and sworn into office at the February 1977 meeting of the District's Governing Board. The Big Cypress Basin Board met for the first time on March 4, 1977.

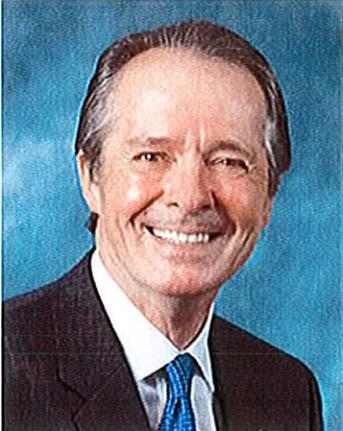


### Big Cypress Basin Board

The Big Cypress Basin Board (BCBB) is composed of a Chairman ex-officio from the SFWMD District Governing Board and five Basin residents appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Florida Senate. The Board members ensure resource and organizational accountability, serve terms of three years and receive no monetary compensation. The current Basin Board members are:



Alicia Abbott



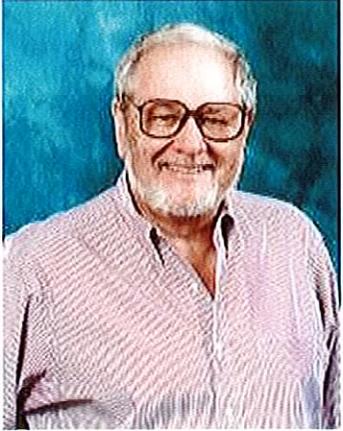
Charles Dauray  
Chairman, ex-officio



John F. Sorey, III,  
Vice-Chairman



Libby Anderson



Jon Staiger, Ph.D.



Liesa Priddy  
Secretary

## Resources and Operations

The majority of the historic Big Cypress Basin landscape is a patchwork of swamps, marshes, sloughs and uplands that recharge aquifers for our water supplies and provide habitat for fish and wildlife. The rapid urban growth in Collier County, and resulting stresses on water and environmental resources, have required effective planning, operation and maintenance to ensure the protection and sustainability of valuable water resources.

The Basin Board is currently responsible for operating and maintaining 169 miles of primary canals and 46 water control structures, which serve to provide storage and drainage of surface water (Figure 1). However, due to the recent plugging of Prairie

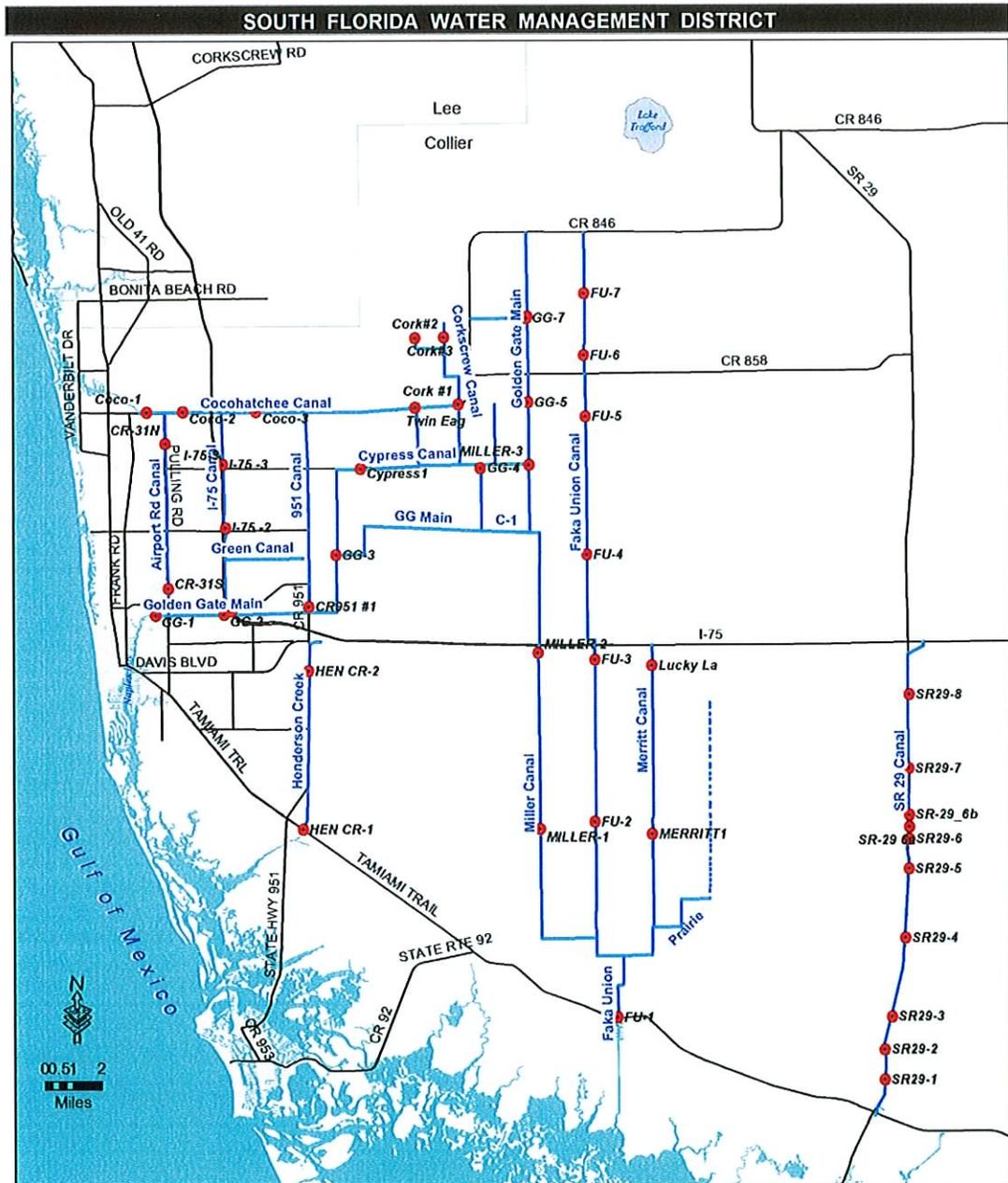


Figure 1. Works of the Basin

- Water Control Structures
- BCB Canals
- ..... Canal Plugged

Canal as a part of the implementation of the Picayune Strand Restoration Project, the effective operation and maintenance of Basin Works is limited to 162 miles of canals and 45 structures.

The Basin Board is also statutorily involved in developing short term and long range plans for efficient management of the water resources of the Basin, as well as providing capital improvements to the canals and structures to enhance water supply, water quality, flood protection and overall environmental quality of the region.

Another primary responsibility of the Basin Board is to lend support and guidance to local governments in dealing with water and environmental resource issues. The core function of this program involves providing technical and financial assistance to local governments and public agencies for projects enhancing stormwater management, alternative water supply, ecosystem restoration and public outreach for water conservation awareness.

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

### Basin Administration

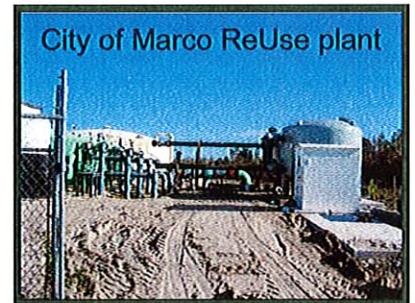
The core activities of the Basin Administration in 2007 continued with overall management of the primary Basin programs, including the preparation of the annual operating budget for submission to the Basin Board and the District Governing Board. Public input to the programs policies and the annual budget were incorporated into the work plan, and directives were issued to the staff for execution of the specific program functions.

Despite having to direct a considerable amount of resources for flood protection tasks in the winter and drought tasks in the summer and fall, progress was achieved on the following key projects:

- Ⓢ Completed topographic mapping for portions of the Barron River and North Golden Gate Estates areas
- Ⓢ Initiated a realtime flood hydrology model for North Golden Gate Estates
- Ⓢ Completed flood improvements for Corkscrew Canal, Bollt Canal and several sections within the Golden Gate Canal Basin
- Ⓢ Continuation of the Golden Gate Main Canal Easement Recovery Program
- Ⓢ Implementation of local government contracts for disbursing approximately \$10.05M million for Alternative Water Supply projects from BCB (\$4.3M) and Florida Senate Bill 444 funds (\$5.7M)

### Right of Way Administration

Right of Way (ROW) Permits are issued to protect the Basin's ability to effectively and safely use the canals and their rights-of-ways for maintaining the conveyance capacities of the canals, while providing for compatible public and private uses. For temporary access to SFWMD Rights of Way, local governments and authorized contractors can request Key Permit Access.



The specific information required for use of the Basin's ROWs depends on the type of use proposed. However, in all cases, the Basin will require that the applicant provide sufficient information to establish that the use will:

- Ⓢ Not interfere with access, operations or maintenance activities
- Ⓢ Not adversely affect a previously-authorized use of the ROW
- Ⓢ Meet the rules and criteria of chapters 373 Florida Statutes (F.S.) and 40E-6 Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)

In FY07, staff ROW activities included the following:

- Ⓢ 70 permit applications and modifications processed
- Ⓢ 60 open permits inspected and closed
- Ⓢ 200 responses to citizen inquiries

## Engineering Planning Activities

One of the primary statutory responsibilities of the Basin is the preparation of engineering plans for water resources development to achieve the mission of flood control, water supply, water quality and environmental enhancement for the benefit of the residents of the Basin. The key planning projects for FY 2008 include:

### SECTION: WATER MANAGEMENT PLANNING

#### 1. **Big Cypress Basin Integrated Hydrologic-Hydraulic Model**

The hydrologic-hydraulic (H&H) models for the BCB Watershed Management Plan are continually being enhanced by refinement of the regional integrated surface and groundwater model. The formulation of this model has enabled the Basin staff to simulate long-term characteristics of the surface and groundwater flow patterns in an integrated fashion. It is being applied to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative water management strategies on regional water resources for several capital improvement projects and Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) projects.

#### 2. **Big Cypress Basin Real Time Flood Hydrology Model**

The capability of the Big Cypress Basin system of canals and water control structures is limited in providing the desired levels of service for flood protection. Rapid urban growth in Collier County has also resulted in quick response of storm events with flash flooding in several areas in Northern Golden Gate Estates. A recent example of such flooding was associated with Tropical Storm Ernesto in August-September 2006. During the aftermath of Ernesto, an evaluation was performed to adopt flood mitigation measures. One of the recommended measures includes development of a flood warning system and operating system based on a real-time flood forecasting model.

The Basin staff, in coordination with the District's Operation & Maintenance and Hydrologic Modeling experts, has undertaken development of the flood forecasting model, utilizing the Basin's existing surface and groundwater model as the base platform. The project is currently in progress through a contract with the Danish Hydraulic institute (DHI). An operable model is expected to be completed by September 2008.

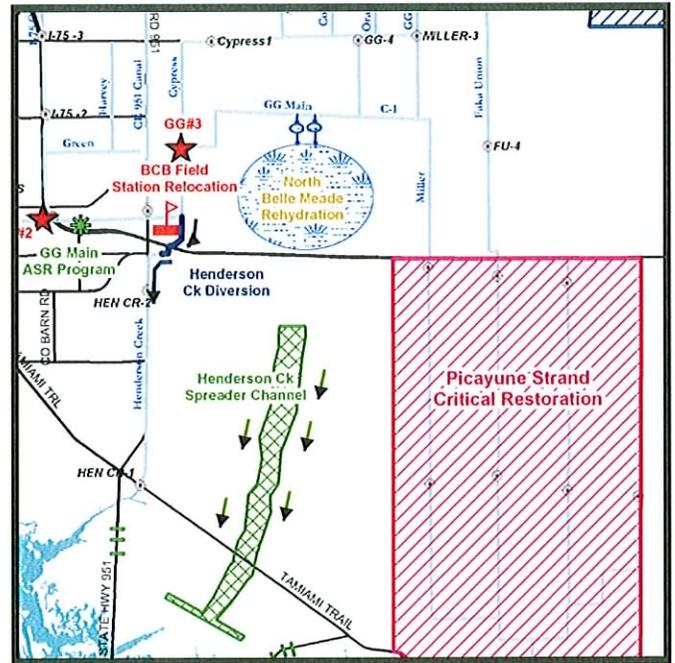
#### 3. **Picayune Strand Restoration Project Planning**

The Picayune Strand Restoration Project (PSRP) is one of the two primary projects in Florida's Everglades Restoration program approved by the United States Congress under the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007. Since the passage of WRDA 2007, the District and Army Corps of Engineers (COE) have been working to transition the project for implementation by the Corps. The COE plans to initiate construction in the fall of 2008.

A considerable part of the planning unit's effort during FY 2007 was geared toward assisting the project team on hydrologic-hydraulic modeling for development of the Basis of Design Reports (BODR) for pump stations, levees, roads and spreader canals associated with this large-scale restoration project. As of 2007, 90% design of the pump stations and levee, canals and roads elements have been completed.

#### 4. Golden Gate Canal Improvement Plan

The Golden Gate Canal watershed is undergoing very rapid development. The design conveyance capacities of the canals and their tributaries are not adequate to provide the desired levels of service for flood protection. The BCB Five-Year Plan (2006-2010) outlined capital improvement projects to enhance the flood carrying capacity of the Golden Gate Canal, improving stormwater conveyance by retrofitting the existing fixed crest configuration of several Golden Gate Canal weirs with large, operable gates. Such structures can have greater draw down capacities to provide flood protection during the wet season, as well as the operational flexibility to store higher water levels during the dry season.



Golden Gate Improvements

Hydrologic-hydraulic assessments for improvements to Golden Gate Canal Weirs No. 3, 6 & 7 have been completed, and are slated for construction during FY08 and FY09. Construction for the retrofit of Golden Gate Weir No. 2 was initiated in FY07 and completed in early FY08.

The BCB Five-Year Plan (2006-2010) has also outlined another important Golden Gate Canal project that will divert water from the Golden Gate Canal to Henderson Creek. Hydrologic-hydraulic assessment and design of the Henderson Creek Diversion project are in progress. The project will involve the construction of a pump station and a canal to divert approximately 100 cfs of water from the Golden Gate Main Canal to the Henderson Creek Canal. This will reduce freshwater inflows to Naples Bay and provide some much needed freshwater inflow to Henderson Creek during the early dry season.

#### 5. Topographic Mapping

The Basin has been procuring digital topographic elevation data at one foot or less contour interval by aerial photogrammetric methods since the 1980s. The data has been extensively used by the staff for all water management planning

and capital improvement projects, as well as by public and private organizations all across the region.

The FY07 projects involved completion of topographic mapping for 88 square miles of the Barron River Basin and 43 square miles of the NGGE area. In 2008, the Basin will undertake a joint effort with Collier County to perform topographic mapping for a 1600-square mile area of western Collier County using LIDAR mapping technology.

### **Goals for Fiscal Year 2008**

- ④ Complete development of a realtime flood forecasting model for North Golden Gate Estates, utilizing the existing BCB Watershed Management model
- ④ Complete Hydrologic-Hydraulic assessments for capital improvement projects outlined for construction in 2009, including Golden Gate Main Canal Weirs No. 3, 6 and 7
- ④ Complete preliminary design of the Henderson Creek diversion project
- ④ Coordinate transition of the Picayune Strand Restoration Project to the Army Corps of Engineers for construction
- ④ Provide technical support to Collier County for development of the Collier County Watershed Management Plan
- ④ Assist Collier Soil and Water Conservation District in development of the Horsepenn Strand Conservation Plan, and to secure lands within and to complement the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program for flowway restoration and wetland enhancement in North Golden Gate Estates and North Belle Meade areas

### **Capital Projects**

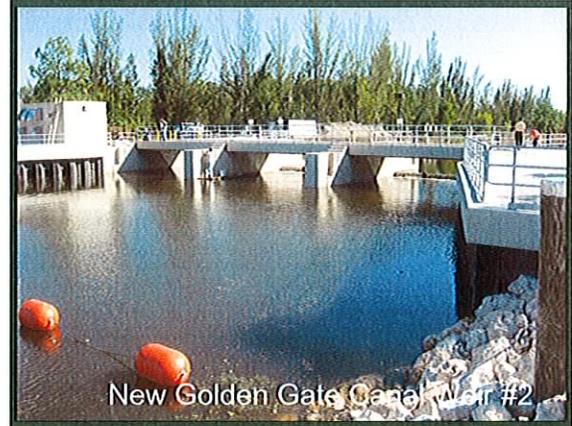
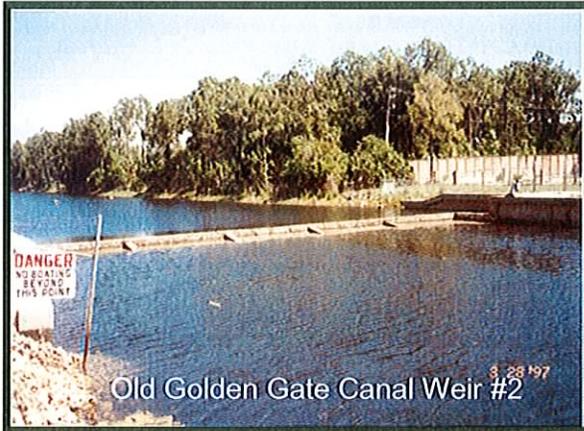
#### **Construction and Capital Improvement Programs**

Since 1981, the BCB Board has been actively pursuing a capital improvement construction program to facilitate and enhance the water resource management capabilities of the 'Works of the Basin'. Under the auspices of this program, numerous canals and water control structures have been upgraded to enhance flood control and conservation storage capabilities. The following are the major activities of the capital improvement program during FY 2007.

#### **Golden Gate Main Canal Weir No. 2**

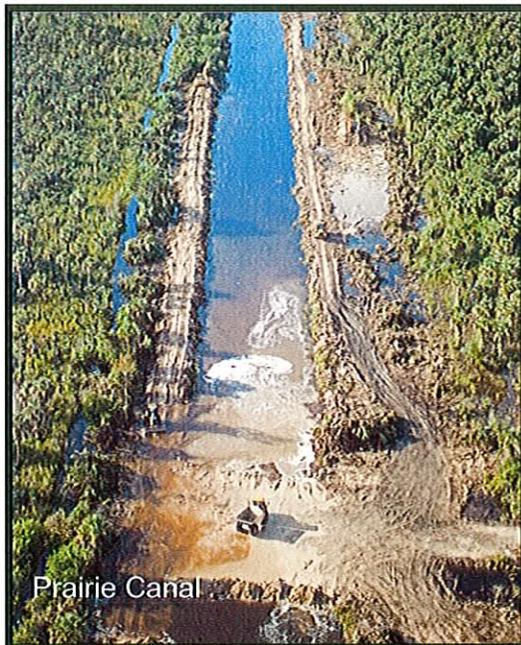
Construction of a new Golden Gate Weir No. 2 was completed in the fall. The old 105-ft fixed crest structure was replaced with an 80-ft automated spillway, consisting of three

Obermyer gates. The new structure will increase the conveyance capacity by approximately 500 cfs (320 MGD). It will also raise the conservation pool level by approximately 1.3 ft during the dry season, enhancing groundwater recharge in the watershed. The operational flexibility afforded by this new design will aid BCB in managing water resources for flood protection, water supply and the environment more effectively.



### Picayune Strand Hydrologic Restoration

In FY07, Phase II of Prairie Canal plugging was completed. As part of this phase of work using roadbed fill and adjacent spoil piles, plugs were installed over a 5-mile section of Prairie Canal and culverts were installed under Stewart Boulevard to allow unobstructed sheetflow of surface water.



The first phase of road removal was also completed in FY07, returning all roads east of Merritt Canal to natural grade, a total of 65 miles. Limestone roads were regraded to fill the roadside swales. The asphalt from paved areas of Patterson Boulevard and Stewart Boulevard was milled and recycled. The 400+ dumptruck loads of material will be used

for on-site future road maintenance activities by Florida Division of Forestry in upland areas.

Traces of chlordane from agricultural operations in the late 1940s were found on approximately 65 acres adjacent to the project area. To prevent any potential for contamination following rehydration

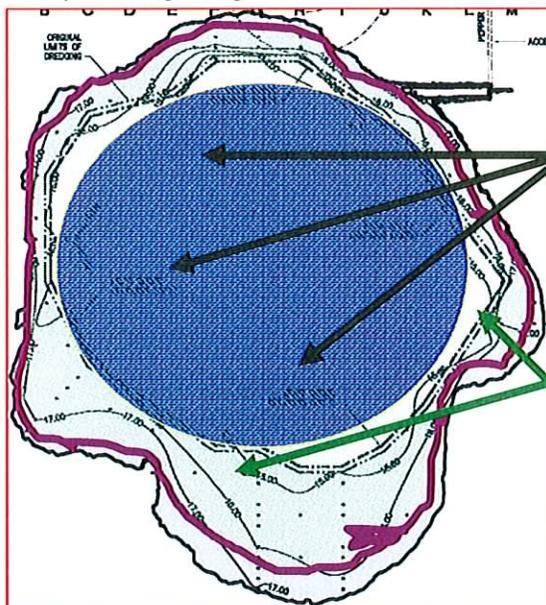
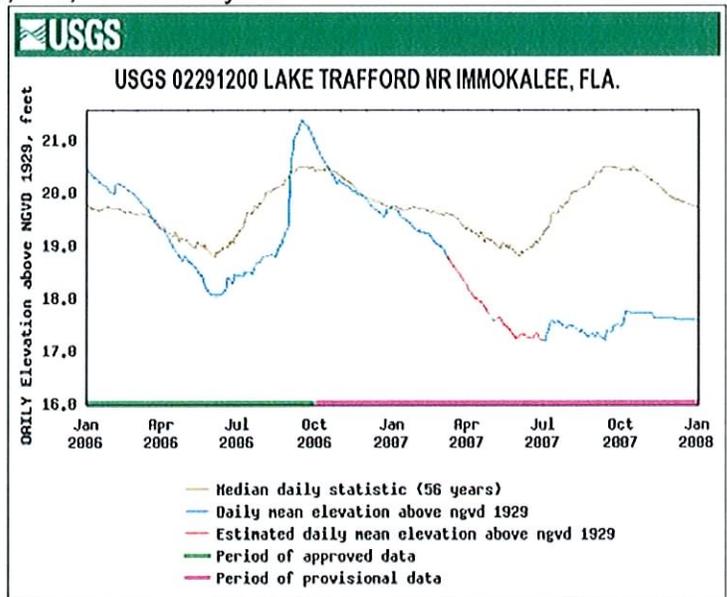


of the wetlands, a soil inversion remediation process was used. This will stop leaching of chlordane into surface waters and prevent foraging wildlife, such as wading birds, from accumulating the chemical in their systems. Approximately half of this work has been completed.

As part of site clean-up for the restoration project, existing facilities, trash and structures were removed. All structures were inspected for asbestos and hazardous materials contamination, and then demolished using heavy equipment. Debris from more than 160 sites was stockpiled on-site, sorted and hauled to appropriate disposal centers, recycling as much as possible: concrete rubble = 1,345 tons; tires from abandoned vehicles = 169 tons; steel from vehicles, old equipment and campers = 514 tons; and, miscellaneous debris = 7,660 cubic yards (384 dump truck loads).

### Lake Trafford Restoration

Phase I dredging of the center portion of Lake Trafford was completed in the spring 2006 at a cost of \$10.3M. Approximately 3,500,000 cubic yards of muck were removed from the central deep portion of the lake. Phase II, removal of muck from the littoral zone, was contracted in FY07 for \$5.1M to remove another 1,000,000 cubic yards of muck. However, due to the prevailing severe drought conditions across all of South Florida, the lake level declined to critical low stages where operation of the dredging equipment could not be continued. The dredging contract was suspended, but activities will resume when the lake levels return to normal operating stages.



**Phase I  
Lake Dredging**

**Phase II  
Littoral/Shoreline  
Dredging**

Lake Trafford Restoration Project

## Goals for Fiscal Year 2008

- ④ Completion of Golden Gate Canal Weirs No. 6 and 7
- ④ Initiation of Golden Gate Canal Weir No. 3 Construction
- ④ Completion of Lake Trafford Restoration, when normal lake levels return
- ④ Continue coordination of future office construction design with East Naples Fire District

## Operations and Maintenance Activities

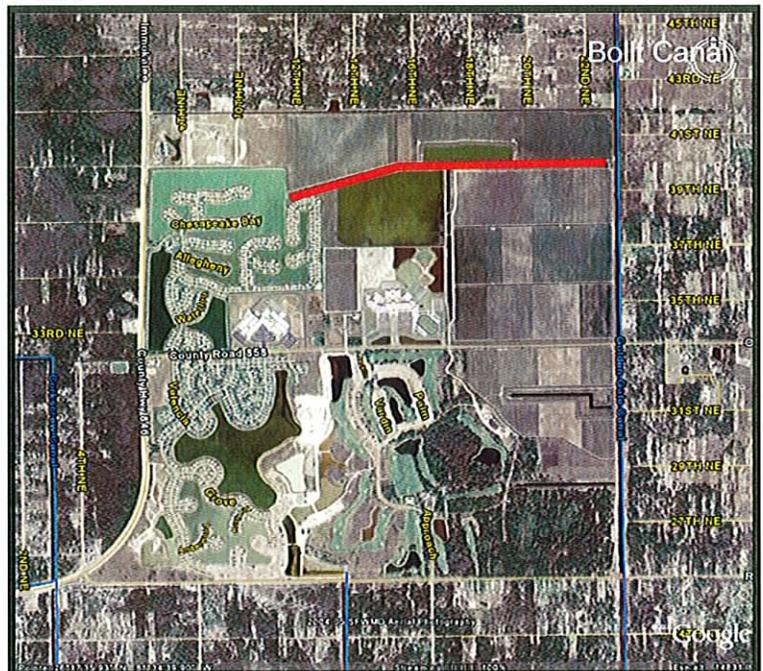
The Big Cypress Basin Field Station is responsible for the operations and maintenance of 169 miles of canals and 46 water control structures in Collier County. However, due to the recent plugging of Prairie Canal as a part of the implementation of the Picayune Strand Restoration Project, the effective operation and maintenance of Basin Works is limited to 162 miles of canals and 45 structures.

BCB's Field Station's goal is to optimally manage the primary canals, water control structures, administration building, field station building, as well as the associated grounds and fleet in the Basin through the following programs:

- Ⓢ Facility and Structure Maintenance
- Ⓢ Vegetation Management
- Ⓢ Canal and Bank Maintenance
- Ⓢ Fleet Maintenance

## Highlights of O&M Activities for FY 2007

- Ⓢ Completed Bollt Canal cleanup, Corkscrew Canal bank stabilization and shoals within the Golden Gate Canal Basin in response to flooding from the Post Ernesto Storm Event
- Ⓢ Installed "Tuffbooms" at Golden Gate No. 1 and Cocohatchee No. 1
- Ⓢ Continued the Canal Bank Recovery Program along Golden Gate Main Canal
- Ⓢ Opportunistically use low water levels from the drought to remove trash from the canal system



## Facilities and Structure Maintenance

The Field Station is responsible for facility maintenance, including the Field Station (offices, work bays and storage) and adjacent Administration building. During the course of the last year, staff performed the following duties:

- Ⓢ 300 gate operations
- Ⓢ 786 inspections and preventive maintenance activities
- Ⓢ 50 bar gates maintained (inspected, painted, signs replaced)

## Vegetation Management

Operation and Maintenance staff controls nuisance vegetation in all District-managed Rights-of-Way, canals, lakes and wetlands. The majority of vegetation management is accomplished through the use of chemical control. Mechanical control, using the Aquamogs, is completed on a case-by-case basis and as floating mats break free. The primary vegetation targeted for control includes:

- Ⓞ Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*)
- Ⓞ Floating hearts (*Nymphoides cristata*)
- Ⓞ Indian swampweed (*Hygrophila polysperma*)
- Ⓞ Wedelia (*Wedelia trilobata*)
- Ⓞ Torpedo grass (*Panicum repens*)

In FY07, Basin staff completed:

- Ⓞ 2,500 acres of floating, emergent and submerged vegetation treated in-house
- Ⓞ 400 acres of terrestrial and aquatic vegetation treated through contracts
- Ⓞ Mechanically removed 875 acre-feet of aquatic vegetation with the Aquamog

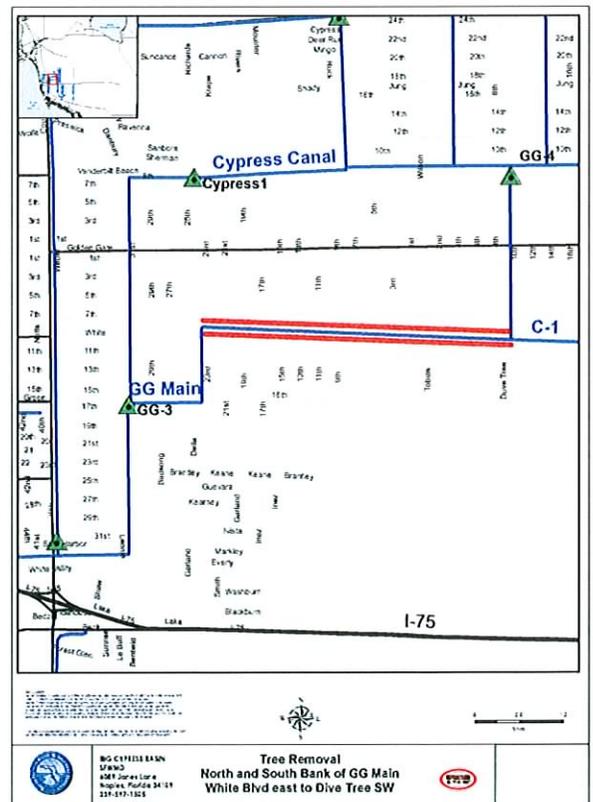


## Canal and Bank Maintenance

While trees and shrubs in the easement are targeted for removal, certain groundcovers and permitted permanent structures can be maintained without impacting access. Field Station staff contacted, via phone and door-to-door visits, each of the homeowners along the canal.

### Tasks:

- Ⓞ Mowed 415 acres of canal bank, 3 times
- Ⓞ Removed 3,000 cubic yards of material from shoal areas, primarily in the Golden Gate Canal Basin
- Ⓞ Repaired 2,200 feet of bank on Corkscrew Canal



- Ⓞ Completed Bank Recovery on Golden Gate Main Canal
  - White Boulevard to Dove Tree Street, 4-mile reach, both north and south banks

## Fleet Maintenance

In 2006, BCB added a Unimog to the fleet. This new addition will allow easy access on canal banks for mowing and debris cleanup. It also can haul loads of materials needed for repair or stabilization of areas in the system.



## Tasks:

- Cycle and preventive maintenance on 6 pieces of heavy equipment (Gradall, (2) Aquamogs, Dragline, Positrac and Unimog)
- Cycle and preventive maintenance on 14 pieces of automotive equipment, including a dump truck, shop truck, field vehicles and office vehicles
- Cycle and preventive maintenance on 3 boats and trailers
- Cycle and preventive maintenance on 15 pieces of miscellaneous equipment (mower, several chainsaws, 3 generators, 3 portable pumps, etc.)

## O&M GOALS FOR FY 2008

- ④ Continue to pursue purchase of land at City Gate for the new Field Station
- ④ Continue Golden Gate Main Canal Easement Recovery Program - 5-mile reach (2 miles on Golden Gate Canal, Dove Tree Street to Cypress Canal; 3 miles on Cypress Canal, Golden Gate Canal to Vanderbilt Beach Road)
- ④ Continue to coordinate activities with Collier County Transportation and Stormwater Management Departments

## Outreach Initiatives

The Basin continues to be challenged with educating a resident, seasonal and tourist population, using innovative ideas and means to raise awareness about both the Basin's and District's issues. Keeping all residents informed of the District and Basin programs and priorities, as well as the established water use rules and water conservation measures are integral parts of the public outreach work performed at the Basin. Outreach took on many forms in FY07 and staff worked at a furious pace to meet the demands of our citizens and partners.

## Strategic Priority

Basin staff works to educate residents and visitors to understand that water management is everyone's business and conservation is the key to maintaining our current lifestyle. The Basin is working toward this goal by informing the public about the strategic programs and priorities of the Basin and the District.

Several ongoing methods for overall citizen outreach in FY07 have included:

- ② Updating the information on the Basin's webpage and adding new information as it is developed



- ② Working with the District's Department of Government and Public Affairs to update Splash Sheets on Basin projects, such as the Picayune Strand Restoration Project, Lake Trafford Restoration Project and Golden Gate Canal Improvements
- ② Participating in the Collier Environmental Education Consortium, Inc. to support teachers who include water conservation in their curriculum to students. In FY07 Environmental School Awards went to 18 schools (6 high schools, 4 middle schools and 8 elementary schools) who received \$5,300 in cash awards for 3 different levels of recognition
- ② Funding field trips for Collier County Public Schools to get students from the classroom into the field at Big Cypress National Preserve, Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, Rookery Bay Reserve and Picayune Strand State Forest.

## Events

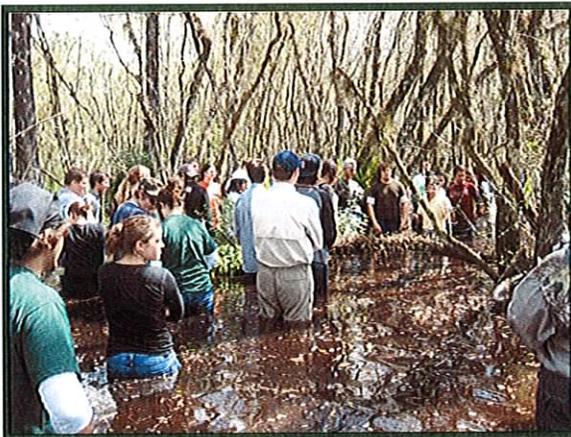
The Basin supported booths at twenty-one local events in FY07 (triple the number attended in FY06) and reached over 3,200 people, not including the Collier County Fair:

- ② Collier County Fair
- ② Earth Day at the Conservancy of SW Florida
- ② Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park's Discovery Day
- ② Florida Marine Educators Conference
- ② March for Parks at Big Cypress National Preserve
- ② Florida Yard and Garden Show

- 🌐 Super Science Saturday – Science Fair
- 🌐 Career Fair Days at local High Schools
- 🌐 American Association of University Women Career Fair
- 🌐 Coastal Clean-up
- 🌐 Bay Days Clean-up
- 🌐 Golden Gate Weir No. 2 Groundbreaking

Staff also gave more than 40 presentations on the Post Ernesto Flood Event, Basin projects and Picayune Strand Restoration Project to several groups, including Leadership Collier, Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, Naples Homeowner’s Association (HOA) Presidents Council, Waterways HOA, Golden Gate Estates Civic Association, Royal Harbor HOA, Island Walk HOA, Village Walk HOA, Vanderbilt Country Club, the League of Women Voters, Women’s League of Realtors, Naples Association of Board of Realtors, FL Nursery Grower’s Association, Florida Irrigation Society, Lee County Ecotour Operators and Collier County Ecotour Operators with more than 1,000 attendees.

The Basin assisted with Picayune Strand Restoration Project’s Celebration of Construction Progress. More than 75 people attended the event that was held on-site adjacent to the Florida Division of Forestry’s Headquarters. Helicopter tours of the canal plugging, road removal and structure demolition were provided for media affiliates.



Ground tours to the road removal site were provided for the public. In addition, almost 100 media, Basin Board members, legislative staff and agency partners, including the Deputy Undersecretary of NOAA, toured the restoration to marvel at its success in FY07.

This year we participated in the Collier County Annual Ag Tour, serving as a stop at Lake Trafford to discuss the restoration with participants. Combined the County Ag Tour, in conjunction with the American Society of Civil Engineers, legislative staff and Chinese

delegates tours, introduced almost 300 professionals to our Lake Trafford Restoration Project.

BCB broke ground for the construction of Golden Gate Weir No. 2. At almost \$4.3M, the new structure improves the level of flood control during major storm events and allows for incremental releases of freshwater to downstream estuaries, enhancing coastal resources. This was achieved by upgrading from a fixed crest weir with no flexibility to an Obermeyer Gate that will allow maximum operational flexibility. Seasonally, the upgraded structure also has the ability to retain more water for aquifer recharge



and significantly enhances the SFWMD's effectiveness in managing water resources in the Golden Gate Basin.

## Contracts

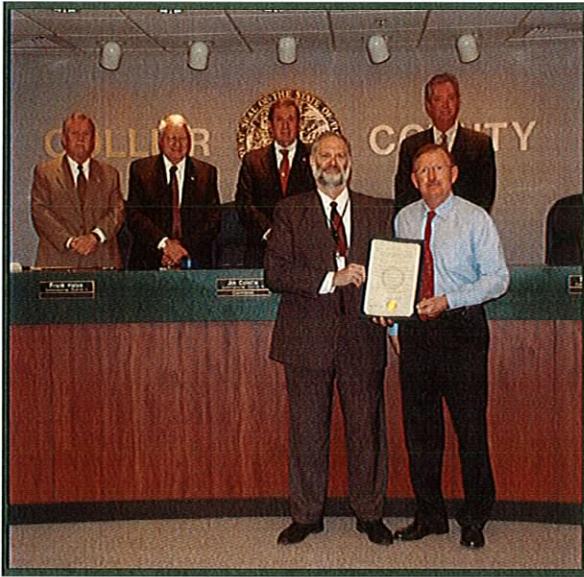
Since Basin staff cannot possibly meet with every individual resident or visitor to the County, the Outreach Program manages several contracts that assist in getting the District/Basin messages out. Primary contracts include:

- ④ Collier Soil and Water Conservation Service's Mobile Irrigation Lab – This Lab conducted more than 112 irrigation system evaluations and did follow-up consultation on 4 systems. In addition, our partnership and cooperative efforts have strengthened as the drought has progressed.
- ④ Florida Gulf Coast University's Wings of Hope, Panther Posse Program – Approximately 220 University students per semester teach 2,000 elementary students from 20 regional schools about Florida habitats, resources and wildlife, specifically the Florida panther. Those students then educate 2 people each on what they have learned, reaching another 4,000 people. In FY07, there were three semesters. More than 600 FGCU students participated in educating themselves and 6,000 elementary students, who, in turn, reached out to another 12,000 people! This year they incorporated a major water conservation effort given our dry conditions and ways citizens can be "green" to the Earth.
- ④ Water Symposium of Florida, Inc. – An estimated 100 citizens and 30 Homeowner's Associations participated respectively in the Annual Water Festival and Water Symposium at North Collier Regional Park
- ④ Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve – Rookery Bay staff assist with education of local government officials, business leaders and community representatives through the Go-With-The-Flow program. This year, in addition to focusing on the headwaters of Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary and Lake Trafford, mid-watershed of Picayune Strand and coastal estuaries of Rookery Bay, an urban component was added to educate the participants on the man-made movement of water and its associated issues given coastal development.
- ④ Big Cypress Basin Ecosystem Restoration Coordination Team – The Basin continued to fund an Administrative Assistant position at Florida Gulf Coast University to coordinate a local interagency team of scientists to formulate and review road maps of ecosystem restoration activities in the region.
- ④ Big Cypress Basin Monitoring and Research Metadata – The Basin also continued to fund the maintenance and update of a web-based regional research database to provide a comprehensive inventory of all monitoring and research projects in the region. The project is contracted to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, and the database is available at <http://www.floridamarine.org/bcb/>.

## Local Government

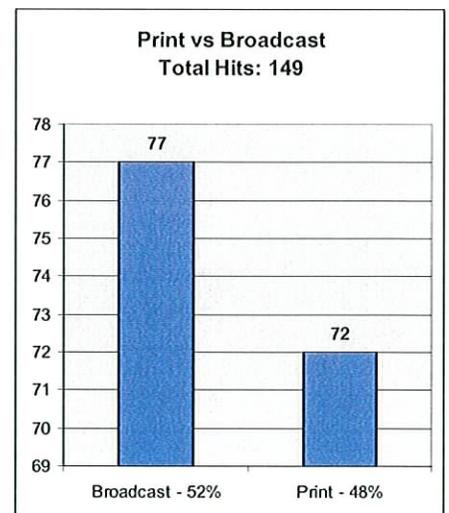
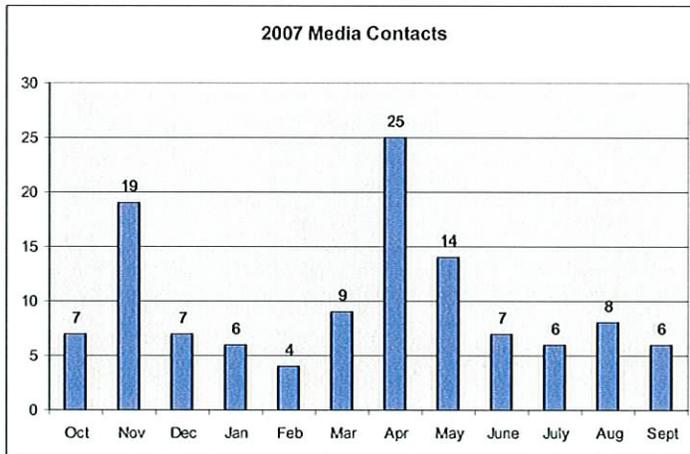
The Basin coordinated with local governments on several initiatives, including the Transfer of Development Rights Program, County and municipal water supplies, water reuse efforts and flood protection measures. Staff regularly attended City Council and County Commission meetings and supported agenda items that complimented District/Basin goals. In addition, the Basin Director met monthly with County and municipal leaders to discuss issue-specific items.

Progress on Basin projects was provided to local officials through BCB's e-newsletter on a bimonthly basis and meetings were held regularly with local government officials, state legislative representatives and US Congressmen.

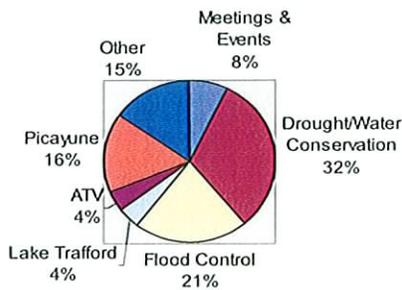


## Media

The Basin's relationship with local media outlets expanded substantially in FY07. Basin staff had 118 contacts with the media that resulted in 149 media hits or stories. Coverage was consistent throughout the year, with higher volumes in November and April from the Picayune Strand Celebration and onset of water restrictions respectively.

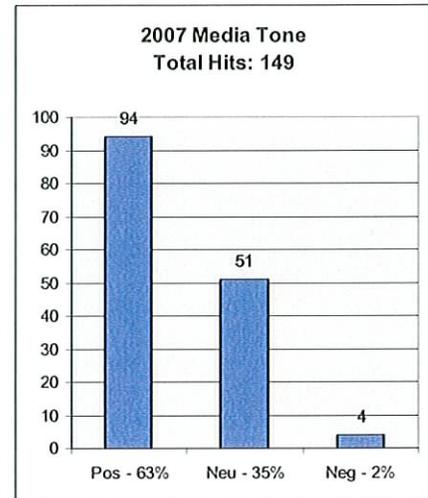


Major coverage venues included the Naples Daily News, NBC-2 and ABC-7. The Naples Daily News has a circulation of 55,000 daily, 75,000 on Sundays and over 6 million webhits monthly. In addition to these major outlets, BCB also had coverage in the Ft. Myers News Press, Collier Citizen, Naples Sun Times, Marco Island Sun Times and on Fox-4, WINK and WGCU. A major effort was made to connect with our Hispanic media affiliates and the Basin worked closely with Vista Semenal (newspaper) and Azteca America (TV) to cover stories of interest.



Primary news topics for FY07 included Drought/Water Conservation, Flood Control, Picayune Strand, Lake Trafford, ATV Issues and Meetings/Events. Flood and drought topics were almost equal and accounted for more than half of the media coverage. Given these 'hot' topics, the majority of the coverage was positive or neutral.

Staff also worked with the Marco Island Civic Association through their MICAwave newsletter (circulation 8,000) to update citizens on programs and projects.



### Water Shortage/Drought 2007

Basin staff worked diligently with West Palm Beach, local governments, enforcement agencies and the local community to understand the water shortage, need for restrictions and enforcement actions.

Activities that dominated staff workloads included:

- Ⓢ Participating in regularly scheduled drought teleconferences
- Ⓢ Disseminating information to local governments, media, HOAs, community organizations and citizens
- Ⓢ Coordinating enforcement needs and activities with local enforcement agencies
- Ⓢ Coordinating meetings and disseminating information to golf courses
- Ⓢ Responding to calls, emails and questions concerning water restrictions and water shortage information
- Ⓢ Promoting water conservation at available venues
- Ⓢ Securing corporate partnerships to raise citizen awareness of water restrictions

### Outreach Goals for 2008

- Ⓢ Plan and execute the Extreme Yard Makeover and Annual Water Symposium for restaurants
- Ⓢ Provide presentations to Homeowners Associations, civic groups and organizations as requested
- Ⓢ Continue outreach efforts at local events, with a focus on water restrictions and long term water conservation
- Ⓢ Maintain BCB website
- Ⓢ Plan and execute Lake Trafford Restoration Project Celebration for completion in the winter of 2008, depending on rainfall
- Ⓢ Recognize partner efforts and work to promote incremental successes