



## SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

December 12, 2011

Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
Central District  
3319 Maguire Boulevard, Suite 232  
Orlando, Florida 32803-3767

Dear Sir/Madam:

**Subject: Permit No. ERP49-187636-001**

***Report to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Central Florida  
Beltway Mitigation, Western Beltway/S.R. 429, Part C***

Enclosed is the Report to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for Western Beltway mitigation. The Report summarizes activities conducted by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) resulting from mitigation funding provided through Section 338.250, Florida Statutes, Central Florida Beltway Mitigation from October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2011. The funding was generated from environmental impacts associated with the construction of the Western Beltway (Beltway), S.R. 429, Part C, for which SFWMD would receive approximately \$9.4 million from the Turnpike District and Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA). To date, SFWMD has received approximately \$8.2 million in funding and land from the Turnpike District.

During this reporting period, the mitigation supported \$844.80 in land acquisition staff costs to support acquisition of the Harbor Oaks parcel on Shingle Creek that will occur in the next reporting period. Restoration expenditures during this reporting period totaled \$171,737.03 for exotic control, staff costs, security patrol services, miscellaneous office, tool and equipment supplies, mechanical vegetation control and storage rental, supported the project. SFWMD will continue to pursue options in accordance with the DEP-approved mitigation plan.

If you have any questions, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Steve Coughlin".

Steve Coughlin  
Land Stewardship Section  
Land Resources Bureau

SC/mm  
Enclosure

c: Marjorie Moore (SFWMD) w/enclosure  
Ayounga Riddick (SFWMD) w/enclosure  
Scott Kamien (PBS&J) w/enclosure by e-mail

## **Report to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection**

This Report is submitted in accordance with the Florida Department of Protection (DEP) permit No. ERP49-0187636-001 for Central Florida Beltway Mitigation. The Report summarizes activities conducted by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD/District) resulting from mitigation funding provided through section 338.250, Florida Statutes, Central Florida Beltway Mitigation for period October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011 (FY 2011). The funding was generated from environmental impacts associated with the construction of the Western Beltway (Beltway), S.R. 429, Part C, for which SFWMD would receive approximately \$9.4 million from the Turnpike District and Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA), also known by the SFWMD as Shingle Creek Phase III. To date, SFWMD has received approximately \$8.2 million in funding and land (detailed below, Section 1) from the Turnpike District. The balance of \$1.2 million was allocated for the purchase of mitigation bank credits and a cash payment or land donation anticipated from OOCEA for 35 acres of skink habitat.

In consultation with the Environmental Advisory Group to the OOCEA and Turnpike District, SFWMD developed a Conceptual Mitigation Plan (Plan) which was approved by the SFWMD's Governing Board on October 11, 2001. The Plan, subsequently accepted by DEP on December 4, 2001, identified several mitigation options to address environmental impacts from the Beltway's construction. These options included 1) land acquisition, 2) mitigation banking, and 3) hydrological restoration/enhancement. SFWMD continues to pursue these options and has implemented significant elements of the Plan since 2001, which are summarized below. Other funding sources, including previous phases of beltway mitigation (Shingle Creek Phase II), are used to supplement beltway-funded projects, when appropriate.

### **1. Land Acquisition**

Shortly after the Plan was accepted by DEP, SFWMD received \$6,022,800 from the Turnpike District for impacts related to the Turnpike District's portion of Western Beltway construction. The Summary of Mitigation Balances by Project Report (financial summary report) dated September 30, 2011, prepared by the District's accounting office, indicates a balance of \$1,935,155.28 available in the Shingle Creek Phase III land acquisition fund. During the period of October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011, there was \$844.80 in expenditures out of the Shingle Creek Phase III land acquisition account for salaries associated with the SFWMD's intended contribution towards the acquisition of the 1.6 acre Harbor Oaks marina site on Shingle Creek. In furtherance of the executed inter-local agreement between SFWMD, Osceola County and the City of Kissimmee the SFWMD budgeted \$150,000 in fiscal year 2012 that will provide funds towards acquisition of this parcel. On November 18, 2011, Osceola County filed a conservation easement on portions of the parcel, with SFWMD as beneficiary. Presently, SFWMD is processing a check request to provide \$150,000 to Osceola County, however this transaction will occur in FY12 so cannot be reported as a transaction in this reporting period.

A summary of the land purchases, including those acquired with Shingle Creek Phase II beltway funding are summarized in **Table 1** and in **Figure 2**.

### **2. Restoration and Management**

SFWMD continues ecological restoration through prescribed fire and exotic plant control on Beltway acquired lands in the Shingle Creek and Lake Marion Creek projects. Based on the initial available amount of \$6,022,800 received by the SFWMD, with \$4,563,529 allocated to land acquisition and mitigation banking, there was \$1,459,271 provided to restoration.

Currently, the financial summary report indicates an available balance in the restoration sub-fund of \$559,461.59 on September 30, 2011. Interest on the land acquisition and restoration sub-funds can be used towards land acquisition, restoration or management expenses; as of September 30, 2011 this amount is \$1,082,934.74. During FY2011, \$2,733.13 provided miscellaneous office, tool and equipment supplies in support of the project, \$17,619.58 provided law enforcement patrol by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, \$6,042.68 provided equipment storage rental, \$89,793.30 towards exotic control and \$6400 for vegetation management activities including mowing, trail/road maintenance, fenceline and fireline preparation. In FY2011, 680 acres were surveyed and spot-treated for exotic vegetation, including Old World climbing fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*), Para grass (*Urochloa mutica*), Caesar weed, and primrose willow (*Ludwigia peruviana*). In FY2012, it is anticipated that 300 acres of exotics will be treated and 50 acres will be burned.

Using funds from the Shingle Creek Phase III, SFWMD funds a full-time land management position to oversee the daily management responsibilities of the SFWMD's beltway mitigation lands, primarily focusing on the Shingle Creek Management Area (SCMA), but also Lake Marion Creek Management Area (LMCA). During FY2011, \$49,148.35 supported staff in the Shingle Creek project. The total restoration expenditures were \$171,737.03.

### **3. Environmental Education**

SFWMD continues to maximize opportunities for environmental education on its lands in the Shingle Creek Management Area. SFWMD has formed a special relationship with Orange County Public Schools at the Hunter's Creek Middle School (HCMS). Students from HCMS and other nearby schools can use SCMA for appropriate curricula (biology, ecology, chemistry, history) and over time assist SFWMD with long-term management of SCMA (trail development, research, scientific studies, etc.).

### **4. Public Partnerships**

As demonstrated in its beltway acquisitions, SFWMD participates in public partnerships to maximize beltway funding opportunities to acquire land for public benefit. SFWMD will continue to seek and establish public partnerships to acquire, restore, and manage environmental lands identified in the beltway legislation.

### **5. Future Projects**

SFWMD continues to seek opportunities to acquire and restore land that is consistent with its mission of water resource protection, flood control, and the protection of environmentally sensitive lands. The Shingle Creek, Reedy Creek, and Lake Marion Creek SOR projects are within hydrological basins identified in beltway legislation and remain the best opportunities to address beltway mitigation.

Table 1. Acquisition Summary September 30, 2011

Parcel	Approximate Acreage	Habitat Type(s)	Partnership	Restoration Opportunities	Beltway funding/Date
Babb*	125	Mesic flatwoods, pasture, freshwater marsh, floodplain swamp	Osceola Co.	Upland restoration, exotic plant control	\$1,275,000 January 2004
St. Clair*	40	Scrubby/mesic flatwoods, floodplain swamp	Osceola Co.	Prescribed fire, exotic plant control	\$783,000 October 2004
Westbrook Hunter's Creek	131	Floodplain swamp, disturbed land/powerline right-of-way	NA	Hydrologic restoration, exotic plant control	\$342,000 December 2004
Steffee	27	Floodplain swamp, hardwood /conifer mix, river/stream	Osceola Co.	Exotic plant control	\$131,900 October 2004
Ruba	16	Hardwood and conifer mix forest, disturbed land, oak hammock	Osceola Co., City of Kissimmee	Upland restoration, exotic plant control	\$500,000 March 2007
Scheibner and Meany/Auston	2.5	Mesic pine flatwoods, disturbed land	NA	Exotic plant control, prescribed fire	\$21,400 May-July 2004
Black*	533.75	Floodplain swamp, mesic pine flatwoods, disturbed land/powerline right-of-way	NA	Exotic plant control, prescribed fire, supplemental tree plantings	\$1,344,400 Dec '91
<b>Total</b>	<b>875.25</b>				<b>\$4,397,700</b>

\* Expended with Beltway Phase II funds



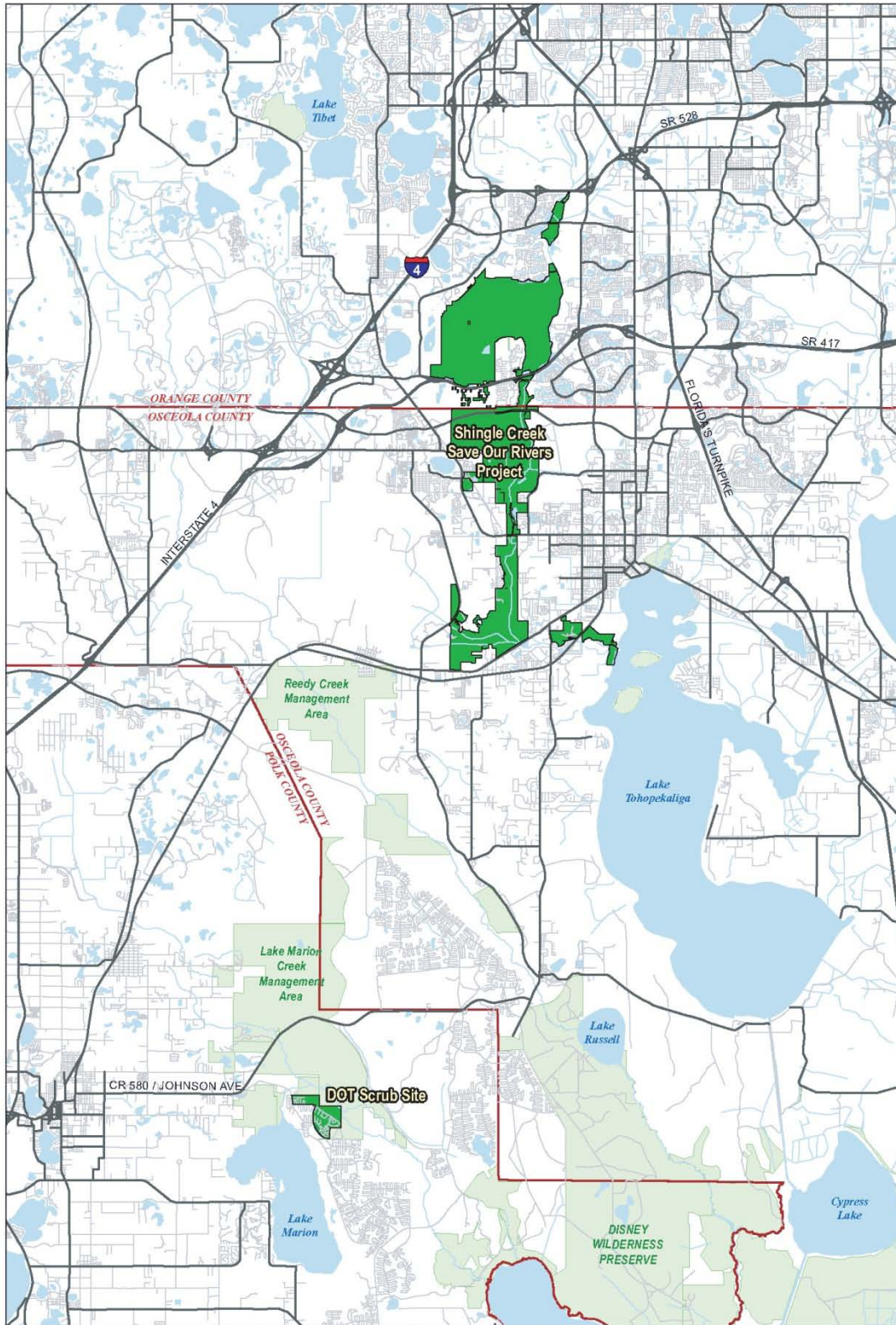
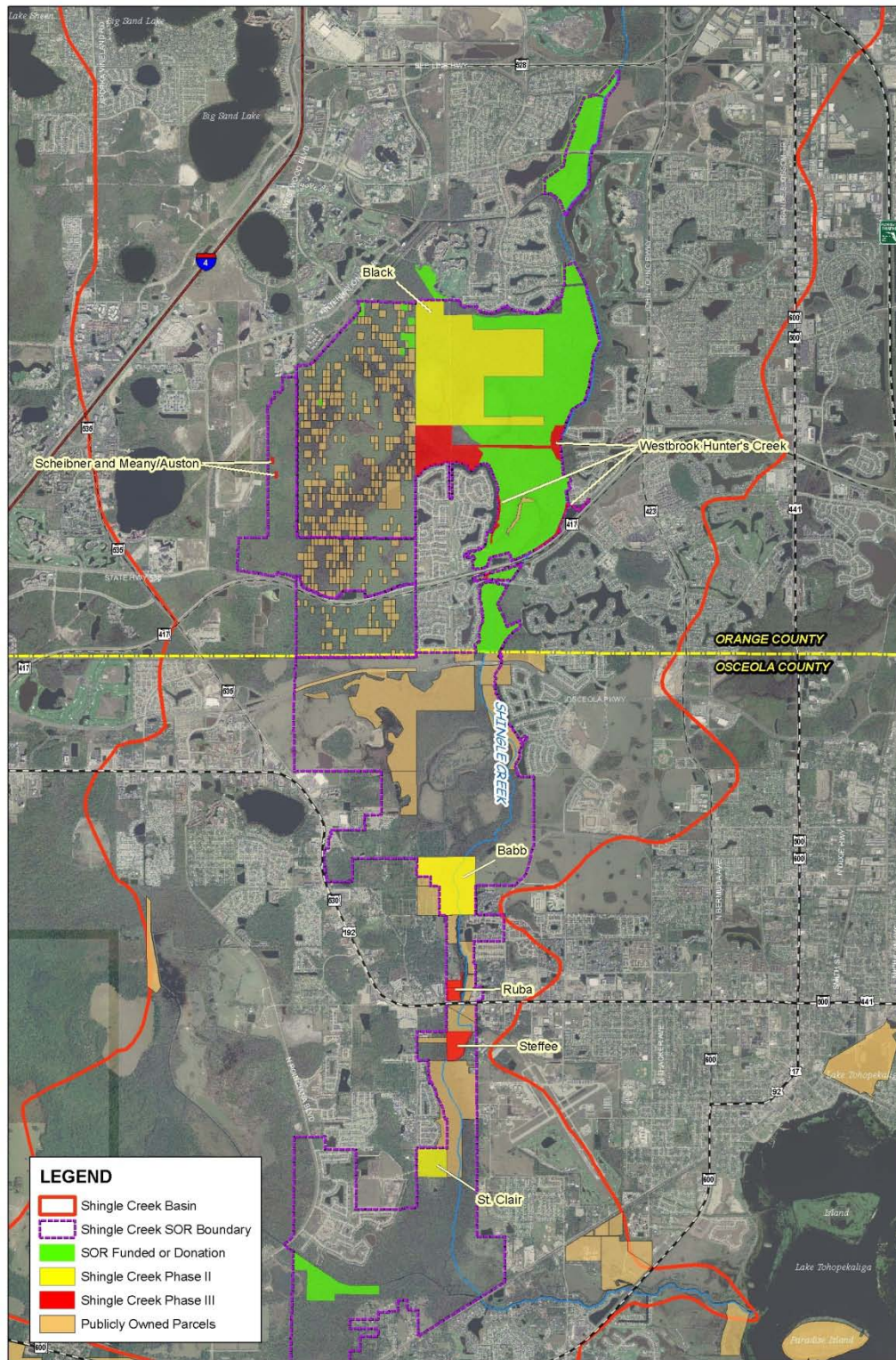


Figure 1  
 Location Map





South Florida Water  
Management District -  
Land Stewardship  
Division



Figure 2  
Shingle Creek Save Our Rivers Project