

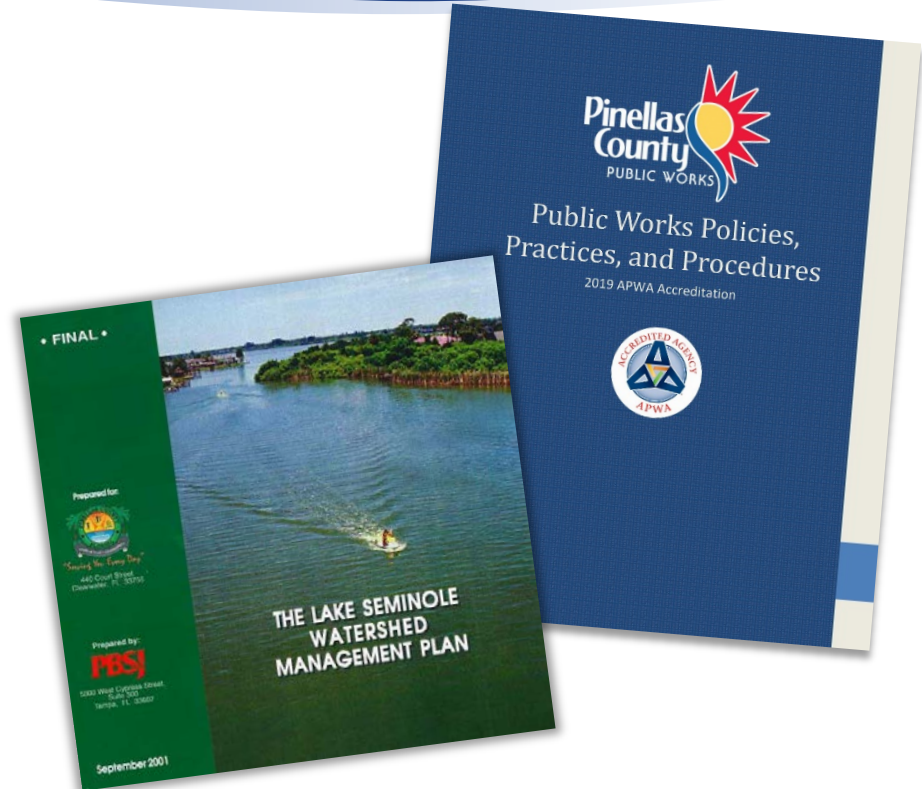


An Overview of Current Lake and Canal Management Policies and Practices

October 3, 2019

Overview

- **Background**
- **History & current practices**
- **Current county policies**
- **Special assessments**
- **Considerations**
- **Other jurisdictions in the region**
- **Summary**



Background

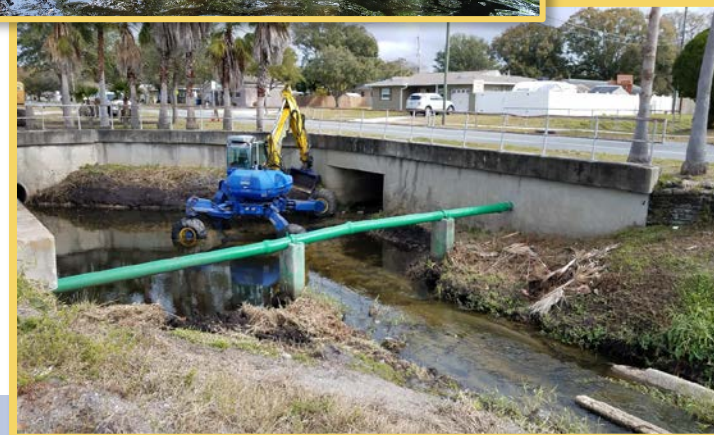
- **Recent requests for expanded services**
 - Stormwater management
 - Navigational dredging
 - Aquatic plant management
- **Policy and code updates**
 - Public Lake Improvement Ordinance (1976)
 - Navigational dredging (2007)
 - Lake Tarpon (2010)
 - Surface Water Assessment (2013)
 - Land Development Code updates (2018)
 - Public Works Policies and Procedures (2019)



History & Current Practice

■ Public Stormwater Management

- Drainage projects and maintenance efforts where studies confirm that sediment removal will reduce flooding
- Implemented in creeks and canals where the county has responsibility
- Examples: Cross Bayou Canal and Mile's Creek
- Funding: General Fund, Surface Water Assessment (maintenance), Penny (capital), and other sources



History & Current Practice

■ Private Stormwater Management

- Drainage projects to correct deficiencies in private systems
- Projects are considered under the special assessment process
- Example – Hidden Meadows/Garlands drainage improvements (2003)
- Funding: costs paid by benefitting property owners



History & Current Practice

■ Navigational Dredging

- Coastal management
 - Sand dredged from Blind Pass for Upham nourishment (2019)
 - Funding: county, state, and federal
- Canals and channels
 - Public example: Hurricane Pass (2000); funding – TDC/Bed Tax
 - Private example: McKay Creek navigational dredge (2001); funding – special assessment levied on benefitting properties



History

- **Lake Seminole Aquatic Plant Management History**
- **1990s-early 2000s invasive plants were a challenge**
- **Lake Seminole Watershed Management Plan (2001)**
 - **Goal:** To manage nuisance species at the lowest feasible levels while encouraging the establishment of a balanced and diverse population of desirable native plants



Current Practice

- **Lake Seminole Aquatic Plant Management**
 - County performs lake-wide management of three invasive species and maintains county-owned areas for water quality and habitat benefits
 - Strong focus in managing restored areas
 - Private parcels and canals are maintained by property owners
 - Private interests do maintain vegetation on state or county-owned lands for navigation
 - Funding for county efforts: SWA and General Fund



■ Lake Tarpon

- Surface Water Improvement Program (SWIM) waterbody
- SWIM Plan (1989)
- Watershed Plan (1998)
- Interim actions were needed to address lake-wide vegetation issues
- 1990s cattails and hydrilla were problematic
- 1993 County-SFWMD agreement
- SFWMD lead on lake proper
- County agreed to harvest cattails in a 10 ft. wide path at the centerline of the canals and treat hydrilla
- Private residents were responsible for management around structures

Recent History

- In 2010, canal residents were notified that aquatic plant management program was being discontinued
- SWFWMD continued treatment both within the lake and canals for three invasive plant species
- Property owners are responsible for management related to navigation and aesthetics



Current Practice

- **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has assumed responsibility from SWFWMD**
 - Same target species; conducted by private contractor
- **Canals are managed for navigation by residents**

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10 GREAT BASS-FISHING LAKES IN FLORIDA

10. Lake Tarpon

The St. Petersburg area enjoys a secret bass honey hole – Lake Tarpon – the “jewel of **Pinellas County**.” This lake has quietly but consistently produced high-quality largemouth Florida bass fishing for decades. Tournament winners on Tarpon average 20-pound, five-fish stringers per day. Visit laketarpon.org.

Current County Policy

- **Requirement for underlying public purpose to fund or participate in any work on private property**

Public examples

- Curlew Creek Channel A (flood protection/erosion control)
- Five public lakes managed lake-wide for top 3 invasives

Private examples

- Sea Horse Mobile Home Park and Parque Narvaez 2nd Addition (navigational dredge)



Special Assessments



- **Concept:** Assessed parties enjoy a special benefit from a project versus a general benefit shared by community as a whole
 - **Navigational dredging assessments**
 - Authorized under Chapter 110 of Code
 - No assessments since early 2000s
 - **Stormwater related assessments**
 - Authorized under Chapter 58 Article XVII and Chapter 110 of Code
 - Surface Water Assessment
 - Special Assessment for private improvements (2003 most recent)
 - **Public lake improvements**
 - Includes vegetation management
 - Authorized under Chapter 130 of Code

Considerations

- **Public and private rights:** trespassing concerns; easement/license acquisition
- **Work in Sovereign Submerged Lands:** navigable waters are often owned by state and require special authorization to work in
- **Special assessments:** strict procedural requirements, e.g. notice and public hearings; also must deduce defensible special benefit area and reasonably apportion assessments
- **Liabilities and damage:** risk of unearthing contamination, damaging private property, and incurring future maintenance obligations

Other Tampa Bay Jurisdictions



■ **City of St. Petersburg**

- The city funds navigational dredging for arterial waterways of city-wide interest and concern
- Local waterways are dredged through an assessment process
- Aquatic Plant Management is handled the same as Pinellas

■ **Hillsborough County**

- Navigational dredging is implemented through an assessment process
- Aquatic Plant Management is handled the same as Pinellas

■ **Manatee County**

- A facility providing services to the general boating public could be eligible for West Coast Inland Navigation District funding
- Private or residential canals assessment only
- Aquatic plant management is handled the same as Pinellas

Summary



■ **Current county policies**

- Where the county has ownership, or defined rights and responsibilities, or there is a larger public benefit, public funding can be utilized for improvements
- Where benefits primarily serve specific property owners, special assessments are considered

■ **County ordinances**

- Ch. 110 – Special Assessments
- Ch. 130 – Public Lake Improvement Ordinance
- Ch. 58 – Surface Water Assessment

■ **Agency responsibilities**

- County – county ownership or where rights and responsibilities are defined
- FWC – lake-wide management of 3 invasives on Lake Tarpon

■ **Considerations**

- Public vs. private rights and risks, sovereign lands, special assessments, and liabilities



Questions and Discussion

Project Locations

