

H₂Oobserver



Environmental Impact Statement Approved by the Environmental Protection Agency

The Authority received final approval of its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Peace River Expansion, a project that will improve the dependability of potable water supplies for Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota counties. This approval from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) gives the Authority \$9 million in grant funding toward the expansion.

The expansion will allow the Authority to produce up to 32 million gallons per day and meet the region's drinking water demands into the year 2015. Environmental protection is a top priority for any water supply project,

and the EIS serves as a plan for environmentally-sound water withdrawals. It addresses the environmental impacts of expanding the Authority's surface water supply, storage and pipeline project, and it also discusses alternative water supply sources such as the Shell Creek and Myakka River alternatives. The EPA and the Authority had been working together to complete the EIS which was finalized in January 2003.

Copies of the full statement may be obtained by making a request at (941) 316-1776.

All the Right Ingredients Come Together at Annual H₂Oe-Down

Great conversation, great weather and great entertainment were all present at the Authority's annual H₂Oe-Down held on April 2.

Following a welcome from Authority Executive Director Patrick J. Lehman, Authority board members took turns addressing the milestones that had been accomplished over the last year. While last year's event celebrated the completion of the Peace River Option, this year's comments focused on The Peace River Expansion, a highly anticipated expansion project that will ensure member governments with a future water supply into the year 2015.

One highlight of the event was the sunny, but not sweltering, weather that board member Pat Glass credited to Ray Pilon, the Authority's government affairs coordinator. (How does he do that?) And the wonderful entertainment provided by Paul Cottrell, a roving, one-man band, rounded out a perfect day.

Event attendees included Authority board members, Dave Moore, the Southwest Florida Water Management's newly appointed executive director as well as District representatives, member government staff and Authority consultants.



Authority staff take a quick break at the annual H₂Oe-Down. Board members applauded the staff for hosting a wonderful event.



We Invite You to Visit Us at www.regionalwater.org

The Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority is excited to announce the completion of its official web site at www.regionalwater.org. Through the web site, interested parties can now access information on current projects the Authority is working on as well as environmental information, Water Planning Alliance updates and Authority board meeting minutes and agendas.

Authority Announces Appointments and Awards

Patrick J. Lehman, executive director of the Authority has been elected chairman of the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association's Utility Council. The Council is made up of members who represent public and private utilities as well as consultants working on water issues. The Council works to represent its members in state legislative and rule making issues.

Ray Pilon, the Authority's governmental affairs coordinator, was recently appointed to the Public Affairs Council for the America Water Works Association (AWWA). This appointment allows Pilon to represent Florida in public water policy issues and activities for the Council. He is also chairman of the Region 10 Florida Section of the AWWA public affairs committee.

The Authority was recently acknowledged for providing the best tasting water in its region, which includes Hardee, Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto and Charlotte counties. Although it didn't take home top honors from the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association, it received high marks in all categories.

Water Alliance Update

The Water Planning Alliance (Alliance) recently awarded a contract to Greeley and Hansen to conduct a \$500,000, two-phase regional system planning and engineering study. The Southwest Florida Water Management District provided \$250,000 in funding for the study which will be matched with another \$250,000 from the Authority's member counties of Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota.

The first phase of the study will consist of data-gathering from all Alliance members in the areas of water resources, supply infrastructure, future demand projections, conservation and water reuse. This information will be presented to the Alliance Technical Advisory Committee by mid-summer 2003, and the final report will be presented to the Alliance Board in fall 2003.

The Alliance is a voluntary planning body formed to work collectively on water issues facing the region. It is governed by one elected official from each participating local entity — Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota counties; the cities of Arcadia, Bradenton, North Port, Palmetto, Punta Gorda, Sarasota and Venice; the Town of Longboat Key; and the Englewood Water District.

New Staff

The Authority is pleased to welcome:

Susan Hochuli, P.E. joins the Authority as a water resource planner. A native of Venice, Florida, Susan is a graduate of Manatee Community College and the University of South Florida. She holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and is a licensed professional engineer in Florida. Her background includes more than 10 years of water and wastewater utilities experience. In her new position with the Authority, Susan will coordinate water resource planning and development for the Authority and the Water Planning Alliance.



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