



# The Peace River Option

## Update Report

Issue 7, Winter 2002

### Peace River Option Nearing Completion

While drawing water from the Peace River during times of high flow and storing it for use during “dry” times has been standard practice, the near-completed expansion of the Peace River Facility will improve the Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority’s ability to produce water. The expansion will increase the plant’s capacity up to 24 million gallons per day, allowing the Authority to meet its contract obligations of supplying water to its member governments now and in the near future.

The expansion will also allow the Authority to store treated water in its expanded Aquifer Storage and Recovery well field now totaling 21 wells. This, in turn, is enhanced by raw water storage in the Authority’s reservoir with a capacity of over 600 million gallons.

Contractors were given incentives to meet a December 1, 2001 deadline, and with this target having been met, full automatic operation of the facility is scheduled for April of this year.

A 23-mile, 42-inch pipeline between the Peace River Facility located in DeSoto County and the Carlton Water Plant operated by Sarasota County is also complete along with a new pipeline to Charlotte County Utilities, the Authority’s largest bulk water customer.

The Authority is already planning for future demand and has applied to the Southwest Florida Water Management District for cooperative funding to expand the

plant, well field and reservoir to their permitted limits.

The Authority, consisting of Charlotte, Sarasota, Manatee and DeSoto counties is governed by a four-member board of directors consisting of a commissioner from each of the member governments.



*Pat Leberman, executive director of the Authority, and Doug Eckmann, project manager for Boyle Engineering, inspect the expanded plant. The December 1, 2001 target operational deadline was met.*

### Authority Wins Environmental Stewardship Award

The Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority received one of eight national environmental excellence awards from the National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP).

The award, presented in the environmental stewardship category, recognized the Authority’s role in developing and implementing the Peace River Option by combining innovative technology, sound engineering, a concern for maintaining existing natural resources and a comprehensive monitoring program. The Authority’s ability to provide a water supply system that meets the needs of both an emerging population and increasingly sensitive environmental resources was also recognized.

Furthermore, the Peace River Option was cited as an obvious example of outstanding environmental stewardship because it inte-

grates federal and state agency regulatory requirements, community and infrastructure development, environmental sensitivity and needs, public issues and concerns, and recreation and commercial interests into a long-term functioning system.

“The Peace River Option utilizes the Peace River and aquifer storage and recovery technology to supply safe and affordable drinking water to over 100,000 people in southwest Florida,” says Ray Pilon, governmental affairs coordinator for the Authority.

Additionally, “. . . the project preserves groundwater supplies in an area of critical concern and reduces saltwater intrusion while protecting the downstream Charlotte Harbor estuary,” says Samuel Stone, the Authority’s environmental affairs coordinator.

*Continued on back*

## Award... Continued

NAEP is a non-profit professional association of some 5,000 environmental professionals representing public and private sectors throughout the United States and internationally. Each year the organization conducts the National Environmental Excellence Awards competition, singling out projects and programs that model excellence in the environmental profession, meet or exceed stringent award criteria and stand out as significant contributions. This year's awards were presented at the organization's annual conference held in Washington, D.C.

### New Staff

**The Authority is pleased to welcome:**

***Raymond A. Pilon (Ray)***

joins the Authority as governmental affairs coordinator. Ray is a graduate of Northern Michigan University and has been a Florida resident since 1974.



He has a political background that includes extensive involvement with water issues. In his position with the Authority, Ray acts as a liaison with local governments, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, state and federal agencies and public groups and organizations.

## Make Water Conservation a Year-Round Habit

Using water wisely is a habit we can practice year round, not just in times of drought. Here are some suggestions for saving water both inside and outside the house.

### Outside

- If possible, skip an irrigation cycle on your system. This is a great place to reduce the amount of water used since more than 50 percent of residential water consumption is used for irrigation.
- Adjust the frequency of irrigation according to the season. Without rain, once-a-week irrigation during warm months is usually adequate for most established trees and shrubs. Once every two weeks should suffice December through February.

### Inside

- Check to see if your plumbing has any hidden leaks. Read your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, you have a leak.
- Toilets can have "silent" leaks. Check by adding a little food coloring to the tank. If you see the color in the bowl 30 minutes later, your toilet is leaking and you can fix by replacing the toilet flapper.

## New Water Planning Alliance Forms

A water planning alliance comprised of member governments recently formed to work collectively on water issues facing the region. Members include Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota counties, the Englewood Water District, the cities of Arcadia, Bradenton, North Port, Palmetto, Punta Gorda, Sarasota and Venice as well as the town of Longboat Key. At its first meeting, the Alliance voted to invite Polk, Hardee and Highlands counties to participate.

The Alliance is a voluntary body governed by one elected official from each participating local entity, all with an equal vote. The mission established by the Alliance is to plan for resource allocation, new alternative water supplies and to facilitate collaboration and resolve conflicts among its members and other shareholders. The Authority is providing basic administrative support.

### The Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority

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