



Statement of Function

The Indian River Soil and Water Conservation District (IRSWCD) was organized for the purpose of developing a program of management and conservation of the soil, water and related natural resources of the County, and to promote and encourage the voluntary implementation of conservation practices on privately owned land. A locally elected board of non-salaried public officials governs the District. The Indian River County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) provides office space, some equipment, supplies, and salaries for a District Conservation Coordinator and a Staff Assistant II. The District works in cooperation with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA/NRCS).

2007/2008 Accomplishments*

- Worked with and through the following Federal and State Agencies:
 - United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA/NRCS)
 - Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)
 - Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
 - St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD)
- Using the agencies above brought additional funding in the form of grants and cost share programs to help support the following projects not only for County and State land but also for our independent landowners:
 - Best Management Practices Cost Share Program for Citrus/Farm/Ranch Owners
 - Improve and or construct conservation easements where needed the most
 - Improve/protect and utilize the land and water resources in small watersheds as well as large
 - To aid Farm/Ranch/Grove owners to address soil and water conservation natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost effective manner
 - Storm water run-off
 - Artesian well plugging/repairing program.
- Offered technical expertise and opinion on the sand mining issues in the County.
- Corresponded with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) in support of continued funding of Mobile Irrigation Labs (MIL's).
- Corresponded with various State Agencies on local fuel and water management issues after heavy rains received from T.S Fay.
- Initiated the consideration of having an updated geohydrology study done for Indian River County. Provided contacts for funding partnerships and well as specifications of study.
- Continued to increase natural resource conservation and awareness by providing educational information and conducting the following educational youth competitions: public speaking contest, poster contest, and a poetry contest. Staff also participated in Agriculture Literacy Week, Earth Day, and the local science fairs. Several gardening programs were started at local schools and established school gardens were improved and maintained.
- Continued to work on creating a more active and beneficial web site for the IRSWCD. Educational contest PowerPoint presentations were created and added to the website as well as forwarded to area schools for award presentations.
- Created a database containing the District's cooperator information. This database will save hours of research time and provide accurate, detailed information for State, County and District reporting.
- Worked with County Storm Water Division to enhance conservation education programs and assist with the storm water NPDES requirements.
- Finished draft work on the Small Farm/Ranchette/Country Estate BMP manual. A draft was submitted to Board of Supervisors in August.
- Installed six-10' water table observation wells at Wild Turkey Sand Mine.
- Staff Assistant began training on Geographic Information System (GIS) and surveying.



- Provided all necessary support to the Indian River Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors and the USDA/NRCS Staff.

2008/2009 Goals and Objectives

- Reinstate and increase Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services (FDACS) Best Management Practices funding support to the County for our citrus growers and ranch and farm owners.
- Establish consistent support for funding from St. Johns River Water Management District to include but not limited to BMP Funding and Indian River Lagoon Snook Tag Projects.
- Initiate for the County, FDACS Best Management Practices Funding support for: Nursery BMPs, Cow/calf BMPs, and Vegetable and Agronomic Crops BMPs.
- Continue to try to establish and put into place a full-time Mobile Irrigation Lab (MIL) for the County and District.
- Working with and through all Local, State and Federal Agencies, to help our County landowners become more preservation and conservation conscious of all of our natural resources.
- Continue with education programs with the local schools.
- Participate in the IR Lagoon Envirothon.
- Propose and begin an annual Arbor Day tree planting event.
- Begin formal GIS training and continue with cooperater database updates for GIS link.
- Continue work on website with information updates, press releases, new programs and educational contests and resources.
- Continue to provide all necessary support to the Indian River Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors and USDA/NRCS Staff.

Performance Measures

Performance Indicator	Actual FY 2007/2008	Projected 2008/2009
Customers (Conservation Education)	4,794	4,850
Conservation cost-share contracts	0	5
Inventory and Evaluations:		
Pond Permits/Design/Mgmt.	13	15
Other, brief contacts, office visits, etc.	2,927	3,000

*The voters of the State of Florida passed Amendment No. 1 on January 29, 2008, by a solid majority of 64% votes. Indian River County’s goal for this budget is a 15% cut in order to avoid an increase in the millage rate for our taxpayers. The Soil and Water Conservation Department met this goal by temporarily removing the recently vacated position of Conservation District Coordinator until such time as cost share funding is resumed by the State agencies that we partner with. This removal results in a budget cut of 45%, which surpasses the County’s goal of 15% and covers any additional required budget cuts up to 30%.

Also due to the above amendment, the FDACS cost share funding contract was cancelled as well as the contract for funding from SJRWMD for the artesian well plugging program.