

South Indian River Water Control District Executive Director's Annual Report For October 1, 2025- September 30, 2026

The South Indian River Water Control District serves Jupiter Farms, Palm Beach Country Estates, Egret Landing, and a portion of the Jupiter Park of Commerce. Throughout the past fiscal year, the District remained focused on its core responsibilities of stormwater management, roadway maintenance, infrastructure preservation, and environmental stewardship. These responsibilities form the foundation of daily operations and guide every investment made on behalf of District landowners.

The District's Mission and Vision Statements

This year the District formally established mission and vision statements to guide future decision-making and long-range planning. While these statements provide organizational direction, their purpose extends beyond administrative governance. They define the District's commitment to delivering reliable and financially sustainable public infrastructure while maintaining transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to the communities we serve. Our mission is to responsibly manage stormwater, roads, and related infrastructure for the benefit and safety of District landowners, while promoting environmental stewardship, regulatory compliance, and long-term resilience. Our vision is to ensure that future generations inherit an infrastructure system that remains dependable, well maintained, and financially sustainable.

The District's work is grounded in principles that guide both daily operations and long-term strategic planning. These principles include resilience in preparing for severe weather and changing environmental conditions, responsiveness to the needs of landowners, reliability in maintaining drainage and transportation systems, stewardship of natural resources, transparency in governance, and collaboration with partner agencies. Together, these values shape the way the District approaches its responsibilities and investments. Note: The District only conducts environmental stewardship activities that are reasonably incidental to, or in furtherance of, its statutory responsibilities for water management, drainage, flood control, and related infrastructure.

Stormwater Management (Canals and Road Swales)

The District's primary function is to provide stormwater management to protect life and property. Florida's Annual Stormwater Assessment has identified substantial long-term investment needs in stormwater infrastructure and highlights the importance of maintaining and modernizing systems to address evolving hydrologic conditions. As rainfall events become more intense and greater stormwater volumes occur within compressed timeframes, South Indian River Water Control District continues to evaluate and implement drainage conveyance improvements, operational modifications, and capital infrastructure upgrades designed to improve flood-control performance, protect property, and maintain regulatory compliance.

The District consists largely of former farmland and wetlands that were converted to residential development. Unlike master-planned communities, these building lots are without a comprehensive engineered drainage design, creating unique stormwater management challenges. The District's more than 8,700 homes are drained by a gravity flow stormwater system. There are no pumps.

During the fiscal year, the District has implemented initiatives and projects to ensure that the landowners within the District have a properly maintained flood control system.

Water Control Plan Update

A significant action undertaken this year was the Board of Supervisors' direction to update the District's Water Control Plan. The Water Control Plan is important because it creates a prioritized and documented approach for managing the District's water management resources. This document serves as the foundation of all water management activities within the District and establishes the objectives, operating criteria, and priorities used to manage water levels, flood protection, stormwater conveyance, and infrastructure investments. The Water Control Plan provides the framework through which engineers, staff, and the Board of Supervisors evaluate existing conditions, identify deficiencies, prioritize maintenance needs, and plan future improvements.

As rainfall patterns continue to evolve and infrastructure demands increase, maintaining a current Water Control Plan becomes increasingly important. The plan allows the District to rely on engineering analysis and hydrologic modeling when assessing the performance of canals, swales, culverts, control structures, and drainage facilities. This data-driven approach ensures that operational decisions and capital improvements are based on measurable conditions rather than assumptions. Through regular updates, the District is working to ensure that infrastructure investments remain aligned with the long-term community needs.

By maintaining and periodically updating the Water Control Plan, the District ensures that water management decisions remain data-driven, transparent, and aligned with statutory requirements, while supporting the continued protection of life, property, and water resources within the District.

Drainage Study for Palm Beach Country Estates

The Board of Supervisors approved a Drainage Study for Palm Beach Country Estates at their June 2025 meeting. It included comprehensive survey work and the development of an updated hydraulic model. The completed report was approved at the February 2026 Board meeting and is being incorporated into the Water Control Plan. The District Engineer has been directed to compile a list of recommended Capital Improvement Projects to be included in the Water Control Plan to address stormwater management operational deficiencies found in the modeling.

Water Quality Program Brought “In-House”

Historically, the District Engineer was responsible for the administrative duties associated with the District's water quality monitoring program. This past year, the Executive Director worked with the Loxahatchee River District to reorganize the water quality program and develop a true, usable database. Based on previously collected data, the water quality monitoring program was redesigned to reduce monitoring from monthly to quarterly, certain parameters were discontinued, and a few new parameters were added. All of the District's water quality data is now available through the District's website. The transition of this work to District staff results in cost savings of \$45,000 annually, while increasing public access to useful water quality information.

District Grants Update

This year, the District has entered into a professional services agreement with Kimley-Horn to provide General Engineering Services under a structured, task-order-based contract model to pursue grant funding in order to reduce financial burdens on District landowners.

The District received two Natural Resources Conservation Service grants for vegetative debris removal in Jupiter Farms due to impacts from Hurricane Milton in 2024. The grants are a 100% reimbursement of District funding for vegetation removal work in Canal 3, east of Jupiter Farms Road, and Canal 7, the South Perimeter Canal. The total Federal contribution for this project is \$1,549,365. This grant has resulted in every landowner in Jupiter Farms receiving \$300 in vegetation management benefits.

Thanks to support from the Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative, a local champion for the protection and restoration of the “Wild and Scenic” Loxahatchee River, the District will be receiving grant funds from the State of Florida through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to support our Geographic Information System easement survey initiative within Jupiter Farms. The District will receive \$75,000.00 in a fifty-fifty-cost share agreement for work that started in February 2026. This survey information will help the District Engineer determine the drainage systems current condition and help improve hydrologic modeling to develop engineering “fixes” to provide improved management of stormwater.

In addition, the Board authorized the Executive Director to proceed with a Loxahatchee Preservation Initiative Grant Application for the Loxahatchee River Headwaters Invasive Exotic Plant Removal – Phase II project. This project has now been approved for grant funding in Fiscal Year 2026-2027 in the amount of \$226,000 (\$113,000 matching 50/50 grant).

These grants were made possible by the Cell Tower Multiplier fund implemented by the District in 2024. Funds in the multiplier are used to obtain cost share grants and are replenished each year. This doubles District landowners’ purchasing power, which reduces assessments to landowners.

C-706 "Outfall Canal" and Turnpike Canal Tree and Vegetation Removal

The District has completed excavation on a 2.30-mile stretch of the East Borrow Canal to deepen and widen the canal to improve conveyance capacity. This canal serves as the primary outfall for Palm Beach Country Estates, Egret Landing, and the Jupiter Park of Commerce.

Clearing of Woody Vegetation Adjacent to Canals in Jupiter Farms

District staff continue to aggressively engage in vegetation management along all of the canals within Jupiter Farms with vegetation trimmed back to allow for equipment to conduct mowing and washout repairs. The elimination of tree limbs and vegetation hanging over the canals and roads helps ensure water flows and vehicle traffic is unimpeded during and after high wind events. This work will continue along all canals in Jupiter Farms in 2026.

Canal C Realignment Project - Phase 2

The Board of Supervisors authorized District staff to proceed with Phase 2 of the Canal C Realignment Project in Palm Beach Country Estates to improve and restore drainage, water storage, and stormwater management, as well as access for District equipment. This project has been awarded to Loren Jock Trucking to perform the realignment of approximately 4,615 linear feet of Canal C within District

easements at a cost of \$444,058. The project will begin in Fiscal Year 2026-2027. This project accounts for a one-time assessment of approximately \$300 in Palm Beach Country Estates for next year. The work will help reduce some of the vulnerabilities identified by the Palm Beach Country Estates hydraulic model and helps to achieve permit compliance with the South Florida Water Management District.

Other District Responsibilities

In addition to stormwater drainage, District operations include road grading, mowing, culvert replacements, and swale and canal restoration. This past year, 14 “dump” pipes were replaced in Palm Beach Country Estates Canal E to improve drainage and four more are scheduled for this upcoming year after tree-clearing work is completed. In addition, numerous wash-out repairs have been completed throughout the District, and two 40-foot cross pipes were installed under 165th Road North in Section 12 and 150th Court North in Section 14 in Jupiter Farms.

Landowner Driveway Culvert Replacement Program

The roadside swales (ditches) in the District are a critical tool to store and move stormwater. Driveway culverts are the responsibility of the landowner. The typical lifespan for a corrugated metal driveway culvert pipe is roughly 30 years. A significant number of these culverts in our community have structurally failed. The District is focusing on poorly drained areas to ensure conveyance from the problem/flood area to the nearest District canal. Flow will be reestablished by using Geographic Information System elevation information and engineered recontouring of the swales to eliminate obstructed swales and culverts. This localized engineering method, in conjunction with the District’s use of new 100-year life span driveway high-performance polypropylene culverts, is anticipated to reduce the need to revisit areas by eliminating recurring drainage problems and thereby saving time and money. If District staff determine that a driveway culvert is obstructed, that landowner will receive a notification letter via our “Enhanced Communication” Outreach Program. Landowners are encouraged to take the initiative and contact the District whenever they identify the need for a new driveway culvert.

The District provides a low-cost culvert replacement program to remove the old culvert and install a new one with a rip rap header wall. For detailed information about the District’s low-cost culvert replacement program and a sample of the notification letter, see please visit our website at www.sirwcd.org.

District Easements

Understanding Easements

Landowner properties in the District contain easements or rights-of-way that play an important role in protecting our community. These easements are established to allow access for drainage systems, roads, utilities, and other essential infrastructure that benefit everyone.

When structures, landscaping, fences, fill, or other improvements encroach on an easement, they can interfere with the intended function of that area. In the case of drainage easements, encroachments can restrict water flow, increase the risk of localized flooding, and make maintenance or emergency repairs more difficult and costly.

Addressing easement and right-of-way encroachments requires District resources and funding. These additional costs are ultimately shared by all landowners within the District through area specific

assessments and fees. What may seem like a minor encroachment on one property can create expenses and risks for the entire community.

As a property owner, it is important to understand where easements are located on your land and the restrictions that may apply within them. Most properties contain road and drainage easements that were established to ensure safe access, effective drainage, and long-term community benefits.

Know Where Easements Are On Your Property

Check before building, landscaping, or placing structures near easement areas. Contact County Building and Zoning or the District if you have questions about easements or permitted activities. Help protect community infrastructure and reduce flooding risks for everyone. By respecting easements and rights-of-way, we can work together to maintain effective drainage systems, control costs, and protect our neighborhoods from flooding.

Please be advised that Section 298.66, Florida Statutes, provides:

"Any person willfully obstructing any canal, drain, ditch, or watercourse, or damaging or destroying any drainage works constructed by the district, shall be liable for any person injured thereby for the full amount of the injury, and shall be liable to the district for double the cost of removing such obstruction or repairing such damage."

The District's roadway and drainage easements shall remain unobstructed and accessible at all times for inspection, operation, maintenance, repair, and improvement of the District's stormwater management and roadway systems.

A good neighbor understands what easements are on their property and acts responsibly.

Road Maintenance

The District is currently using a Geographic Information System road assessment tool for evaluating paved road surface conditions and to improve the dirt road grading program to provide better drained and smoother roads for landowners. The District has a maintenance program for both District paved and dirt roads and is currently in the process of establishing a formal road maintenance plan as part of the development of a comprehensive strategic plan.

The District has adopted a policy to eliminate future use of micro-overlay due to the long-term costs to maintain this surface and the lack of vendors to achieve a competitive cost benefit to the District. Road grading methods have evolved to do more "pull ins" to establish an appropriate crown on the roads for better drainage. As a result, the roads have required less frequent motor grading because the elimination of the flat roads has resulted in the water not ponding and the road material is not splashed out, thereby reducing potholes. For the upcoming fiscal year, the District is doubling the amount of shell rock material to make repairs to dirt roads.

Strategic Governance and Planning

Throughout the fiscal year, the Board of Supervisors remained actively engaged in strengthening the District's financial management, infrastructure planning, and organizational effectiveness. Board actions focused on enhancing fiscal oversight, improving flood protection capabilities, securing external funding

opportunities, and advancing strategic initiatives that will shape the District's future. These efforts reflect a continued commitment to responsible governance and careful stewardship of landowner assessments.

Chief Financial Officer

This past year the District created the executive position of Chief Financial Officer to improve efficiency, reduce reliance on consultants, and strengthen the District's succession planning and implementation. Mr. Ryan Grigg, CPA, was hired after a comprehensive review and search and began work in December 2025. Mr. Grigg has progressively assumed most of the duties of the District Treasurer and billable hours have been reduced accordingly. He has implemented new transparency procedures and developed and presented the new budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 in conjunction with the District Treasurer.

Most recently, Mr. Grigg received Board approval to implement a conservative, safe investment plan to increase non-assessment revenue, which is expected to generate over \$100,000 annually.

Legislative Activities

One of the most significant long-term initiatives launched this year is the beginning of a comprehensive review of the District's enabling legislation and governing charter. The Board recognized the importance of periodically evaluating governing documents to ensure they remain relevant, effective, and aligned with the needs of the community. A structured review process has been established with the goal of developing any recommended legislative amendments through a collaborative and transparent public process before consideration during the 2027 legislative cycle.

This work reflects the District's commitment to good governance, transparency, and public accountability. Any proposed changes to the District's structure, authority, or operations will continue to be evaluated through public meetings and in accordance with applicable legal requirements, ensuring that landowners can remain informed and engaged throughout the process.

Recent History

It should be noted that in 2025, the Palm Beach Country Estates Landowners Association submitted a proposed amendment to the South Indian River Water Control District's Special Act, which included changes to the composition of the Board of Supervisors and other organizational provisions, to the legislative representative serving the District. The proposal was subsequently introduced as House Bill 4099 and referred to a legislative committee for consideration. The bill ultimately died in the Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee.

At no time were the Executive Director or Board of Supervisors of South Indian River Water Control District made aware of the proposed legislation, and the Board had not discussed, considered, or voted on any amendment to the District's charter. The proposed legislation was never formally communicated to the District or presented to the Board for review.

The District believes it is important that the legislative record accurately reflects that House Bill 4099 did not originate from, nor was endorsed, reviewed, approved, or supported by the District or its Board of Supervisors. The District's position is that any proposal affecting its governance structure should be subject to open discussion, public consideration, and formal action by the Board before being represented as a measure associated with the District. Approaching such issues through the collective Board process helps avoid confusion regarding the District's official position and reduces potential operational or compliance concerns for both the Board, staff, and the landowners.

Florida's Turnpike Enterprise Expansion

This year, the District and Florida's Turnpike Enterprise continued discussions regarding Palm Beach Country Estates permitting stormwater discharge volumes. The District Engineer has provided Florida's Turnpike Enterprise with the Palm Beach Country Estates drainage model to ensure that they are using the correct calculations to design the Turnpike expansion's stormwater system to store and convey the additional runoff from the two new travel lanes. The model includes the District's Outfall Canal to the Loxahatchee Estuary and includes stormwater discharge from Palm Beach Country Estates, the Jupiter Park of Commerce and Egret Landing, as well as the Turnpike/Florida Department of Transportation corridor.

Any new Turnpike Authority plans must include a detailed analysis of impacts to stormwater capacity and water quality both into and out of the travel corridor, to ensure the continued adequate flood protection for the entire 2,600 acres that discharge through this stormwater system. A crucial issue is the substantial difference in baseline assumptions between Florida's Turnpike Enterprise and South Indian River Water Control District models.

Because Florida's Turnpike Enterprise has removed the details from the Palm Beach Country Estates drainage study, the model approach is not aligned regarding existing conditions and there is a high risk that the storage capacity is being misrepresented. As a result, conflicts between the District and Florida's Turnpike Enterprise will persist throughout the South Florida Water Management District's permitting process instead of being resolved early.

Critical concerns include emergency evacuation route risk and hydraulic constraint (pinch point) under Interstate 95 and Indiantown Road, potential double counting of stormwater storage, which could pose a flooding risk, regional hydraulic performance and system timing issues, and under-represented water quality and regulatory compliance modeling and design approach.

Mutual Reliance History

The relationship between Florida's Turnpike Enterprise and South Indian River Water Control District reflects mutual operational reliance rather than unilateral control because Florida's Turnpike Enterprise depends on South Indian River Water Control District's regional canal network to convey and discharge transportation related stormwater. Concurrently, South Indian River Water Control District depends on Florida's Turnpike Enterprise coordination to ensure upstream infrastructure changes do not adversely affect downstream flood protection or create unfunded maintenance burdens.

The entire eastern basin of the South Indian River Water Control District discharges stormwater through the Turnpike Borrow canals, then into the South Indian River Water Control District-maintained outfall canal that discharges downstream of the South Florida Water Management District's S-46 control structure on the C-18 canal along Indiantown Road.

South Indian River Water Control District /Florida Turnpike Enterprise Maintenance Agreement

In September 1984, Florida Department of Transportation and the District executed a maintenance agreement, granting the District the right to make permitted improvements within the Florida Department of Transportation corridor, connecting the system to the new canal and eliminating the prior C-18 connection. In exchange, the District assumed maintenance responsibility for the Borrow canal system.

This agreement is perpetual, is funded by the landowners of the District, and may only be modified in writing by both parties. A 2012 amendment clarified the extent of the District's maintenance responsibility around the east Borrow canal. The District anticipates that the existing Florida Department of Transportation - District agreement will need to be renegotiated because of the changes associated with the Turnpike's addition of two lanes. The new system will differ from what the District originally agreed to maintain, and a reallocation of maintenance responsibilities will undoubtedly be required.

Landowner's Service Requests

During the past year, significant changes have been made to the District's administrative activities. The modernization of the District is needed to comply with legal requirements and efficiently protect the community in a financially sustainable manner. Reported issues are now documented, photographed, prioritized by importance to the entire area (not by the most frequent or persistent caller), and tracked through the District Service Ticket Process. To submit a request for service, landowners can visit the District's website, select the Service Request icon, and then complete the electronic form. Landowners are encouraged to submit photos to help the District understand the situation and prioritize the District response action. Thank you for your input and patience as we work through existing service tickets in conjunction with our normal maintenance and emergency response operations. Please note that District staff typically have work scheduled several days in advance, and new requests will be incorporated into the workflow based on priority and the efficient use of equipment and staff time.

District Staff and Office Information

The District currently has a staff of four in the office and 14 operations staff. All staff receive an annual performance review, and any salary adjustment is linked to the performance observed and documented by the Executive Director and Supervisor of Operations.

The District office is open Monday to Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Landowners may visit us at our office at 15600 Jupiter Farms Road, Jupiter, Florida 33478, call 561-747-0550, or visit our website at www.sirwcd.org.