



## New Update from Lee County

April 4, 2018

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Lee County continues to work on flood mitigation efforts.

### **Ten Mile Canal, San Carlos Park and Lehigh Acres**

The Lee Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, April 3, gave the greenlight to Lee County Natural Resources to apply for a federal grant. If received, the \$4.95 million grant would be matched by \$1.65 million of county funding and be used to remove sediment deposited from Hurricane Irma. The areas would include the Ten Mile Canal as well as work in San Carlos Park within the East Mulloch Drainage District (EMDD), and within Lee County Department of Transportation's drainage system in Lehigh Acres.

### **Island Park**

The Lee County Department of Transportation's work within the swales and canals in the Island Park area will be completed next week.

### **The Villas**

The Villas has been identified as an area for re-establishing existing flow ways on county-owned rights-of-way for storm-water management.

In the coming weeks and months, county crews will be in various sections of the Villas to work on the public rights-of-way. That work may include removing plants, trees, driveways and structures that are obstructing the water flow from the existing swales. Any irrigation lines within the rights-of-way will be capped.

Before that happens, property owners in the immediate area within the Villas will be notified via door hangers that they have two weeks to remove impediments to the rights-of-way. Survey crews will be marking the Villas' rights-of-way lines. These markings will help property owners identify items in the rights-of-way that may need to be relocated or removed.

Residents who would like to discuss the marked rights-of-way line in front of their property once survey crews are done can call Lee County DOT at 239-533-9400.

Not all properties within the Villas will be affected by this work. The county is committed to re-establishing the Villas' drainage system to the way it was designed to work and to make it more efficient and better able to mitigate impacts from future rain events.

### **San Carlos Park**

Work is finishing up in the San Carlos Park area. The contractor hired by Natural Resources is in the cleanup phase.

Background: At the request of and under agreement with East Mulloch Drainage District (EMDD), Lee County contracted with Daniels Tree Service to remove downed trees within EMDD canal rights-of-way to mitigate against future flood events. Because this work was eligible for FEMA reimbursement, the contractor was required to complete efforts by a March 3 deadline. With this strict timeline, the contractor

focused on removing as many obstructions as possible. Since work was completed, the cleanup and restoration phase has included repairing fences and sidewalks and reseeding grassy areas.

It should be noted that much of the removal process required removing or going around property owner encroachments into the drainage rights-of-way. As a result, vegetation that perhaps provided a buffer from a backyard neighbor is now gone. However, it is important that these areas remain clear to maximize flood capacity of the drainage system.

### **Flood assessment and mitigation efforts**

The county is currently in the process of selecting a firm or firms to do a study for a longer term look at potential engineered solutions to flooding. The first step in the selection process is completed; that narrows the list of candidates for further evaluation. A negotiated contract for a selected firm or firms is anticipated to go to the Lee Board of County Commissioners for approval this summer.

You may recall that after the August rainfall event and then Hurricane Irma dropped 30 inches of rain in just a few weeks on our area, the Board instructed staff to develop a plan; staff came back with a three-pronged approach:

- Phase 1 – Immediate removal of known waterway impediments. (This is substantially complete.)
- Phase 2 – Flood assessments by watershed to identify impediments to storm flow for near-term and short term remedial efforts. (These assessments are posted online; the next step is a project prioritization process that is ongoing.)
- Phase 3 – This is the process described above. (Long-term look at potential engineered solutions.)

### **More information**

Visit [www.leegov.com/Irma](http://www.leegov.com/Irma)

Please forward this to others who may have an interest in flood-mitigation issues.

Visit Lee County's website at [www.leegov.com/Irma/flood](http://www.leegov.com/Irma/flood).