

ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT
Meeting Date: February 2, 2010

Action Agenda
Item No. 7-b

SUBJECT: Efland Sewer System

DEPARTMENT: Planning & Inspections

PUBLIC HEARING: (Y/N)

No

ATTACHMENT(S):

Memo Regarding Sewer System History
Efland Sewer Map

INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kevin Lindley, Staff Engineer, 245-2583
Craig Benedict, Planning Director, 245-2592

PURPOSE: To provide a history of events regarding the creation of the Efland Sewer System and special events thereafter.

BACKGROUND: The key dates are noted in the attachment.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None at this time.

RECOMMENDATION(S): The Manager recommends the Board receive the report. Staff will periodically update this report as conditions change and various projects go forward.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Orange County Board of Commissioners

FROM: Craig Benedict, Planning Director and
R. Kevin Lindley, PE, Staff Engineer

THROUGH: Frank Clifton, Jr., County Manager

DATE: 1/13/10

SUBJECT: Brief history of the Efland Sewer System

This memo is a follow-up to a request by the BOCC for background information on the Efland Sewer System (system). In the interest of brevity, the information has been condensed to a bulleted list of the highlights of the last twenty-five years. If there is interest in any of these items, more information can be provided.

- 1984 Due to reports of failing septic systems in Efland Estates and at the Efland-Cheeks Elementary School, the BOCC commissioned the McAdams Company to perform an engineering study for provision of sewer in the Efland Community.
- 1984-85 County began gathering tap requests from the Efland Community, with the understanding that at least 179 taps would be needed in the initial phase of construction to make the system viable.
- 1985 Sign-up period ends with 137 customers (individuals, churches, businesses, and clubs) requesting 191 taps.
- 1985 BOCC adopts "Resolution Establishing Rules and Regulations for the Operation of a Sewer Collection Treatment System to Serve the Efland Area of Orange County"
- 1985-86 County chooses Hazen & Sawyer to restudy the Efland area sewer situation and construction phasing plan. The original Phase I of the McAdams Company plan is divided into two sections. (See attached map).
County chose to continue with the plan to provide sewer service to the area, even though 19 of the 191 taps were located outside of the original Phase I area, dropping the initial number of taps to 172. This was slightly less than the estimated 179 taps needed for system viability.
- 1987 Construction begins on the portion of Phase I west of Efland-Cedar Grove Rd. A lack of available funding prevented the County from constructing all of Phase I. The original system had 109 taps.
- 1988 System construction was completed and began operation.
- 1991 In a memo from the County Engineer to the BOCC and County Manager, the system is already being described as financially troubled. At that time, only 75 taps were in service and the Town of Hillsborough, who treats the wastewater from the system, had just raised their treatment fees by 24%.

- 1991-1997 Throughout the 90s, memos from the County Engineer were written regarding cost estimates for expansion of the system and the pursuit and study of various funding strategies, including Community Development Block Grants, financing through customer rates or assessments and a district sewer tax. None of these ideas proved fruitful.
- 1997 County issued a bond of \$1.2 million to expand sewer service in Efland.
- 1998-2002 Discussions in memos from the County Engineer focus on steps required to use the bond money for expanding service in Efland and defining the scope of the project so a consultant could be hired to begin engineering design work.
- 2002-2003 Scope was expanded to include the Buckhorn Economic Development District and North Buckhorn community, in addition to the Central Efland expansion. By this time, the costs to construct the system expansion in Central Efland were far above the original estimates prepared in 1996 by the County Engineer. Federal grants were sought and earmarked in the form of EPA Special Appropriations Grants (SPAP). (2003 and 2005).
- 2004 Engineering consultant, Coulter, Jewell, Thames, hired to design the Buckhorn and Central Efland sewer expansion projects and Gravelly Hill water and sewer.
- 2005-2006 Gravelly Hill is separated from North Buckhorn and Central Efland projects. When it became clear that regulatory hurdles due to the EPA SPAP grant would delay water/sewer service provision to the new Gravelly Hill Middle School, the portion of the project related to the school was separated from the larger project.
- 2007-2008 Rate study commissioned. Raftelis Financial Consultants concludes that revenues from customer's monthly rates only cover 20-25% of system costs. Staff develops and BOCC approves a four-year rate increase plan to increase revenues and make the system self-funding.
- May 2008 Environmental Assessment and Engineering Report for North Buckhorn/Central Efland project is submitted to the State's Construction Grants and Loans division for review.
- July 2009 Rates raised first time in 20 years. This was the first of four increases over the next four years.
- Sept 2009 Craig Benedict, Planning Director, and Kevin Lindley, Staff Engineer, attend EPA workshop on applying for and administering the EPA SPAP grants.
- Dec 2009 State Construction Grants and Loans division approves the Engineering Report and recommends a Categorical Exclusion (i.e., environmental clearance) to the EPA Regional office in Atlanta.
- Dec 2009 EPA Grant Application draft is submitted to State Construction Grants & Loans section for review.

