

East and West Spring Lake Central Sewer Expansion

Project Description

Charlotte County has developed a county-wide plan to provide central sewer to prioritized areas with aging and failing On-Site Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems (septic tanks) that are contributing to the pollution of the impaired water bodies of Charlotte Harbor, the Peace River and the Myakka River. The first project is within this priority area, Area 1-A East and West Spring Lakes.

This first project is part of an on-going and phased initiative to revitalize Charlotte Harbor and the Peace River both of which are designated by the State and Federal governments as impaired waters due to nutrient pollution. The OSTDSs in these priority areas were largely constructed in the 1970's and early 1980's and are inadequate with many known to be in failure. The OSTDSs in these priority areas have exceeded their useful life and do not meet current design criteria. During large rain events, these failing OSTDSs pose a significant health, as well as environmental, risk.

This first project includes constructing central wastewater service to 2,455 properties, of which 75% are developed, in order to replace inadequate OSTDSs, restoring the storm conveyance system to improve removal of sediment and pollutants, and educating property owners on Best Management Practices (BMPs) when applying pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. The remaining projects within this priority area would address other properties.

Request

Charlotte County requests \$3M in state funds to assist with the estimated total project cost of \$23.9 M. Original cost estimates have risen \$8M and state assistance is needed to effectuate these connections. Sewer capacity is available. Property owners in East and West Spring Lakes are being assessed an annualized assessment over 20 years to cover the cost of the sewer expansion. Charlotte County is seeking funds through grants and legislative appropriations to offset some of the construction costs in order to maintain assessments to the property owners at the affordable level determined for this project.

Based upon census tract information, over fifty percent (50%) of the families within this sewer expansion area have low to moderate incomes. Even though Charlotte County has implemented and funded a hardship program to assist the most financially stressed property owners that cannot afford to pay the annual assessment, without the aid of grants, affordability would not be accomplished for the project as a whole.