



Deerfield Forum

ALSO SERVING LIGHTHOUSE POINT

THURSDAY, APRIL 5, 2012

VOL. 24 NO. 43

WWW.SUNSENTINEL.COM/DEERFIELD

Hillsboro Canal to get cleanup

ELIZABETH ROBERTS FORUM PUBLISHING GROUP

The Hillsboro Canal is usually a shady expanse of rippling water interrupted only by an occasional diving bird or jumping fish.

But the waterway separating Broward County from Palm Beach County is about to become an ant hill of activity.

The South Florida Water Management District has announced that for the first time since it was built more than 50 years ago, a 7.6-mile stretch of the canal will be revamped — cleared of brush and obtrusive trees and dredged. Then the newly cleared banks of the canal will be re-sodded.

The work will take place from Military Trail on the east to three miles west of U.S. Highway 441.

"We have 2,000 miles of canals in the water management district, and they are put on a schedule," said Randy Smith, district

spokesman. "Quite frankly, we look at the worst ones first, and this is one of the worst."

The Water Management District is a regional governmental agency charged with the health and well-being of water resources in the southern half of Florida.

Roughly translated, that means the district is responsible for improving water quality, natural systems, water supply and flood control.

It is the latter task that is the concern in the Hillsboro Canal.

"In order to ensure flood protection for the surrounding area, the district has begun a multi-year effort to ensure ... the canal ... can effectively move water as designed for another five decades," said Rod A. Braun, director of the Office of Intergovernmental Programs.

According to District 4

Commissioner Bill Ganz, the project will involve studying the canal "from the ocean to the Everglades, eliminating hazardous trees and adjusting the right-of-way [and] clearing the canal bank so the dredging and the equipment for the project can access the canal."

The project affects landowners.

"Deer Creek Golf Club will have to relocate two holes [on the golf course], and they will look at trees on a case-by-case basis," he said. "They will play the Lorax out there and stand behind each one asking, 'What about this one? What about this one? What about this one?'"

Marty Martinez, general manager of Deer Creek Golf Club, confirmed the changes. "A couple of tees are being moved slightly — lowered 2 feet and

continues
on 7



**continued
from 1** moved over
10 feet on
both No. 6
and No. 3,"
he said of the work slated
for June, July and August
of 2013. "People aren't go-
ing to notice for the most
part."

Residents at a recent
meeting expressed con-
cern about rodents dis-
placed by the deforest-
ation. Smith said those
residents need to consider
the bigger picture.

"If we left the trees
there and had a hurricane
and trees fell into the ca-
nal, there would be an ex-
tensive flooding problem.
That's the bottom line," he
said. "It is a definite threat
to human safety if we
leave potential debris
along the sides of the ca-
nals."

A water district analy-
sis shows that of 59 docks
on the stretch in question,
41 have permits and 30
have up-to-date transfer

of owners' permits. That
means some of the docks
will be removed, along
with encroachments like
sheds and trees.