

PROJECT: Loxahatchee River Maintenance Dredging  
PURPOSE/GOAL: Enhance public recreational use of river.  
PROJECT LOCATION: Loxahatchee River Estuary (Central Embayment)  
STATUS: Ongoing.

DESCRIPTION:

The Jupiter Inlet District (JID) maintains a navigation channel in the Central Embayment of the Loxahatchee River. It was first dredged in 1979, after which the JID installed a system of marker buoys as aids to navigation. The channel requires maintenance dredging on an average of once every three years, and was most recently dredged in 2003. It is now maintained at 100 feet wide, 1,500 feet long, and approximately 5 feet deep (NGVD).

In 1995, the JID entered into a Management Agreement with the FDEP. As part of the management agreement, the District was granted the authority to maintenance dredge channels in the North Fork and Southwest Fork of the river, if required.

North Fork

Sedimentation trends for the North Fork have shown a great deal of variability and depths appear to be adequate for now, for recreational boating.

Southwest Fork

Substantial sedimentation has occurred at the mouth of the Southwest Fork, near the confluence with Sims Creek. The primary source of the sediment is the SFWMD S-46 control structure, located on the north side of Indiantown Road. This is due to the episodic nature of freshwater discharge from the structure, as well as the structure's gate configuration which allows discharge from the bottom. Based on preliminary findings obtained from its ongoing Sedimentation Study, the JID expects to dredge a portion of the Southwest Fork sometime in 2009.

The Northwest Fork is the only natural channel that has not required maintenance dredging to maintain safe navigable depths of five feet (NGVD) or greater.