



STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2030

**BROWARD SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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I. Background

Established by the Florida Legislature, the Broward Soil & Water Conservation District, a governmental subdivision of the State of Florida, was established October 9, 1950 under Florida Statutes 582 by local residents for the purpose of promoting and encouraging the wise use, management and general conservation of the County’s soil, water and related natural resources. The District is committed to preserving and enhancing the quality of life in Broward County through conservation of its natural resources.

The Broward Soil & Water Conservation District works closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) creating ways to conserve water, prevent soil erosion, convert irrigation systems and inform the public about conservation problems.

A Code of Ethics has been adopted by the district, and The Broward SWCD operates under Florida Statutes 582 under the Florida Legislature.

I.A: Purpose

Chapter 582 of the Florida Statutes concerns soil and water conservation within the State of Florida. The chapter establishes the processes for creation, dissolution, and

change of boundaries of districts; the qualifications, election, tenure, and mandatory meetings of District Supervisors; the oversight powers and duties of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (“FDACS”); and the powers and purpose of the districts. The District’s statutory purpose, per s. 582.02, Florida Statutes, is “to provide assistance, guidance, and education to landowners, land occupiers, the agricultural industry, and the general public in implementing land and water resource protection practices. The Legislature intends for soil and water conservation districts to work in conjunction with federal, state, and local agencies in all matters that implement the provisions of [ch. 582, Florida Statutes].”

I.B: Mission

The Broward Soil & Water Conservation District mission is to build stronger, healthier communities while conserving natural resources. This is accomplished through educating local homeowners and businesses on agricultural Best Management Practices and championing environmental stewardship through direct community engagement.

I.C: District Description

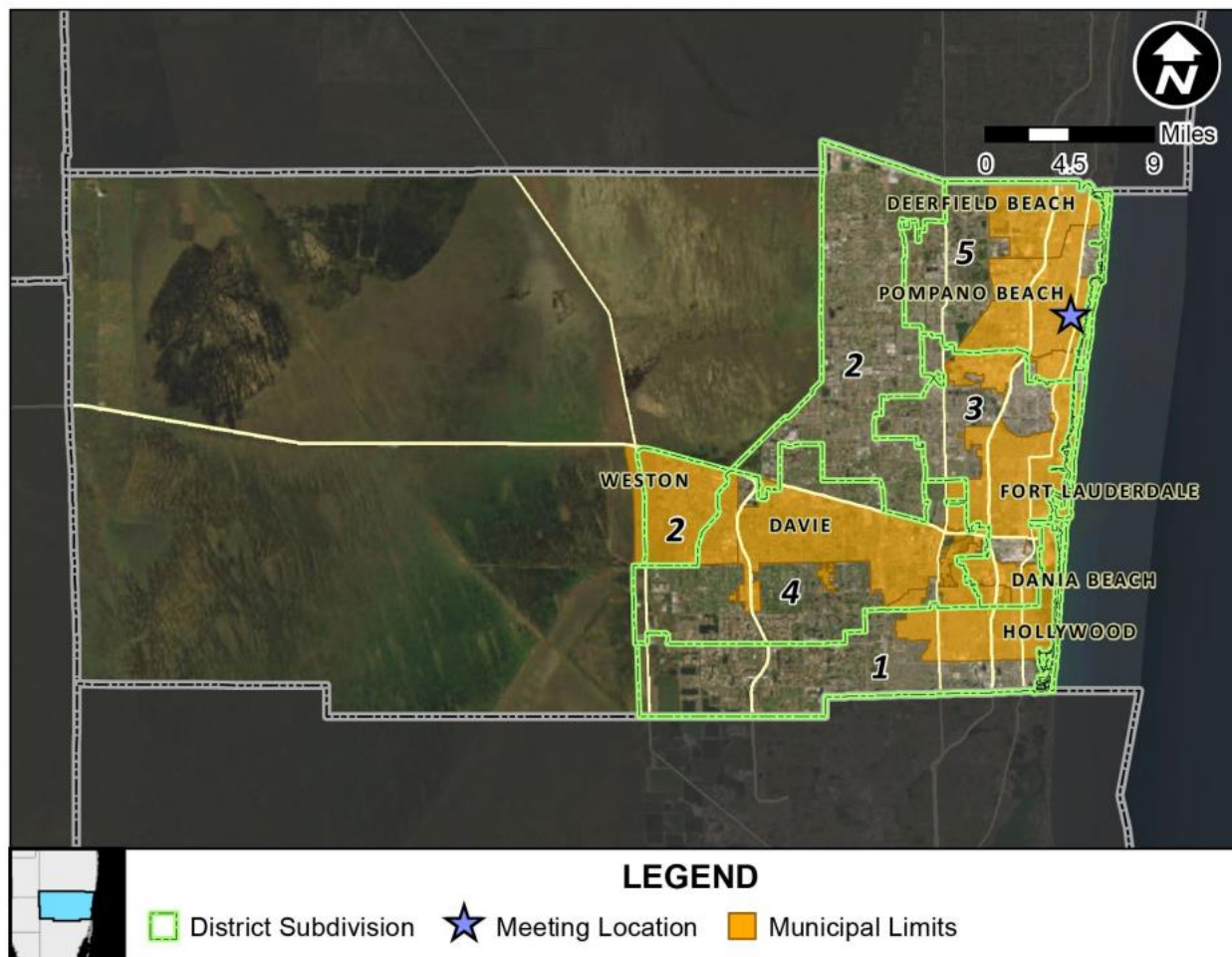
Service Area

Since the District was established in 1964, the service area has included the entirety of Broward County. The District’s service area includes unincorporated Broward County; the County’s 24 cities, five towns, and two villages;¹ and part or all of Everglades and Francis S. Taylor Wildlife Management Area, Dr. Von D. Mizell-Eula Johnson State Park, Hugh Taylor Birch State Park, and Miccosukee Indian Water Conservation Area. The District is bounded on the north by Palm Beach County, east by the Atlantic Ocean, south by Miami-Dade County, and west by Collier and Hendry Counties. The total area

¹ 1 Cities: Coconut Creek, Cooper City, Coral Springs, Dania Beach, Deerfield Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Hallandale Beach, Hollywood, Lauderdale Lakes, Lauderhill, Lighthouse Point, Margate, Miramar, North Lauderdale, Oakland Park, Parkland, Pembroke Pines, Plantation, Pompano Beach, Sunrise, Tamarac, Weston, Wilton Manors. Towns: Davie, Hillsboro Beach, Lauderdale-By-The-Sea, Pembroke Park, Southwest Ranches. Villages: Lazy Lake, Sea Ranch Lakes.

within the District is 1,323 of square miles, with 1,210 square miles of land and 113 square miles of water. The District’s primary office is located at 401 East Las Olas Boulevard, Suite 1510, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301. The District meets at 1255 West Atlantic Boulevard, Pompano Beach, Florida – the Edward L. Myrick State Farmers Market, owned by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Figure 1 is a map of the District’s service area, based on the map incorporated by reference in Rule 5M20.002(3)(b)1., Florida Administrative Code, showing the District’s boundaries, electoral subdivisions, major municipalities within the service area, and the District’s meeting location.

Figure 1: Map of Broward Soil and Water Conservation District



(Source: Broward County GIS, Florida Commerce Special District Profile)

Population

Based on the Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research population estimates, the population within the District's service area was 1,973,579 as of April 1, 2023.

District Characteristics

Broward SWCD is located in the southeastern part of Florida. The economy of the service area is supported by construction, trade, tourism, manufacturing, and aviation.² The eastern third of the District is densely populated among 31 municipalities, while the remaining service area is conservation land.³ According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, the District includes 13,007 acres of farmland and the District's most popular crops include nursery and greenhouse stock crops and forage crops. Broward County represents one of the most vulnerable counties in Florida to tropical disturbances which can cause destructive winds that can damage crops.

The District's topography includes a flat landscape with low land elevations averaging five to 25 feet which increase the District's exposure to flood risk and sea level rise.⁴ The service area encompasses 24 miles of beaches, the majority of which are critically eroded. The Broward County Natural Resources Division implements beach renourishment projects to distribute sand, place shore protective dunes, and build mitigation reef units to help mitigate erosion.⁵ Furthermore, the District's main source of water is the Biscayne Aquifer, which is heavily recharged from the surface and rainfall which is influenced by its coastal boundary with the Atlantic Ocean. Wellfields and canals allow for groundwater to provide direct recharge to the Biscayne Aquifer; therefore, it is important to protect wellfields from saltwater contamination. Stressors to the District's water system include urban development, wellfield pumping, and sea

² Broward County, Florida. 2021. Targeted Industries. June 7. Accessed May 13, 2024. <https://www.broward.org/EconDev/WhyBroward/Pages/TargetedIndustries.aspx#t2>.

³ Broward County, Florida. 2022. 30 Quick Facts. Accessed May 25, 2024. <https://www.broward.org/Planning/Demographics/Pages/QuickFacts.aspx>.

⁴ Resilient Cities Network. 2023. Broward County's Resilience Journey. Accessed May 13, 2024. <https://resilientcitiesnetwork.org/broward-county-united-states/>.

⁵ Broward County, Florida. Beach Renourishment Projects. Accessed May 14, 2024. <https://www.broward.org/Beaches/Pages/Projects.aspx>.

level rise. Issues pertaining to the continued use of compromised home septic systems also pose a threat to the District’s water quality as septic systems may cause algae blooms in canals that flow into the Biscayne Aquifer.

I.D: Creation and Governance

Broward SWCD was chartered on June 1, 1964, as the Broward Soil Conservation District, following a successful referendum of local landowners and subsequent petition to the Florida State Soil Conservation Board.⁶ The District was created under the authority of the State Soil Conservation Districts Act (herein referred to as “ch. 582, Florida Statutes”).⁷

The District is governed by a Board of Supervisors. Supervisors are unpaid, nonpartisan public officials elected by the voters within the service district. Section 582.19(1), Florida Statutes, requires Supervisors to sign an affirmation that they meet the residency and qualification requirements.

II. District Impact

I.A: Conservation Objectives

The Broward SWCD is committed to educate the public on Agricultural Best Management Practices, including practices such as irrigation efficiency, reducing soil and fertilizer runoff, and properly managing animal waste. These practices can help to directly protect drinking supplies as well as help to protect animal habitat. The Broward SWCD will work with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' (FDACS) Office of Agricultural Water Policy (OAWP) which administers the BMP Cost Share Program to assist eligible producers or landowners with BMPs.

Irrigation Efficiency

The process of determining and controlling the volume, frequency and application rate of irrigation water in a planned, efficient manner.

⁶ Florida Department of Commerce. 2024. “Official List of Special Districts.”

⁷ Ch. 582, Florida Statutes (1939), available online as ch. 19473, Laws of Florida

Animal Waste Storage Structure

A fabricated structure that provides temporary storage for animal waste. These BMPs are designed for the proper handling, storage, and utilization of animal waste in order to prevent or abate pollution of surrounding waterways.

Nutrient Management

Determine nutrient needs and sources and manage nutrient applications (including manure) to minimize impacts to water resources.

Water Resource Protection

Practices that use buffers and setbacks to reduce or prevent the transport of nutrients and sediments from production areas to waterbodies.

II.B: Public Education and Community Engagement

The Broward SWCD is committed to meaningful engagement with the community for the purposes of promoting its conservation mission through a variety of programs.

Envirothon

Envirothon is an outdoor competition encouraging student interest in natural resource conservation and environmental management. Students in grades 9-12 work in teams to compete at a local or regional level and develop hands-on skills related to five core environmental subjects. Winning teams have the opportunity to advance to the Statewide and national competitions. The District Supervisors help to advertise the event to local schools.

Poster and Photo Contests

The Poster and Photo Contests provide students with a chance to compete and have their art displayed nationally. The contests are open to kindergarten through 12th grade students from the District's service area, separated into two- or three-grade divisions. These contests use a common conservation related prompt set by the National Association of Conservation Districts. The winners of the District level contests

advance to compete at the regional, State, and national levels. The District Supervisors help to advertise the event to local schools.

Outreach Events

The District will participate in a variety of outreach events to provide information and education to members of the community through interactive activities, answered questions, and informing of District-sponsored programs. Florida Farm Bureau Day is a program in which Florida Farm members advocate at the State Capitol on behalf of Florida Farm Bureau priority issues during the legislative session. Garden Matters Day is hosted by the Town of Davie as a celebration of the art of gardening. The event includes workshops by gardening experts on topics such as water management and Florida-friendly landscaping. The Orange Blossom Festival is hosted by the Town of Davie and includes vendors, live music and entertainment, and kids' activities. Unity in Community is hosted by the City of Pompano Beach and is designed for families and provides demonstrations by the Pompano Beach Fire Rescue and Broward County Sherriff's Office and agricultural groups in addition to entertainment from cultural groups. Water Matters Day is hosted by the Town of Davie and provides interactive educational displays to help residents learn about water conservation techniques, smart irrigation, and native landscaping. Additional events hosted by the Broward SWCD and hosted by partner organizations will continue to be identified and attended to promote the District's public education and community engagement objectives.

II.C: Advocacy and Information

The District will continue to advocate for or against various projects or developments that are proposed in its service area that affect soil and water conservation. The District will also serve as a conduit of information for the public to refer producers to local organizations to serve their agricultural needs. The District will continue to attend local events to distribute information regarding best management practices and to assist local agricultural organizations.

III. Funding Strategy

The District is committed to exploring grant opportunities from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the National Association of Conservation Districts, and other public and private conservation-related entities to increase revenues that may be used to administer additional programs and employ staff. Other fundraising strategies include annual fundraising dinners honoring local Conservation Champions. Funds will allow the District to expand operations, footprint, and effectiveness.

Title Photo Credit: Monika Moorman