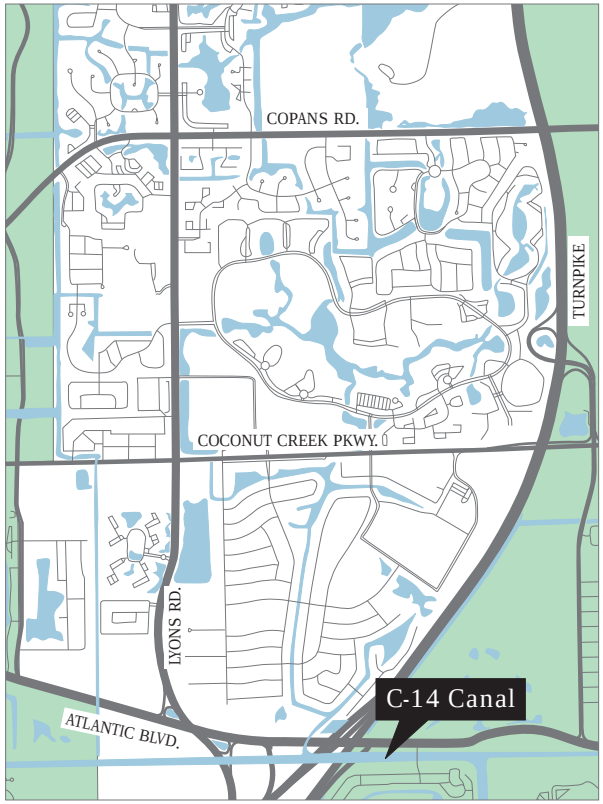
South Creek Waterways



Controlling Our Water Levels

The waterways in South Creek are a meandering canal and lake system maintained by the Cocomar District, a public agency created by Broward County Commission in 1980.

This system connects the major Hillsboro canal in the north to C-14 canal in the south. Water levels are managed at the Hillsboro canal by means of control structures.

But in the South Creek area, no such mechanism exists, causing water levels to depend upon the water elevations in the C-14 canal, maintained by South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).

Neither Cocomar nor the City of Coconut Creek has control over the water elevations in the C-14 canal.

COCONUT CREEK

Utilities and Engineering Department

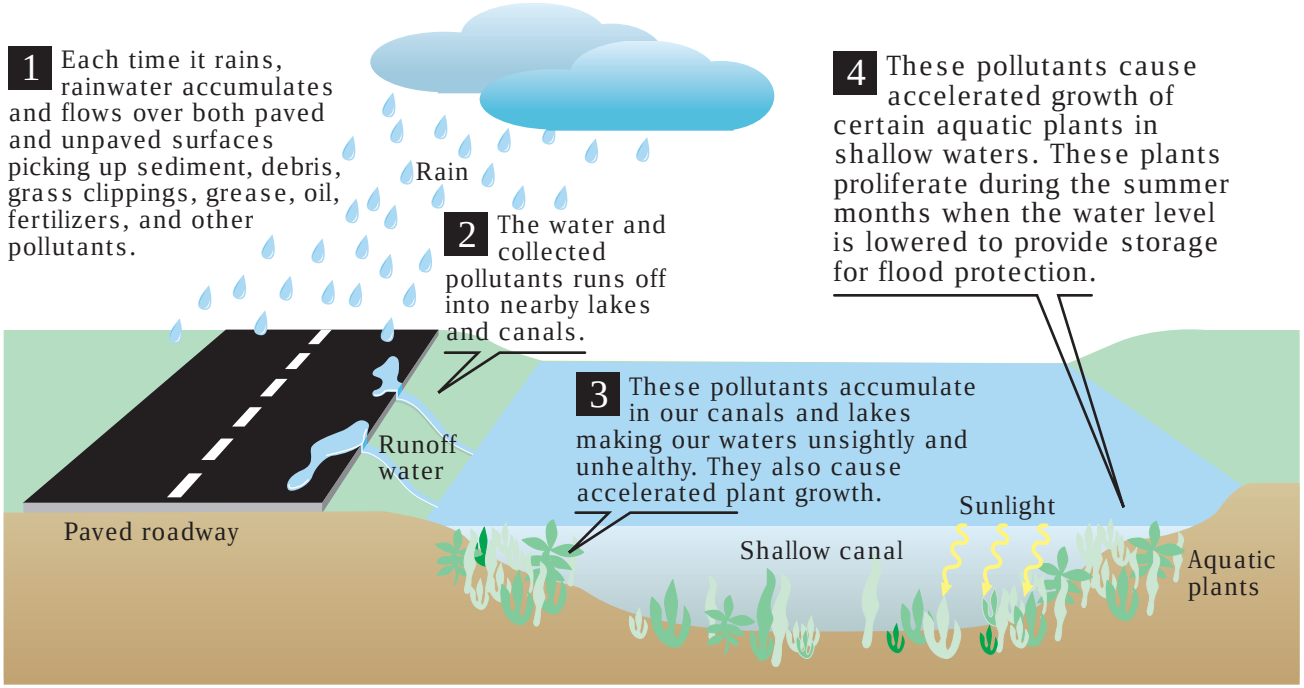
http://www.creekgov.net

Canals in South Creek

Issues and Solutions

Runoff and Shallow Waters Clog Canals

Shallow canals let sunlight penetrate down to where aquatic plants grow. The more sunlight that is available, the more the plants will flourish. Also, pollutants from runoff water help accelerate aquatic plant growth. Deepening the canals and stopping runoff pollutants will help keep our canals from choking on plants and algae.



Improving South Creek Canals

Cocomar and City of Coconut Creek are undertaking a dredging project in the Lake Julie area. This $1 million project, likely to begin in October 2004 and end in April 2005, will make our canals deeper in the center, causing them to produce less aquatic growth.

Algae and aquatic plant growth in shallow areas will continue to exist near the banks. Dredging will not solve this problem.

To protect seawalls from collapsing, dredging will take place at a minimum of 10 - 15 feet away from the canal banks. Poor and non-conforming seawalls severely restrict long-term solution to the aquatic growth problem.

Controlling Growth of Aquatic Plants

Controlling growth of aquatic plant in a shallow canal while balancing the elements of Mother Nature is a major challenge. Spraying is performed regularly in the South Creek canals with approved herbicides in allowable concentrations and frequencies.

Care is taken not to exceed the regulatory thresholds to avoid potential harmful effects to the aquatic habitat, not withstanding fines and public scrutiny.

Another solution is to introduce plant-eating herbivorous fish called grass carps into the canals. However, they do not feed on all types of aquatic plants, thereby restricting their usefulness.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q The canal behind my house looks worse after spraying. Why is there an ugly scum all over?

A The floating scum after spraying is the first sign that those chemicals have begun decomposing the aquatic plants. Unfortunately, it can take up to three to six weeks before the scum will disappear.

Q In spite of all the spraying, why do I always see algae floating next to my seawall?

A At most locations, South Creek canals are shallow. They become shallower at the seawalls. A water depth of about five feet is required to keep the growth to a minimum, which is not available near the seawalls.

Q Why can't Cocomar keep water levels high in my canal?

A South Creek canals are connected directly to the main C-14 canal and there is no control structure between the two systems. The levels, therefore, are not under the control of Cocomar or the City.

How You Can Help

- Consider a control structure at C-14 canal.
- Prevent grass clippings, tree branches, debris, etc. from falling into your canal
- Trim tree branches and shrubs overhanging canals periodically
- Avoid fertilizing your lawns just before a major storm