

BSI Canal Committee

8/10/21

Mayors Cut is a point of many discussions, so I will try and clear up some of the confusion. First off, Mayors Cut is the connection between the rim canal and the south fork of Alligator Creek, the cut is located on the west side of the rim canal. It is also identifiable with the row of pilings set approximately 5' apart across the cut.



There is significant tidal flow through the cut, relieving much of the strong tidal current which would otherwise be forced through the lock itself. Without this cut from the rim canal, tide flow through the lock would render it virtually unnavigable at times of tide changes. As mentioned in one of my earlier columns, as it is, there is so much tidal flow through the cut, that it is cutting (eroding) banks and mangroves to the point that additional pilings are scheduled to be place to secure the integrity of the cut.

This brings up the primary question of why are pilings place across the cut? ---It is my understanding, there are two primary reasons:

1. The navigation channel between BSI and the Harbor is from the rim canal, through the Lock and down the north fork of Alligator Creek. It is this channel that is maintained (dredged) for that purpose. The south channel of Alligator Creek (and "Mayors Cut") is not dredged, and is therefore deemed "not navigable", so the efforts are to ensure the "non-navigable" designation in the original agreements.
2. For some time, the environmentalists have identified this section of Alligator Creek as "environmentally sensitive" with numerous reports of manatee living and berthing along its channel, as well as home to other indigenous species. Due to the environmentally sensitive nature of this south creek channel, part of the agreement to remove the Lock doors some years

ago, was the addition of the pilings, preventing motorized traffic through the cut, -- in an effort to protect these species.

Although it is not open to motorized traffic, non-motorized traffic is encouraged. The pilings are spaced to allow animals such as manatees to move through this cut as well as canoes, kayaks, paddle boats, etc.

As a degreed Civil Engineer, and speaking from a Civil perspective, I could go on for several pages on the interesting aspects of this classic study in open hydraulics, but Wanda (my wife) says nobody would be interested—as usual, she is probably right.

Until next time---

Rick Daugherty, Chairman, BSI Canal Committee