



Levy County Board of County Commissioners

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To: The Board of County Commissioners
From: Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
Date: January 7, 2025
Subject: Citrus County Legislative Priority: Barge Canal Boat Ramp Phase 1

Commissioners,

The Citrus County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) has approved the proposed Cross Florida Barge Canal Boat Ramp as one of their 2025 Legislative Priorities. The Citrus County BoCC believes this project is of significant regional importance, including for the residents of Levy County. They have requested the Levy County BoCC to consider a letter of support for this project.

Mr. James Toy, Intergovernmental Affairs Manager for the Citrus County BoCC will attend the January 7, 2025 Levy County BoCC Meeting to share more information about this project.



Commissioners

Charlie Kennedy, District 1

Rock Meeks, District 2

Desiree Mills, Chair, District 3

Tim Hodge, Vice Chair, District 4

Johnny Hiers, District 5



APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST: BARGE CANAL BOAT RAMP - PHASE I

PROJECT OVERVIEW

This project aims to develop a boat ramp that will enhance access to the Cross Florida Barge Canal. In 2012, Citrus County secured a conceptual permit from the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). Since then, the County has successfully navigated the federal permitting process, receiving approvals from both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries (National Marine Fisheries Service). Final approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is anticipated in the near future.

The new boat ramp is expected to alleviate pressure on the County's existing ramp facilities, which are often congested with boaters waiting in long lines to launch and retrieve their vessels. Additionally, parking lots regularly reach capacity, causing pickups and boat trailers to overflow onto the roads leading to the ramps. Beyond reducing congestion at the ramp, the strategic location of the new boat ramp on the Barge Canal, with direct access to the Gulf, will help ease traffic along the Crystal River. This will provide boaters with a more efficient route for traveling between Kings Bay and the Gulf, particularly during peak boating hours.

Phase One of the project will include the construction of a 400-foot-wide boat ramp, three gangways with floating docks, 24 vehicle parking spaces, 60 boat/trailer parking spaces, and the necessary stormwater management infrastructure. This phase will be developed on a 18.55-acre site located just south of the Citrus-Levy County border, along the Cross Florida Barge Canal. The project is expected to boost local tourism by attracting recreational boaters, enhancing access to the Gulf, and supporting local businesses in the area.

TOTAL COST

\$11,180,000 (estimated)

LOCAL FUNDING

General Fund:

\$215,528

Boating Improvement Fees:

\$410,000

RESTORE Act (application pending)

\$3,293,924*

REQUEST: Citrus County is seeking \$7,260,548 to fund the construction of Phase One of the Barge Canal Boat Ramp project.