

FYI

FACT SHEET

FOR YOUR INFORMATION...

This fact sheet is offered as a courtesy to assist in supporting greater understanding of water-related issues in the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

Water Control Structures in Pinellas County

The Southwest Florida Water Management District maintains and operates 84 water control structures throughout the District's 16-county region. These structures help provide flood protection, manage lake water levels and prevent salt water from flowing up freshwater streams and creeks. There are three of these structures located in Pinellas County.

1. Lake Tarpon Outfall Canal

The three-mile-long canal extends from the south end of Lake Tarpon in northern Pinellas County, passes between Safety Harbor and Oldsmar, and empties into Old Tampa Bay. The canal serves as the only surface water outlet for the lake. The canal and the S-551 Salinity Barrier were completed in 1971 to help regulate flooding around Lake Tarpon. The structure prevents salt water from entering Lake Tarpon during high tides and protects the lake's freshwater ecology.

2. S-551 Salinity Barrier and Flood Control Structure

The S-551 structure is located in Oldsmar, on the outfall canal for Lake Tarpon just north of Curlew Road. The structure's gates can be remotely operated to help prevent saltwater intrusion into the freshwater system, help maintain water levels on Lake Tarpon and can be used to lower upstream levels during high water events. A generator supplies backup electrical power to the structure in the event of a power outage.

3. Sawgrass Flood Control Structure

The Sawgrass structure is located in the District's Sawgrass Lake Park in St. Petersburg, on the outfall canal east of Sawgrass Lake. The structure's gates can be remotely operated to manage water levels on the lake and can be used to lower upstream levels during heavy rain events. A generator supplies backup electrical power to the structure in the event of a power outage.

