7.0 CONSERVATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The CONSERVATION element is required to be included within the Comprehensive Plan per requirements of State planning law and rule criteria. Specifically, Chapter 163.3177 (6)(d), Florida Statutes established the CONSERVATION element requirement and Chapter 9J5.013, Florida Administrative Code established minimum criteria to guide its preparation..

This element contains a summary of the data, analyses and support documentation necessary to form the basis for future conservation Goal, Objectives and Policies.

In keeping with the requirements of Chapter 9J5.005 and 9J5.010 Florida Administrative Code, the CONSERVATION element is structured according to the following format:

- Conservation Data;
- Conservation Analysis; and
- ~~Conservation Goal, Objectives and Policies~~

Data and analyses presented are important to the development of Goal, Objectives and Policies statements in that localized issues can be identified and targeted.

7.2 CONSERVATION DATA SUMMARY

The necessity of proper management and conservation of the natural environment is an important element in all types of planning activities. The natural environment and its various physical systems should be identified and understood in order to assure proper management and conservation.

Much of the data and information contained within this element is either highly interrelated with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, or may be contained in other elements (i.e. ~~COASTAL MANAGEMENT~~; FUTURE LAND USE; SANITARY SEWER, SOLID WASTE,~~DRAINAGE~~ STORMWATER MANAGEMENT, POTABLE WATER AND NATURAL GROUNDWATER AFER RECHARGE). In these cases, it is so noted.

The natural resources to be addressed in this element have been analyzed in the FUTURE LAND USE element, including soils, native vegetation and surface water bodies ~~(Ref: Sections 3.2.2, 3.2.4 and 3.2.5 FUTURE LAND USE element).~~

It is concluded that there are no areas having significant natural or institutional use limitations that require special precautions prior to conversion or development. However, this element identifies those areas where “caution” factors should be recognized prior to future development.

The primary land use within the City is agriculture, a majority of which is presently used for sugarcane production. The remaining land use within the City is primarily residential. Commercial and industrial development are located along U.S. Highway 1 and State Road 80. The urban portion of the City is essentially platted and the only vacant land is a result of undeveloped residential lots and commercial and industrial parcels.

7.3 CONSERVATION ANALYSIS

7.3.1 Surface Waters

The North New River Canal, controlled by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and a system of lateral drainage canals operated by the South Florida Conservancy (eastern City limits) and the South Shore Drainage District (western and southern City limits) are the only surface waters in South Bay.

Neither the North New River Canal nor the drainage canals are suitable for body contact due to generally high nutrient and low dissolved oxygen content. Fishing from their banks and small boat usage are the two primary recreational uses of these waterways.

All surface water bodies within the City are designated as Class III waters by the State. Class II waters are used extensively for recreational activities such as boating, water skiing and fishing.

The following definition has been developed for Class III waters by the State:

Definition – For the purposes of this report, Class III waters shall be defined as all inland waters not otherwise classified. This includes bays, rivers, lakes, estuaries and open waters of the territorial sea. Priority use of Class III waters shall be for recreation , and fish and wildlife propagation and management.

7.3.2 Wetlands and Coastal System

There are no designated wetland or coastal systems within the City.

7.3.3 Floodplains

There are no floodplains or flood prone areas in the City of South Bay as defined in Chapter 9J5.003(30), Florida Administrative Code.

7.3.4 Fisheries and Wildlife Habitats

There are no commercial fisheries within the City. Wildlife habitats are not identified by State or federal agencies at a scale that can be applied to conditions within the City.

However, soils data ~~(Ref: Section 3.2.2 FUTURE LAND USE element)~~ indicate that natural habitats have been virtually eliminated by urban and/or agricultural development within the City.

7.3.5 Minerals and Soils

The City has no known sources of commercially valuable minerals. There are no existing mining operations nor does the City's Zoning Code allow for any mining activities.

Soils and soil limitations are mapped and discussed in the FUTURE LAND USE element (Ref: FIGURE 3-3 and TABLES 3-1 and 3-2). The two predominant soil types in and around the City are Pahokee Muck and Torrey Muck. Although not naturally suited to agriculture due to wetness, each is productive if a system of water control is installed and properly managed. However, an associated problem is the subsidence (loss) of the organic soil components when the soils are exposed to the air. If subsidence is not controlled the soils will eventually recede to a point where agricultural production is not viable. As s result, water control (i.e. allowing periods of inundation), crop rotation and the investigation of alternative crops must be investigated and implemented in order to prolong agricultural activities in the area.

7.3.6 Air Quality

Present air quality conditions for Palm Beach County, including South Bay, are generally designated as good. However, the County has been placed in a non-attainment category for atmospheric ozone levels.

Air pollution is monitored daily throughout Palm Beach County at fifteen (15) locations. In December, 1977 it was determined by the Department of Environmental Regulation (Department of Environmental Protection today) through the local program office that Palm Beach County was in violation of allowable atmospheric ozone levels.The Metropolitan Planning Organization has been charged with the task of developing control measures which will ultimately be carried out at the local level.

In direct relation to air pollution programs, the Metropolitan Planning Organization developed a Transportation Control Program (TCP) to measure and provide means to reduce emissions of mobile sources. Likewise, the Palm Beach County Health Department has developed RACT (Reasonably Available Control Techniques programs) to measure and reduce emissions from fixed sources. Both of these programs were instituted as a result of the County being placed in a non-attainment category by FDER (FDEP today) because it was in violation of allowable atmospheric ozone levels. All of Palm Beach County is considered in these planning efforts.

7.3.7 Recreation and Conservation Land Uses

The surface water bodies in the City provide a recreational and leisure time resources to the residents. However, the surface water bodies' primary function is for drainage and stormwater management purposes. The recreational use of these waters is restricted to fishing and small boat usage. The are no designated conservation land uses within the South Bay.

The potential for additional recreational uses and conservation of natural resources should be substantially the same as exists today, since the City currently consists primarily of agricultural lands and platted urbanized areas.

No site-specific water quality data are available on the drainage canals abutting the City.

7.3.8 Hazardous Waste Disposal

Although the City has 33 acres designated for industrial use, the present land uses associated with these industrial tracts do not generate wastes that can be considered hazardous; that is, those that require special handling and disposal. Common household waste products in the form of pesticides, car batteries, degreasing solvents and petroleum products are typically generated within the City. Fuel storage is a potential source of contamination.