

PROJECT: JID Mangrove Island Preservation Project
PURPOSE/GOAL: Preserve and Protect Eroded Mangrove Island Habitat
PROJECT LOCATION: Loxahatchee River Central Embayment
PROJECT STATUS: Permitting
DESCRIPTION:

The Mangrove Island Preservation Project originated in the JID's Loxahatchee River Management Plan (adopted, 1992). The completed project will preserve and protect an eroded habitat ("Mangrove Island") that lies just offshore the south shoreline of the Loxahatchee River Central Embayment.

The project has been approved for \$190,000 in grant monies from the Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative and, when completed, will preserve and protect an eroded mangrove island habitat lying just offshore the south shoreline within the Central Embayment of the Loxahatchee River. The design concept includes construction of a series of breakwaters surrounding the mangrove habitat to protect/preserve the island from further erosion and promote sediment accumulation behind the breakwaters.

Historical impacts to the island include mosquito ditching, gradual erosion over time due to storm- and boat-induced wave action and swift natural currents, and significant loss following the 2004 hurricane season. The project will include construction of a series of limestone breakwaters around Mangrove Island to attenuate storm- and boat-induced wave energy.

Red mangrove habitat serves a critical role to the ecology of the embayment, providing important nursery grounds and physical habitat for a wide variety of vertebrates and invertebrates, including many threatened and endangered species. Over the years, Mangrove Island has also served as a bird rookery for species such as the brown pelican.

Mangrove Island is currently the only remaining mangrove island habitat within the Loxahatchee River Central Embayment. Because mangroves also benefit water quality and clarity by filtering pollutants and trapping sediments, its protection is critical in order to preserve this important and unique resource.

JID expects a 6-12 month permitting process, with construction expected to begin in 2016.