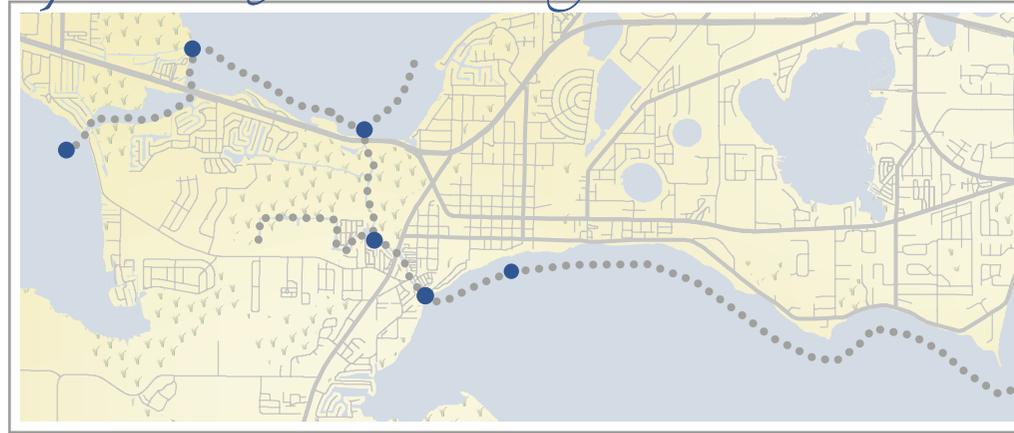


Proposed Blueway — Golden Triangle Run



Collective Interest

Last year challenged the Department of Environmental Services as staff dealt with debris management resulting from three hurricanes. Despite this obstacle, the Department successfully achieved a number of initiatives.

Progress for the Department was marked by the *effective* completion of several long-range projects: submission of a permit application to create the Lake County Blueways system, implementation of the Home Heating Oil Recovery Program, selection of an expansion design option for the County Landfill, and negotiation of a new contract with the waste-to-energy facility owner, Covanta Energy Corporation.

The *Blueways* community development project is a series of recreational waterway trails that are being identified along the lakes, rivers and canals of Lake County. These waterway trails are designed for canoeists, kayakers and recreational boaters. Maps and trail markers will be provided to help paddlers and boaters guide their way through the water trails.

The Department submitted the County's permit for eight proposed blueway routes in May 2005. The trails are within the areas of the St. Johns River, Golden Triangle, Palatka Basin and Oklawaha Basin. The eight trails total about 130 miles. If approved in late 2005, this new program will make Lake County's Blueways system the *largest* in the State.



The Department implemented the Home-Heating Oil Recovery Program this fiscal year as older homes in Florida may still have unused above or below ground home-heating oil tanks. This program allows citizens to have any residual oil drained out of these heating oil tanks for free. Heating oil tanks can hold between 50 and 200 gallons. One gallon of oil could potentially contaminate as much as one million gallons of groundwater. As a result of this free program, citizens as well as valuable potable water supply resources are *protected* from petroleum products that may also contain carcinogens.

With 1.6 million cubic yards of waste predicted over the next five years in Lake County, plans for finding additional landfill space was critical for Environmental Services in 2005. The Department secured professional engineering services to obtain a State permit to develop Phase III of the existing landfill.

Converting waste to reusable *resources* continues to be an important task for the Department. Last year, about 104,000 tons of residential waste and another 56,000 tons of business waste were transported to the waste-to-energy facility in Okahumpka. Using solid waste as fuel, the facility generated 12.5 megawatts of electricity, which equates to \$6.6 million of revenue. A new cost-savings agreement was struck this past year with the waste-to-energy facility owner. The new contract is expected to save taxpayers several millions of dollars over the next 10 years through debt refinancing and equitable cost allocation structures.