

Update from City Hall

The Everglades Harbor Project was authorized by Congress in 1965, it provided for the dredging of the Barron River from Everglades City to the Gulf of Mexico. The channel was dredged and was to be maintained at a working depth of 8 feet deep, 60 feet wide and would include a turning basin at the North end. There has been no maintenance dredging since 1965 resulting in lower working depths. Hurricanes Wilma, Irma and Ian exacerbated the problem by depositing additional sediment in the channel. Our commercial fishing fleet is impacted by the reduced working depth and are unable to transit the channel at low tide events which was confirmed by the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in a survey completed in 2022.

On August 8, 2023 Councilman Tony Pernas gathered together a group of stakeholders impacted by the reduced depth of the working harbor. Present at the meeting were numerous local commercial fishermen, Everglades City Mayor Howie Grimm, United States Senator Marco Rubio's Southwest Florida Regional Director London Rotundo, Congressman Mario Diaz Balart's Deputy Chief of Staff Miguel Otaro and Corps of Engineers Project Manager Ashleigh Fountain. Ms. Fountain informed the gathering that the Corps of Engineers had received \$5 million for the Everglades Harbor Dredging Project through the Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2023, the project is currently in the planning stages and the contract for dredging is expected to be awarded in 2026.

On a more current note, our Administrative Sergeant Adam Hall has been promoted to Lieutenant and assigned to head the Professional Responsibility Bureau. Adam has been our Sergeant since Hurricane Irma. He is being succeeded by Sergeant Robert (Bob) Reuthe. Wishing Adam success in his new position is Mayor Grimm.

