

HORIZONTAL DIRECTIONAL DRILL (HDD) PERMITTING ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS

Islamorada, Village of Islands, in partnership with Reynolds Water Islamorada is working to extend sanitary sewer service to its incorporated islands of Plantation Key, Windley Key, and Upper and Lower Matecumbe keys. Wastewater will be collected from residential and commercial areas and conveyed to the Key Largo Wastewater Treatment Facility via a transmission main installed along US Highway 1, and under seven channels in FDOT right-of-way utilizing Horizontal Directional Drill (HDD) technology. The project is on an expedited schedule to comply with the December 2015 State of Florida-mandated project completion date.

SWC was responsible for acquiring all required HDD environmental permits, including performing all pre-construction data collection tasks.

Work included an extensive marine data collection process in the area of the drill corridors that incorporated more stringent assessment protocols now required as a result of recent additions of coral species to the federal endangered species list. One of the upland staging area locations also required protected species data collection.

With effective advance coordination and thorough applications, SWC acquired permits from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary within three months of filing the applications, a task that typically takes 12-18 months. SWC and engineers were able to avoid impacts to all wetlands at the staging areas—a major accomplishment that greatly reduced permitting issues.

Specific SWC accomplishments included:

- ❖ work with project engineer to identify corridors and staging areas
- ❖ extensive coordination with staff of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Environmental Protection Agency, National Marine Fisheries Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prior to application submittal
- ❖ design of benthic habitat survey methodology to assess seven bridge spans across navigational channels
- ❖ coordination with project engineers to develop construction plans that avoid and minimize impacts to natural resources
- ❖ supervision of field data collection, conduct analysis of data, and prepare report presenting benthic data
- ❖ preparation of permit applications and all attachments to address all questions raised by permit and review agencies
- ❖ filing of permit applications within three months of work inception
- ❖ working with agencies to address any remaining questions and make requested revisions to permit documents—with no official Requests for Additional Information (RAIs) to slow the process
- ❖ acquiring all permits in less than three months from filing applications

