

Diking District 4 History

1917 A petition to form a diking district in this area was submitted.

1919 The Board of County Commissioners formed Diking District #4, with the County Engineer appointed as supervisor. Supposedly, it was formed to convert this area of Deer Lagoon into farmland and protect houses at low elevations. Prior to the dikes, much of this area would regularly be covered with water as part of Deer Lagoon / Useless Bay tidal action.

1919 – 1921 The dikes were constructed, funded by issuing warrants.

1946 Private properties were approved to install and maintain / operate a 4,000 gallon / minute diesel pump station. As a result of the dikes and the pumping station, the area was drained and farmed. At some unknown time, the diesel pump station ceased operations, possibly 1952.

As it became uneconomical to farm, the area changed roles. The waterfront land was developed, and the interior became inundated. At one point there were plans to develop waterfront lots towards the interior with piers and docking capabilities. But this did not come to pass. Without farming or development, the dike continued to function adequately until 1979. At some point prior to 1979, the County activity dwindled, and their knowledge about ownership and management of a diking district waned.

1979 It was reported that one of the dikes was eroding. An investigation showed that:

- There was no public access to the damaged portion of the dike.
- Houses were built on top of and in front of the dike.
- Private properties were located at both ends of the dike.

A period of time followed where the County reviewed their responsibilities, discussed means of access to the damaged dike, discussed funding for possible repairs (there was no fund balance for the District or in the County Current Expense fund), discussed assessments for properties within the District, discussed the option of reforming the Diking District as a self-entity where the control would rest with the residents.

1981 Additional dike damage was reported. Funds were borrowed for the repairs; the repairs were completed, and an assessment was determined for property owners within the district to repay the loan. The assessment was challenged and reevaluated..

1984 Assessment passed.

1994 Assessment passed.

2005 Island County acquired parcels providing access from Deer Lagoon Rd to the dike. (R22913-050-4190 and R22913-059-4480) through a grant from the State Department of Ecology. 22 other parcels around Deer Lagoon, but not related to the function of the dike, were acquired at the same time under the same grant.

Environmental clean-up of contaminated soils on the dikes was completed. This work was funded in part, or in whole by a grant received from the State Department of Ecology.

- 2005 Assessment of \$194.78 / parcel to address the next 10 years of maintenance.
- 2014 Replaced original water level regulator, weir boards, with a fixed device. This resulted in a more consistent maximum level and reduced the need for seasonal readjustment of the weir boards.
- 2015 Assessment of \$238.82 / parcel to address the next 10 years of maintenance.
- 2024 Assessment of \$25.63 / parcel each year for 10 years for maintenance, a total of \$256.33 per parcel.

Largely based on notes from County Engineer Roy Allen for a public hearing on June 23, 1984, as well as legal documents for grants and assessments.