CANAL West Palm Beach Canal — Open

(FOR ACS USE)

STATUS Drainage and commercial

DATES OF CONSTRUCTION & CLOSURE: About 1903-1917

LOCATION (ENDPOINTS OF CANAL): Canal Point(Lake Okeechobee) West Palm Beach

LENGTH: CANAL 40 SLACKWATER -- TOTAL 40

LIFT LOCKS	NBR.	DIMENSIONS	AQUEDUCTS	TUNNELS
	2	25 X 130 ft. LOCK CHAMBER 25 X 135 ft OVERALL ____	NBR. 0 SECTION SIZE 0	0

DESCRIPTION: [Type of navigation, features of note (include USGS coordinates where useful); e.g., feeders (navigable & otherwise), locks other than above, type of locks, use of unusual material or methods of construction, present owner, present use & condition, etc.]

West Palm Beach Canal was the shortest of Main Canals, and deepest of all. Served as drainage and commercial use. No towpaths used. Steam power was available. Gasoline later. Both sternwheelers and screw propellers were used. Boats were roughly 70 X 14-18 ft. beam. Passenger boats of larger size were double deckers & shallow draft. Locks in this canal were of concrete. Width of canal(unknown) but assumed to be from photos about 60-80 ft. Construction on most Main Canals started about 1906. The above canal opened in 1917. At the lake end of each canal in later years was a hurricane gate, weight of 92 tons each. Costing $250,000. Built after 1930. Purpose-to prevent flooding and loss of life which occured in late 1920's. By 1913, 142 miles of canals had been dug at a cost well over $2,000,000.

NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANAL'S PRESERVATION/RESTORATION: (Not on this canal alone)
Everglades Drainage District & Commission.
U.S.Dept of Engineers Corps.
All land owners within the areas involved under flood control projects.

REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: A.W.Gould-5550 Palm Beach Blvd.Fort Myers,Fla. 33905 — Lot# 114 — DATE Jan. 1. 1974

HISTORICAL SUMMARY: [Original aims of company, date of incorporation, prominent engineers, cause of closure, significant alterations to structure or route, height of traffic date, transfers of ownership, etc.]

Drainage of all lands south of Lake Okeechobee to the Everglades over a period of years to the southeast towards the Atlantic Ocean. Several engineers were prominent, two were Mr. F.C.Elliot & J.O.Wright. Traffic dates started at once on all canals when opened, continuing to middle 1920's. Canal still open. Presume small boat traffic only today. Plus the drainage system required to lower the water table. Dr. Wills stated that all canals should be made navigable. Due to lack of highways and railroads in this section of Florida. Limestone formed the canal beds in all canals to the best of our knowledge. Muck was the top soil generally, used for dikes where necessary. Steam dredges used for excavation work.

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: [Published works relating to Canal]

Everglades Eng.Comision-Internal Improvement Fund-State of Florida 1913 Document #379. Everglades Drainage District, Biennial Report 1927-1928, F.C.Elliot Chief Drainage Eng. 44-111-5.
Area maps by U.S.Dept.Engineers. Eng. Drainage Dist. Reports May 1. 1944.

UNPUBLISHED RECORDS, LOCATION OF PHOTOS, DRAWINGS & IMPORTANT PERIODICAL REFERENCES

U.S.Eng. Corps Drawings & Maps.
Okeechobee; Okeechobee-Boats & Skippers photos(both books) Fort Myers Pub-Library. Note-- Total of all locks on canal to be(verified) later.

NATIONAL REGISTER & HAER (HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD) STATUS:

None as far as I know.

RETURN TO: CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE, C/O P.H.STOTT, HAINES ROAD, MOUNT KISCO, NEW YORK 10549

USE ADDITIONAL SHEETS AS NECESSARY.
TO MAKE AN INDEX CARD SUITABLE FOR FILING, CUT ALONG THE HEAVY LINES AND FOLD BACK ALONG THE DOTTED LINE.