

# ARCH CREEK TRUST, INC.

A NOT FOR PROFIT CORPORATION

1855 N.E. 135th Street  
North Miami, Florida 33181

July 8, 1996

Deborah Drum-Duclos  
Project Manager  
South Florida Water Management District  
Suite 412  
1550 Madr<sup>u</sup>~~og~~<sup>a</sup> Ave  
Coral Gables, Fl 33146

RE: Arch Creek Community Action Master Plan  
Final Draft: June 29, 1996

Dear Ms. Drum-Duclos:

On behalf of the Arch Creek Trust, we thank you for providing the community with an opportunity to submit comments by July 12, 1996 to the above-referenced Arch Creek Master Plan ("Plan"). Trust members attended the June 29, 1996 public workshop, all public meetings that were part of this process, as well as all public meetings over the past 22 years involving many of the same issues.

They have reviewed the Plan and submit the following comments with the request that changes to the Final Draft reflect the following:

## Issue 1. Salinity Control Structure

Page 23: "...removing the salinity control structure would be a preferred alternative only when water quality is restored to a level that does not degrade Biscayne Bay".

Arch Creek is a key component to the environmental education that has been ongoing at the almost 10 acre park site since it was acquired by the State of Florida as the Arch Creek State Archaeologic Site, and subsequently added to the National Historic Register, in part because it is a 2,000 year old Tequesta Indian Site. The SFWMD, the Cities of North Miami and North Miami Beach, Dade County and the Trust all contributed funds to rebuild a full scale model of the Natural Bridge (which collapsed in 1973) over the Creek.

The Bridge has always been used to show school children and other visitors to the site the fresh water critters that can be found in the Creek e.g. turtles, ducks, etc. Removing the salinity structure will change Arch Creek into a wholly salt water environment. This will compromise the historic interpretation of the creek.

Request:

1. Delete references to removing the salinity structure from the Plan. This is a public policy decision that requires special discussion and thorough evaluation before any recommendation is made.
2. The Plan states that the salinity structure "now prevents highly degraded water in Arch Creek from flowing into Biscayne Bay". Please add that the structure serves a dual purpose by impounding fresh rain water behind it.

Issue 2: Description of Arch Creek

Page 27 states that "most of the creek has been built over, and what remains is a polluted water-filled ditch hidden away from site."

Arch Creek, as it meanders through the state of Florida Arch Creek Archaeologic site boundaries and immediately to the north and to the south as it flows easterly under Biscayne Boulevard, is following its historic creek bed. It is the only creek in Dade County that was not canalized by either the SFWMD or the Army Corps of Engineers.

Request:

1. Rewrite the paragraph describing Arch Creek so that the Plan is accurate.
2. We request that one word be changed in the Preface, page iii:, line 15 from "**including** improved water quality for Arch Creek and Biscayne Bay" to "**resulting in improved water quality for Arch Creek and Biscayne Bay.**" If the efforts described in the Plan do not result in improved water quality, the objectives of the Biscayne Bay SWIM plan will not be realized.

In closing, the Trust commends you and the Miami District staff for focussing your sister agencies and local government on the neglected and ever-worsening pollution problems in the Creek. We look forward to continue our efforts to assist the SFWMD in the implementation of the Plan.

Very truly yours,

Wesley Wilson, President

Carol Helene, Steering Committee