

s Zap South Florida Power

Blaze Sparks 3-Hour Blackout Affecting 4.5 Million

County overheated two 500-kilovolt transmission lines bringing electricity to South Florida from Georgia, Beck said.

"The heat buildup combined with the power load automatically caused the substations and feed lines around the major transmission lines to shut down. As a result of that, generation plants in South Florida were not at capacity to handle that load and they automatically shut down too so they could gradually build up later," said Gary Forney, FPL government services manager.

Power was shut off to 1.5 million hookups stretching along 100 miles of coast from Wellington in suburban West Palm Beach to Marathon, including the entire cities of Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Boca Raton, Delray Beach and

Boynton Beach, Forney said.

In Palm Beach County, 168,000 customers, or about 504,000 people, were affected. The area affected was mostly south of Lantana Road and east of U.S. 441. Also affected were about 12,000 customers in Loxahatchee and Wellington west of West Palm Beach, utility spokesmen said.

Power was gradually restored, starting at 12:35 p.m., when generators were restarted and power was borrowed from other utilities, Beck said. In Palm Beach County, the restoration started at 12:46 p.m., and all power was restored by 1:33 p.m.

The fire, which had a 10-mile front near the intersection of SR 84 and U.S. 27, shifted away from the transmission lines about 3:30 p.m., and

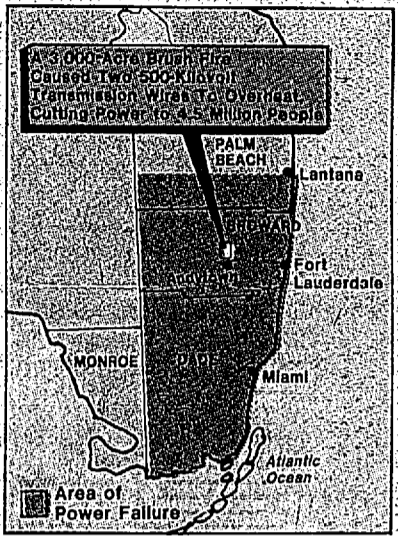
utility-line workers were able to start power surging through the lines again, Beck said. FPL purchases some power from the Southern Co. in Georgia.

Workers and shoppers left their office buildings and malls without lights or airconditioning to spill out into the 90-degree heat.

Banks closed because their computers went down and gas stations could not pump gas, but spokesmen at IBM in Boca Raton and Motorola Inc. in Boynton Beach said they did not suffer a blackout.

Some merchants asked customers to leave their stores to prevent shoplifting, Boca Raton Mall manager Carol Brock said.

The shortage forced cancellation of the eight-



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Loxahatchee: Wild and Scenic



John J. Lopinot/THE POST

Canoeist Bob Bergen admires the scenery along the river

River Named to U.S. List

By Larry Lipman and Linda Lyon
Staff Writers

WASHINGTON — A 7.5-mile stretch of the Loxahatchee River in Palm Beach and Martin counties has been placed under the federal government's protection and designated a part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system.

In a letter mailed yesterday to Gov. Bob Graham, U.S. Interior Secretary Donald Hodel said the Loxahatchee is the first Florida river designated under the federal system and one of the few in the Southeast.

Hodel said the designation, combined with state and local management plans, "will adequately protect the river environment from adverse state and local action." He further commented that the state's application "served to demonstrate that protection of natural resource values of the nation's rivers

does indeed involve a federal-state partnership."

Hodel complimented Florida for promptly applying for federal protection based on the recommendation of a congressionally authorized wild and scenic river study.

The protected area includes the northwest fork of the Loxahatchee River extending from Riverbend Park in Palm Beach County to the southern border of Jonathan Dickinson State Park in Martin County.

The action means that federal projects such as dams, hydroelectric facilities or channelization would be prohibited along the designated area. The state management plan also imposes limitations on development near and discharge into the river.

"It's to a large extent symbolic," said John Haubert, an outdoor recreation planner for the National Park Service who noted that

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most of the river is park land now and the rest is expected to be purchased by the state.

The 7.5-mile segment is the shortest and the first subtropical river in the national system that now includes 66 waterways, Haubert said.

There are two ways a river can be designated part of the system: by an act of Congress or by Interior Department action on a state's request. Usually, the Interior Department designations mean that the river will be managed by the state.

The Loxahatchee is the first river designated by the department since five California rivers were designated in 1981. Congress named five other rivers to the system last year.

All but 12 of the '66 rivers are administered by the Interior Department. The others, like the Loxahatchee, come under a state management plan, Haubert said.

Some state officials and those from Martin and Palm Beach counties had been working for 15 years to attain the designation.

State Sen. William (Doc) Myers (R-Hobe Sound) said the work now begins in earnest.

"We're soon going to find out how well this (state management) thing works," he said.

Palm Beach County officials were concerned when the plan was drafted that it might preempt the power of

local agencies to manage growth.

Those problems had not been resolved completely, said Dick Roberts, a biologist with the state Department of Natural Resources.

"There's still a long road yet," he said. "There will always be encroachments, always."

The next step is for the DNR and South Florida Management District to draft rules to implement the management plan. "That will be an open process" including ample opportunity for public advice, said Al Gregory, DNR chief of policy and planning.

Fred Davis, WMD water chemistry division director, said planners who will be implementing the plan have been working closely with major landholders.

"We recognize that development is going to occur," Davis said. "This is a fast-growing area that is popular to locate in."

The major landowner is the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The foundation offered to donate 903 acres along the river in exchange for revisions to the wild and scenic River plan to accommodate development on the 52,000 acres the foundation owns in north Palm Beach County.

Graham refused to grant those concessions and submitted the plan as drafted. The MacArthur Foundation donation is consequently on hold.