

August 2012 Employee of the Month
Andre Melo, Senior Engineer
Infrastructure Management Bureau

Andre identified a significant cost-saving program within the Florida Department of Transportation called the National Bridge Inventory and Inspection Program, which completes inspections of bridges open to the public. This DOT program allows the transfer of 17 of the District's public access bridges, replacing the District's Bridge Inspection Program which will no longer require funding of \$450,000 in FY13.

Additionally, Andre proposed that field station staff, with proper training, could perform the District's Annual Fall Protection Hardware Inspection Program. If performed by consultants, the estimated cost for FY13 was \$100,000 to cover 90 structures, increasing to \$228,200 to inspect 326 structures in future years. Training cost for staff is estimated at approximately \$27,000 and inspections can be performed while field staff conducts periodic maintenance. Overall, Andre's efforts reduced the District's annual inspection program cost by \$651,200 -- funds that can be used for other Capital Program needs.

Andre proposed, investigated and followed through on these initiatives while performing his regular assigned duties. We recognize and appreciate these outstanding efforts. Congratulations, Andre!

August 2012 Team of the Month

The Nutrient Criteria Rule Team

Team Members:

- Susan Martin
- Christopher Madden
- Kevin Carter
- Joyce Rader
- Elizabeth Woods

This team represented the District in helping to defend the Department of Environmental Protection's nutrient criteria rules. DEP proposed new numeric criteria to more effectively regulate nutrients in certain waters and to respond to federal directives. Certain public interest groups challenged the validity of DEP's proposed rule, and also challenged the validity of existing narrative criterion which remains applicable to certain waters. After a full hearing, the Administrative Law Judge upheld the validity of the DEP rules on June 7, 2012.

Nutrients are an important factor in the District's regulatory program to protect water resources. Restoration and operational projects are also subject to these criteria; therefore, it's important that they be reasonable and practical. The District fully participated in the six-day final hearing in Tallahassee. As in any complex litigation, much effort is required for a well-prepared case and the team worked after hours and weekends. As the only water management district intervening in this case, our team's assistance was much appreciated by DEP. Congratulations to all of you!