

## 35 Years Service Recognition

Wesley P. Ficht, Jr. – Crew Chief  
Miami Field Station

Wes was hired on September 4, 1973, as a Fieldman 1, and within two months he was promoted to Fieldman 2, which is what we now call Equipment Operator 1. Three years later he was promoted to Equipment Operator 2. Wes cut trees, operated heavy equipment, and worked as a Tow Boat Operator. He operated boats in Miami, West Palm, Clewiston, and Okeechobee Field Stations. He also assisted Southwest Water Management District in clearing a jam on the Myakka River with the use of the “Water Witch” to relieve flooding in the area. In 1989 he was promoted to Craft Supervisor (towboats).

Six years later he was reassigned to supervise the mowing program. In 1992 with less than 24-hour notice, Wes was asked to assist the St. Johns River Water Management District in removing a debris blockage at the State Road 192 overpass. This operation lasted over two weeks. Shortly thereafter he was challenged with the clean up of Hurricane Andrew. In May of 1993, again Wes was asked to lead a crew of two boats to Lake Trafford for tussocks removal. This event was completed within three days. This project was a success due to Wes and his team’s effort. In 1996 he was acting Operations Director for two months and was later asked to assist with the outsourcing of the mowing program. In 1999 his position was reclassified to Crew Chief where he leads a team of 11 employees to ensure maintenance of vegetation, debris removal and special projects such as tree removal. Recently, Wes was a member of the Team of the Month for July '08.

Wes has been a dedicated and resourceful employee and we appreciate his many years of service.