



Wild Blue, Yonder

Massive development is awash in GNSS technology



In an area rich with development of planned-communities, Mitchell & Stark Construction (MSC) excels at bringing many of those to life. On one such project, Wild Blue, outside of Ft. Myers, Florida, the company drew upon the strengths of its GNSS-equipped fleet to tackle both the underwater excavation and earthmoving phases of the job. Doing so, they say, streamlined the operation from a standpoint of both time and manpower.

Key to the design and functionality of Wild Blue was the creation of several lakes on the 3,000-acre site. The sloping and excavation for those features — done underwater in cases when dewatering is not possible — has long been a challenge for companies like MSC, according to Chris Anderson, one of the company's project managers.

Featured Company

Mitchell & Stark Construction

Project Scope

Massive earthmoving effort combined with creation of lakes for the creation of a 3,000-acre planned community

Solutions Used

X-53i, Sitelink3D, and 3D-MCMAx

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“In those cases, where digging under water while maintaining the 4:1 or 6:1 slopes is necessary, the X53i system is invaluable for us,” he said.

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When creating a slope underwater, the technology has made looking at marks on the stick of the machine — a slow and laborious task — a thing of the past.

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Chris Anderson, Mitchell & Stark Construction

“Now an operator is able to look at a screen and see the bucket under water, relative to where they need to be. His or her work becomes little more than a material handling operation — it’s been amazing for us.”

Using the solution, the bucket movement for each of MSC’s excavators is tracked in real time, delivering key information to reach grade repeatedly. The software component of the package directs the operator to centerlines and guides the bucket to grade, thereby eliminating over-excavation — even in a blind situation such as underwater excavation.

When MSC migrated to GNSS in 2016, they also opted to embrace Sitelink3D, a communication and management solution. Designed as a means to provide office-to-machine, machine-to-office and machine-to-machine connectivity, Sitelink3D has proven invaluable as MSC’s job sites — and client list — continue to grow. According to Anderson, the systems they use have fit well with their overall trajectory as they move forward.

“My old boss used to say: ‘variance is the enemy of efficiency,’ and I think that holds true in this industry as well,” said Anderson. “At MSC, we are trying to turn construction into more of a manufacturing environment model where we can control as many variables as possible. With the Topcon solutions and the ways in which we use them, I am able to push that scale of variables a little bit more towards the good side.”



A [full-length version](#) of this story is on the Topcon website.



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