



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## OPERATIONS UPDATE

Sept. 14, 2016

### **Operations Update: SFWMD Taking Additional Measures to Relieve Water Conservation Area 3A Flooding**

**Miami, FL** - The South Florida Water Management District this week began taking additional operational measures to move more water south out of Water Conservation Area 3A to relieve the high water conditions in that natural area caused by recent rainfall.

The SFWMD is using the S-334 structure to move 250 cubic feet per second of clean water from the conservation area south through the C-111 South Dade Conveyance System that includes the C-111 Canal where some of it will be sent to Biscayne Bay.

In addition, water managers are also using the S-39, S-38 and S-31 structures to move excess water out of the conservation area to help relieve high water levels.

These operational step increase the amount of water that can be moved out of Water Conservation Area 3A by an additional 807.7 million gallons of water per day, until the water levels are returned to regulation levels.

"Water Conservation Area 3A is a critical part of the District's system of cleaning and moving water south as well as a critical piece of the Everglades ecosystem," said SFWMD Chief Engineer John Mitnik. "We will always utilize whatever feasible operational measures to relieve high water levels in this area for the benefit of the wildlife, the Everglades and the entire water management system."

Currently, because of heavy rainfall throughout South Florida over the past month the water level in Water Conservation Area 3A is at approximately 10.7 feet. That is a half-foot above the prescribed regulation level for wildlife health and 1.5 feet higher than the water level was at this time last year.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has closed the conservation area to recreation because of the high water levels, which can cause wildlife drowning concerns. High water levels in this conservation area also hinder the District's ability to move water south from Lake Okeechobee to reduce the need for the U.S. Army Corps to make releases to the coastal estuaries for flood protection after heavy rainfall events.

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*The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages the water resources in the southern part of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. Our mission is to protect South Florida's water resources by balancing and improving flood control, water supply, water quality and natural systems.*

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