

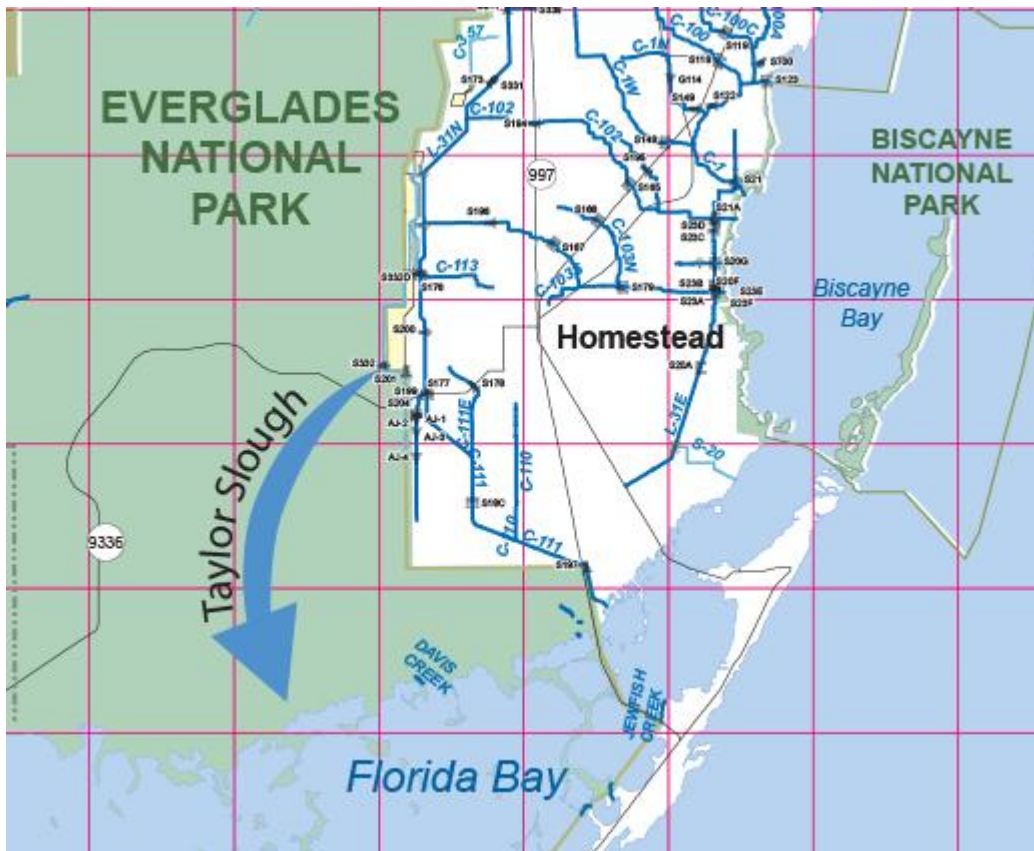


SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

July 14, 2016

Moving Water South Into Florida Bay SFWMD Governing Board approves operational plan to help ecosystem in need



The plan will deliver more water through Taylor Slough to balance salinity and help seagrasses in Florida Bay.

West Palm Beach, FL - The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board today approved an innovative plan to deliver more fresh water to Florida Bay.

The changes are estimated to double flow of water into the headwaters of Taylor Slough by as much as 6.5 billion gallons more freshwater per year on average that would reach the thirsty bay. This will help save the bay by reducing salinity levels and promoting the recovery of seagrasses killed during a severe drought in the summer of 2015. The plan involves using canals, weirs, pump stations and other structures to

promote direct flow into Taylor Slough and sheet flow through the S-332D Detention Area into the slough, which connects to Florida Bay.

"We will put water where it is desperately needed to help this delicate and rare ecosystem recover from the impact of last year's drought in Florida Bay," said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Daniel O'Keefe. "These solutions, devised by our world class innovative staff, will become a major part of saving the bay. This is a win for Monroe County, a win for the environment and a win for all Floridians."

The improvements, some of which require permission from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection will cost the SFWMD between \$1.8 million and \$3.3 million and could be completed before the start of the next dry season in November.

Required features of the plan include::

- Connecting a flow way from the S-200 Pump Station to the L-31 West Canal to send more water towards Taylor Slough.
- Rebuilding a levee and weir and adding plugs along the L-31 West Canal to encourage the flow of more water towards Taylor Slough. This will also keep more water in Everglades National Park.
- Removing flapgates at the S-332i Pump Station to promote more flow.
- Pump additional water through the S-328 structure into the L-31 West Canal reaching Taylor Slough.

Supplemental features of the plan that will also help deliver more water include:

- Installing several plugs in the L-31 West Canal to reduce seepage from Everglades National Park and the S-332D Pump Station into the C-111 Canal and to promote overland flow of water into Taylor Slough.
- Modifying a weir at the S-332D structure to promote overland flow of water to the headwaters of Taylor Slough.
- Increasing the pumping capacity at S-199 and S-200 pump stations, which will send more water flowing towards Taylor Slough, the Aerojet Canal and Everglades National Park, ultimately, reaching Florida Bay.
- Removing vegetation to increase the amount of water flowing through the detentions areas into Taylor Slough.

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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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