



# SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

January 13, 2012

Secretary Herschel Vinyard  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
3900 Commonwealth Blvd, MS 49  
Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000

Dear Secretary Vinyard:

**Subject: 2012 Priority Water Body List and Schedule**

The South Florida Water Management District (District) is pleased to submit for your consideration the 2012 Priority Water Body List and Schedule for the establishment of Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs) as required by Section 373.042(2), Florida Statutes (F.S.). The District Governing Board approved the 2012 Priority Water Body List and Schedule for Minimum Flows and Levels on December 15, 2011 (see attached resolution and Attachment A).

As discussed during our meetings with Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) staff on October 20, 2011 and December 9, 2011, the list and schedule included in Attachment A demonstrates our continuing commitment to evaluate new information for the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary and Florida Bay to determine if a revision of the MFL can be supported. Data collection will continue and additional studies are planned in the future to gain a better understanding of the relationships between salinity and fresh water inflows. The technical analysis for Florida Bay will be finalized in FY2012 and will provide the foundation for decision making in 2013 regarding whether an update to the existing MFL criteria is needed.

Separate from the Priority Water Body List, the Governing Board has also provided policy direction to staff concerning the ongoing water reservation rulemaking efforts for the Caloosahatchee River and Biscayne Bay. The Governing Board directed staff to develop a water reservation for natural system water associated with two Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) projects, the CERP Caloosahatchee River (C-43) West Basin Storage Reservoir Project and the CERP Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project (Phase 1). This rulemaking effort is expected to be completed in 2012.

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We look forward to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's review and approval of this year's Priority Water Body List. If you have any questions, please contact Terrie Bates, Water Resources Division at (561) 682-6952 or [tbates@sfwmd.gov](mailto:tbates@sfwmd.gov).

Sincerely,



Melissa L. Meeker  
Executive Director  
South Florida Water Management District

MLM/dm  
Enclosures

c: Greg Munson, DEP  
Kathleen Greenwood, DEP  
Dr. Ann Shortelle, DEP

1 SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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3 RESOLUTION NO. 2011 - 1201

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5 A RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA  
6 WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT TO AUTHORIZE SUBMITTAL OF THE  
7 PROPOSED 2012 PRIORITY WATER BODY LIST AND SCHEDULE FOR MINIMUM  
8 FLOWS AND LEVELS TO THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
9 PROTECTION FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL PURSUANT TO SECTION  
10 373.042(2), FLORIDA STATUTES; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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12 WHEREAS, the South Florida Water Management District is required by  
13 Section 373.042(2), Florida Statutes, to conduct an annual update of the Priority Water  
14 Body List for Minimum Flows and Levels to reflect changing water resource  
15 management priorities, such as the importance of the waters to the region and  
16 existence of or potential for significant harm to the water resources; and

17  
18 WHEREAS, prior to finalizing their updated Minimum Flows and Levels Priority  
19 Water Body List and Schedule annually, the water management districts are required  
20 to forward it to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for its review and  
21 approval; and

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23 WHEREAS, the proposed 2012 Priority Water Body List and Schedule for  
24 Minimum Flows and Levels considers the differing resource issues addressed by  
25 minimum flows and levels based on staffing and technical resources to ensure  
26 successful completion of rulemaking; and

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28 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Board of the South  
29 Florida Water Management District:

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31 **Section 1.** The Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District  
32 hereby approves submission of the proposed 2012 Priority Water Body List and  
33 Schedule for Minimum Flows and Levels to the Florida Department of Environmental  
34 Protection for review and approval pursuant to Section 373.042(2), Florida Statutes.

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36 **Section 2.** A copy of the proposed 2012 Priority Water Body List and Schedule for  
37 Minimum Flows and Levels is attached hereto and made a part hereof.

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39 **Section 3.** This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

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41 PASSED and ADOPTED this 15<sup>th</sup> day of December 2011.  
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Resolution No. 2011-1201

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SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT  
DISTRICT, BY ITS GOVERNING BOARD

BY: Joe Collins  
Chair

ATTEST:

Jackie McGarty  
District Clerk/Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

BY: Beth O. Lewis  
Office of Counsel

**Attachment A**  
**South Florida Water Management District**  
**2012 Priority Water Body List and Schedule**  
**Minimum Flows and Levels**

**Caloosahatchee River and Estuary – MFL Evaluation**

- Quantify the habitat value of *Vallisneria* in 2014.
- Continue data collection and its analysis for the Tidal Basin including its tributaries, develop a model and apply it to understand the sources and their contribution to the Caloosahatchee Estuary through 2014.
- Investigate effects of MFL flows on oysters, benthic macrofauna zooplankton, ichthyoplankton and phytoplankton through 2015.
- Apply hydrodynamic/salinity/*Vallisneria* models and develop a return frequency to improve the existing MFL criteria for the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary through 2015.
- Complete technical analysis and its documentation in 2016
- Complete peer review in 2017.
- Submit rule to Office of Fiscal Accountability and Regulatory Reform for review per the Executive Order Number 11-72 in 2017.
- Present draft rule to Governing Board to consider for adoption in 2017.

**Florida Bay - MFL Evaluation**

For Florida Bay, the technical evaluation and documentation of the existing MFL criteria will be complete in FY2012. Whether to update the MFL rule will be evaluated and considered in 2013.

# Existing Minimum Flows and Levels Water Bodies

- **MFL Prevention Waterbodies**

- Biscayne aquifer - 2001
- Lower West Coast aquifers - 2001
- St Lucie Estuary - 2002
- Lake Istokpoga - 2006
- ★ — Florida Bay – 2006

- **MFL Recovery Waterbodies**

- Lake Okeechobee - 2001
- Everglades (5 MFL's) - 2001
- ★ — Caloosahatchee River - 2001
- Northwest Fork of Loxahatchee River - 2002

- ★ Proposed for the 2012 Priority Water Body List and Schedule

