



## SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

# GET THE FACTS

**The Huffington Post reported Monday that Everglades restoration efforts – including protection of the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie estuaries – have been seriously impaired by South Florida Water Management District Governing Board not purchasing U.S. Sugar land.**

The SFWMD Governing Board prudently took the opposite view – that Everglades restoration would have been impaired if the District made such a purchase.

**Bottom line: The 2010 option to buy patches of U.S. Sugar land is a lousy deal that would have allowed U.S. Sugar to run the table on Florida taxpayers.**

Here's why:

- The purchase option requires the purchase of all 46,800 acres of U.S. Sugar property scattered throughout the Everglades Agricultural Area, making development of the reservoirs that advocates want astronomically expensive.
- The purchase option lets U.S. Sugar keep sugarcane farming for 20 years. The contract negotiated in 2010 with U.S. Sugar contains a 20-year "leaseback." Of the 46,800 acres in the option, the District could access only 1,100 acres – cannibalizing money to buy land actually needed for Everglades restoration.
- The U.S. Sugar land is in the wrong place. A great deal for U.S. Sugar but a raw deal for Florida taxpayers.

# # #

*The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages 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.*