River Restoration Land Acquisition

Over the past 10 years, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has acquired about 125,000 acres of land along the Kissimmee River and its tributaries. Approximately 10,000 acres have been put into flood control. This land will enhance flood protection for the Kissimmee Basin communities, and will provide recreation opportunities for residents. The SFWMD and its partners are also using these lands to create new habitats for fish and wildlife.

Today the river is home to more than 28 species of migratory birds and a variety of small mammals and reptiles. The river also supports a diverse fish community, including largemouth bass, bluegill, and redhorse sucker. The Kissimmee River Reservoir, which is located on the river, provides water for drinking, irrigation, and recreation.

Flood Control Structures, River Use Require Caution

Be careful and respectful when using flood control structures. The structures were built to provide flood protection, but they can also be used as retirement areas for boaters. Please be courteous to other boaters, and do not use the structures for mooring or storage.

During the non-navigable season, June 1 to September 30, there are no lock and dam operations. Boats can use the structures to get through the river, but they must not use the structures for mooring or storage.

Lock Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lock</th>
<th>Hours of Operation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>24 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locks 6, 7, 8, 9, 10</td>
<td>24 hours</td>
</tr>
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Boaters are encouraged to use the structures during the non-navigable season, but they must not use the structures for mooring or storage.

Kissimmee River Restoration

The Kissimmee River Restoration is a multi-year project that is transforming the river into a more natural and self-sustaining ecosystem. The project includes the construction of new locks, the removal of old locks, and the creation of new habitats for fish and wildlife.

During the non-navigable season, June 1 to September 30, there are no lock and dam operations. Boats can use the structures to get through the river, but they must not use the structures for mooring or storage.

Welcome to the Kissimmee Waterway

The Kissimmee Waterway is a unique and scenic waterway, perfect for boating and fishing. The river is home to a variety of fish, including largemouth bass, bluegill, and redhorse sucker. The river is also home to a variety of wildflowers, including the state flower, the purple hibiscus.

To receive up-to-date information about navigation on the Kissimmee Waterway, please visit www.sfwmd.gov (click on “waterways”).
West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680
September 2008
MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 24680

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3301 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, Florida 33406
561-686-8800 • 800-432-2045
www.sfwmd.gov

Restoring Natural Curves and Habitats

The Kissimmee River continues to attract hundreds of people, eagerly looking for new ways to enjoy nature. The South Florida Water Management District project, known as Restoring Natural Curves and Habitats, is an ongoing restoration effort that is transforming the Kissimmee River into a meandering, less regulated waterway.

Instead of the straight, concrete-lined channels typical of the Kissimmee River, the restored river will feature natural curves and habitats that are essential for the health of the ecosystem and the river itself. The project is designed to mimic the natural flow of the river, allowing it to change course and create new habitats for plants and animals.

The project, which began in the late 1990s, is expected to take several years to complete. During this time, some of the river's natural curves and habitats will be blocked or diverted, but the overall goal is to create a more natural, self-sustaining ecosystem that will benefit all who visit the river.

The restored river will feature a variety of habitats, including wetlands, meadows, and forests, as well as diverse fish and wildlife populations. The river will also feature a number of man-made structures, such as locks and weirs, which will be designed to allow water to flow freely and support the natural flow of the river.

The Kissimmee River is a vital part of the region's ecosystem, supporting a diverse array of plants and animals. The river's restoration will help to ensure that it remains a healthy and sustainable ecosystem for generations to come.
Birds Flock Back to Physically
Restored Sections of the River

Over the course of many years, the Kissimmee River was channelized to create flood control canals and physical separation between wetland and wildlife habitats. In 1968, the state of Florida purchased most of the land along the Kissimmee River to conserve the historic river channel and establish a channel for flood control. However, the river corridor was not pristine. The river was divided into five separate channels by 14 locks and 13 dam releases, with vertical clearances of 11.5 feet or more. Locks and dam releases were very infrequent, resulting in high water levels and the absence of natural flow. The Kissimmee River between State Road 60 and Lake Okeechobee is one of the most beautiful and exciting recreation areas in the state. Whether beginning in the headwaters of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, Lake Okeechobee or any place in between, you are sure to witness some of Florida’s most spectacular natural areas.

Flood Control Structures, River Use Require Caution

Welcome to the Kissimmee Waterway . . .

As more natural flow returned to the river, the wildlife responded. Although the Kissimmee River still includes several navigation facilities, it again flows naturally through the wetlands east of State Road 60, from the Matlacha Canal to Lake Okeechobee. The Kissimmee River between State Road 60 and Lake Okeechobee is one of the most beautiful and exciting recreation areas in the state. Whether beginning in the headwaters of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, Lake Okeechobee or any place in between, you are sure to witness some of Florida’s most spectacular natural areas.

Several years ago, FWC filed a lawsuit to challenge the US Army Corps of Engineers and the US Army Corps of Engineers’ decision to remove the locks and dam releases on the Kissimmee River. Although the Corps decided to keep the locks and dam releases, they agreed to work with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to ensure that navigation needs are met while protecting the environment.

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and the Corps have been working to restore the Kissimmee River since 1997. The project includes the removal of the locks and dam releases and the reestablishment of natural flow and floodplain function. The project is expected to be completed by 2013. Ecological monitoring will extend through 2018.

In response to periodic flooding, the 1960s channelization of the river destroyed much of the river’s natural habitat. As a result, the river became a series of disconnected channels, with vertical clearances of 11.5 feet or more. Locks and dam releases were very infrequent, resulting in high water levels and the absence of natural flow. The Kissimmee River between State Road 60 and Lake Okeechobee is one of the most beautiful and exciting recreation areas in the state. Whether beginning in the headwaters of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, Lake Okeechobee or any place in between, you are sure to witness some of Florida’s most spectacular natural areas.

Top Ten Rules for Boater Safety

1. Always wear a personal flotation device while the boat is in motion.
2. Be aware of other boaters, swimmers and waders, and watch for wildlife.
3. Wear a life jacket or personal flotation device while boating.
4. Keep working plugs or gates closed when navigating through lock and dam areas.
5. Know the rules of the road and follow all safety instructions.
6. Wear a seat belt when boating.
7. Keep boats and fishing gear safe and secure.
8. Be sure to check your vessel’s fuel capacity and always carry extra fuel.
9. Be aware of your surroundings, particularly when operating near boating areas.
10. Always be prepared for emergencies and carry a first aid kit.
BOATERS: USE CAUTION

For up-to-date information about restoration construction projects that may impact navigation and/or to find current water levels, contact the Orlando or Okeechobee Service Center.

Kissimmee Waterway Bridge Data

<table>
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<td>CSX RR</td>
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( ZIPPER Bridge)
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