



## **Public Use at Everglades Stormwater Treatment Areas**

15<sup>th</sup> Annual Public Meeting on the Long-Term Plan for Achieving Water Quality  
Goals for Everglades Protection Area Tributary Basins  
February 23, 2018

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**Land Stewardship Section**  
**Field Operations and Land Management Division**

# Public Use at Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs)

## ■ Public Use on District Lands

- Why have Public Use?
- Policy and Rules
- Recreation Partnerships
- STAs
- A-1 Flow Equalization Basin



# Public Use Program Background Information

## Why Have Public Use?

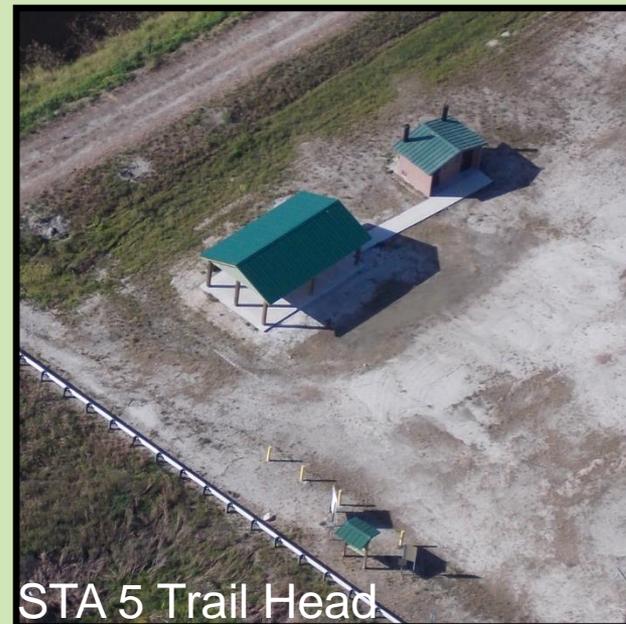
- **373.4592 “the district shall allow these areas to be used by the public for recreational purposes... unless such uses are incompatible with the restoration goals of the Everglades Construction Project..”**
- **SFWMD created**
  - **Public Use Policy**
  - **Public Use Rules**



# Public Use Program Background Information

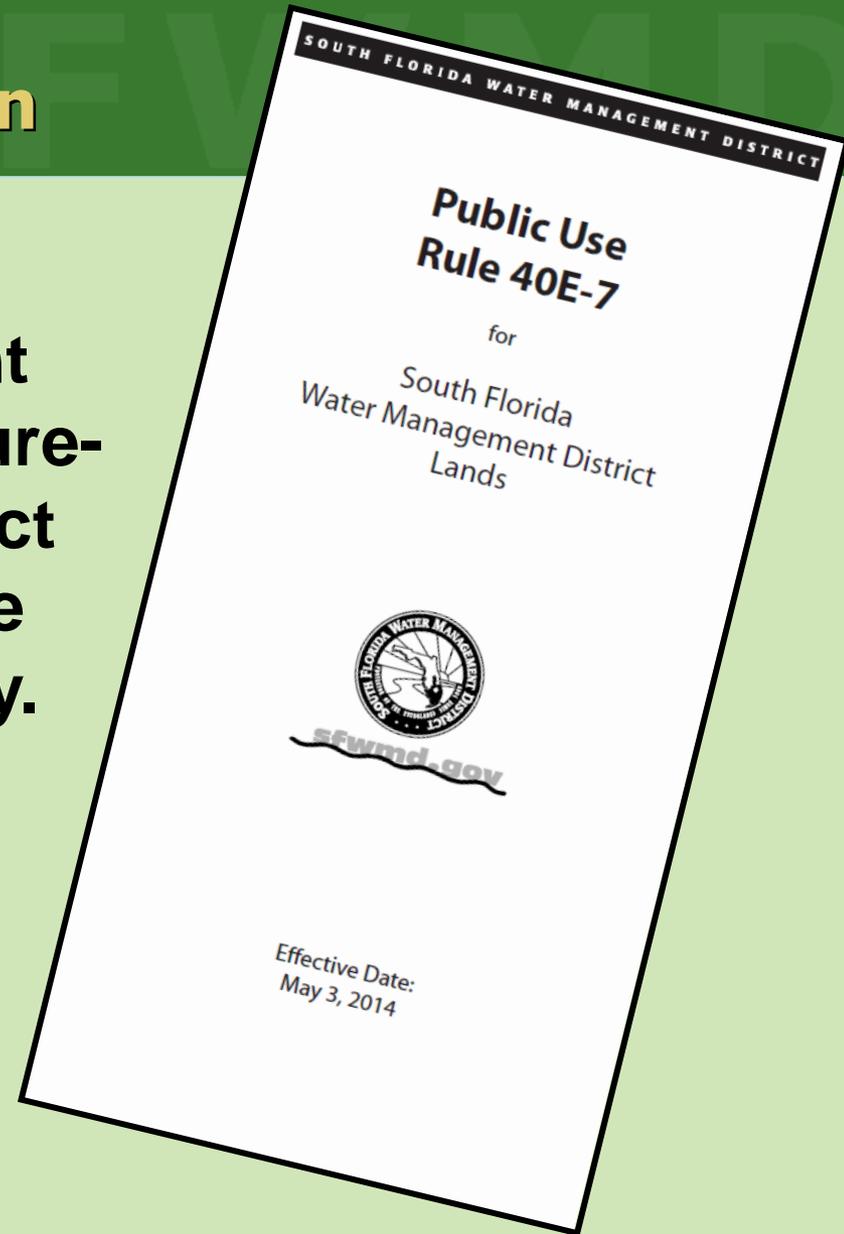
## Public Use Policy

- **Public Participation**
  - Recreation Issues Forum
- **Project Purposes First**
  - Different rules for different types of lands
- **Project Planning and Construction**
  - Incorporate recreation facilities in project



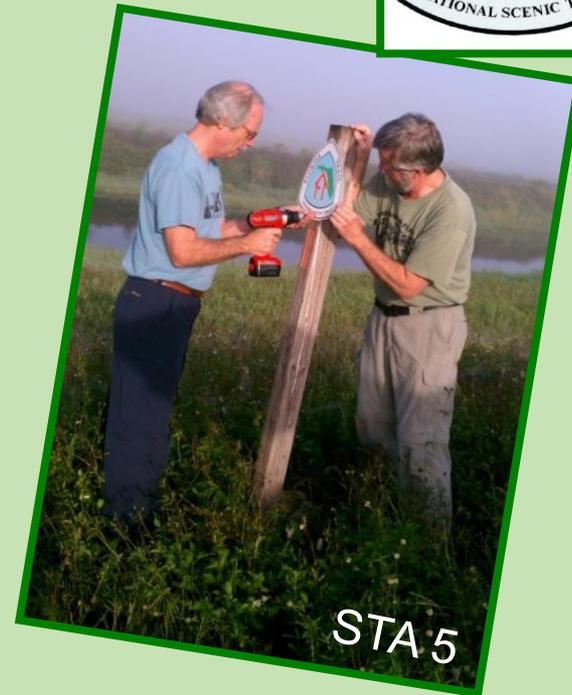
# Public Use Program Background Information

- **Public Use Rule 40E-7**
  - Rules provide commitment for public access and nature-based recreation on District lands consistent with state statutes and District policy.
  - Types of Land include:
    - Conservation
    - Interim
    - Right of Way
    - Project Lands



## Public Use Program Partnerships – Audubon, Florida Trail

- Audubon Society- Cooperative guided bird-watching tours on the STAs.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Audubon tour in 2005 at STA 5, now 3 Chapters leading over 65 tours with 1,600+ participants at STAs, 1E, 2, and 5,
- Florida Trail Association



# Public Use Program Partnerships- FWC

Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Waterfowl & alligator, quotas  
Specialty Hunts  
Youth and wounded warrior  
Enforce all public use rules



**STA 5  
Boardwalk**



STA 2

**Wounded Warrior Outdoors**



STA 2

**Youth Hunts**

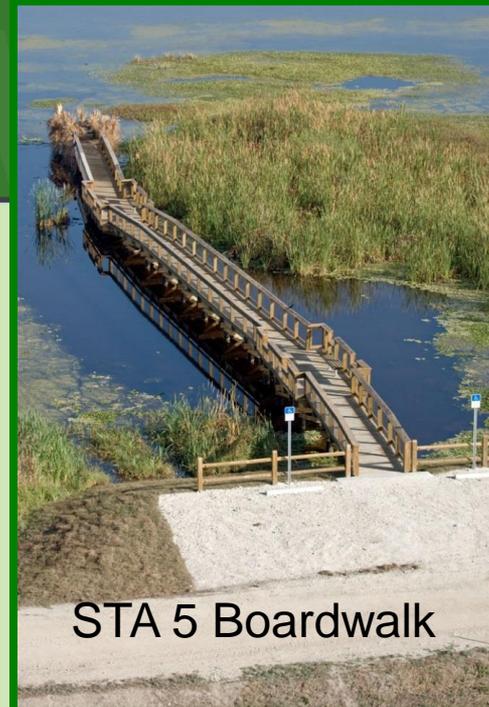
## Public Use on STAs

- Project / Constructed Wetlands
  - Stormwater Treatment Areas

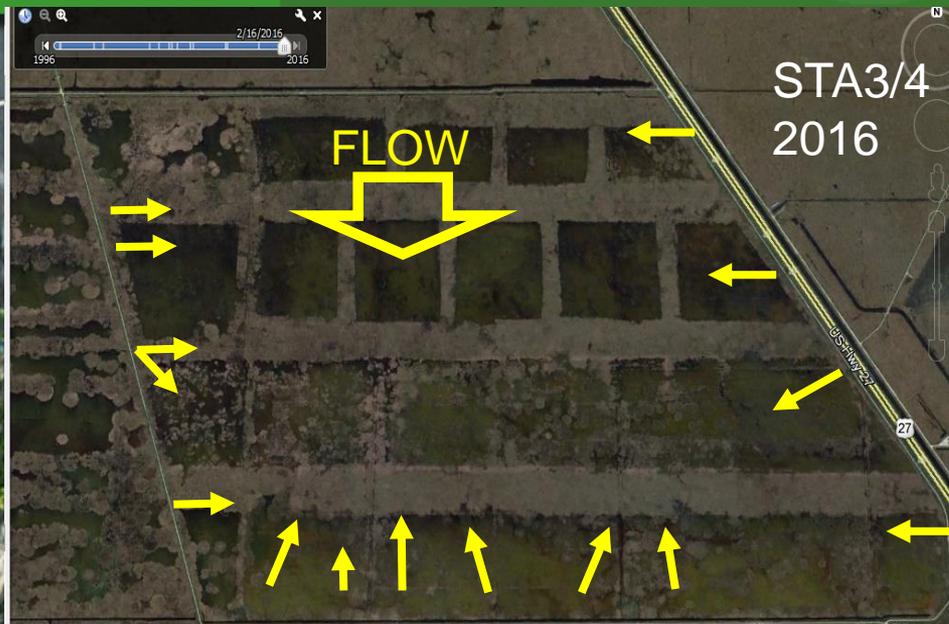


## STA Activities and Facilities

- Public access, open on “extended weekends” Fri. – Mon.
- Daylight hours
- Bird watching, hiking, biking
- Fishing
- FWC hunting alligator and waterfowl
  - Friday Waterfowl hunts
    - STA 1W STA 3/4



# STA Waterfowl Hunting, Project Purposes First 2016-17 Season Change Pattern of Access



- Typical access was through openings in emergent plants
- Using access site parallel to flow contributes to short circuits



- Change access to cross flow
- Access through vegetation not openings

# STA Waterfowl Hunting Change Access



# STA Bank Fishing 1E, 1W, 3/4 December 2016



## STA 1W and 3/4

- Within the existing public use area
- During existing times, F-M daylight hours
- Existing areas already avoid many structures
- Not in experimental PSTA Cells
- STA 1E
  - Eliminate catch and release

# A-1 Flow Equalization Basin Activities and Facilities



- **Activities-  
Opened to Public  
Use Sept 2017**
  - **Open - Fri, Sat,  
Sun, 24hr/day**
  - **Non-motorized  
boats, allowing  
electric trolling  
motors**
  - **Licensed  
motorized  
vehicles for all  
public uses  
during hunting  
season**

A-1 FEB

# A-1 Flow Equalization Basin Activities and Facilities

- **Activities**
  - **FWC Hunting and Other Public Uses Simultaneously**
    - Waterfowl and alligators, quota hunts
    - Hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, fishing and frogging



A-1 FEB

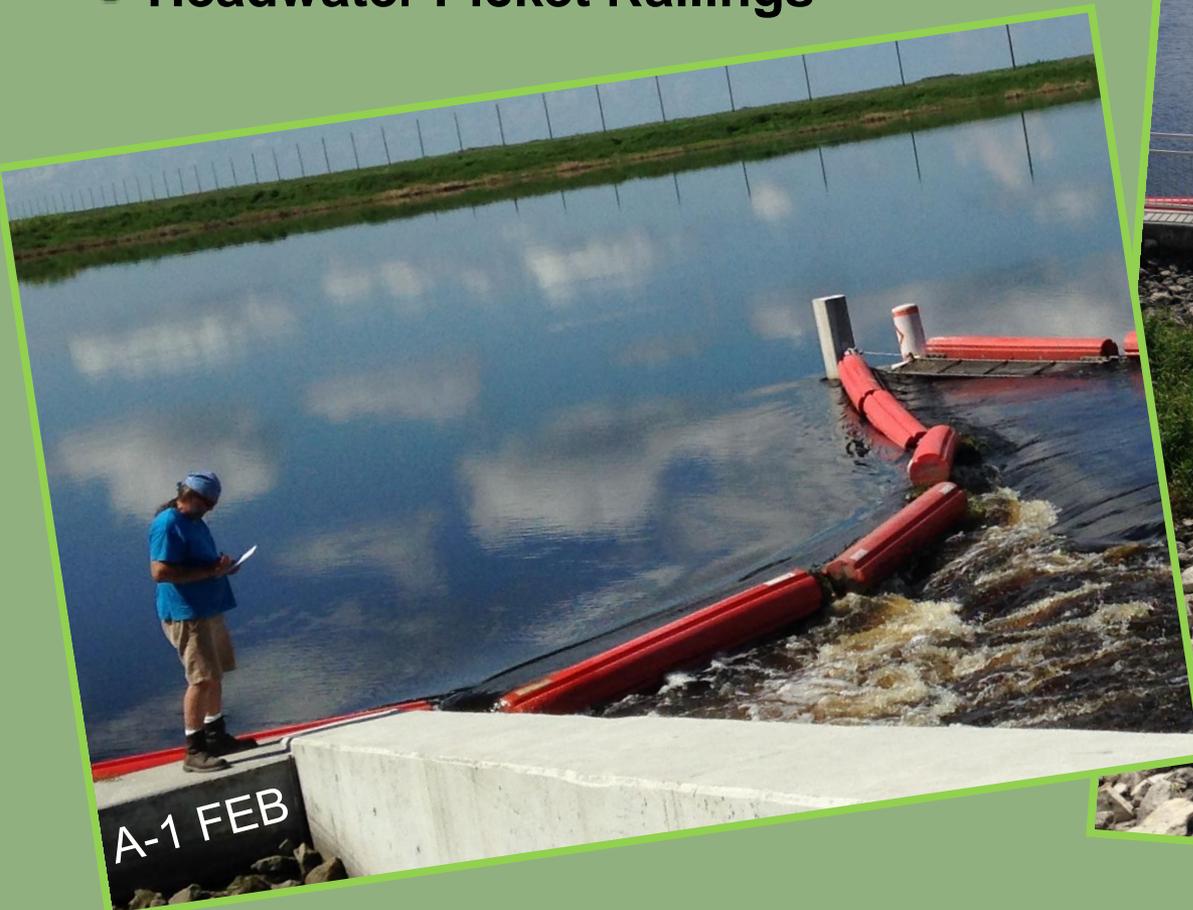
# A-1 Flow Equalization Basin Activities and Facilities

- Activities
- FWC/SFWMD collecting alligator mercury samples



# A-1 Flow Equalization Basin Activities and Facilities

- Facilities
- Headwater Picket Railings



# A-1 Flow Equalization Basin Activities and Facilities

- Facilities
- Warning Signs at Entrances, Boat Ramps and Syphon



# Thank You



Loxahatchee River