



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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SFWMD Joins Calusa Nature Center to Open Estuary Touch Tank

District provided funding for exhibit to increase estuarine awareness



WHAT:

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is joining the Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium to officially open the Center's new Estuary Touch Tank on Thursday. The District partnered with the Center, a private, not-for-profit environmental education organization, by funding a display to educate the public about the Caloosahatchee Estuary.

The 1,000-gallon touch tank features native crustaceans, mollusks, fish, echinoderms and other animals that visitors can touch while learning about the delicate balance required to maintain a healthy and productive estuary. In addition to the tank, the exhibit includes an educational video, an interpretive brochure and graphics that highlight the variety of species found in the estuarine environment. It will serve as a conversation starter about water management in the Caloosahatchee River's watershed, which stretches from Lake Okeechobee to the Gulf of Mexico.

In December, the SFWMD Governing Board took another step toward protecting and improving the health of the Caloosahatchee Estuary by approving the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection Plan. The plan is designed to build upon existing and planned programs and projects to enhance water storage and quality in the estuary and watershed.

For more information on the Watershed Protection Plan and other parts of the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program, please visit www.sfwmd.gov/northerneverglades.

WHEN: Thursday, January 29, 2009

TIME: 1 p.m.

WHERE: Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium
3450 Ortiz Ave.
Fort Myers, FL 33905

WHO: SFWMD Governing Board member Charles Dauray and Bob Soter, president of the Calusa Nature Center Board of Trustees, will be attending a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

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About the South Florida Water Management District – [Celebrating 60 Years \(1949-2009\)](#)

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.