



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406

MEDIA ADVISORY

April 20, 2009

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SFWMD Apple Snail Tag and Release Experiment to Benefit Everglades, Florida Wildlife

The release of 1,600 apple snails is expected to provide fast data for scientists



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[**Apple Snail Photo Gallery**](#)

WHAT: Scientists from the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) will tag and release approximately 1,600 apple snails in an experiment designed to study reestablishing the significant species in Lake Okeechobee. Apple snails are an important food source for endangered snail kites, baby alligators and other wildlife. The snail release supports the District's Everglades and ecosystem restoration efforts.

Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute will deliver the snails, hatched from eggs collected in Lake Kissimmee in 2008, to a District science lab in West Palm Beach. The noted Fort Pierce institute has been a longtime

SFWMD partner in researching strategies and utilizing aquaculture to replenish the species in the wild, especially to benefit the endangered snail kite.

Scientists at the lab will use a special glue to attach plastic tags to the mollusk shells in an assembly-line fashion. The next day, SFWMD scientists plan to release the snails in a lakeside marsh. There will be space on District vessels for the media to document the release up close and talk with the scientists. The SFWMD will make available still photographs and B-Roll video for those who cannot attend.

Researchers will return to the release site every two to three days to collect data, and they expect to have significant information on survival rates and other key indicators in about a month. The data collected will aid the District and its partners in restoring and protecting the Everglades and its wildlife.

WHEN:

| APPLE SNAIL TAGGING | APPLE SNAIL RELEASE |
|--|--|
| Wednesday, April 22, 2009 | Thursday, April 23, 2009 |
| 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. | 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. |
| SFWMD Chemistry/Biology Lab 1480 Skees Road West Palm Beach, FL 33411: MAP | Jaycee Park Okeechobee, FL MAP |

RSVP: Please RSVP to either [Gabe Margasak](#) or [Randy Smith](#) as space on the research boats is limited.

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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.