



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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**CONTACT:**

**Bill Graf**

[Orlando Service Center](#)

South Florida Water Management District

Office: (407) 858-6100, ext. 3837 or Cellular: (407) 908-4764

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### **Water Managers Open St. Cloud Field Station to Enhance Protection of Water Resources, Flood Control**

*Location, technology improve regional flood protection*

**Orlando, FL** – The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and local officials today dedicated the District’s 25,237-square-foot St. Cloud Field Station, representing an important step forward in enhancing the management and protection of the region’s water resources. The \$11.3 million St. Cloud Field Station sits at the northern reaches of the 16 counties served by the District and includes state-of-the-art communications and operational systems to improve flood control and water management capabilities.

“The cities of St. Cloud and Kissimmee, along with Polk, Osceola and Orange counties, will see considerable benefits from this new facility,” said SFWMD Governing Board Vice-Chair Jerry Montgomery. “The technological advances mean dramatic improvements in flood protection for all the communities of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes.”

The SFWMD’s eight field stations and their crews are integral components in the operation of the regional flood control and water management system. Located at the headwaters of the Kissimmee River, the technologically advanced St. Cloud Field Station replaces the 14,700-square-foot Kissimmee Field Station in operating and maintaining the flood control system from south Orange County through the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and into the Kissimmee River. The facility is responsible for managing water through 46 miles of canals, 14 water control structures, 107 culverts, three navigation boat locks and a pump station.

The facility’s flood control system also regulates water levels set by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers within the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, which encompasses approximately 107,000 surface acres.

Among the improvements built into the new facility is a microwave communication system that allows water managers to operate the flood control system remotely, including monitoring and managing flows immediately before and during severe storms. Until now, safety protocols required that flood control structures in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes had to be set prior to a storm based on weather predictions.

Additionally, the new St. Cloud Field Station location, which is immediately south of Osceola County Road on Old Canoe Creek Road, increases operating efficiency by reducing travel time to the flood control system's canals and water-control structures. The field station has been under construction since January 2007 and will house 36 employees.

For more information about the regional flood control system, please visit [www.sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov).

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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.*