



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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**CONTACT:**

**Randy Smith**

South Florida Water Management District

Office: (561) 682-2800 or Cellular: (561) 389-3386

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### **SFWMD Upgrades Critical Port St. Lucie Flood Control Structure** *Ensures regional flood control system operating at full capability*



*(Click on the picture for a larger version.)*

**Port St. Lucie, FL** – The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) recently completed a major upgrade of a vital flood control structure in order to protect Port St. Lucie residents and businesses well into the future.

“The upgrade will help ensure this local component of the regional flood control system is in top working order,” said SFWMD Governing Board member Kevin Powers.

“Ongoing improvement of our infrastructure is a wise investment of taxpayer dollars.”

Inspections of the S-49 structure, built in 1960, indicated vibration problems that impacted its operation, especially after Tropical Storm Fay in 2008. The \$484,485 upgrade included a more reliable mechanical system of cables with an updated electrical supply. The structure is located between Florida’s Turnpike and Port St. Lucie Boulevard.

With smoother operation, the gates can better move water, which could otherwise flood streets and homes, through the C-24 canal to the coast. During times of drought, the new gate system will benefit the environment by preventing saltwater intrusion from the ocean and also enhance support for agriculture by holding water in the canal for irrigation.

The project was completed on time by the Stuart-based general contractor Lucas Marine. Subcontractors included Vero Beach-based Paragon Electrical and West Palm Beach-based Van Linda Iron Works.

Over the last five years, the District has invested \$240 million to ensure the regional system of 2,600 miles of canals and levees continues to operate at optimal capacity, providing effective flood control for South Florida's 7.5 million residents.

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### **About the South Florida Water Management District**

*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.*