



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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2011 SFWMD Budget Reflects Dedication to Fiscal Discipline, No Increase in Tax Rate

\$1.07 billion budget dedicates 60 percent to restoration

West Palm Beach, FL – At a public hearing tonight, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board adopted a \$1.07 billion budget for [Fiscal Year 2011](#) (Oct. 1, 2010 – Sept. 30, 2011). The annual budget funds the agency's flood control and water supply missions as well as its continued progress to restore the South Florida ecosystem, which includes America's Everglades.

"This board is committed to building a budget that is mindful of today's challenging economic climate yet accomplishes our mission to benefit the environment and quality of life for 7.5 million South Floridians," said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Eric Buermann. "Prudent fiscal management allowed us to achieve this goal without raising taxes and still move forward on an immense opportunity to acquire land for Everglades restoration."

The approved \$1.07 billion budget contains a significant investment in the environment, including \$197.4 million for the initial acquisition of 26,800 acres of land from the United States Sugar Corporation for the purpose of Everglades restoration. A full 60 percent of the FY2011 budget is dedicated to environmental restoration projects benefiting the Everglades, the Kissimmee River, Lake Okeechobee and coastal watersheds.

The budget provides for the District to continue or complete a host of mission-critical projects, including:

- \$62.6 million for refurbishment of the regional flood control network of 2,600 miles of canals and levees.
- \$77.9 million for ongoing construction of the Compartment B Stormwater Treatment Area in western Palm Beach County to improve Everglades water quality.

- \$35.1 million for ongoing construction of the Compartment C Stormwater Treatment Area in Hendry County to improve Everglades water quality.
- \$13.4 million for continued construction of the C-111 Spreader Canal to restore Florida Bay and the Everglades.
- \$15 million for ongoing construction of the Lakeside Ranch Stormwater Treatment Area adjacent to Lake Okeechobee to remove phosphorus and improve water quality.

The District's annual budget is funded by a combination of ad valorem (property) taxes, and other sources such as federal, state and local revenue; licenses; permit fees; grants; agricultural taxes; investment income and bond proceeds. About 37 percent of the total FY2011 budget comes from property taxes. The approved FY2011 budget reflects a \$60.9 million reduction in property tax revenues in comparison with the current year.

The approved tax rates, unchanged from FY2010, represent 62.4 cents per thousand dollars of value in 15 of the District's 16 counties (the Okeechobee Basin). For example, a home with a taxable value of \$200,000 (assessed value of \$250,000, less the \$50,000 homestead exemption) would see a total District tax bill of \$124.80. For Collier County and mainland Monroe County (the Big Cypress Basin), the tax rates represent 48.14 cents per thousand dollars. A similar home in this region would see a tax bill of \$96.28.

For the 18th consecutive year, the District has been recognized by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) with its Distinguished Budget Presentation Award – the highest form of professional recognition in governmental budgeting.

For more information, see:

- [Just the Facts: FY2010-11 Budget and Millage Rates](#)
- [Governor Charlie Crist's Letter of Approval](#)

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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.