



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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New Navigational Markers Will Help Guide the Way on the Kissimmee
SFWMD is taking special care to protect nesting ospreys during the project



(Click on the photo for a larger version.)

Kissimmee, FL – To better aid boaters traveling between the City of Kissimmee and the Kissimmee River, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is preparing to replace a set of aging navigational markers in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes.

“In the three decades since their installation, the current set of navigational markers has been battered by the elements, including a series of hurricanes a few years ago,” said Tommy Strowd, SFWMD Deputy Executive Director of Operations and Maintenance. “The new markers will help guide the way for boaters through the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes for many more years to come.”

During a six-month period, the \$385,000 project will result in construction of:

- 27 navigational markers along the federal navigation channel stretching from the City of Kissimmee lakefront to the Kissimmee River
- Two directional day beacons, one at the south end of Lake Tohopekaliga and the other at the north end of Lake Kissimmee
- Two navigation barriers – known as dolphins – with floating booms that will replace an aging boat barrier at the flood control structure on Lake Tohopekaliga

Before work begins, special consideration must be given to ospreys that have built nests atop the existing navigational markers. Avian experts will carefully move the nests to special osprey nesting platforms that will be placed adjacent to the markers.

Beginning in mid-February, environmental scientists will determine which nests are active. Inactive nests will be covered to encourage ospreys to nest elsewhere, while active nests will be avoided until newly hatched ospreys have fledged. Once all the young ospreys have fledged, the nests will be moved to the platforms before the old navigational markers are removed.

Construction of the new navigational markers is scheduled to begin in April. The project is expected to be completed by the end of September.

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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.