



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

September 25, 2012

CONTACT:

Randy Smith

South Florida Water Management District

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

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SFWMD 2013 Budget Supports Water Resource Priorities

75 percent of \$567.3 million budget invested in flood control and Everglades restoration

West Palm Beach, FL – At a public hearing tonight, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board adopted a \$567.3 million budget for Fiscal Year 2013 (Oct. 1, 2012 – Sept. 30, 2013). The annual budget funds the agency's core flood control and water supply missions as well as its continued progress to restore the South Florida ecosystem, which includes America's Everglades.

"We remain committed to achieving our mission-critical goals without increasing the burden of additional taxes on the people of South Florida," said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Joe Collins. "Mindful of continuing economic challenges, this prudent budget allows the District to move forward with critical flood control operations and important long-term projects to increase water storage and improve Everglades water quality."

The approved \$567.3 million budget contains a significant investment in South Florida's environment, including \$27 million appropriated by the Florida Legislature in support of Everglades restoration. A full 75 percent of the District's FY2013 budget is dedicated to benefit restoration, protect water resources and enhance flood control operations:

- \$182 million to operate and maintain South Florida's regional flood control system, including \$50 million to refurbish the extensive network of canals, levees and water control structures.
- \$245 million to restore the Everglades ecosystem, including \$87.6 million to implement the first phases of Governor Scott's landmark plan to improve water quality to achieve ultra-low nutrient standards.

With restoration investments of more than \$1.16 billion in the past three years, the District is bringing important restoration projects to construction completion and beginning operations to deliver meaningful environmental returns to South Florida's ecosystem.

- Projects include: expansions of Stormwater Treatment Areas (Compartments B and C); C-111 Spreader Canal; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Phase I; and Lakeside Ranch Stormwater Treatment Area. The District has invested close to

\$392 million toward these projects to date, with \$2.7 million included for FY2013 to complete construction.

- Another \$11.4 million is dedicated in FY2013 to support continued federal partnership construction to restore the Kissimmee River and implement Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan projects, including Picayune Strand, the Indian River Lagoon-South C-44 Reservoir and the Fran Reich Preserve adjacent to the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge.
- Building on a \$10 million investment to date, the District is increasing water storage through partnerships with ranch owners to benefit the northern Everglades while maintaining working landscapes and jobs and keeping land on the tax rolls. The District will invest \$8.7 million in FY2013 toward its Dispersed Water Management program.

As part of its budget development, the District last year established a spend-down plan to dedicate accumulated reserves and cash balances toward restoration and water supply priorities. The FY2013 budget includes \$148.8 million in fund balances primarily to implement critical water resource projects.

The District's annual budget is funded by a combination of ad valorem (property) taxes, and other revenues such as state and federal sources; licenses and fees; agricultural taxes; balances; and investment income. About 47 percent of the total FY2013 budget comes from property taxes.

The approved millage rates for FY2013 represent 42.89 cents per thousand dollars of value in 15 of the District's 16 counties (the Okeechobee Basin). For a home with a taxable value of \$100,000 (assessed value of \$150,000, less the \$50,000 homestead exemption), the SFWMD portion of the property tax bill would total \$42.89. In Collier County and mainland Monroe County (the Big Cypress Basin), the tax rates represent 33.90 cents per thousand dollars of taxable value. For a similar home in this area, the combined SFWMD and Big Cypress Basin portion of the property tax bill would total \$33.90.

For more information, see:

- [Just the Facts: FY2013 Budget](#)
- [Governor Rick Scott'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.