



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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SFWMD Completes Work to Strengthen Protective Levee in Broward *Reinforcement work meets federal standards for levee certification*



(Click on the map or picture for larger versions.)

West Palm Beach, FL — The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has completed work to strengthen the 38-mile portion of the East Coast Protective Levee in western Broward County.

“These upgrades build on 60 years of effective flood protection from the levee, ensuring it continues to operate as designed for many more years to come,” said Tommy Strowd, SFWMD Assistant Executive Director of Operations, Maintenance and Construction.

“The work will also meet Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) certification criteria, which may benefit residents and businesses during the federal flood map update process.”

The District’s \$18 million investment in work on the Broward portion of the levee, which stretches in total for 105 miles along South Florida’s east coast, included:

- Reinforcing banks to better protect against erosion and seepage
- Grading and restoring the top of the levee
- Strategically stockpiling material for emergencies
- Building access ramps for future maintenance work

With construction complete, the SFWMD will submit detailed engineering reports to FEMA, which is expected to accept the documentation as proof the levee meets its standards.

Background

The District has actively maintained South Florida's extensive network of earthen levees since they were constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1950s and 1960s. The agency continues to make significant investments in improvements and routine maintenance of the levees, including those that border some of the region's most populated areas.

Annual inspections conducted jointly by the District and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers consistently indicate the East Coast Protective Levee is performing as intended. Over the years, the District has made improvements to address maintenance items identified by regular inspections.

Along with the regular assessments, a pair of federal evaluations recommended further improvements. In 2007, the Corps initiated a nationwide inventory and inspection of federally sponsored levee systems, including the East Coast Protective Levee.

East Coast Protective Levee Facts

- Constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers more than 50 years ago
- Designed to retain water in the Water Conservation Areas for storage, to protect wildlife and to help prevent hurricane-driven storm surges in the Everglades from impacting communities in western Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties
- Stretched 105 miles from West Palm Beach to the Tamiami Trail
- Maintained from end to end by the SFWMD

Separately, Broward County requested the District provide documentation to FEMA on its 38-mile portion of the East Coast Protective Levee for a routine update of National Flood Insurance Program maps. Current maps recognize the 38-mile Broward section as an accredited levee that provides protection from a flood with a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year.

For more information:

- [Just the Facts: Maintenance of South Florida's Levee System \[PDF\]](#)
- [Just the Facts: Accreditation of Broward Portion of East Coast Protective Levee \[PDF\]](#)
- [New Flood Zone Maps for Broward County \(County website\)](#)

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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.

