



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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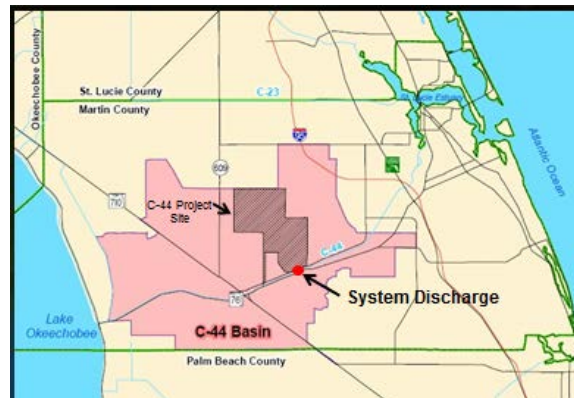
South Florida Water Management District

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SFWMD Set to Begin Construction on Key Piece of St. Lucie Project *C-44 System Discharge will also provide for additional water retention*



(Click on the map for a larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL – The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board today awarded a contract to begin construction on a component of the C-44 Reservoir and Stormwater Treatment Area in Martin County. The overall project will help capture, store and clean local stormwater runoff before it reaches the St. Lucie River and Estuary.

“It was just last month that the Board approved an agreement for the District to participate in construction in order to expedite this important project,” said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Daniel O’Keefe. “Today’s contract award sustains this momentum and moves us a step closer to significant water quality improvements for the St. Lucie.”

The contract is for construction of a spillway that will serve as the single point of water movement out of the entire C-44 project. The contract award successfully puts to work approximately \$60 million in funding from the Governor and Florida Legislature to benefit the St. Lucie Estuary.

Strategically completing the spillway early in the construction timeline will allow the District to store additional water on the project, helping to reduce excess water flow to

the estuary – even before the reservoir and stormwater treatment area are complete. This work will allow water managers to retain up to 5.7 additional feet of groundwater within the 7,000-acre project site in western Martin County.

The approximately \$5.4 million investment in the spillway follows a July agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the District to begin construction on 6,300 acres of stormwater treatment area (STA) in October, with a completion date of 2017. That larger contract will be considered by the SFWMD Governing Board next month.

When the project is operational, water will be pumped into the STA, which is a treatment wetland containing plants such as cattails, pickerel weed and bulrush. This vegetation removes and stores nutrients, including phosphorus, from the water before it flows into the St. Lucie River and Estuary.

The STA is critical component of the overall C-44 Reservoir Project, which will also include:

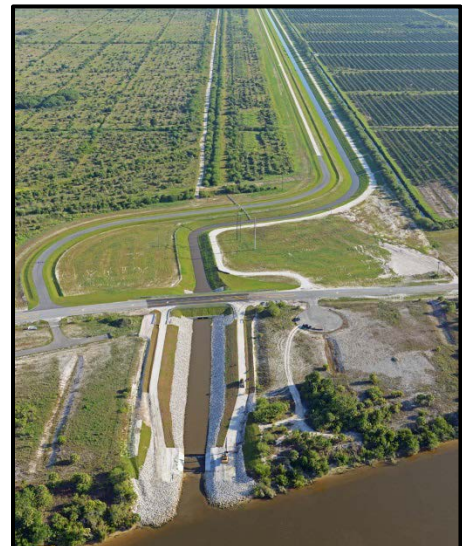
- A 3,400-acre reservoir capable of storing about 16 billion gallons of water
- A pump station capable of moving 1,100 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water, or about 717 million gallons a day, into the C-44 Reservoir

To date, the SFWMD has completed land acquisition and design for the STA treatment cells and the system discharge components. The Corps initiated the first phase of construction, which includes the project intake canal and access road, and will build the reservoir component. When the entire C-44 Reservoir and STA project is complete, stormwater runoff from the C-44 basin will be stored and cleaned before flowing into the river.

The St. Lucie River and Estuary is part of the larger Indian River Lagoon system, the most diverse estuarine environment in North America. It is home to more than 4,000 plant and animal species, including manatees, oysters, dolphins, sea turtles and seahorses.

For More Information:

- [Indian River Lagoon - South](#)
- [Improving Water Quality: Stormwater Treatment Areas](#)



This former citrus operation will become a wetland to clean water flowing to the St. Lucie River. (Click on the picture for a larger version.)

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.