



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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SFWMD Awards Construction Contracts to Improve Everglades Water Quality

Two key structures will help water flow to cleansing wetlands



The new L-8 Divide Structure will look similar to existing 3-gate SFWMD gravity structures. (Click on the picture for a larger version.)

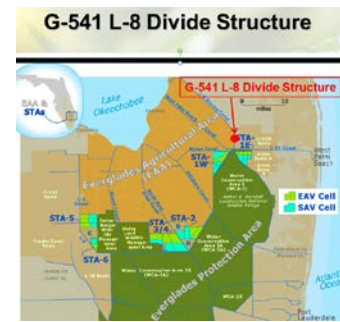
West Palm Beach, FL — Work is set to begin on two structures that will route water where it can be stored and cleaned as part of Governor Rick Scott's Restoration Strategies plan to improve Everglades water quality.

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board this week awarded contracts to build a new gated structure and improve an existing structure to move water to and from the massive L-8 Flow Equalization Basin (FEB). This storage reservoir will capture peak stormwater flows so water managers can move water into a Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) at a steady rate to optimize its performance and achieve water quality improvement targets.

"This is where a plan on paper becomes a working construction project on the ground," said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Daniel O'Keefe. "Seeing earth movers and heavy equipment means we are closer to achieving this agency's goal and the Governor's vision of cleaner water for the Everglades."

With an approximately \$4.4 million investment, Douglas N. Higgins, Inc., will construct a vertical-lift gated structure located in the L-8 Canal, about 2.6 miles north of State Road 80 in Palm Beach County. The fully automated, concrete reinforced structure has two basic functions:

- When closed, it will allow water levels in a portion of the L-8 Canal to be raised and held without affecting water elevations in the remainder of the canal north of the structure.
- Filling of the L-8 FEB by gravity and also pumping of water out of the L-8 FEB to nearby STA-1E and 1W without impacting flood control and water supply for L-8 Canal users.



(Click on the map for a larger version.)

With an approximately \$2.3 million investment, Murray Logan Construction, Inc., will upgrade the existing gated structure known as S-5AS near the C-51 Canal along State Road 80 west of Wellington. This upgrade will enable the structure to move water sent from the L-8 FEB to be treated in the STAs.

Both of these structures are key to fully utilize the operation of the L-8 FEB.

The reservoir is one of two Flow Equalization Basins under construction as part of the Restoration Strategies plan, providing 105,000 acre-feet of combined water storage for delivery of consistent flows needed to optimize performance of the region's Stormwater Treatment Areas.

The L-8 Reservoir has already provided regional water resource benefits, including:

- Approximately 3.1 billion gallons of water from Tropical Storm Isaac were directed into the reservoir to help alleviate flooding from historic rainfall in Palm Beach County.
- The City of West Palm Beach utilized more than 600 million gallons of water from the reservoir for water supply during the historic 2007 drought and again drew from the reservoir during a prolonged dry period in 2011.
- During a 2011 pilot project, the District used small pumps to send fresh water from the reservoir north to benefit the Loxahatchee River.

L-8 Reservoir Quick Facts

- **950-acre former rock mine**
- **Watertight geology allows for deep, below-ground storage**
- **Below-ground storage minimizes water loss through seepage and minimizes levee safety concerns**
- **Initially approved in 2002, the project is capable of storing 15 billion gallons of water**
- **This is enough to fill 34,000 football fields one foot deep**
- **The reservoir will be able to accept up to 3,000 cubic feet per second of inflow from the L-8 Canal**

For More Information:

- [Restoration Strategies](#)
- [Just the Facts: L-8 Flow Equalization Basin](#)

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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.