



# NEWS RELEASE

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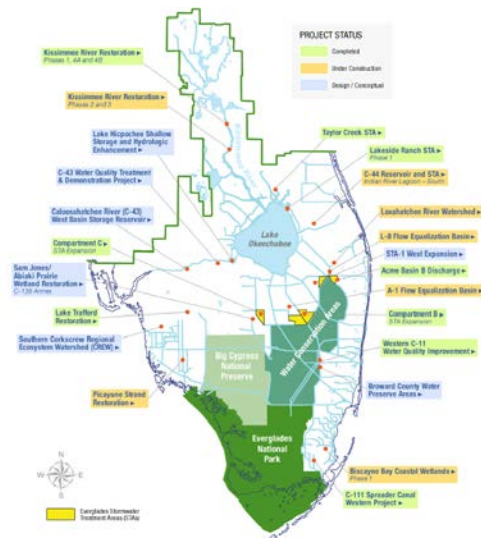
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## SFWMD Details Restoration Project Progress *Completing current projects is an agency priority*



*(Click on the map for a list of projects and their status. Click on the pictures for larger versions.)*

**West Palm Beach, FL** — Recognizing that a healthy ecosystem is vital to a healthy economy, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is making significant progress on dozens of initiatives and projects to improve water quality and increase storage.

“The most effective way to achieve restoration is by completing the host of projects now being designed or under construction across the region,” said SFWMD Executive Director Blake Guillory. “Major progress is being made, from wildlife returning to the Kissimmee to heavy construction work south of Lake Okeechobee on reservoirs and treatment wetlands that will help protect coastal estuaries and the Everglades.”

### Improving Water Quality

Under Governor Rick Scott’s Restoration Strategies program, the SFWMD is creating more than 6,500 acres of new Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) and 116,000 acre-feet

of additional water storage through construction of flow equalization basins (FEBs). The FEB's will help optimize operation of the treatment wetlands.

**Everglades water quality progress includes:**

- **A-1 FEB under construction with a completion date of June 2016**
- **L-8 FEB pump station under construction with a completion date of December 2016**
- **STA-1 West Expansion in preliminary design and permitting underway**
- **Two conveyance features required for the movement of water with the new FEBs and STAs under construction and another in design**

The Sam Jones/ Abiaki Prairie Wetland Restoration (C-139 Annex) project will complement Restoration Strategies by returning more historic Everglades conditions to 15,000 acres of former citrus grove, which will help improve water quality. To date, about 2,000 acres of citrus have been removed.

**Kissimmee River Restoration**

When complete, 40 square miles of Kissimmee River and floodplain will be enhanced, including almost 25,000 acres of wetlands and 40 miles of historic river channel.

**Kissimmee River restoration progress includes:**

- **Acquisition of approximately 100,000 acres of needed land**
- **Construction completion of three phases, refilling 14 miles of C-38 canal and reestablishing continuous water flow to 24 miles of river channel; Seasonal rains and flows now inundate 15,000 acres of restored floodplain habitat and another 9 miles of canal is being backfilled to restore flow to 16 additional miles of the river; Project completion is scheduled for 2019**
- **Planning and land acquisition underway to increase storage capacity in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes – the headwaters of the river system**
- **Ongoing environmental monitoring to evaluate ecosystem responses to the canal backfilling and other changes**

**Indian River Lagoon – South:**

The restoration project will reduce harmful freshwater inflows and generate habitat and water quality improvements in the St. Lucie Estuary and the Indian River Lagoon.

**Indian River Lagoon-South progress includes:**

- **Completion of land acquisition and design for the C-44 Reservoir and STA component; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completion of the first phase of construction, including the intake canal, and the Corps will begin work on the 3,400-acre reservoir in 2015**
- **SFWMD has initiated construction of the 6,300-acre STA and associated features and will start on the reservoir pump station in spring 2015; SFWMD construction will be complete in 2017**
- **Acquisition of more than 20,000 acres of land for natural storage and treatment areas and initiation of wetland restoration activities on Allapattah Flats**

### **The Caloosahatchee River (C-43) West Basin Storage Reservoir**

The project will capture and store stormwater runoff from the C-43 basin and reduce excess freshwater flow to the Caloosahatchee Estuary. It will also capture and store regulatory releases from Lake Okeechobee, reducing discharges to coastal estuaries during wet periods and providing flows to the estuary during dry periods.

#### **Caloosahatchee River (C-43) West Basin Storage Reservoir progress includes:**

- **Acquisition of the land with significant cost-share from the U.S. Department of Interior; Design and permitting is complete**
- **Authorization in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014**
- **Utilization for emergency storage during wet periods**
- **Design underway on incremental features that will provide 9,000 acre-feet of interim shallow storage, with construction in early 2015**

### **The Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Phase I**

The project will restore natural water flows to Biscayne Bay and Biscayne National Park, improving salinity distribution near the shoreline. This will reestablish productive juvenile nursery habitats for shrimp, shellfish and other near-shore species.

#### **Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Phase I progress includes:**

- **Completion of construction of the Deering Estate Flow- Way component, and 4 of the 10 culverts planned for the L-31East component have been completed**
- **Authorization in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014; Federal appropriations are needed to enter into a Project Partnership Agreement**

### **Dispersed Water Management**

Additional water retention is being provided in the Northern Everglades.

Examples include cooperative agreements with public and private landowners to cost-share projects, retaining water on State-owned lands prior to the implementation of regional projects (interim lands), conducting pilot projects to document the costs and benefits of storing water on fallow citrus groves (water farming) and compensating ranchers for storage/nutrient reductions through the Northern Everglades Payment for Environmental Services Program.

#### **Dispersed Water Management progress includes:**

- **Achieved approximately 87,000 acre-feet of storage/retention in the Northern Everglades, with the majority located in the Lake Okeechobee watershed**
- **Implementation of approximately 99,000 acre-feet of additional storage (including six new projects approved December 2014)**

#### **For More Information:**

- [Everglades Restoration Progress](#)
- [Restoration Strategies](#)
- [Improving Water Quality](#)

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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.*