



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

# NEWS RELEASE

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**MEDIA CONTACT:**

**Gabe Margasak**

South Florida Water Management District

Office: (561) 682-2800 or Cellular: (561) 670-1245

[www.sfwmd.gov/news](http://www.sfwmd.gov/news)

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## **SFWMD Weir Begins Service to Boost Flood Protection, Water Storage**

*New and improved Miller weir will provide benefits for years to come*



*(Click on the picture for a larger version.)*

**Naples, FL** – A water control structure built by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) on the Miller Canal officially began service today to improve flood protection and increase water storage in Southwest Florida.

“Maintaining and upgrading the local flood control system is at the core of our mission to serve residents and protect the environment in Southwest Florida,” said SFWMD Governing Board member and Big Cypress Basin Board Chairman Rick Barber. “The new Miller Weir No. 3 will provide upgraded flexibility to operate the system for many years to come.”

Weirs are water control structures resembling a dam that are built to regulate the level and flow of water in a canal or water body. Unlike a typical dam, water can flow over the top of the structure or via controlled releases with gates.

The new Miller Weir No. 3 was designed with three gates that automatically respond to water levels. The structure becomes part of an integrated Big Cypress Basin (BCB) network and supports a more efficient, system-wide response to flood events.

Upgrades also include:

- Increased capacity from 500 to 700 cubic-feet of water per second
- Remote control from a local control center, with a backup facility already in place
- Utilizes the full width of the canal to move water



*(Click the picture for a larger version.)*

## **Background**

The Golden Gate canal system was built in the 1960s for the purpose of residential development. Almost 70 miles of canals were dug to lower groundwater levels for home construction. A series of weirs were installed to control excess drainage.

The original Miller Weir No. 3 was a fixed-crest structure constructed in the mid-1960s. It was designed primarily to control over-drainage from the Northern Miller Canal basin. This design, however, was relatively inflexible for wet season operations and, over time, was failing to meet the increased needs of the BCB.

Since 1981, the Big Cypress Basin has implemented a \$40.9M capital improvement program to modify the canal system and water control structures to achieve more efficient water management. Since 2010, the District has invested approximately \$5.3 million to replace four weirs.

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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.*

## **About the Big Cypress Basin**

*The Big Cypress Basin, part of the South Florida Water Management District, covers Collier County and portions of Monroe County. A network of 162 miles of primary canals, 46 water control structures and four pumps provide flood control to the basin and also protect regional water supplies and environmental resources.*