



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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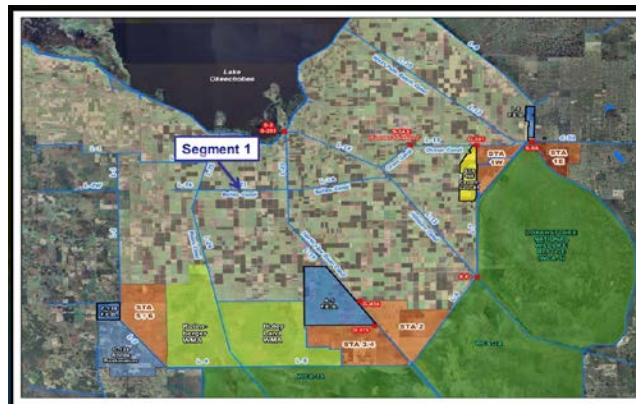
South Florida Water Management District

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SFWMD Canal Upgrade Will Help Improve Everglades Water Quality *Project will also reduce potential need to pump stormwater into Lake Okeechobee*



(Click on the map for a larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL — The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has approved construction of canal upgrades to enhance flexibility for moving stormwater from the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) into wetlands that improve the quality of water before it reaches the Everglades.

Improvements on the Bolles East Canal, which runs east / west in the EAA south of Lake Okeechobee, will also help reduce the potential need for emergency pumping of excess stormwater into the lake.

“Expanding the District’s flexibility for managing water south of Lake Okeechobee provides multiple benefits across the entire region,” said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Daniel O’Keefe. “Further, this project reflects our commitment to ensure that our flood control mission is integrated with achieving Everglades water quality goals.”

The Bolles East Canal currently provides a link between the Hillsboro and the North New River canals, serving adjacent agricultural landowners by supplying irrigation and drainage. As currently configured, the canal has limited capacity to convey water, because it is shallow and has constrictions at a bridge and culvert.

Work that includes expanding the canal bottom width to 40 feet will improve water flow east /west across the EAA. This in turn will provide increased flexibility for moving water into the Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs), which use aquatic vegetation to remove excess nutrients in the water before it reaches the Everglades.

The STAs are an integral part of the Governor's Restoration Strategies to improve Everglades water quality.

Canal upgrades will also have the ancillary benefit of providing water supply and flood protection for nearby farms.

Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company, LLC, the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, will soon begin work on the approximately \$3.8 million project. Work is expected to be complete by early 2017.

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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.