



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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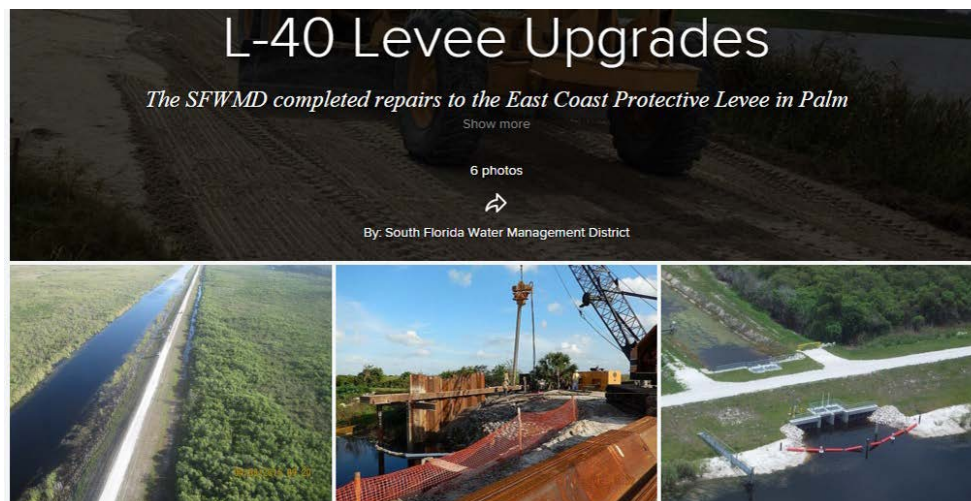
South Florida Water Management District

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SFWMD Completes Upgrade of Levee Protecting East Coast Population *Reinforcement work meets federal flood insurance standards*



(Click on the graphic to see a photo gallery of strengthening work on the L-40 Levee in Palm Beach County.)

West Palm Beach, FL — The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has completed work to strengthen a 20.5-mile Palm Beach County portion of a levee that protects tens of thousands of people from Palm Beach to Miami.

Stretching 105 miles, the East Coast Protective Levee serves as a buffer between three vast Everglades Water Conservation Areas and portions of the most populated regions in South Florida. Improvements to the levee in Palm Beach, known as the L-40, spanned from Wellington to west of Boca Raton.

“This rehabilitation effort was important for the flood control system to continue operating as designed well into the future,” said Jeff Kivett, SFWMD Director of Operations, Engineering and Construction. “Along with flood protection, the work may benefit residents and businesses in the federal flood mapping and insurance process.”

With a nearly \$8.5 million investment, crews accomplished an array of work, including:

- Completing a comprehensive study and analysis

- Grading and restoring 9.5 miles along the top of the of levee
- Utilizing 62,810 tons of material
- Removing a pump station and water control structure
- Replacing several water control structures
- Removing vegetation and encroachments

As the levee owner, the District is required to provide data and documentation to show that the levee meets the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program. With construction complete on the L-40, the SFWMD will submit detailed engineering reports to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which is expected to accept the documentation as proof the levee meets requirements and accredit the levee for flood protection.



(Click the map for a larger version.)

Background

The District has actively maintained South Florida’s extensive network of earthen levees since they were constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1950s and 1960s. The agency continues to make significant investments in improvements and routine maintenance of the levees, including those that border some of the region’s most populated areas.

Annual inspections conducted jointly by the District and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers consistently indicate the East Coast Protective Levee is performing as intended. During the years, the District has made improvements to address maintenance items identified by regular inspections.

Along with the regular assessments, a pair of federal evaluations recommended further improvements. In 2007, the Corps initiated a nationwide inventory and inspection of federally sponsored levee systems, including the East Coast Protective Levee.

East Coast Protective Levee Facts

- Constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers more than 50 years ago
- Designed to retain water in the Water Conservation Areas for storage, to protect wildlife and to help prevent hurricane-driven storm surges in the Everglades from impacting communities in western Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties
- 105 miles from West Palm Beach to the Tamiami Trail
- Maintained from end to end by the District

The District completed work in 2013 to strengthen a 38-mile portion of the East Coast Protective Levee in western Broward County. Documentation was accepted by FEMA as proof the levee met requirements and it was accredited for flood protection.

For more information:

- [Just the Facts: Accreditation of Broward Portion of East Coast Protective Levee \[PDF\]](#)

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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 flood control, water quality, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.