



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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SFWMD Governing Board Approves Key Agreement for Caloosahatchee

The action advances momentum on the C-43 reservoir to benefit the river and estuary

West Palm Beach, FL - The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board today approved an agreement that protects Florida's investment in a restoration project under construction to store and deliver water to benefit the ecology of the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary.

The Project Partnership Agreement with the U.S. Department of the Army ensures Florida will receive credit for its investment in the Caloosahatchee River (C-43) West Basin Storage Reservoir Project. The effort is a 50/50 partnership between Florida and the federal government. The agreement also ensures Florida will receive from the federal government half of the approximately \$4 million in yearly operating costs.

"This Everglades restoration project is a top priority of residents on the Southwest Coast, and we are working to complete construction as soon as possible," said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Dan O'Keefe. "Today's agreement is a major step toward delivering the significant benefits of this effort to the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary."

To date, SFWMD and the State have invested \$83.5 million buying land, designing and constructing portions of the project. With support from Gov. Scott, the Florida Legislature has approved \$49 million during the past two years to advance the work.

Project Progress

In August of 2015, the Governing Board approved an early start to construction on the project as part of Governor Rick Scott's commitment to South Florida ecosystem restoration. Phase 1, scheduled for completion in 2020, involves the construction of the western storage cell, two pump stations, the perimeter canal and associated water control structures and improvements to the Townsend

Canal. To date, the Governing Board has awarded two construction contracts totaling \$21.6 million that will achieve an array of work, including:

- Demolishing existing agricultural features such as buried pipes, culverts, irrigation pump stations and above-ground facilities across the 10,000-acre reservoir site
- Construction of 7 above-ground, earthen fill mounds reaching 56 feet high at select locations to help compact the ground to support future structures
- Moving approximately 1.8 million cubic yards of fill for the mounds, enough to fill 1 acre of land to a height of 1,100 feet
- Preparation of the foundation for construction of the 16-mile dike that will surround the reservoir
- Construction of Pump Station S-476 to provide irrigation water to surrounding landowners impacted by the reservoir construction.

C-43 Project Overview

The C-43 project was closely scrutinized during years of design, review and permitting by an array of scientists, engineers and experts. The project was authorized by Congress in 2014.

Once complete, the reservoir will hold approximately 170,000 acre-feet of water to be used to help maintain a desirable minimum flow of fresh water to the Caloosahatchee Estuary. During the rainy season, the reservoir will capture and store excess stormwater and regulatory releases from Lake Okeechobee, helping prevent excessive freshwater flows to the estuary. The C-43 reservoir alone will resolve more than 70 percent of the instances where the river does not meet the minimum flows and levels necessary for a healthy ecology.

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The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages the water resources in the southern part of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. Our mission is to protect South Florida's water resources by balancing and improving flood control, water supply, water quality and natural systems.

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