



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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SFWMD Governing Board Set to Revitalize Project to Protect St. Lucie River and Estuary

The Ten Mile Creek facility will store and clean excess stormwater

West Palm Beach, FL - The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board today signed an agreement that will transform the Ten Mile Creek Water Preserve Area into a functional water storage and water quality improvement project for the St. Lucie River and Estuary.

Taking control of the project from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers allows SFWMD to make repairs to fill the long idle federal reservoir with four feet of excess stormwater that would otherwise flow to the St. Lucie River. A wetland at the site in St. Lucie County will clean that water before it reaches the river.

"Today's action literally required an act of Congress, and significant credit goes to South Florida's Congressional delegation and St. Lucie County officials for their steadfast efforts," said SFWMD Governing Board Vice Chairman Kevin Powers. "We will now work without further delay to repair and operate the 10 Mile Creek project to finally provide tangible benefits for the St. Lucie River and Estuary and Treasure Coast families."

Construction bid requests are scheduled to go out in July, with a contract award in September and project completion in June 2017. Once complete, the reservoir will be able to hold 2,500 acre-feet of water.

Background:

The Ten Mile Creek Water Preserve Area is located at the outlet of the 30,682-acre Ten Mile Creek Basin in St. Lucie County, situated immediately south of State Road 70 (Okeechobee Road) and west of the I-95-Florida Turnpike intersection. The project was designed by the Corps to improve the timing and volume of water deliveries to the North Fork of the St. Lucie River by capturing, storing and treating stormwater runoff from the Ten Mile Creek Basin.

Secondary benefits of the project included reduction of fine sediment and nutrients flowing to the St. Lucie River, increased freshwater recharge into the aquifer and capability to make releases back to Ten Mile Creek for water supply when needed.

Timeline:

- 1996: Project was authorized by Congress as a joint effort between SFWMD and the Corps budgeted to cost up to \$50 million.
- 2006: Construction was completed by the Corps.
 - During operational testing, design and construction deficiencies were identified that rendered the project unsafe for operation.
 - The project remained non-operational for several years while court proceedings took place. Eventually, the Corps settled the case and received money from the contractor who built the project.
- August 2014: SFWMD requested to take control of the facility and make repairs so that the project could start providing benefits to the river and estuary.
- June 2015: SFWMD was authorized by the Corps to make improvements to store one foot of water at the site to provide benefits while the request to take over the project was pending in Congress.
- December 2015: Following Congressional action, the president signed into law a bill that allowed the SFWMD to take control of the project. The District already owned the land.
- May 2016: SFWMD Governing Board formally took over the project and is moving forward with work to make it operational.

Media Contact:

Randy Smith | rrsmith@sfwmd.gov | Office: 561-682-2800 | Cell: 561-389-3386

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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