

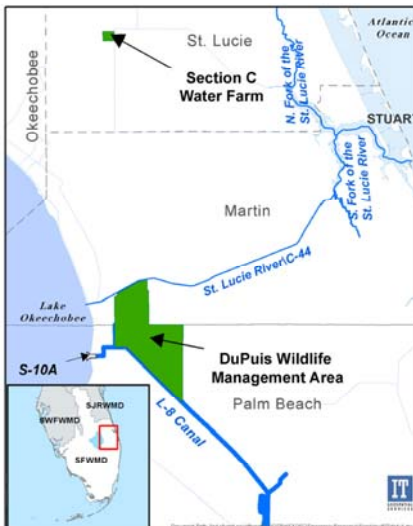


SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

July 18, 2016

### **SFWMD Allocates \$2.6 Million to Respond to State of Emergency *Funding to improve public land water storage to address blue-green algal blooms***



*(Click on the photo to learn more about what SFWMD is doing to respond to the blue-green algae state of emergency. [Click here](#) to view a larger version.)*

**West Palm Beach, FL** - The South Florida Water Management District Governing Board on Thursday allocated \$2.6 million from its reserves to address the state of emergency declared by Gov. Rick Scott because of blue-green algal blooms in South Florida's waterways.

"We have been taking every practical action possible to address the impact of the blooms since Gov. Rick Scott declared the state of emergency," said Governing Board Chairman Daniel O'Keefe. "This money allocated will allow more water storage on public land in the Treasure Coast to further address the needs of residents and help lessen the bloom."

The \$2.6 million will also pay for improvements needed to manage stormwater runoff at two publicly owned properties in the St. Lucie Estuary. It will speed up improvements, such as ditch plugs and culverts in the vast DuPuis Management Area in western Martin County. Additionally, the funds will expedite the construction of a 320-acre impoundment in "Section C" near the C-23 Canal in St. Lucie County to store more local runoff.

Furthermore, the District is continuing several other ongoing operations to address the blooms. This includes storing more water in the Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes north of Lake Okeechobee, which slows down the flow of water south to the lake. High lake levels have led the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to release water from Lake Okeechobee to the coastal estuaries for flood protection. Water from the lake as well as local stormwater runoff and nutrients from septic tanks all contribute to the development of algal blooms. The District has also been pulse releasing more water south through the L-8 and C-51 canals to lessen the need for estuary releases.

Private landowners and corporate partners have also been responding to the emergency by volunteering their land for water storage. Florida Power and Light Co. agreed to let the District use its cooling pond at the Martin Clean Energy Center near Indiantown to store up to 2.2 billion gallons per month for the next three to four months. Consolidated Citrus Limited Partnership has also begun storing local stormwater runoff on its 1,700-acre Sunrise Grove farm property near Palm City. Caulkins Citrus Company is storing water on 2,600 acres of its farming property, and Bluefield Grove is also storing water on its 6,800 acres of property.

- For more information on the District's response to blue-green algae and facts about algae, please visit the District's website at <http://sfwmd.link/AlgaeResponse>.
- For information on the Department of Environmental Protection's response to blue-green algae, visit DEP's website at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/bgalgae/index.htm>.
- For more information about blue-green algae, visit the Florida Department of Health's website at [http://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/aquatic-toxins/\\_documents/cyano-faqs-pio.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/aquatic-toxins/_documents/cyano-faqs-pio.pdf).

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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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