



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

July 22, 2016

SFWMD: No Tax Increase for Sixth Consecutive Year

The District's Governing Board reviews a \$726.2 million tentative budget and locks in lower millage rates for the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year

West Palm Beach, FL - The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board this month continued its commitment to reduce the tax burden on South Florida property owners for a sixth consecutive year. The Governing Board locked in lower "rolled-back" millage rates as staff presented the tentative budget for the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year.

Estimated rolled-back millage rates are designed to generate the same level of ad valorem tax revenues as the prior year.

"The 8.1 million residents served by the South Florida Water Management District depend on us to manage and protect the water resources of the region by balancing and improving flood control, water supply, water quality and natural systems," said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Daniel O'Keefe. "We are once again accomplishing those missions and making significant progress on key projects without raising taxes."

The tentative budget will levy a total millage rate to property owners in the 15-county Okeechobee Basin of 0.3307 mills, lower than the 0.3551 mills levied last year. Property owners in the Big Cypress Basins in Collier County will pay 0.2695 mills, less than the 0.2888 mills levied last year.

The millage rates and budget details must still be officially reviewed and approved at two public hearings in September.

The \$726.2 million tentative budget includes \$47.8 million of additional monies appropriated by the Legislature to store water north of Lake Okeechobee, thereby reducing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' need to release water from the lake to the coastal estuaries for flood protection. The budget also includes \$54.1 million next year to continue implementation of Gov. Rick Scott's Restoration Strategies Plan to complete water quality restoration in the Everglades.

The District is proposing to spend \$67.8 million to benefit the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary, including continuing construction of the massive Caloosahatchee River (C-43) Reservoir to ensure enough water flow to the river

during dry months. The District is also proposing to spend \$88 million on Everglades restoration projects, including \$60.3 million to continue construction of the C-44 stormwater treatment area and pump station allowing the storage and treatment of local runoff headed for the St. Lucie Estuary in Martin County.

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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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