



Compiled by: South Florida Water Management District  
(for internal use only)

**Total Clips: 2**

Headline	Date	Outlet	Reporter
<a href="#">Excitement of Everglades restoration land buy gives way to exasperation, official says</a>	07/07/2009	Jupiter Courier	
<a href="#">A year later, U.S. Sugar deal euphoria fades</a>	07/06/2009	Naples Daily News	Whitehead, Charlie

## Excitement of Everglades restoration land buy gives way to exasperation, official says

[Return to Top](#)

07/07/2009

Jupiter Courier

More Treasure Coast

Share and Enjoy [?]

NAPLES Its been over a year since Gov. Charlie Crist made a splash with his announcement the state would pay U.S. Sugar \$1.75 billion for 180,000 acres south of Lake Okeechobee for Everglades restoration.

The deals since been watered down twice. The most recent iteration approved by the South Florida Water Management District governing board calls for the purchase of a patchwork of 73,000 acres for \$536 million.

Charles Dauray, a district board member, said this week the excitement that accompanied the June 24, 2008, announcement has faded.

Its taken more time than expected, and the environmental euphoria has transgressed to cynicism, skepticism and exasperation, Dauray said to a meeting of Business People United for Political Action Committee. He and Phil Flood, the director of the districts west coast office, spoke to the group.

The deal will allow U.S. Sugar to lease back the 40,000 acres of cane land included. It would pay \$150 per acre, with a seven-year lease extendable to 20 years. The district could start utilizing the other 33,000 acres most of it in citrus within a year.

The deal also includes an option on 107,000 more acres, set at \$7,400 per acre for three years. The option is good for seven more years at market value. Dauray said the board wont rush.

Dauray voted against the initial deal because of its economic impact on taxpayers. The district plans to borrow money to do it, with payment coming from the 16 counties in the district, including Martin, St. Lucie, Palm Beach and Okeechobee counties. Dauray said the district expects \$200 million or so in federal stimulus funding to help with the project.

Comments are the sole responsibility of the person posting them. We don't allow comments that degrade others on the basis of gender, race, class, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or disability. Epithets, abusive language and obscene comments will not be tolerated... nor will defamation.

---

## **A year later, U.S. Sugar deal euphoria fades**

07/06/2009

Naples Daily News

Whitehead, Charlie

[Return to Top](#)

It's been over a year since Gov. Charlie Crist made a splash with his announcement the state would pay U.S. Sugar \$1.75 billion for 180,000 acres south of Lake Okeechobee.

The deal's since been watered down twice. The most recent iteration approved by the South Florida Water Management District governing board calls for the purchase of a patchwork of 73,000 acres for \$536 million.

Charles Dauray, a west coast governing board member and an Estero resident, said this week the excitement that accompanied the June 24, 2008, announcement has faded.

"It's taken more time than expected, and the environmental euphoria has transgressed to cynicism, skepticism and exasperation," Dauray said to a meeting of Business People United for Political Action Committee.

BUPAC is the oldest PAC in Lee County. Dauray is its past president. He and Phil Flood, the director of the district's west coast office, spoke to the group about the U.S. Sugar buy and Everglades restoration.

Flood said the modified purchase has placed nine different plans of action on the table. He said district employees - 40 are working full-time on the project - are analyzing the various plans now.

The deal will allow U.S. Sugar to lease back the 40,000 acres of cane land included. It would pay \$150 per acre, with a seven-year lease extendable to 20 years. The district could start utilizing the other 33,000 acres — most of it in citrus — within a year.

The deal also includes an option on 107,000 more acres, with a set price of \$7,400 per acre for three years. The option is good for seven more years after that at market value.

Dauray said the board won't rush to a decision.

"I'm a great believer in 'Act in haste, repent at leisure,' " Dauray said.

Dauray actually voted against the initial deal because of its economic impact on southern Florida taxpayers. The district plans to borrow money to swing the deal, with payback coming from the 16 counties in the district, including Lee and Collier.

"The feds aren't going to buy it," he said. "The state's not. The taxpayers of our 16 counties are going to buy it."

With all the talk off the Everglades being a national and international treasure, commented BUPAC member and county Republican Chairman Gary Lee, it seems cash should be coming from somewhere.

"It seems grossly unfair for the burden for this international treasure to fall on 16 counties," Lee said.

Dauray said he agrees with that, but reminded Lee that the Water Resources Development Act, which included federal Everglades funding, was repeatedly vetoed by President George W. Bush. He said the district expects \$200 million or so in federal stimulus funding to help with the project.

Dauray also said he's ready for some more help. When the deal was announced a year ago, board member Bubba Wade, a U.S. Sugar vice president, resigned. At that time the governor's office said he hoped to appoint someone "soon."

Since then there are two fewer board members. Paul Huck of Miami-Dade resigned in March, and the term of Martin County representative Melissa Meeker ended in March. She asked not to be re-appointed, but continues to serve.

Instead of nine members on the board there are six.

When asked again this week the governor's office gave the same answer as a year ago. Spokesman Sterling Ivey said he has nothing more definitive than "soon."

