

# Mutual Understanding of the Vegetation and Sediment Maintenance Intent for L-29 Canal Culvert Inlets and New Tamiami Trail Bridge

Vegetation and sediment maintenance for the L-29 canal culvert inlets and the flow-way connection under the newly constructed Tamiami Trail Bridge will be integral to improving water flow into Everglades National Park. The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), Everglades National Park (ENP), and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will coordinate to insure that necessary maintenance activities are undertaken to achieve the maximum benefit of the improved flow conveyance of the newly constructed Tamiami Trail Bridge. The above agencies mutually support this maintenance activity and the intent of the requirements outlined below.

- A flow-way between the adjacent L-29 canal and extending under the new bridge up to the south edge of the newly established bridge will be created by scraping and removing the existing vegetation and overlying soils to the existing cap-rock surface as part of the bridge construction. Since this flow-way is only intended to facilitate an unobstructed path for water flow from the L-29 canal and under the bridge by limiting the growth of vegetation, no excavation of the underlying rock formations will be required. USACE will be responsible for the design and construction of this feature. Since the flow-way under the new bridge is within ENP, the use of all herbicides must be approved by the National Park Service. USACE will be responsible for the initial authorizations through the National Park Service to perform the vegetation maintenance. The monitoring of any water quality effects resulting from these maintenance actions will be accomplished by the reconfiguration of existing water quality monitoring activities.
- Following the execution of planned land exchanges between ENP and the State of Florida associated with implementation of the Modified Water Deliveries Project and subsequent transfer of fee title from ENP to SFWMD of the lands on which the flow-way is constructed, SFWMD will provide periodic removal of any accumulated sediments or other debris in this conveyance as deemed necessary to maintain the flow of water and prevent the establishment of aquatic vegetation. SFWMD will maintain and control aquatic vegetation growth under the bridge using an approved list of herbicides as employed for routine canal maintenance. (Since the use of herbicides by SFWMD will be outside ENP, NPS approval of the use of these herbicides is not required.) Treatments, using standard methods employed by SFWMD, will be conducted at least twice each year, if needed, at the beginning and near the end of the wet season. The minimal amount of herbicide necessary as recommended by the labeled product will be used for each treatment. As determined by SFWMD, additional treatments to control problem aquatic vegetation growth may be conducted to reduce future scheduled applications.
- Aquatic weeds will additionally be controlled in and around the existing Tamiami Trail culverts on the upstream side of the L-29 canal to maintain the flow conveyance of these structures.

- SFWMD will not be responsible for the repair or replacement of the culverts or removal of sediment inside the culverts under the Tamiami Trail. These activities will be governed and performed in accordance with the Tamiami Trail Relocation Agreements.
- ENP will determine the extent and type of vegetation maintenance needed in ENP to the south of the new bridge and, as necessary, take actions to facilitate unimpeded water flow.
- ENP, SFWMD and USACE mutually recognize that the above activities are intended to maintain the ability to convey water as intended under the Tamiami Trail Limited Reevaluation Report (dated April 2008). These maintenance activities will be incorporated into the water control plan for the Tamiami Trail Bridge and L-29 Canal operations as provided to SFWMD as the Local Sponsor for the Modified Water Deliveries Project by USACE.
- Changes and modifications to these maintenance activities may be implemented through water control plan updates as deemed necessary by mutual agreement.
- USACE, SFWMD, and ENP will meet as necessary to review the status, effectiveness, and any other issues related to these vegetation and sediment maintenance activities and the intended improvement of water conveyance through the Tamiami Trail Bridge.