



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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SFWMD Begins Project to Restore Florida Bay, Everglades
C-111 Spreader Canal project will restore freshwater flows to Florida Bay, preserve clean water for Everglades National Park



(Click on picture for larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL — The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board today awarded contracts to begin construction on the C-111 Spreader Canal project, representing another significant step for Everglades restoration. Key benefits of the project include restoring freshwater flows to Florida Bay, preserving clean water for Everglades National Park and maintaining flood control for eastern communities.

“Unwavering commitment to this project has brought us to the point where we will be able to significantly increase freshwater flows through Taylor Slough toward Florida Bay,” said SFWMD Governing Board member Michael Collins. “The result will be tangible ecological benefits that will help restore and protect an integral piece of our ecosystem and economy.”

The C-111 Spreader Canal project, located west of Florida City in Miami-Dade County, is a component of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) approved by Congress in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. In 2004, the project became a part of the State’s expedited construction plan, supported by a total \$44 million investment to improve water quality and achieve restoration goals – \$30 million in construction and \$14 million in land acquisition.

A central goal of the C-111 Spreader Canal project is to help achieve healthy salinity levels in Florida Bay by restoring the quantity, timing and distribution of freshwater flows via Taylor Slough to the bay ecosystem. Florida Bay is an integral component of the Everglades ecosystem and is a valuable economic resource for the region. A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) study found that Florida Bay contributed approximately \$1.7 billion in the form of “destination spending” in 2003 alone.

Equally significant, the C-111 Spreader Canal project will help prevent clean water from seeping out of Everglades National Park through South Florida’s porous underground rock layers. Preserving clean water significantly reduces the cost of treating and moving water into the park from other sources.

With the necessary federal and state permits in hand, the District Governing Board awarded contracts to build pump stations and other features for the project. Three Florida-based firms, Palm Beach Grading Inc., Wright Construction Group and GlobeTec Construction, were selected in a public bidding process. As part of the construction contracts, certified businesses in the District's Small Business Enterprise (SBE) program will participate in approximately 27 percent of the overall work.

“We are thrilled that this Everglades restoration project is moving forward,” said SFWMD Executive Director Carol Ann Wehle. “The recent Everglades restoration construction agreement and financial commitments from our federal partners have made this a banner year for the Everglades and South Florida’s environment.”

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) is a framework for restoring, protecting and preserving the water resources of central and southern Florida. CERP is a 50-50 partnership between the State of Florida and the federal government. The State of Florida and the South Florida Water Management District have invested approximately \$2.4 billion toward this effort, including approximately \$300 million in

construction. Through June 30, 2009, 59 percent – or approximately 230,000 acres – of the estimated lands needed to implement CERP have been acquired. For more information, visit www.sfwmd.gov/everglades.

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About the South Florida Water Management District – [Celebrating 60 Years \(1949-2009\)](#)

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state’s five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.