



NEWS RELEASE

October 20, 2016

Improved Public Facilities at Popular Martin County Equestrian Recreation Spot

Upgrades at the DuPuis recreation area highlight Governing Board commitment to multi-purpose use



Before: With 8 stalls, DuPuis Barn #3 was in need of restoration.



After: The barn was one of the first portions of the project to be complete.

Martin County, FL - Barns, bathrooms, paddocks and picnic tables are being upgraded at a public equestrian and outdoor recreation spot west of Stuart. The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board approved sufficient operations and maintenance monies to improve this very popular recreation venue, which offers hiking, biking, hunting, camping, wildlife viewing, environmental programs and equestrian activities.

Located on 21,000 plus acres in western Martin and Palm Beach counties, the DuPuis recreation area was acquired in 1986 because of its significant water resource and conservation value. The vast area contains the northern most edge of remnant Everglades marsh, with numerous ponds, wet prairies, cypress domes and pine flatwoods.

"DuPuis is an ideal example of managing land to protect water resources while ensuring a special place remains open and accessible to

DuPuis Recreation Highlights

- 40 miles of equestrian trails
- 22 miles of hiking trails

the public," said SFWMD Governing Board Vice Chairman Kevin Powers. "The Governing Board remains steadfast in its commitment to support and expand recreational opportunities where consistent with our restoration and water management missions."

- Family, group and equestrian camp grounds
- Fishing lake and picnic shelters
- Nature Center that hosts a variety of environmental programs

The unique DuPuis property was once an active cattle ranch. The land's barns and buildings formerly part of their operation have been repurposed to support public uses such as camping and equestrian activities. However, many of the more than 50-year-old structures are in desperate need of refurbishment.

With an investment of \$550,000, work is well underway on upgrades at the area known as the Equestrian Campground at Gate 3 off Kanner Highway, including:

- Refurbishing three barns
- Renovating and replacing 2.5 miles of paddock fencing
- Adding two picnic shelters
- Constructing an Americans With Disabilities Act-compliant bathroom and shower facility
- Improving road access, parking and adding 27 new picnic tables and 14 fire rings

Many of the improvements are scheduled to be complete within the next 60 days, while the new bathroom and shower accommodations are scheduled for completion in spring 2017.

Along with DuPuis, the SFWMD Governing Board is the steward for more than 1 million acres of public land. Over the years, the agency has expanded recreational opportunities on land purchased with public dollars and continues to support recreation activities.

More Information

- [SFWMD Recreation Guide](#)

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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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