



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

GET THE FACTS

April 2016

A recent article in the Key West Citizen perpetuated erroneous facts about the quality of water flowing into Everglades National Park and Florida Bay.

Water in Everglades National Park is cleaner than it has been in generations and meets water quality requirements. Water sent south to restore historic flows into Everglades National Park and Florida Bay, which desperately needs freshwater, is clean.

Here are the facts:

- Florida invested \$1.8 billion to develop the science and the infrastructure to move clean water into Everglades National Park. Notably, the South Florida Water Management District constructed 57,000 acres of Stormwater Treatment Areas. These vast expanses of wetlands are highly successful in using plants to clean nutrients from the water before it reaches the Park and the Bay.
- Under Governor Scott's Restoration Strategies plan, an additional \$880 million is being invested to construct another 6,500 acres of treatment wetlands, along with several vast storage areas and other projects, to allow more water to be cleaned and sent south.
- No Lake Okeechobee water has been sent to Everglades National Park or Florida Bay that is not clean. This water meets water quality requirements and is continually monitored under a strict science program.
- Brown water seen flowing into Everglades National Park near the Tamiami Trail is actually very clean. The brown color comes from natural plant tannins and is not harmful at all.

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The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages 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.