



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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**SFWMD Prepares for More Heavy Rain;
Flood Control Actions Continue From Historic Kissimmee Storm**
Water levels are expected to continue rising north of Lake Okeechobee



(Click on the picture for a larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL – The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) began preparations today for more heavy rainfall as engineers continue to move water as fast as safely possible from last week’s historic Kissimmee storm.

“Our big challenge is to ready the flood control system for another potentially large rainfall event while continuing to alleviate high water from the heaviest rain in nearly 100 years over the Kissimmee area,” said Tommy Strowd, SFWMD Director of the Operations, Maintenance and Construction Division. “We are exploring every option to operate the system at its maximum safe capacity to protect 7.7 million residents while also ensuring the integrity of the system itself.”

With rains forecast to begin late this weekend and move north, engineers began lowering canal water levels in Miami-Dade County today and plan to do the same in Broward County tomorrow. Palm Beach County will be assessed on Sunday. The storm is expected to impact the entire 16-county District by Tuesday, with heavy rainfall once again possible for the saturated Kissimmee region.

Saturday, October 8, was the wettest single day in the upper and lower Kissimmee basins combined in nearly 100 years. In that one day, the storm dropped an average of 6.05 inches of rain in the two basins spanning approximately 3,000 square miles, with local maximums up to 14.09 inches. The second wettest day was recorded in 1933.

Some lakes are still rising in the Kissimmee basins as water managers continue moving large volumes of stormwater runoff, opening flood control gates as far as safely possible. Locks on the Kissimmee River remain closed to navigation as a public

| Facility | Status | Effective Date |
|--|--------|------------------|
| S-65 (Lake Kissimmee) | Closed | Oct. 11 - 7 p.m. |
| S-65A (Kissimmee River) | Closed | Oct. 11 - 7 p.m. |
| S-65C (Kissimmee River) | Closed | Oct. 11 - 7 p.m. |
| S-65D (Kissimmee River) | Closed | Oct. 11 - 7 p.m. |
| S-65E (Kissimmee River) | Closed | Oct. 11 - 7 p.m. |
| Click here for a map of the area | | |

safety measure. Boaters are urged to stay off the river because of hazardous conditions until further notice. Today, the District also closed the S-61 boat lock at the south end of Lake Tohopekaliga because of high water velocity.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages Lake Okeechobee water levels and has coordinated with the District throughout this event. At this time, the Corps has indicated there are no planned releases to the St. Lucie or Caloosahatchee rivers, as the water level will likely remain in the Water Shortage Management Band of the 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule. Water seen moving through the C-43 (Caloosahatchee) and C-44 (St. Lucie) canals will be from basin runoff, not water from the lake.

Updates on the status of Kissimmee River navigation and water conditions will be provided on the District's website at www.sfwmd.gov.

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About the South Florida Water Management District

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.