



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

September 24, 2013

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SFWMD 2014 Budget Supports Restoration, Flood Control

More than 80 percent of the budget is invested in environment, operations, maintenance

West Palm Beach, FL – At a public hearing tonight, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board adopted a \$622.2 million budget for Fiscal Year 2014 (Oct. 1, 2013 – Sept. 30, 2014). The annual budget funds the agency’s core flood control and water supply missions as well as its continued progress to restore the South Florida ecosystem, which includes America’s Everglades.

“This budget provides the means to continue implementing projects that improve Everglades water quality and use new state funding to send water south and help maximize storage to benefit the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries,” said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Daniel O’Keefe. “In a reflection of our continued commitment to fiscal responsibility, District millage rates have been reduced for the third year in a row.”

More than 80 percent of the District’s FY2014 budget is dedicated to flood control operations and restoration:

- \$261 million to operate and maintain South Florida’s regional flood control system and Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs), including \$50 million toward refurbishment of the primary network of canals, levees, structures and pump stations.
- \$250.9 million to restore the Everglades ecosystem, improve Lake Okeechobee and protect the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries.

Everglades Ecosystem

The approved \$622.2 million budget contains a significant investment in South Florida’s environment, including \$67 million appropriated by the Florida Legislature this year to help move key Everglades projects forward. The spending plan also includes \$101.6 million to implement the next phases of the governor’s \$880 million Restoration Strategies plan to improve the quality of water flowing into the Everglades, including:

- \$72.4 million to enhance and expand water treatment facilities and construct more than 100,000 acre-feet of water storage.

- \$17.5 million to increase water treatment capacity at STA-1 West.
- \$2.4 million to construct additional conveyance features.
- \$9.3 million for implementing a comprehensive science plan to optimize STA performance; modeling to plan operations of new STAs and storage basins; and additional source controls.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries

Following record wet season rainfall, the budget invests in projects to benefit South Florida’s coastal estuaries, including:

- \$8.5 million to implement water quality treatment and storage projects in the Caloosahatchee watershed.
- \$29 million to support construction of the Indian River Lagoon-South C-44 (St. Lucie) Reservoir and to take the lead on the Stormwater Treatment Area component.
- \$9.4 million to expand public-private partnerships with landowners to hold water on their property and increase regional water storage to benefit the environment.
- \$2.7 million in legislative funding to move more water south.

The FY2014 budget includes \$196 million from accumulated reserves primarily to implement critical water resource projects to improve water storage and water quality in the northern and southern Everglades.

The District’s annual budget is funded by a combination of ad valorem (property) taxes and other revenues such as state and federal sources, licenses and fees, agricultural taxes, balances and investment income. About 43 percent of the total FY2014 budget comes from property taxes.

The approved millage rates for FY2014 represent \$41.10 per \$100,000 of taxable value in 15 of the District’s 16 counties (the Okeechobee Basin). In Collier County and mainland Monroe County (the Big Cypress Basin), the tax rates represent \$32.78 per \$100,000 of taxable value.

For More Information:

- [Just the Facts: FY2014 Budget](#)
- [Governor Rick Scott’s Letter of Approval](#)

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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.