



**SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT**

3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406

# **MEDIA ADVISORY**

December 7, 2010

**CONTACT:**

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## **Join the 111<sup>th</sup> Christmas Bird Count in a Showcase of Wildlife, Recreation on Public Land**

*Everglades stormwater treatment areas are renowned bird-watching havens*



Red-Shouldered Hawk



Ibis



Roseate Spoonbill



Bald Eagle

*(Click on the pictures for larger versions.)*

**WHAT:** Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) are the water-cleaning workhorses of Everglades restoration. They have also become renowned havens for wildlife and outdoor enthusiasts alike. The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is joining with the Hendry-Glades Audubon Society as the group conducts its portion of the 111th Christmas Bird Count in STA-5 in Hendry County. This is the Hendry-Glades Audubon's fourth year conducting the count at STA-5.

The data collected during the annual counts — which span North America and beyond — are critical to studies of the long-term health and status of bird populations. Such data is used to protect birds and identify environmental issues with implications for people as well, according to Audubon. The STAs, managed by the SFWMD, also provide the public with a variety of recreational opportunities, such as hiking, biking and excellent bird watching.

During the 110th Christmas Bird Count, Audubon teams in STA-5 and the surrounding area documented 96 species and more than 87,300 birds,

including the all-time highest count of an individual species (2,800 Glossy Ibis and 2,100 Fulvous Whistling Duck) in the Christmas Bird Count within the United States. District staff and bird experts from Audubon will be available for media interviews during the 111<sup>th</sup> count.

The South Florida Water Management District is steadily increasing recreational access to public lands while continuing to manage them to support environmental restoration, water supply, water quality and flood control missions. At present, the District owns 621,000 acres of land that are open to the public. Many of these properties are in their natural state or have enhancements such as picnic tables, informational kiosks, campsites and hiking trails. For more information on recreational opportunities throughout the District's 16-county region, visit [www.sfwmd.gov/recreation](http://www.sfwmd.gov/recreation).

**WHEN:** December 18, 2010

**TIME:** 7 a.m.

**WHERE:** The gate at STA-5 is located on Blumberg Road in Hendry County, 12 miles south of the intersection of Blumberg and County Road 835. Blumberg Road ends at the gate after 10 miles of asphalt and 2 miles of dirt.

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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.*