



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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MEDIA ADVISORY

December 22, 2011

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www.sfwmd.gov/news

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Join the 112th 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 112th Christmas Bird Count in STA-5 in Hendry County. This is the Hendry-Glades Audubon's fifth year conducting the count at STA-5.

Data collected during the annual bird counts – which span North America and beyond – are critical to studies of the long-term health and status of bird populations, according to Audubon. The STAs, managed by the SFWMD, attract large numbers of birds and also provide the public with a variety of recreational opportunities, such as hiking, biking and excellent bird watching.

During the 111th Christmas Bird Count, Audubon teams in STA-5 and the surrounding area documented 105 species and more than 96,400 birds.

The District provides 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.

WHEN: December 31, 2011

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.