



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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MEDIA ADVISORY

April 17, 2013

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SFWMD to Rejuvenate Lake Okeechobee Water-Cleaning Wetland *Work will boost Taylor Creek Stormwater Treatment Area effectiveness*



(Click on the picture for a larger version.)

Okeechobee, FL – To increase treatment capacity at a water-cleansing wetland near Lake Okeechobee, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is set to begin improvement work on the Taylor Creek Stormwater Treatment Area (STA).

Water levels in the 170-acre site, which has become a popular recreation spot not far from the City of Okeechobee, will be temporarily lowered to allow sunlight to reach buried wetland plant seeds. The goal is to allow the seeds to germinate and expand the extent of vegetation in the wetland.

This vegetation, such as bulrush and cattail, is the water-cleaning engine that drives the stormwater treatment area's function. By taking up nutrients such as phosphorus, the plants improve water quality coming from Taylor Creek before it reaches Lake Okeechobee. Since operations began in 2008, the Taylor Creek STA has removed more than 4 metric tons of phosphorus that would have otherwise entered the lake.

During the water drawdown, wildlife is expected to concentrate around smaller pools where fish and invertebrates will be abundant. This will potentially provide excellent opportunities for wildlife viewing and photography.

Water levels are expected to return to normal in late May.

For More Information:

- [Taylor Creek Stormwater Treatment Area](#)
- Questions can be directed to the SFWMD Okeechobee Service Center at (863) 462-5260, ext. 3017, or (800) 250-4200.

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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.