



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

December 1, 2009

CONTACT:

Randy Smith

South Florida Water Management District

Office: (561) 682-2800 or Cellular: (561) 389-3386

www.sfwmd.gov/news

follow us on 

SFWMD, Partners Continue Water Quality, Biological Monitoring to Protect Loxahatchee Watershed

Data collection helps track water quality and ecosystem restoration success



(Click on picture for larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL – The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board recently approved a cooperative agreement with the Loxahatchee River District to continue water quality and ecosystem monitoring critical to current and future restoration efforts in the Loxahatchee River watershed.

"The continued restoration and protection of Florida's first federally designated 'Wild and Scenic River' is a priority for the District," said SFWMD Governing Board member Patrick J. Rooney Jr. "Monitoring and long-term study provides the data to track success and safeguard this valued ecosystem for future generations."

The Loxahatchee River District has been monitoring the watershed for 25 years and has partnered with the SFWMD to complete restoration projects under the Loxahatchee

River Preservation Initiative. Supported by funding from the Florida Legislature, the goal of the Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative is to preserve, protect and restore the Loxahatchee River and Estuary by improving water quality, controlling exotic plants and educating the public.

The renewed \$240,000 monitoring agreement builds on a suite of cooperative agreements to benefit the Loxahatchee River and Estuary. Approved in October by the Governing Board, these agreements represent a \$2.1 million investment in projects to provide sewer service to 135 homes, restore habitat and reduce nutrients.

To date, the monitoring project has helped identify short- and long-term trends in water quality conditions and in biological communities, such as oysters and seagrasses within the watershed. A related project helped increase oyster populations within the Loxahatchee River.

The Loxahatchee River watershed has a wide variety of habitats and is home to many rare and endangered species, such as the manatee and wood stork. This 260-square-mile ecosystem includes the communities of Jupiter, Tequesta, Juno Beach, Jupiter Island, Jupiter Inlet Colony, Jupiter Farms, Hobe Sound and Palm Beach Gardens.

The Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative was formed in 2000 to pursue funding for important projects. Funding sources include State appropriations administered by the District and local, state and federal funds from participating organizations. Partners have included Palm Beach County, Martin County, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Loxahatchee River District, the Town of Jupiter and the Jupiter Inlet District.

For more information, please visit the [Loxahatchee Estuary Overview](#).

#

About the South Florida Water Management District – [Celebrating 60 Years \(1949-2009\)](#)

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.