



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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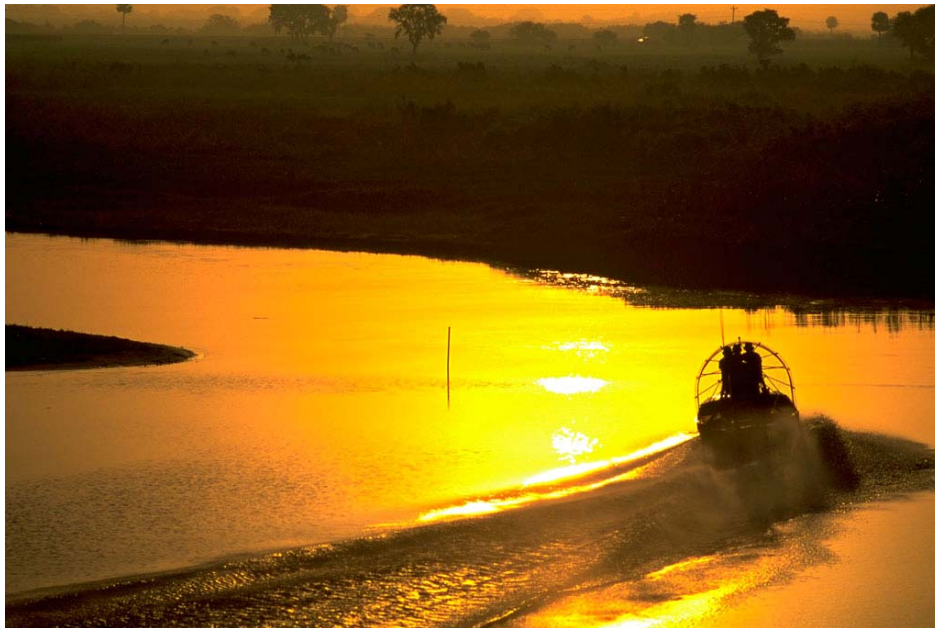
South Florida Water Management District

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New Park Enhances Lake Kissimmee Recreation Access *SFWMD Governing Board approves contract to build public area*



(Click on picture for a larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL - The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board today approved a contract to build a new park that will improve public access to Lake Kissimmee and its many recreational opportunities.

“This park boosts quality public access to southwest Lake Kissimmee and its myriad of recreational opportunities,” said SFWMD Governing Board Vice Chair Jerry Montgomery. “The project also represents a strong partnership between the District and the many anglers, boaters, airboaters and outdoor enthusiasts who helped design the park.”

The park will provide boat ramp access for powerboats and airboats and includes a canoe and kayak launch. The facility also features picnic shelters, restrooms, vehicle and boat trailer parking, as well as an improved access road off Shady Oak Drive in the southwest corner of the lake, just north of State Road 60.

Formerly known as the Shady Oaks and Rocks fish camps, the land was purchased in 2004 to allow the level of Lake Kissimmee to rise an additional 1.5 feet. Known as the Upper Chain Revitalization project, the additional water storage within lakes Kissimmee, Cypress, Hatchineha and Tiger is a key component of the Kissimmee River Restoration project.

The Governing Board awarded the \$849,532 construction contract to ZFI Engineering & Construction Incorporated of West Palm Beach. Work on the park is scheduled to begin in February with completion slated for November 2010. Once complete, Polk County officials will operate and maintain the park.

The South Florida Water Management District is increasing recreational access to public lands, while continuing to manage them effectively to meet environmental restoration, water supply, water quality and flood control missions. For more information on recreational opportunities throughout the District's 16-county jurisdiction, visit www.sfwmd.gov/recreation.

The District manages 621,000 acres of public land, including 18 Management Areas.

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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.