



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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Groundbreaking Marks Start of Restoration Work for Florida Bay, Everglades

*SFWMD C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project complements federal Tamiami Trail
effort to improve freshwater flow*



(Click on picture for a larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL — The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and its federal and state partners today broke ground on a project that represents a significant step forward for restoration of Florida Bay and America’s Everglades. The C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project will help restore freshwater flows to Florida Bay, preserve clean water for Everglades National Park and maintain flood control for eastern communities.

“This groundbreaking is a gratifying moment for the many people who have worked so hard to bring this Everglades restoration project to fruition. The C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project is a major achievement that will significantly benefit Florida Bay’s ecology and all who depend on its health,” said SFWMD Governing Board member Michael Collins. “Starting construction on this project is real progress that moves us

closer to fulfilling restoration goals vital to South Florida's ecosystems and the livelihoods of millions of residents."

The C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project, located west of Florida City in Miami-Dade County, is a component of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) approved by Congress in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. In 2004, the project became a part of the State's expedited construction plan, supported by a total \$44 million investment to improve water quality and achieve restoration goals in South Florida – \$30 million in construction and \$14 million in land acquisition.

"The District's commitment to Everglades restoration is evident with each shovel that turns dirt on a project of this magnitude," said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Eric Buermann. "And this groundbreaking represents our determination to reach many more restoration milestones."

A central goal of the C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project is to help achieve healthy salinity levels in Florida Bay by restoring the quantity, timing and distribution of freshwater flows via Taylor Slough to the bay ecosystem. Florida Bay is an integral component of the Everglades ecosystem and is a valuable economic resource for the region. A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) study found that Florida Bay contributed approximately \$1.7 billion in the form of "destination spending" in 2003 alone.

"As significant as achieving healthy salinity levels in Florida Bay, the C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project will help prevent clean water from seeping out of Everglades National Park through South Florida's porous underground rock layers," said Kenneth Ammon, P.E., SFWMD Deputy Executive Director of Everglades Restoration and Capital Projects. "Reducing seepage out of the park preserves clean water for Taylor Slough and Florida Bay and reduces the cost of treating and moving additional water into the park from other sources."

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan is a framework for restoring, protecting and preserving the water resources of central and southern Florida. CERP is a 50-50 partnership between the State of Florida and the federal government. The State of Florida and the South Florida Water Management District have invested approximately \$2.4 billion toward this effort, including approximately \$300 million in construction. Through September 30, 2009, 60 percent – or approximately 232,767 acres – of the estimated lands needed to implement CERP have been acquired.

The C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project builds on momentum from another recent groundbreaking. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers broke ground last month on a complementary project to improve water flow under the Tamiami Trail into Everglades National Park.

For more information, visit www.sfwmd.gov/everglades. Also see, Just the Facts: [C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project](#).

Praise for the C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project

STATEMENT FROM FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SECRETARY MICHAEL W. SOLE

“We are elated to see this vital Everglades restoration project move forward. Re-establishing clean, freshwater flows is essential to restore America’s Everglades and revitalize Florida Bay. The bay is a significant environmental and economic resource for South Florida, and the C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project represents a wise investment in the bay’s future health.”

STATEMENT FROM COMMANDER OF THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT, COL. AL PANTANO

“HOOAH! to our partner, the SFWMD, and to all who care so much about the ecosystem. Breaking ground on the C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project is a huge and important step in Everglades restoration. The SFWMD’s tremendous initiative, persistence and resilience were critical to getting us to this groundbreaking today. The C-111 project is huge in terms of regaining the essential naturally distributed flow of fresh water to Taylor Slough and into Florida Bay. Because it is the third Everglades project groundbreaking in two months, we maintain momentum in this new era in Everglades restoration. The importance of momentum can't be overemphasized. It is essential to making more of these extraordinary restoration projects a reality. These are phenomenal times!”

STATEMENT FROM EVERGLADES TRUST CHAIRMAN THOM RUMBERGER

“The C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project ensures that the splendor of Florida Bay will be safe for generations to come. It is a testament to the amazing value of Everglades restoration that so many organizations have worked together with the South Florida Water Management District to make this project a reality.”

STATEMENT FROM EVERGLADES AND DRY TORTUGAS NATIONAL PARKS SUPERINTENDENT DAN KIMBALL

“This project represents another significant step forward in the restoration of Everglades National Park – specifically restoring the health of Flamingo Bay – and we reached this achievement because of the leadership of the South Florida Water Management District and then working together with all of our governmental partners as well as the local agricultural community and non-governmental organizations.”

STATEMENT FROM EVERGLADES FOUNDATION CEO KIRK FORDHAM

“A countless number of people would reap the benefits of a healthy Florida Bay. The restoration project will sustain and create jobs while enhancing the recreational opportunities that so many people who live here and who visit Florida enjoy, especially lifestyles centered around fishing and boating.”

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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.