



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **SFWMD Marks 25th Anniversary of Loxahatchee River's Wild and Scenic Designation**

*May 17 declared Wild and Scenic Loxahatchee River Day*



*(Click on the picture for a larger version.)*

**West Palm Beach, FL** — In recognition of the 25th anniversary of the federal designation of the Loxahatchee River as a Wild and Scenic River, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board has declared May 17, 2010, to be Wild and Scenic Loxahatchee River Day.

A public celebration of the 25th anniversary of the national designation is scheduled for 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 15, at Jonathan Dickinson State Park in Hobe Sound.

“The Loxahatchee River is among the great natural places in Florida,” said SFWMD Governing Board member Kevin Powers, who represents a portion of the Loxahatchee Watershed. “Its designation as a national Wild and Scenic River is celebrated as much today as it was 25 years ago.”

On May 17, 1985, 7.6 miles of the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River was designated as a national Wild and Scenic River through the National Wild and Scenic River Act of 1968. Under the Act, free-flowing rivers with outstanding scenic, recreational, fish and wildlife, historic and cultural values are designated for preservation for the enjoyment and benefit of present and future generations.

The Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River – from Riverbend Park in Jupiter downstream to Jonathan Dickinson State Park in Martin County – was the first river in the State of Florida to receive such a designation.

“The story of the Loxahatchee River is unique in that a diverse partnership of our citizens, legislative delegation and local government partners has long given enthusiastic support for the river,” said SFWMD Governing Board member Patrick Rooney Jr., who also represents part of the Loxahatchee Watershed. “Together, they have worked tirelessly for the protection and restoration of the river.”

Since 1985, the SFWMD has acquired more than 20,000 acres of land in the river corridor and tributary watersheds for preservation and restoration. Through the Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative – administered by the SFWMD – numerous agencies and local governments have worked together on 65 habitat and water quality restoration projects, most of which have been completed. Nearly \$18 million in legislative appropriations have been matched by more than \$23 million in local funding partners to accomplish this work.

“We’re fortunate to have the Loxahatchee River, a national treasure, as a central feature in our community,” said Loxahatchee River District Executive Director Albrey Arrington, who also serves as the Chair of the Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative. “As a fourth generation Floridian and a Jupiter native, it is an absolute pleasure to work collaboratively with partner agencies to preserve, protect, and restore the Loxahatchee River.”

The District proclamation, and others issued by local government and agency partners involved in the protection and restoration of the Loxahatchee River, will be on display during the 25th anniversary celebration at Jonathan Dickinson State Park.

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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.*