



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE



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### **Hydrilla Treatments Scheduled on Cypress Lake** *SFWMD and FWC to apply herbicide over 1,745 acres*

**Kissimmee, FL** – The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) are scheduled to begin a significant effort to control hydrilla growing over 1,745 acres of Cypress Lake on June 2. The invasive plant can clog waterways, impede navigation and affect wildlife.

Working in cooperation with the FWC Invasive Plant Management Section, the SFWMD Vegetation Management Division will first apply the herbicide Aquathol over impacted areas of the lake using a team of helicopters. A day later, aquatic plant experts will use airboats to apply Galleon, another herbicide that robs hydrilla of its ability to feed itself.

The work was originally planned for March but was delayed because above-normal rainfall created flows through the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes that would have limited the herbicides' effectiveness on hydrilla.

As hydrilla becomes a larger challenge in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, the District and the FWC are constantly looking for new ways to keep the noxious aquatic plant under control. By applying Galleon in combination with the regularly used Aquathol, aquatic plant experts hope to maximize the effects of the treatments.

Both Aquathol and Galleon are approved for lake use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Since hydrilla was first introduced from Asia as an ornamental aquarium plant in the 1950s, the rapidly growing aquatic plant has invaded almost 80 percent of Florida's freshwater ponds, rivers and waterways. The plant can grow in underwater stands or surface mats and is easily transferred to other water bodies by boats.

Hydrilla slows water flow and can clog structures in District canals that must be kept clear for effective flood control. It can also be detrimental to fish and wildlife habitat and limit access to waterways by clogging boat motors.

The SFWMD Vegetation Management Division is responsible for managing nuisance and invasive exotic vegetation throughout the 16-county District. The implementation of a vegetation management program is necessary to ensure the continued use and function of the region's water resources and preservation of South Florida's conservation lands.

For more information on the District's vegetation management efforts, please visit the District's website at [www.sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov).

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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.*