



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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SFWMD Website Opens Visitors' Eyes to Science *Redesigned www.sfwmd.gov showcases District's ecosystem restoration efforts*



(Click on the image above to go to the [Protecting and Restoring Ecosystems](#) homepage.)

West Palm Beach, FL — As part of the ongoing redesign of its website, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has launched a series of webpages that highlight the agency's role in protecting and restoring South Florida's ecosystems.

"The District is conducting cutting-edge scientific research to improve regional water quality, hydrology and ecology," said Deena Reppen, SFWMD Deputy Executive Director for Regulatory and Public Affairs. "It is fitting that our website reflect that level of technological sophistication by presenting timely and relevant information in an engaging way to the public and our stakeholders."

The new and improved webpages on www.sfwmd.gov use interactive graphics, multimedia and fact sheets to tell the story of the District's ecosystem restoration efforts and the science behind them. The pages include:

- An overview of Florida's [habitats and wildlife](#). For each of seven habitats, visitors can open a panoramic photo with related information on plants, animals, recreation opportunities and scientific research.
- A multimedia look at the District's [Stormwater Treatment Areas](#) (STAs). These are constructed treatment wetlands that use plants to naturally remove phosphorus from water flowing into the Everglades. The webpage has videos and animations that explain why the District built the network of six STAs, how they work and what water quality improvements they have delivered. Visitors can also explore a panoramic view of an STA with information on its components.
- A new page that outlines the role of sound [science](#) at the agency and the expertise of District scientists, researchers and modelers.
- Information and a video on the District's efforts to control nuisance and invasive [exotic vegetation and animals](#) throughout the agency's 16-county region.
- Regional overview pages detailing work to protect and restore [the Kissimmee River](#), [Lake Okeechobee](#), [coastal watersheds](#) and [America's Everglades](#).

This latest phase in the ongoing redesign and re-engineering of the District's website contains more than 25 new or improved webpages. In addition to the sections on protecting and restoring ecosystems, this phase includes a page on [what residents can do to improve water quality](#), plus a new interactive search function for [recreational activities](#).

The redeveloped www.sfwmd.gov is being produced in-house to be the authoritative source of information about the District and the agency's primary line of communication with 7.5 million residents across 16 counties. Additional pages for the site – which drew 512,263 unique visitors in Fiscal Year 2009 alone – will be transitioned into the new Web redesign through mid-2010.

More information about the ongoing redesign of the District's website can be found in the attached [Q & A](#).

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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.