



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Hiking, Biking and Fishing, Oh My! Summer Fun Awaits Florida Residents on Public Lands**

*New Web feature includes interactive search for free family activities*



*Click on the pictures to see a photo gallery of views from the DuPuis Management Area on the Martin/Palm Beach county line.*

**West Palm Beach, FL** – Hike in the historic Everglades. Bike through the beauty of Shingle Creek. Fish along Paradise Run by Lake Okeechobee.

Tons of fun, free year-round activities are available on approximately 375,000 acres managed by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) across 16 counties, from Orlando to the Keys. These public treasures – featured in the new SFWMD interactive [recreation guide](#) – provide an escape from the daily grind.

“I am constantly amazed by the variety of outdoor activities right in our own backyards,” said SFWMD Executive Director Carol Ann Wehle. “Summer is a perfect time to come out and enjoy Florida’s unique nature and wildlife while spending time with friends and family.”

The District is committed to increasing recreational access to public lands, while continuing to manage them effectively to meet its environmental restoration, water supply, water quality and flood control missions. Such access is also made possible by

partnerships with local, state and federal agencies, along with community organizations.

The SFWMD recently completed construction on three day-use shelters along the Kissimmee River and Lake Kissimmee to provide a rest stop and destination for boaters, airboaters, canoe and kayak paddlers and other outdoor enthusiasts.

Within counties served by the District, Stormwater Treatment Area 5 (STA-5) in Hendry County represents a prime example of melding effective management and restoration with recreation. The Everglades water-cleaning marsh has become a premier bird-watching spot in the United States, with 167 species recently recorded from the area. The District has partnered with the Hendry-Glades Audubon Society, which leads birding tours at the STA.

STA-1 East and STA-1 West on the western fringes of Palm Beach County's urban area, 20 miles from the coast, offer wildlife watching, hiking and biking opportunities Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday during daylight hours. Trophy bass fishing in the 27 miles of canals and boating are features at the Harold A. Campbell Public Use Area at STA-3/4 in southwest Palm Beach County.

The Allapattah Management Area in western Martin County offers a variety of recreational opportunities from horseback riding, hiking and biking to primitive camping and seasonal hunting. Equestrian trails are located off Fox Brown Road and the south levee of the C-23 canal.

The array of activities available on SFWMD-managed public lands also includes:

- Horseback riding, bicycling, hiking and canoeing in the KICCO Wildlife Management Area in Polk County
- Primitive camping on Drasdo within the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes in Osceola County – accessible only by water
- Hiking, horseback riding and wildlife viewing in the DuPuis Management Area spread across the border of Martin and Palm Beach counties
- Bank fishing in Stormwater Treatment Area 1 East in Palm Beach County
- Hunting in the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) Management Area in Lee and Collier counties

The District recently opened the Istokpoga Canal Boat Ramp Area in Highlands County, featuring picnic tables, shelters, parking and bathroom facilities. Airboat and power boat ramps connect boaters with the Kissimmee River. The District has also supported the City of Belle Glade in enhancing recreational opportunities on Torry Island with the addition of a chickee hut, picnic tables and informational signage.

For more information on recreational opportunities, please visit [www.sfwmd.gov/recreation](http://www.sfwmd.gov/recreation).

To sign up for the STA-5 Birding Tour, visit the Hendry-Glades Audubon Web site for bird watching tour dates at [www.hendrygladesaudubon.org](http://www.hendrygladesaudubon.org). Send an e-mail to Margaret England at [sta5birding@embarqmail.com](mailto:sta5birding@embarqmail.com) with your name and contact information, including an emergency cell number for the tour day, the date you want to go and the number in your party. You may also leave a message at (863) 674-0695 or (863) 517-0202.

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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.*