



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **SFWMD to Replace Golden Gate Weirs in Big Cypress Basin to Improve Water Quality**

*New structures will also enhance flood control in the Golden Gate Estates area*

**Naples, FL** – The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is set to start construction in the Big Cypress Basin on two water control structures on the Golden Gate Canal to help improve water quality and flood control in the region.

“The weir replacement project will provide important water resource benefits to Southwest Florida residents and the environment,” said Tommy Strowd, Director of the SFWMD Operations, Maintenance and Construction Division. “Infrastructure improvements such as these are vital to our core missions of improving regional water supply, water quality and flood control.”

Designed to convey water from a 25-year, 5-day storm event, the new weirs will improve flood protection while creating additional storage capacity in the canal to help recharge groundwater supplies during the dry season. The project will replace Golden Gate weirs #6 and #7 located just south of 50th Avenue NE and east of 22nd Street NE. Construction will begin later this month and continue through January 2012.

The new weirs will be aligned with 50th Avenue and 22nd Street NE to allow crews greater access for maintenance and repairs. They are not designed to allow vehicle traffic across the canal.

The Golden Gate Canal system was built in the 1960s for the purpose of residential development. Almost 70 miles of canals were dug to lower groundwater levels for home construction. A series of water control structures, called weirs, were later installed to control excess drainage.

Since 1985, the Big Cypress Basin has implemented a capital improvement program to modify the water control structures in the Golden Gate Canal and its tributaries to achieve better water management. Through the program, 17 water control structures have been upgraded in the Golden Gate system alone.

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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.*

**About the Big Cypress Basin**

*The Big Cypress Basin, part of the South Florida Water Management District, covers Collier County and portions of Monroe County. A network of 162 miles of primary canals, 46 water control structures and four pumps provide flood control to the basin and also protect regional water supplies and environmental resources.*