



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **New Boat Ramps, Recreation Area Open Today on Lake Kissimmee** *SFWMD, Polk partnership leads to enhanced public recreation access*



*(Click on the pictures for larger versions.)*

**West Palm Beach, FL** – The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and its partners in Polk County today opened a new recreation area and boat ramps to improve public access on Lake Kissimmee and its array of outdoor opportunities.

“This recreation area was ultimately made possible by the ongoing and highly successful restoration of the Kissimmee River,” said SFWMD Governing Board member Daniel O’Keefe. “It is a showcase of how lands managed for restoration can enhance access to public property and their recreational activities.”

Formerly known as the Shady Oaks and Rocks fish camps, the land was purchased in 2004 to allow the level of Lake Kissimmee to rise an additional 1.5 feet. Known as the Upper Chain Revitalization project, the additional water storage within lakes Kissimmee, Cypress, Hatchineha and Tiger is a key component of the Kissimmee River Restoration project.

The recreation area will provide boat ramp access for powerboats and airboats and includes a canoe and kayak launch. The facility also features picnic shelters, restrooms and vehicle and boat trailer parking, as well as an improved access road off Shady Oak Drive in the southwest corner of the lake, just north of State Road 60.

The South Florida Water Management District provides recreational access to public lands while continuing to manage them to support environmental restoration, water supply, water quality and flood control missions. At present, the District owns 621,000 acres of land that are open to the public. Many of these properties are in their natural state or have enhancements such as picnic tables, informational kiosks, campsites and hiking trails.

For more information on recreational opportunities throughout the District's 16-county region, visit [www.sfwmd.gov/recreation](http://www.sfwmd.gov/recreation).

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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.*