



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **SFWMD Weirs Begin Service to Boost Flood Protection, Water Storage** *New Golden Gate Main Canal weirs will provide benefits for years to come*



*Golden Gate Main Canal Weir #6 (left), #7 (right). (Click on the pictures for larger versions.)*

**Naples, FL** — Two water control structures built by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) on the Golden Gate Main Canal officially began service today to improve flood protection and increase water storage in Southwest Florida.

“Flood control and water storage are at the heart of the District’s missions to serve residents and protect the environment in Southwest Florida,” said SFWMD Governing Board member and Big Cypress Basin Board Chairman Dan DeLisi. “The agency’s dedicated maintenance and improvement plan is helping to ensure our infrastructure is capable of accomplishing these missions well into the future.”

Weirs are water control structures resembling a dam that are built to regulate the level and flow of water in a canal or water body. Unlike a typical dam, water can flow over the top of the structure or via controlled releases with gates.

Designed with the capability to convey water from a 1-in-25-year, five-day storm event, the new Golden Gate Main Canal weirs #6 and #7 will improve flood protection while creating additional storage capacity in the canal to help recharge groundwater supplies during the dry season. They will also help improve water quality by reducing freshwater flows to Naples Bay and the Ten Thousand Islands area, improving salinity in these important water bodies.

The new weirs replaced the old Golden Gate weirs #6 and #7 located just south of 50th Avenue Northeast and east of 22nd Street Northeast. The new structures are directly aligned with 50th Avenue and 22nd Street Northeast 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 weirs were 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. Since 2010, the District has invested approximately \$4.7 million to replace three weirs.

Along with the replacement of weirs #6 and #7, the SFWMD replaced Weir # 3 in 2010 to improve flood protection for Golden Gate Estates, help reduce freshwater discharges into Naples Bay and create additional storage capacity in the Golden Gate Main Canal to help recharge groundwater supplies during the dry season.

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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.*