



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

STATEMENT

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Statement by George Horne, SFWMD Deputy Executive Director of Operations and Maintenance

RE: Announcement by U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar to list nine species of non-native constrictors as “injurious wildlife”

“The South Florida Water Management District applauds Secretary Salazar for his decision to classify nine species of non-native, giant constrictor snakes as injurious animals under the federal Lacey Act and ban their importation into the United States.

“This month alone, District personnel have captured 25 Burmese pythons and five African rock pythons in South Florida. As has been well documented, the highly adaptable Burmese python has established a breeding population that threatens state and federal efforts to protect and restore America’s Everglades. These exotic snakes prey on native animals, including threatened and endangered species. Recent evidence suggests the more aggressive African rock python may also be establishing a permanent presence in the Everglades.

“Secretary Salazar’s decisive action today will help stem the flow of other potentially harmful constrictors into the Everglades ecosystem, reducing the long-term costs associated with managing these exotic species.”

Related information:

- [Department of the Interior news release: Salazar Moves to Ban Importation and Interstate Transfer of Burmese Python and Eight Other Giant Invasive Snakes \(Jan. 20, 2010\)](#)
- [Written testimony of George Horne before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security \(Nov. 6, 2009\)](#)
- [Appendix to written testimony, including photos \(Nov. 6, 2009\)](#)

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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.