



## News Release

### **SFWMD Governing Board Approves Contract to Build Lower Kissimmee Water Quality Project**

Stormwater Treatment Project to Improve Water Quality and Build Wetlands North of Lake Okeechobee

**DORAL, Fla.** - The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board approved a contract today to build the Lower Kissimmee Basin Stormwater Treatment Project. The first-of-its-kind project is located north of Lake Okeechobee and will use a combination of wetland systems and innovative technology to improve regional water quality.

"The South Florida Water Management District continues bold action and significant investments to improve water quality all across South Florida," said **SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Chauncey Goss**. "Under the leadership of Governor Ron DeSantis, we are breaking ground and finishing more Everglades restoration projects than ever before in Florida's history. Our vote today implements more innovative solutions to support meaningful water quality improvements in the region and benefit the health of Lake Okeechobee."

Lake Okeechobee and its watershed have been subjected to hydrologic, land use, and other modifications over the past century that have degraded its water quality. To help address the lake's nutrient pollution, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) adopted a total maximum daily load (TMDL) to reduce total phosphorus (TP) from reaching the lake and its watershed.

The 3,400-acre Lower Kissimmee Basin Stormwater Treatment Project, located along the Kissimmee River about three miles upstream from Lake Okeechobee, will capture and clean water from the river prior to it flowing into Lake Okeechobee. The Lower Kissimmee Basin Stormwater Treatment Project is strategically located to improve water quality from high-priority basins identified by the [DEP's Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan](#).

When completed, it will be the largest water quality project north of Lake Okeechobee and will significantly reduce nutrient pollution loads in the Kissimmee River. The project will use traditional stormwater treatment cells with aquatic vegetation to remove nutrient pollution from the water coupled with innovative technologies to provide additional water quality benefits.

Gov. DeSantis made improving water quality and completing Everglades restoration projects a top priority of his administration and called for record funding and water quality efforts in his "[Achieving More Now for Florida's Environment Executive Order](#)." SFWMD continues to advance important Everglades restoration projects that will send more water south, reduce harmful discharges to the estuaries, and improve water quality in South Florida.

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*The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages the water resources in the southern part of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. Our mission is to safeguard and restore South Florida's water resources and ecosystems, protect our communities from flooding, and meet the region's water needs while connecting with the public and stakeholders.*

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