

9. **OLD BUSINESS**

c. Water Quality Issues

3. Reports on Meetings

- a. Report by Dr. Rob Loflin at the Water Resources Advisory Commission February 22, 2006 meeting
- b. Report by Dr. Rob Loflin at the Army Corps of Engineer February 22, 2006 meeting
- c. Attendance by Vice Mayor Denham at the groundbreaking of C-43 February 24, 2006

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## Water Quality Issues

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Press release issued at the ground breaking of test cells of Caloosahatchee Reservoir, the C-43 West Reservoir which is part of the Acceler8 project.

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Additional materials on file:

- Acceler8 – Overview
- C-43 West Reservoir, Purpose and Benefits



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE



February 24, 2006

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## FLORIDA BEGINS CONSTRUCTION ON TEST CELLS OF CALOOSAHATCHEE RESERVOIR

*Reservoir to help reduce flood-control releases from  
Lake Okeechobee to the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary*

LABELLE – Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Colleen M. Castille and South Florida Water Management District Governing Board Member Alice Carlson today joined a host of local, environmental, recreational, agricultural and business leaders to begin building preliminary water storage areas as part of the plan to construct the massive C-43 Caloosahatchee West Storage Reservoir. A component of Florida's *Acceler8* initiative to fast-track Everglades restoration, the 170,000 acre-foot reservoir will protect the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary when complete by capturing and storing harmful freshwater releases from Lake Okeechobee.

"Beginning this important project is further proof that Florida is stepping up the pace of South Florida ecosystem restoration," said DEP Secretary Castille. "Sound science and aggressive initiatives like *Acceler8* are moving restoration forward ahead of schedule to realize the environmental and social benefits of this monumental plan earlier than anticipated."

The South Florida Water Management District is constructing two initial four-acre storage areas, known as test cells, that will hold approximately 42 million gallons of water from Lake Okeechobee. The test reservoirs will provide engineers with critical water quality, embankment and seepage information to design and build the C-43 Reservoir on more than 10,000 acres of former agricultural land known as Berry Groves. Construction on the test cells is scheduled to be completed by June 2006.

"These test cells are the result of public participation at its best," Carlson said. "The region's citizens, community leaders, state environmental scientists, engineers and water managers worked together to address common concerns to move forward with this significant project and see restoration benefits faster."

Located in Hendry County south of the Caloosahatchee River and west of the Ortona lock, the \$338 million C-43 Reservoir will hold approximately 170,000 acre-feet of water, 16 feet deep. Scheduled to be operational by 2011, the above-ground reservoir will comprise a significant portion of the total water storage requirement for the entire C-43 basin. The reservoir will capture and store regulatory water releases from Lake Okeechobee, reducing harmful discharges to the coastal estuaries, improving the health of the ecosystem and revitalizing fish and oyster habitats by maintaining salinity levels. The project will also provide public access and recreation opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts when finished.

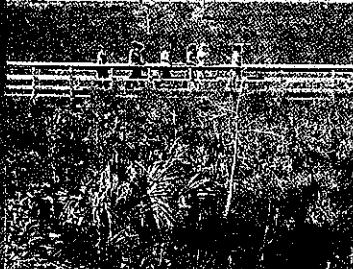
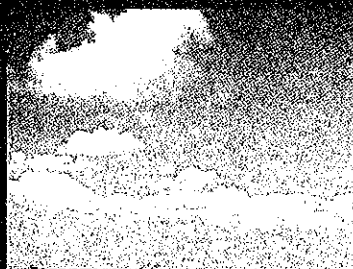
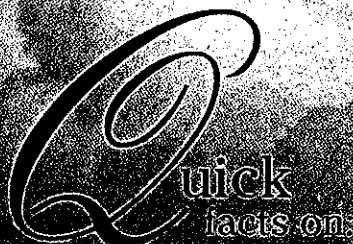
Announced by Governor Jeb Bush in October 2004, *Acceler8* is stepping up the pace for funding, design and construction to complete eight critical Everglades restoration projects over seven years. At substantial savings to taxpayers, the projects will restore 100,000 acres of wetlands, expand water treatment areas by close to 29,000 acres and provide 428,000 acre-feet of additional water storage for Everglades restoration a decade ahead of schedule. The C-43 Reservoir is the fourth *Acceler8* project now underway and the second *Acceler8* project to launch in just two weeks. The State began expanding three treatment wetlands in February and launched similar test cells for the Everglades Agricultural Area reservoir last year.

Under the leadership of Governor Bush, Florida forged a 50-50 State-federal partnership to implement the \$8 billion Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and has invested \$1.3 billion and committed an additional \$3 billion through the end of the decade to clean up and restore the famed *River of Grass*. For more information on *Acceler8*, visit [www.evergladesnow.org](http://www.evergladesnow.org)

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*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.*

FEBRUARY 2006



## Acceler8 – An Overview

*STEPPING UP THE PACE TO RESTORE AMERICA'S EVERGLADES*

ACCELER8 is a major boost for Everglades restoration. The expedited course of action reaffirms the commitment of the federal/state/local partnership to revitalize the ecosystem by stepping up the pace on eight restoration projects:

- C-43 (Caloosahatchee River) West Reservoir
- Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir - Phase 1 with Bolles & Cross Canals Improvements
- Everglades Agricultural Area Stormwater Treatment Area Expansion
- Picayune Strand (Southern Golden Gate Estates) Restoration
- C-44 (St. Lucie Canal) Reservoir / Stormwater Treatment Area
- Water Preserve Areas

(Includes Site 1 Impoundment, C-9 Impoundment, C-11 Impoundment, Acme Basin B Discharge, WCA-3A/3B Seepage Management)

- Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands - Phase 1
- C-111 Spreader Canal

By accelerating the funding, design and construction of these projects, the Everglades will experience positive benefits much sooner... and in a more cost-effective manner. As opposed to the "pay as you go" approach, taxpayer dollars needed for construction will be significantly leveraged. The South Florida Water Management District will finance project construction with "Certificates of Participation" revenue bonding. Financing and fast-tracking these projects NOW helps avoid the inevitable increases in construction materials and labor costs.

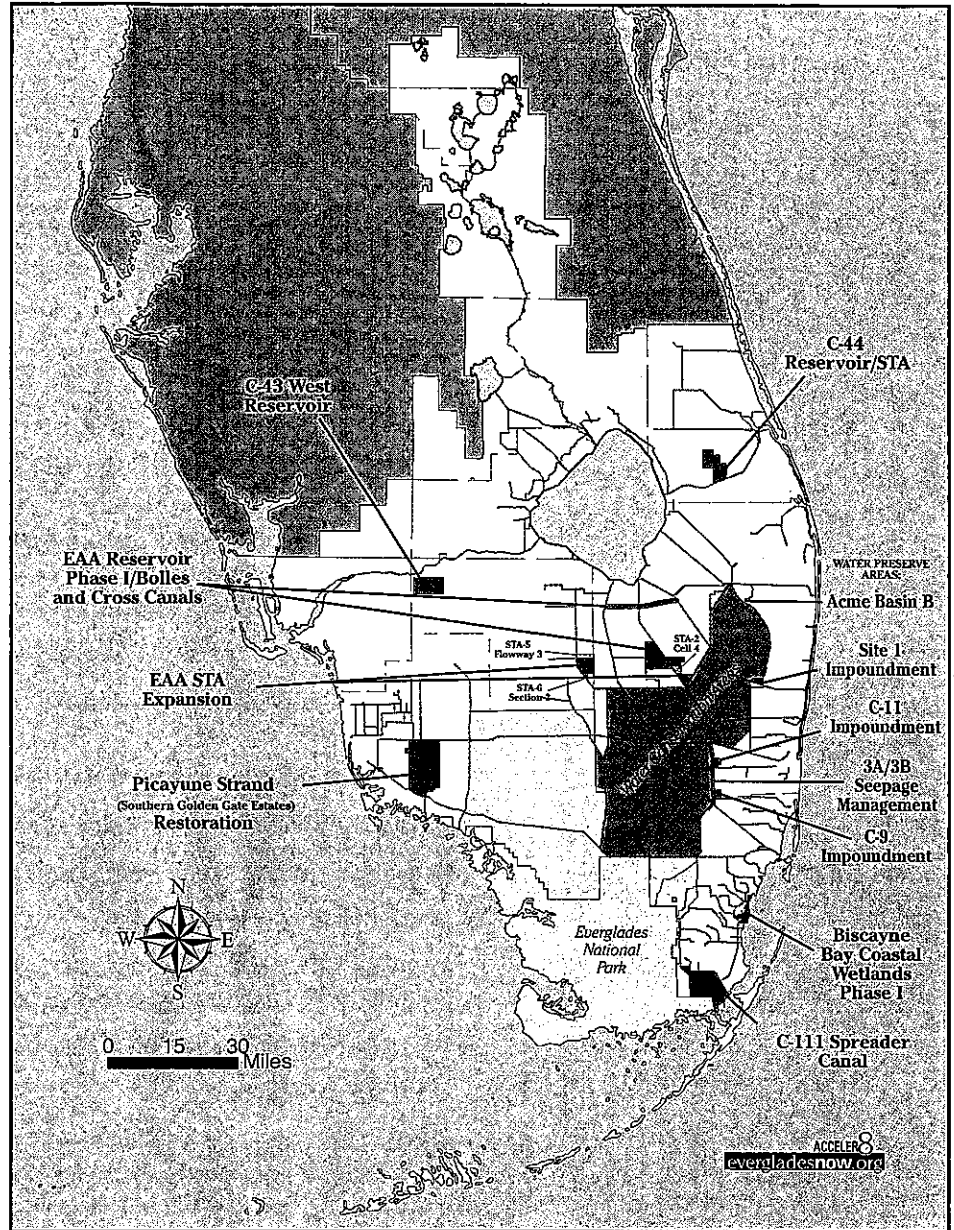
Most of the land for these projects has already been acquired, with much of it purchased in partnership with the federal government. Acceler8 strengthens the state and federal partnership to restore the Everglades.

Building these projects on an accelerated pace is a major economic undertaking that is expected to generate a large demand for goods and services. Special efforts are being made to ensure that a wide variety of vendors and contractors will be utilized, and partnerships are under way with local workforce development organizations to help prepare and train area workers with needed job skills.

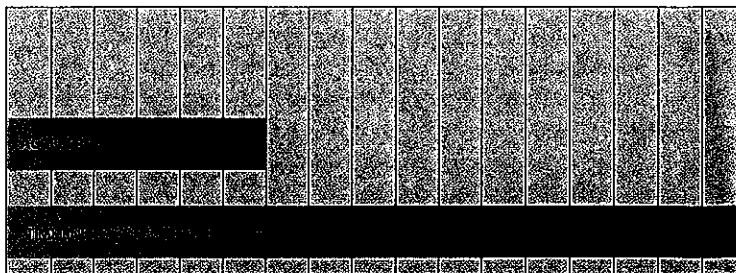
In addition to the environmental improvements, these projects will also provide additional flood control and water supply options, along with the potential for recreational opportunities.

## Acceler8 benefits

- Achieves restoration goals faster
  - Project components in ground 11 years ahead of schedule
  - Provides approximately 50% of needed surface water storage components
  - Earlier improvements in water deliveries to estuaries
  - Earlier improvements to Lake Okeechobee habitat
  - Earlier improvements in water quality
  - Earlier improvements in water flow and timing / hydropatterns
- Fiscal responsibility / cost efficiencies / economic stimulus
- Provides greater flood control and water supply management flexibility
- Earlier opportunities for public access and recreation opportunities on state and federal lands



## Timeline for All Acceler8 Projects



2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022



**ACCELER8**  
**evergladesnow.org**

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