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SFWMD Begins Initial Operation of World's Largest Treatment Marsh

Friday, October 3, 2003 - The South Florida Water Management District (District) has begun initial operation of Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) 3/4, a 17,000-acre constructed wetland designed to significantly reduce phosphorus from water before it enters the Everglades. When completed the massive 26-square mile project will be the largest man-made wetland in the world.

Over 11 million cubic yards of dirt and rock were removed while digging the 29 miles of canals and constructing the 31 miles of levee for the treatment marsh. Two major pumping stations equipped with large diesel pumps will push water through the 48 internal water control structures constructed to manage water flow.

“This marks a tremendous milestone in our on-going Everglades clean-up efforts,” said Henry Dean, SFWMD executive director. “This precedent-setting facility is the largest of its kind and greatly expands our aggressive phosphorus control initiatives.”

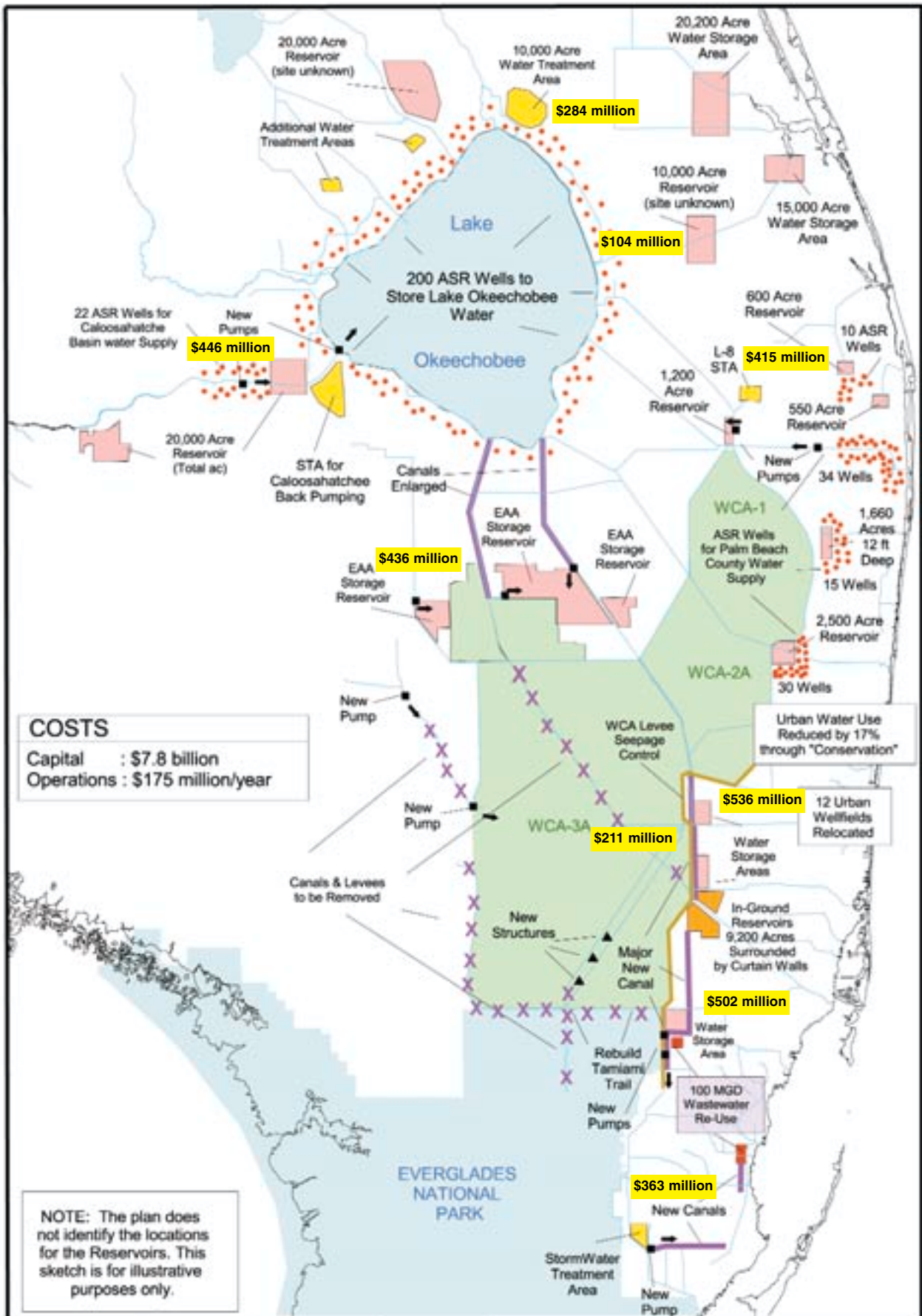
Excess phosphorus has been identified as a major pollutant of the ecosystem, causing an imbalance in the natural populations of the plant and animal life of the Everglades.

The concept of using stormwater treatment areas, or man-made marshes that use vegetation to naturally cleanse excess nutrients from the water, has proven to be an effective weapon in the battle to improve Everglades water quality. The four stormwater treatment areas already in operation have successfully prevented nearly 350 tons of phosphorus from reaching the Everglades. Working in concert with changes in on-farm practices, phosphorus inputs have been reduced by more than 1,400 tons.

Located west of US 27 on the Palm Beach-Broward County line, STA 3/4 will include a 100-acre periphyton-based treatment cell to help further reduce phosphorus levels in stormwater runoff leaving agricultural and urban areas. “To help us reach our water quality goals, we are accelerating the demonstration of this advanced “green technology on a full-scale basis,” said Dean.

In addition, this STA will allow the District to treat nearly 250,000 acre feet of in-flow water from Lake Okeechobee when needed due to regulatory releases, thereby minimizing harmful discharges to estuaries.

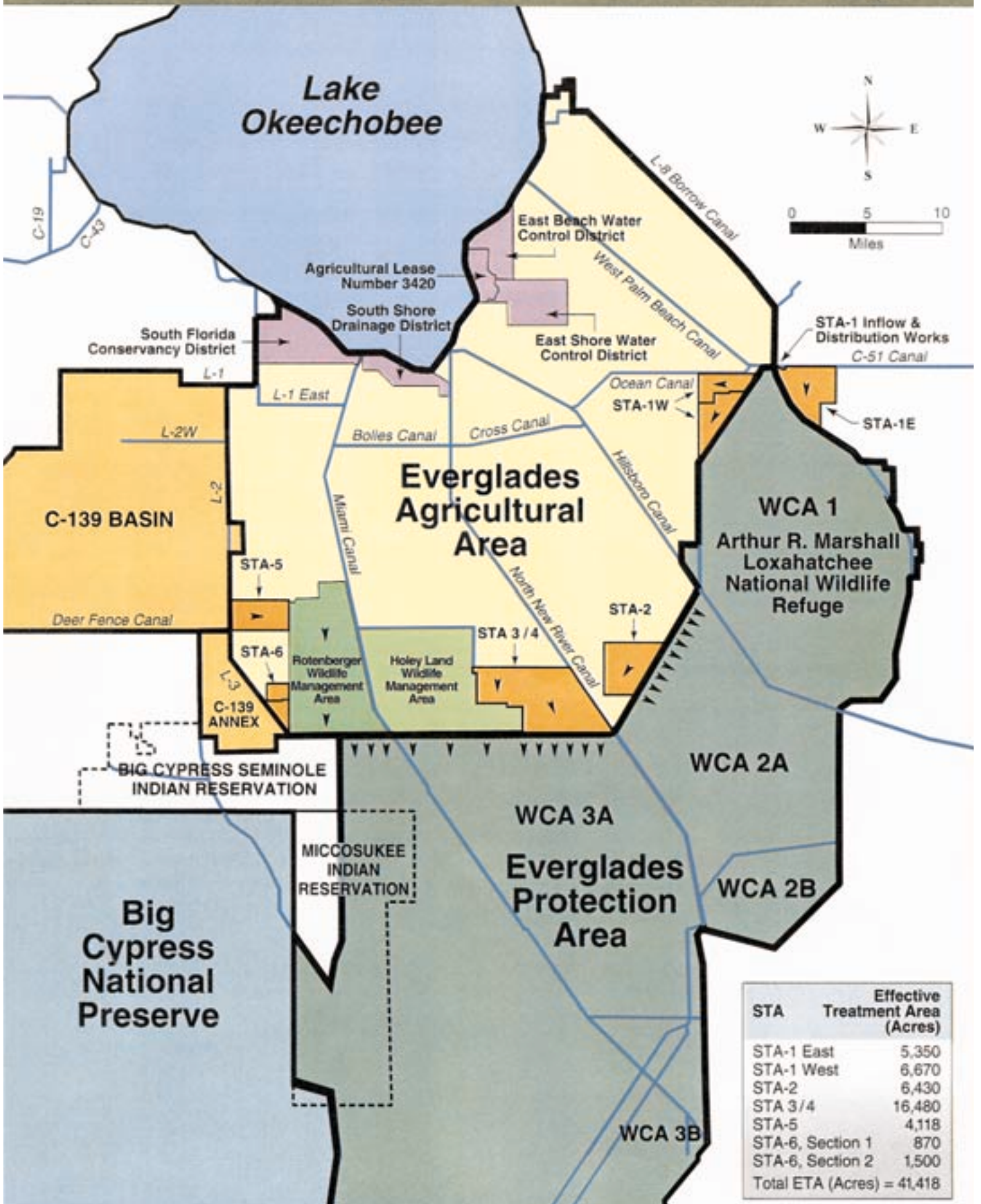
“The District is able to begin filling a large portion of the facility now, while completing full build-out of the treatment area, scheduled for next spring,” said Dean. “This milestone is all the more significant in that the original construction contractor filed for bankruptcy 18 months ago which could have delayed construction indefinitely. Through innovative construction management, the District worked diligently with the new contractor to initiate operation by the October 1 deadline for STA-3/4.”



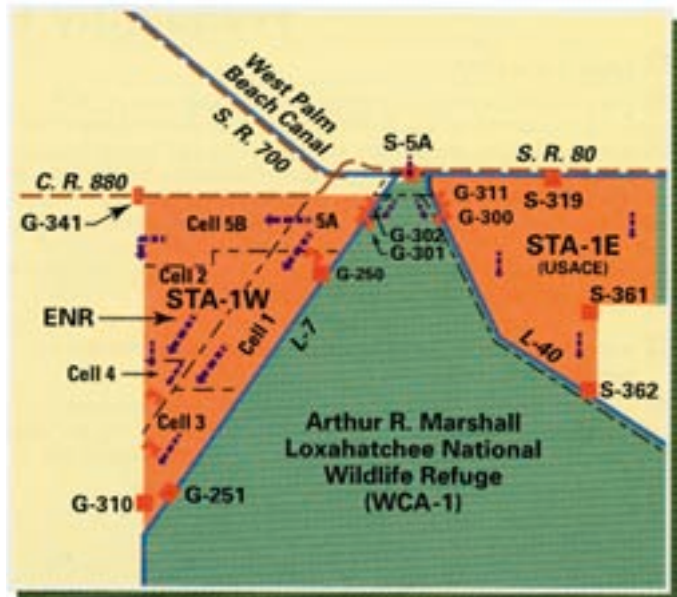
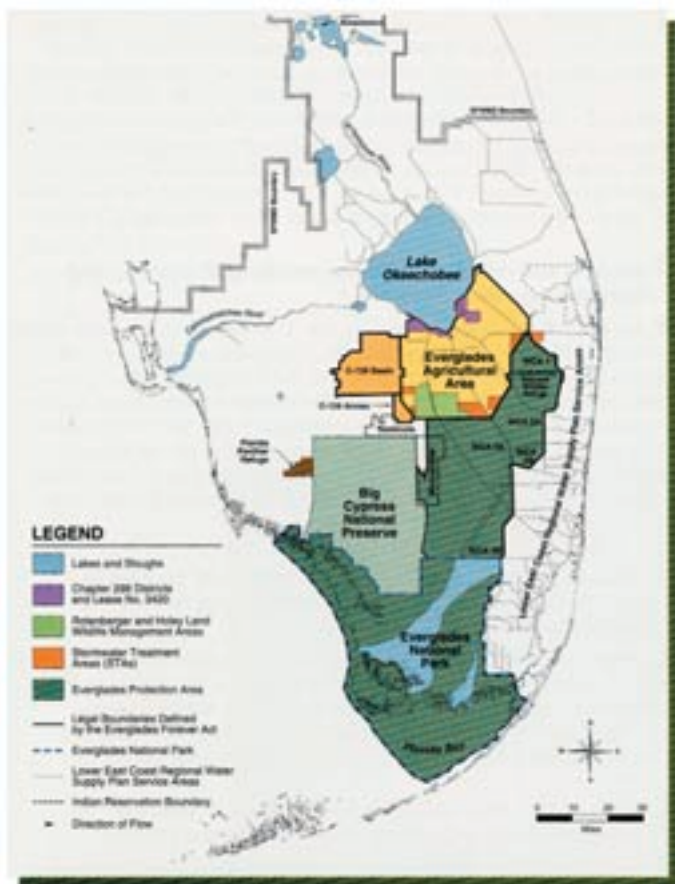
NOTE: The plan does not identify the locations for the Reservoirs. This sketch is for illustrative purposes only.

Data Source: SFWMD

Overview of Everglades Construction Projects



General Location Map



STA-1W

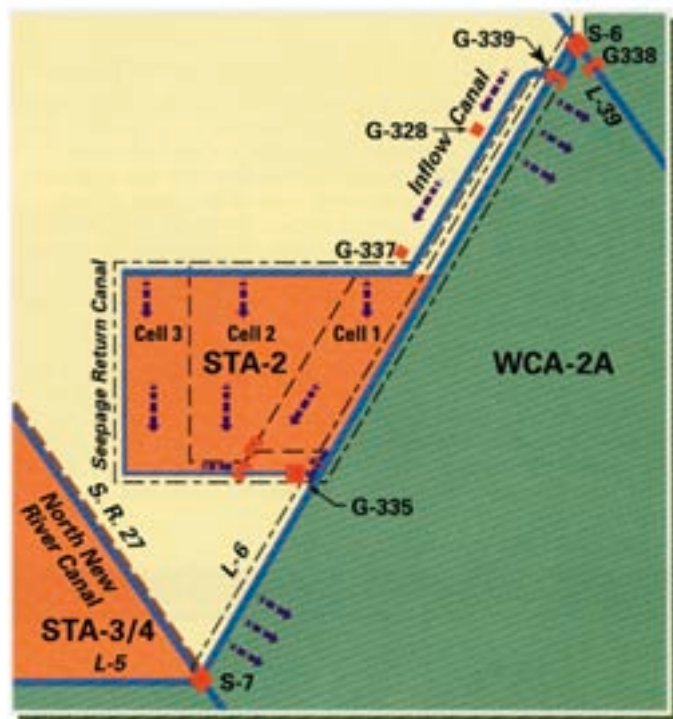
Located in Western Palm Beach County, STA-1 West was constructed to serve the area tributary to pump station S-5A. The construction consisted of 6,670 acres of effective treatment area, 14 miles of levees, concrete spillways, culverts and related ancillary facilities. STA-1 West includes the Everglades Nutrient Removal (ENR) project and will filter waters released to the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge also known as Water Conservation Area-1 (WCA-1).

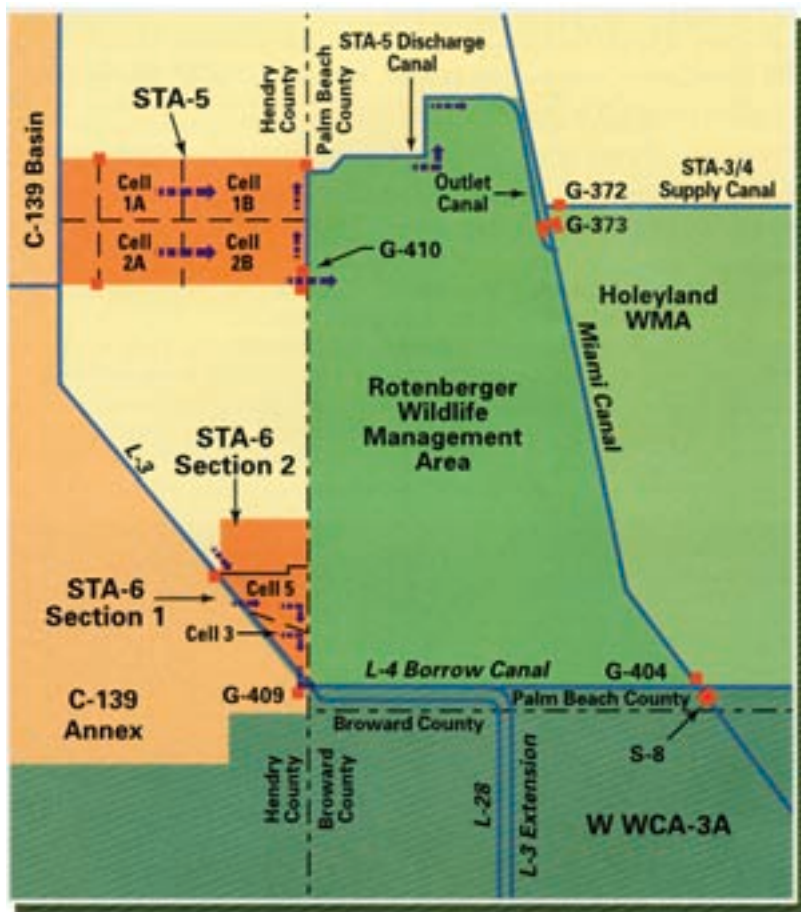
STA-1E

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is responsible for the design and construction of STA 1E. STA 1E facilities include the inflow pump station, S-319, outflow pump station, S-362, inflow and discharge water control structures, seepage/inflow pump station, S-361, FPL transmission lines relocation and treatment cells totaling over 5,000 acres.

STA-2

STA-2 is located in southern Palm Beach County including and surrounding the Brown's Farm Wildlife Management Area. This project provides a total effective treatment area of 6,430 acres, serving the area tributary to pump station S-5A and S-6. Construction included approximately 28 miles of levees, remote controlled structures and pump station G-335. This stormwater treatment area will filter and discharge waters to Water Conservation Area-2A (WCA-2A).





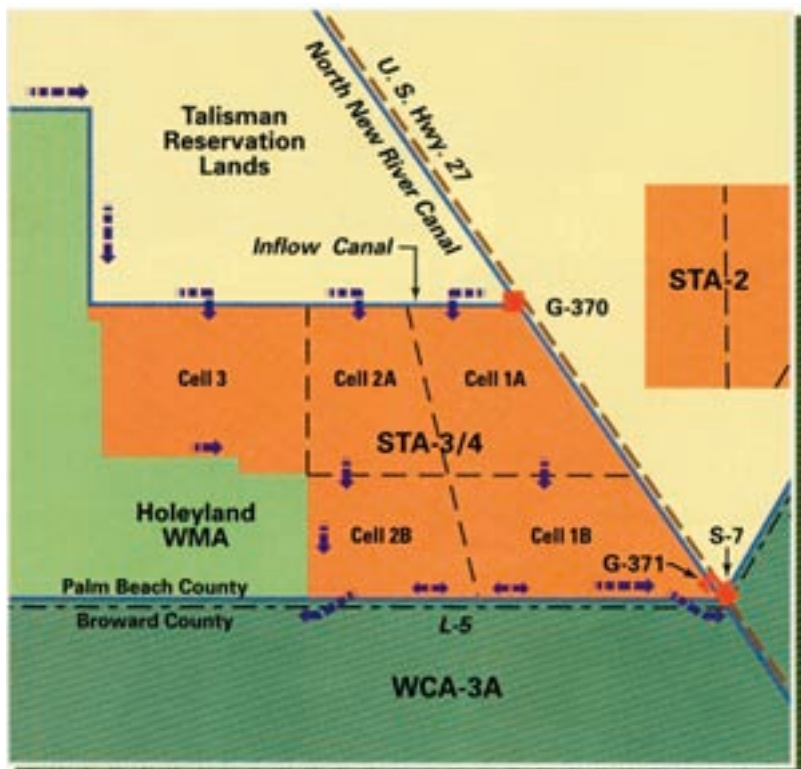
STA-5

STA-5, located in Hendry County, is bordered by the L-3 canal on the west and Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area immediately to the east. STA-5 is intended to improve the quality of water discharged from C-139 Basin to WCA-3A via pump station S-8 and to the Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area via pump station G-410. STA-5 consists of two parallel treatment cells that flow from west to east. Major components of this project include gravity control structures, 18 miles of canals and levees, concrete culverts with fixed weirs, modifications to the L-3 levee, seepage return/water supply pump stations and discharge/outlet canals.

STA-6

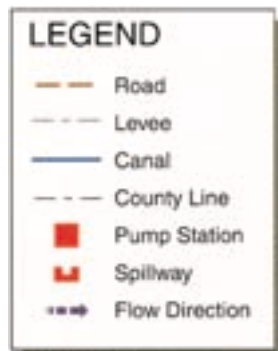
STA-6 Section 1 is located in southeastern Hendry County, south of STA-5 and immediately west of the Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area. It provides a total effective stormwater treatment area of 870 acres, with construction of various inflow and discharge structures, discharge canals and levees.

STA-6 Section 2 will involve the addition of 1,500 acres of effective treatment area to treat runoff from C-139 Annex. The improvements consist primarily of new inflow, outflow, exterior and perimeter levees, inflow structures and outflow structures, new access bridges and a seepage return pump.



STA-3/4

Stormwater Treatment Area-3/4 is located north of the Palm Beach County - Broward County line. It is bordered on the west by the Holeyland Wildlife Management Area, on the east by U.S. Highway 27, on the south by WCA-3A and on the north by the Talisman reservation lands. This STA includes the construction of inflow pump stations G-370 and G-372, gated spillways G-371 and G-373, supply canal, STA Works, canal widening and new bridges on U.S. Highway 27.



South Florida Water Management District is the primary agency responsible for the land acquisition, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the Everglades Construction Project. Known as "ECP", the project sets the cornerstone for the largest ecosystem restoration program in the history of Florida.

Six stormwater treatment areas, or STAs, are the key components of the project. These constructed wetlands use biological processes to reduce the level of phosphorous entering the Everglades. This effort has been recognized as the best approach for achieving interim water quality goals of Everglades restoration.

Frank R. Finch, P.E.

Executive Director
South Florida Water Management District

Joseph A. Schweigart, P.E., P.L.S.

Director, Everglades Construction Project
South Florida Water Management District



470 cfs pump for pump station



Stormwater Treatment Area 5,
Hendry County



G-335 pump station, intake side of super
structure wall

G-335 pump station (STA-2), intake side,
near completion, (11/2000)