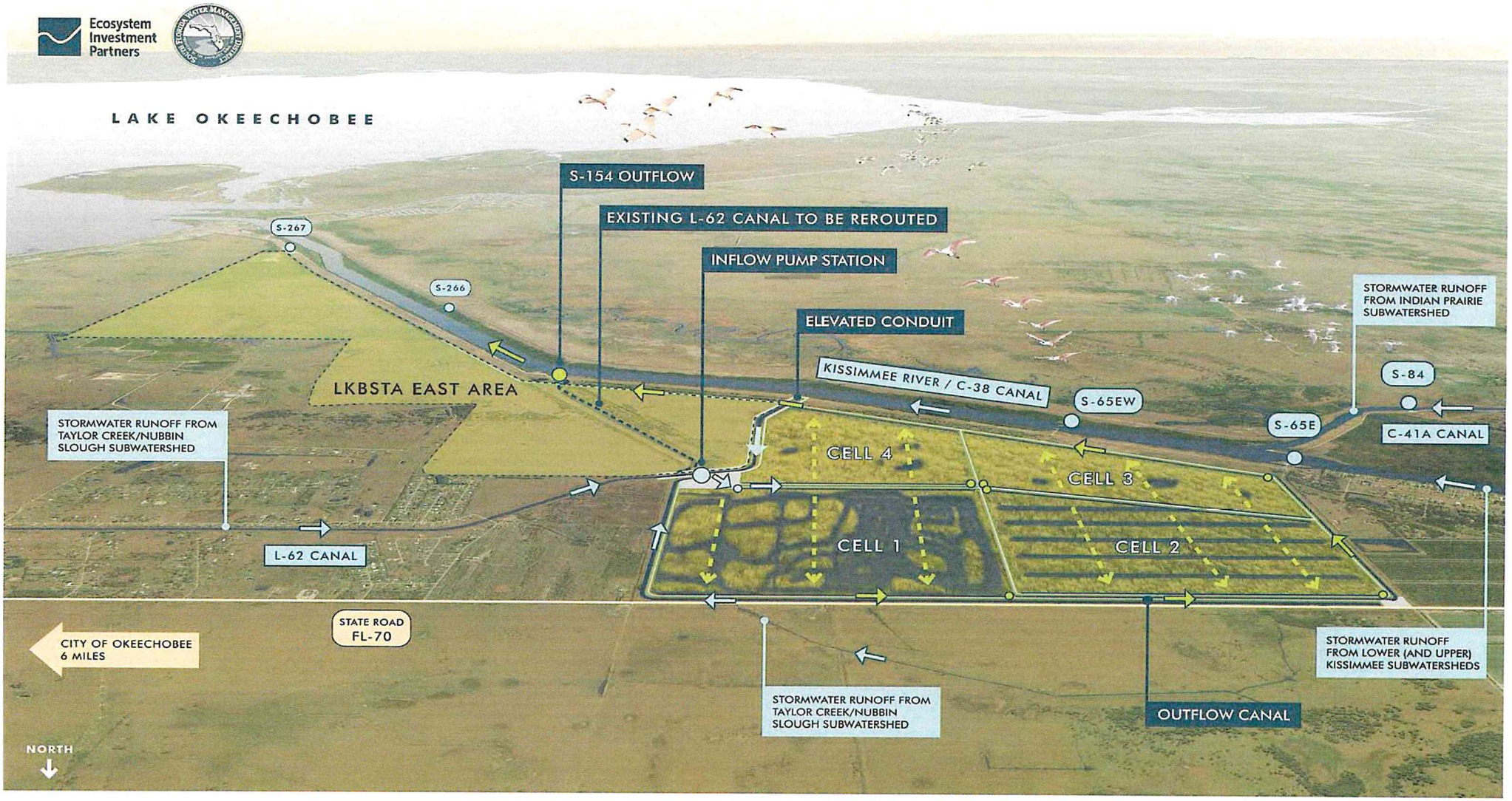
Okeechobee County Board of County Commissioners Opposes the planned SFWMD LKBSTA Project - Proposed to be Developed by Ecosystem Investment Partners (EIP)

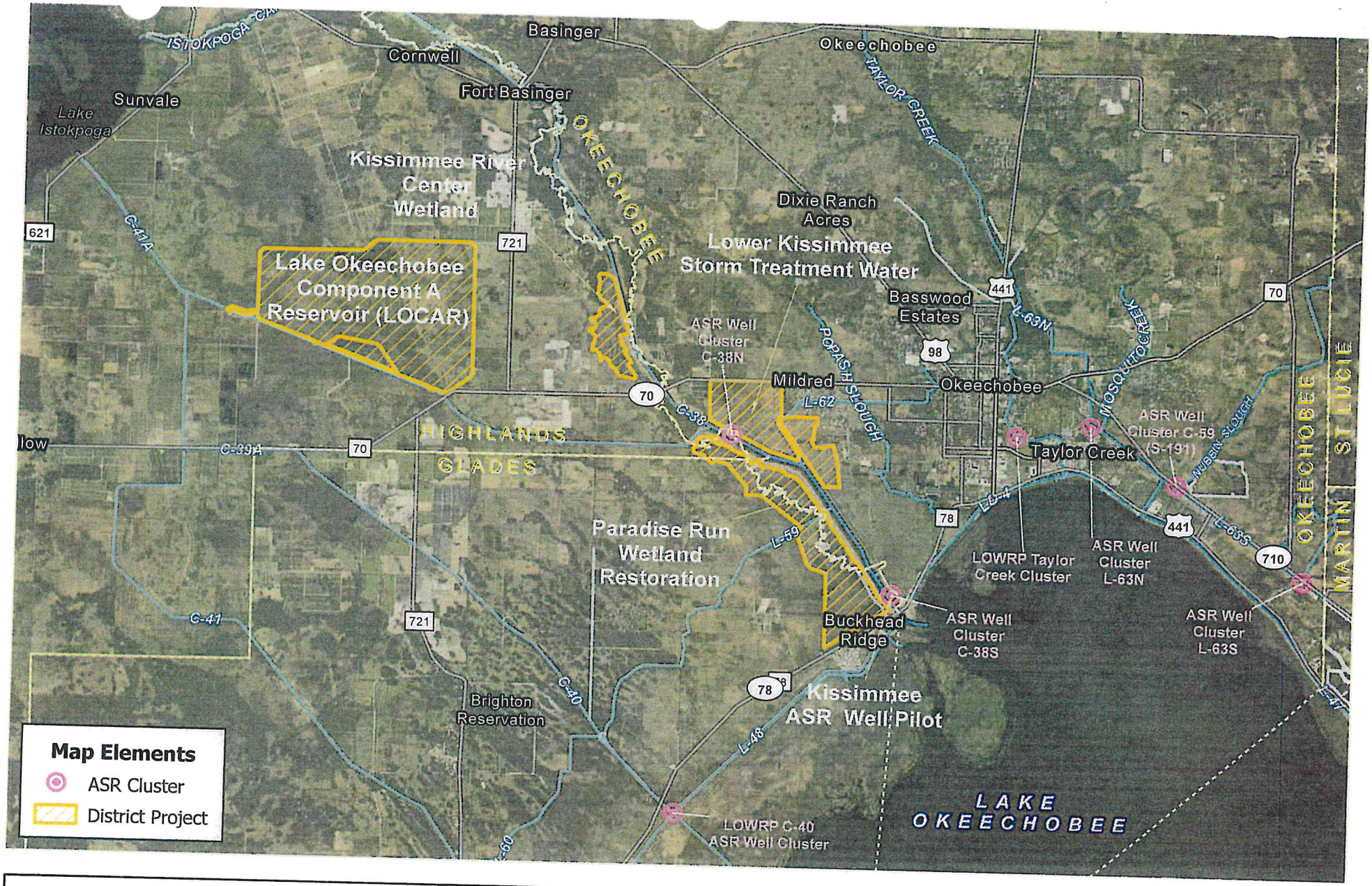
- Okeechobee County **opposes the proposed Lower Kissimmee Basin Stormwater Treatment Area (LKBSTA) Project in its current location**
- County is requesting the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board **to oppose and discontinue its consideration of the design and construction of the LKBSTA project** by Ecosystem Investment Partners Florida Water Quality, LLC – Ecosystem Investment Partners, LLC (EIP)
- Request **to oppose includes the proposed expansion of this project to include the adjacent property** that is either owned and/or controlled/managed by HGS, LLC d.b.a. RES Environmental Operating Company (RES)

Four (4) reasons the Okeechobee Board of County Commissioners are not in support of the proposed project:

1. Insufficient transparency related to the proposed LKBSTA project development, impacts and cost
2. There are better options that are available today that do not threaten the safety of our community's homes and are not nearly as financially taxing to our residents and businesses
3. This project, if developed, is too close to three (3) airstrips, with one being the Okeechobee County Airport, which is one of the most significant economic development tools that the County maintains in an effort to attract jobs and resources to our community
4. The proposed LKBSTA project is being planned to be developed on the RIO Ranch property in western Okeechobee County (adjacent to State Road 70) to address one of the highest nutrient contributors in our region – the Kissimmee River (according to the SFWMD)
    - The River and natural or historical flow/drainage is bringing in significant amounts of phosphorus into the Okeechobee community from other areas around the central Florida areas and the properties within Okeechobee County are being utilized to attempt to clean the water from other areas of the state

LOWER KISSIMMEE BASIN STORMWATER TREATMENT AREA





BASE CREDITS:
State plane projection, Florida east zone, NAD 83-HARN, US feet.
Notes:
ASR = Aquifer Storage and Recovery Wellfields

South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Rd., West Palm Beach, Florida 33406
(561) 686-8800; www.sfwmd.gov

Okeechobee Area Projects

0 5 10 Miles

0 5 10 Kilometers

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER:
This map is a conceptual or planning tool only.The South Florida Water Management District does not guarantee or make any representation regarding the information contained herein. It is not self-executing or binding, and does not affect the interests of any persons or properties, including any present or future right or use of real property.

Map Date: July 2023

User Name: erios

Remedy ID Ticket: 190974

Map Produced on Date: 7/26/2023 2:41 PM

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Restoration and Resiliency Project Opportunities North of Lake Okeechobee

Building Water Infrastructure to Protect Lake Okeechobee and Our Water Resources

About Us

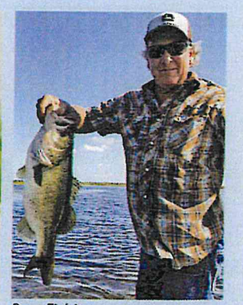
The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is the regional water resources agency. The SFWMD operates the largest water control system in the world. This water management system of canals, levees and control structures moves water away from homes, businesses and populated areas for flood control. The system also provides water supply to communities, businesses and the environment.

The Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, Kissimmee River and Lake Okeechobee offer world class boating and fishing opportunities. Along the route, there are 11 locks maintained by the SFWMD and five maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

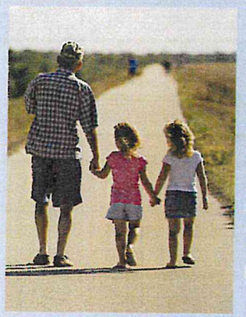
The SFWMD also builds projects to improve the region's water resources. As the local sponsor of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), the SFWMD partners with the USACE to build Everglades restoration projects.

Recreational activities available to the public include hiking, fishing, boating, cycling, camping, birdwatching, horseback riding, nature study, hunting and stargazing.

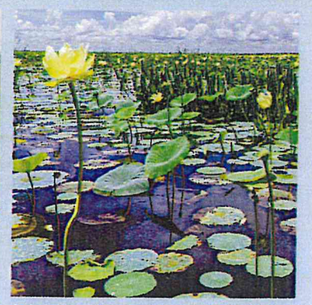
Kayaking



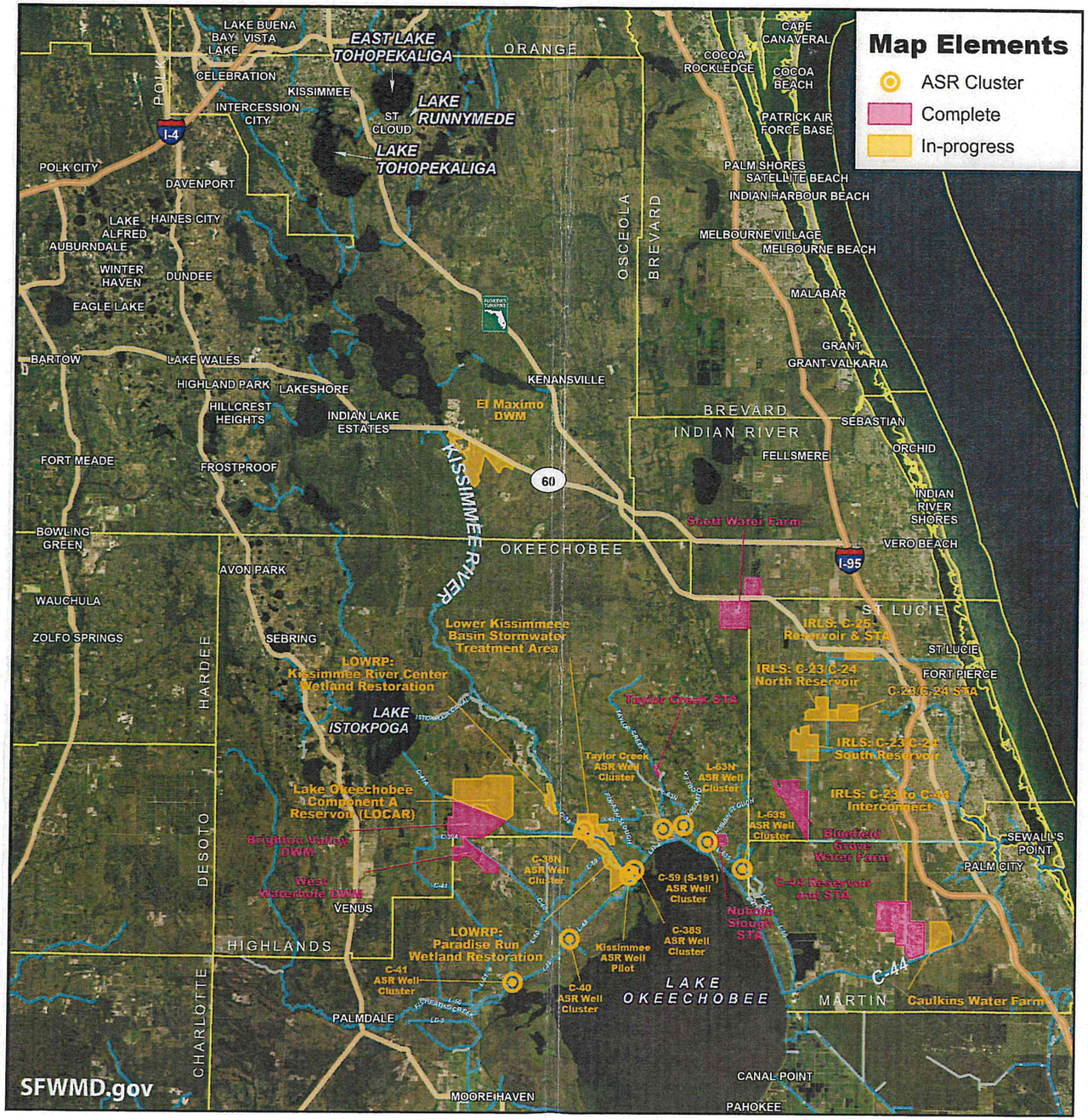
Bass Fishing



Enjoy Florida wildlife while walking along levees and trails.



Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) is a key component of the ecosystem and fisheries in Lake Okeechobee.



Lake Okeechobee Component A Reservoir (LOCAR)

This planning project explores the opportunity for an above ground reservoir to store excess water north of Lake Okeechobee. It will store 200,000 acre-feet of water (0.5 feet of Lake Okeechobee). When built, the project will help support healthy water levels in Lake Okeechobee – one of the most important freshwater resources in the state. SFWMD supports Congressional authorization in 2024 for the project.

Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project (LOWRP)

LOWRP includes features to store water and restore wetlands north of Lake Okeechobee. Stored water is cleaned to high water quality standards. The project improves water levels in Lake Okeechobee to benefit communities, businesses and the environment. The project includes two components:

- Up to 55 aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) wells to store water.
- Restoration of 5,900 acres of wetlands.

SFWMD supports Congressional authorization in 2024 for the project.

Water Farms and Dispersed Water Management (DWM)

These public-private partnerships with private landowners store and clean excess water from the regional canal system on private land.

Stormwater Treatment Areas (STA)

These constructed wetlands use aquatic vegetation to remove nutrient pollution from the water. Using both floating and submerged vegetation, water is cleaned by moving through highly-managed cells.

STAs provide several recreational opportunities such as walking trails, biking, kayaking, fishing, and more.

Lower Kissimmee Basin Stormwater Treatment Project (LKSTA)

Located in the most nutrient-rich basin in the region, this 3,400-acre water treatment project is in the planning and feasibility phase now. It includes built wetlands to remove nutrient pollution and may include innovative technology. When constructed, the public will have access to trails, fishing and other recreational opportunities.

This project will improve the health of Lake Okeechobee by removing harmful nutrients from the water, sending cleaner water to the lake.