

## **SFWMD Starts Public Process to Revise Rules for Northern Everglades and Coastal Estuaries Water Quality**

*Schedule of public workshops and interactive website announced where public can participate and provide input as District works to amend a Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program rule*

**WEST PALM BEACH, Fla.** - The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) initiates a public rule-making process to support water quality improvements in the Northern Everglades, which includes the Lake Okeechobee Watershed and the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee River watersheds and estuaries and announced the dates for several workshops to gather public input.

The Governing Board approved the public process last month to revise Chapter 40E-61 of the Florida Administrative Code. The rule was originally created in 1989, and in 2016, the Florida Legislature passed laws requiring SFWMD to revise the rule to support Northern Everglades restoration. The purpose of the rulemaking process is to amend Chapter 40E-61 to:

- Be consistent with the 2016 Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program (NEEPP or 373.4595, F.S.) and Section 403.067, F.S., including for the Lake Okeechobee Watershed.
- Develop rules for Caloosahatchee River and St. Lucie River Watersheds.
- Provide for a monitoring program for non-point source dischargers required to monitor under Section 403.067, F.S.
- Provide for a research and water quality monitoring program.

The public engagement process will include workshops and opportunities to provide input through the District's website. An interactive web board that can be found by [clicking HERE](#) will also allow the public to submit comments online.

The scheduled public workshops for the rule-making process include:

- **Nov. 5, 10 a.m.** at the Indian River State College, Dixon-Hendry Campus, Williamson Conference & Education Center, Building C, Room 112, 2229 NW 9th Ave., Okeechobee, FL 34972
- **Nov. 15, 10 a.m.** at the Fort Myers Regional Library, 1651 Lee St., Ft. Myers, FL 33901

- **Nov. 19, 10:30 a.m.** at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension Osceola County, 1921 Kissimmee Valley Lane, Kissimmee, FL 34744-6107
- **Nov. 19, 4 p.m.** at the Indian River State College, Chastain Campus, 2400 S.E. Salerno Road, Stuart, FL 34997
- **Nov. 20, 10 a.m.** at the South Florida Water Management District Headquarters, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406.

The Nov. 20 meeting at 10 a.m. will also be broadcast online at [SFWMD.gov](http://SFWMD.gov) and [YouTube.com/SFWMDTV](http://YouTube.com/SFWMDTV).