

# NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS | Jacksonville District

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**Release No.:** NR 10-72

**For Release:** August 12, 2010

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## ***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

### **SFWMD Governing Board approves key agreement For Indian River Lagoon restoration**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District applauds today’s approval of the Indian River Lagoon South (IRL-S) Phase I Project Partnership Agreement by the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board. “This agreement marks another huge gain for Everglades restoration,” said Stu Appelbaum, Corps’ Jacksonville District deputy for restoration. “This project will help get the water right in the Indian River Lagoon via a series of reservoirs and water treatment areas that will improve the quality, timing, volume and rate of flow from local basins.”

Board approval of partnership agreements for Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) projects included in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (WRDA 2007) are vital to maintaining momentum in Everglades restoration. WRDA 2007 included authorization for the IRL-S, Picayune Strand Restoration and Site 1 Reservoir projects.

Another key to progress was the CERP Master Agreement adoption a year ago by the South Florida Water Management District and the Army Corps of Engineers. That precedent-setting agreement enabled agency staff to develop Project Partnership Agreements (PPAs). To date, the SFWMD and the Corps have approved five PPAs for CERP projects: IRL-S Phase I; Melaleuca Quarantine Facility; L-31N Seepage Management Pilot Project; Site 1 Reservoir, Phase I; and Picayune Strand Restoration project (listed from most recently approved to earliest approved).

“The Indian River Lagoon South project is another building block in Everglades restoration we’ve recently set into place,” said Julie Hill-Gabriel, Audubon of Florida senior Everglades policy associate. “The likelihood of restoration becomes stronger every day as we move forward with these projects.”

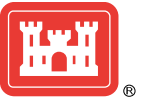
The project, located on 12,000 acres in Martin County, is divided into two phases, and includes 13 components. The first phase of the IRL-S project has an estimated cost of \$1.1 billion, and contains eight components that will provide water storage and stormwater treatment areas in the C-23, C-24 and C-44 basins. Pending agency staff clarification of issues related to treatment of soils containing agrichemicals and mitigation for wetland impacts, the IRL-S Phase I PPA will be executed in early September. The Corps

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anticipate awarding a construction contract in January 2011. Phase 1 construction will take about eight years.

“We’re delighted that today the Corps of Engineers and the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District approved entering into the Indian River Lagoon South Phase I Project Partnership Agreement,” said Doug Smith, chairman of the Martin County Board of County Commissioners. “This is the final hurdle to allow the Corps to move forward on the construction of 12,000 acres of reservoir and stormwater treatment areas in the St. Lucie Watershed. This project will be built on lands purchased, in part, by a \$27 million contribution by the citizens of Martin County.”

“The CERP Indian River Lagoon South project is designed to hold and treat excess stormwater, reduce pollution of the St. Lucie, provide essential jobs to the community and result in a great addition to Martin County’s legacy of environmental enhancement, water quality protection and recreational opportunities for our citizens,” Smith said.

For more information on Everglades restoration, visit either [www.Evergladesplan.org](http://www.Evergladesplan.org) or [www.saj.usace.army.mil](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil). For questions and inquiries, please contact Nanciann Regalado at 904.334.8954 (mobile) or [nanciann.e.regalado@usace.army.mil](mailto:nanciann.e.regalado@usace.army.mil)

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