

FACTS & INFORMATION



FEBRUARY 2015

The Lake Okeechobee Water Retention and Phosphorous Removal project at Taylor Creek and Nubbin Slough is part of the Everglades and South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Program and is being implemented by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in coordination with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).

BACKGROUND

Lake Okeechobee is the nation's second largest freshwater lake and the largest lake in Florida. It is the heart of the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades system. The lake provides drinking water for surrounding communities serves as a source of irrigation for a \$1.5 billion-a-year agricultural industry that produces sugar cane, winter vegetables, citrus and rice. The lake also serves as a source of water for navigation, recreation, and for estuaries.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The Lake Okeechobee Water Retention and Phosphorous Removal Project at Taylor Creek and Nubbin Slough serves two purposes:

- Reduce the phosphorous loads entering Lake Okeechobee.
- Increase water storage capability to reduce the amount of water entering the lake during increased water events.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

Two Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) will treat inflows in the treatment wetland cells and discharge the cleaner water back into Taylor Creek, Nubbin Slough and Lake Okeechobee.

- A 780-acre STA constructed for Nubbin Slough at the former New Palm/Newcomer Dairy site will divert and treat most of the runoff from Nubbin Slough. This is accomplished by delivering water from the slough to the east end of the STA. The water then flows through the treatment wetland and discharges back to the slough.
- A 190-acre STA for Taylor Creek on a portion of the Grassy Island Ranch, east of Taylor Creek, will divert and treat about 10 percent of the water flow from Taylor Creek. This is accomplished by allowing the water to flow parallel to the creek for about 1.6 miles, before returning it to the creek.
- Two relatively small pump ponds or pump storage pool that provide on average estimated storage volumes ranging from 70,000 to 100,000 cubic feet.

PROJECT STATUS

Following completion in April 2011, the Taylor Creek portion of the Lake Okeechobee Phosphorus Removal project was transferred to the SFWMD in May 2011. The SFWMD currently operates and maintains this project feature. In 2011, the Taylor Creek STA removed approximately 60 percent of total phosphorus concentrations in its water inflows.

The Nubbin Slough STA portion of the project was transferred to SFWMD in February 2015.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



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