



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Jacksonville District

NEWS RELEASE

Release No.: 0834
For Release: 19 May 2008
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Increases Flows To Everglades National Park to Fight Wildfires

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — In an effort to battle raging wildfires in Everglades National Park (ENP), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District has increased water flows from Water Conservation Area 3 to the park. Yesterday the Corps immediately responded to a request from the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to increase flows to Shark River Slough, located in northeastern ENP.

In coordination with the South Florida Water Management District, the Corps increased flows from the S-12D structure, in the area of Tamiami Trail, with a goal of increasing flows from approximately 100 cubic feet per second to 500 cubic feet per second.

"While this timely action by the Corps of Engineers will only increase water in Shark River Slough in the Park a very small amount, it will keep the slough from drying out as quickly in the coming days," said Everglades National Park Superintendent Dan Kimball. "This is important because an eastern sea breeze, which is forecast for mid-week, could run the fire toward the slough."

According to the approved schedule governing water releases from Water Conservation Area 3A to Everglades National Park, the proper flow at this time of year and under the prevailing rainfall conditions is 100 cubic feet per second. This schedule strives to follow the natural cycle of wet and dry seasons. Deviations from the schedule may be made with the approval of the commander of the Corps' South Atlantic Division in Atlanta. Approval was requested and received, and water flow will be increased slowly over the next few days as it moves south through the slough.

"The Corps will do all we can to support the Department of Interior's efforts to fight these wildfires," said Jacksonville District commander Col. Paul Grosskruger. "The whole system is dry, but it is fortunate that we have the ability to move some water from Water Conservation Area 3A to the park to mitigate these devastating fires."

This year's persistent drought resulted in conditions that are favorable for wildfires. "I firmly believe that increasing flows at the S-12D structure will improve our ability to fight this blaze and protect Park resources as well," Kimball said.



"We at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are extremely grateful to our partners at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and to the South Florida Water Management District for quickly adding water to the slough, said Paul Souza, field supervisor of the Service's South Florida Ecological Services Office." Their prompt and decisive actions should help firefighters control the blaze and prevent it from spreading to Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow habitats farther west."

For more information on the status of the fires in Everglades National Park, visit the Incident Information News Web at <http://www.inciweb.org/>.