CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER (C-43) | West Basin Storage Reservoir

FACTS & INFORMATION

MARCH 2015

The Caloosahatchee River (C-43) West Basin Storage Reservoir project will improve the timing, quantity and quality of freshwater flows to the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary.

South Florida's flood reduction system stores water in Lake Okeechobee during the annual wet season. Excess water is released, and the resulting, unnatural surges of freshwater to the Caloosahatchee River reduce estuarine salinity levels. Alternately, during the dry season when irrigation demands are high, little to no water is released to the river. This causes an increase in salinity levels. Both high and low salinity levels can trigger die-offs of sea grasses and oysters, species that are indicators of the estuary's overall health.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The C-43West Basin Storage Reservoir will help ensure a more natural, consistent flow of fresh water to the estuary. To restore and maintain the estuary during the dry season, the project will capture and store basin stormwater runoff, along with a portion of water discharged from Lake Okeechobee, and water will be slowly released into the Caloosahatchee, as needed.

This project also provides secondary benefits, once the needs of the estuary are met, along with recreational benefits.
Project features include:

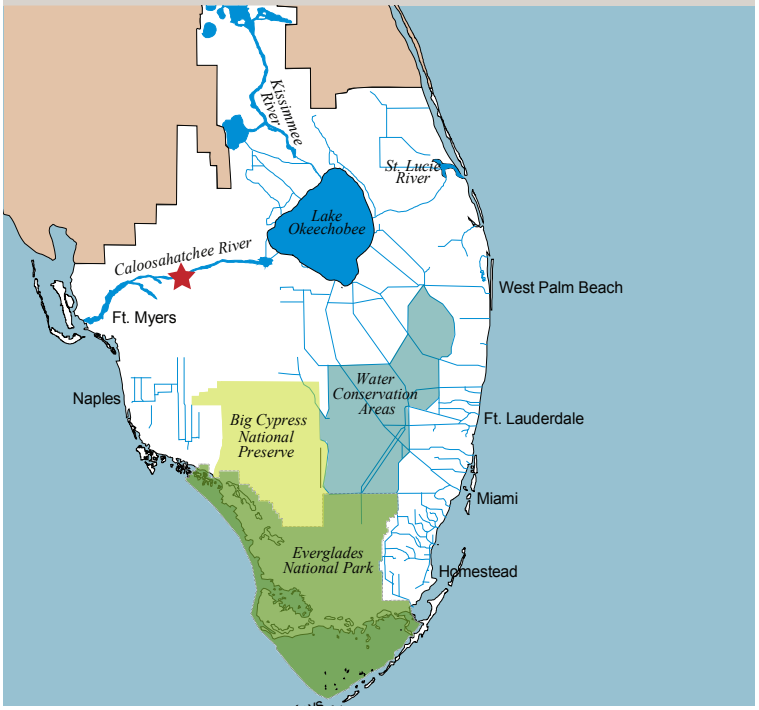
- 10,500-acre storage reservoir
- 1,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) pump for filling the reservoir
- Perimeter canal to convey drainage off-site
- Recreation component

PROJECT STATUS

On June 10, 2014, the project received congressional authorization in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014. Congressional authorization now makes the project eligible for funding during the appropriations process.

PROJECT LOCATION

The C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir project is located in Hendry County, Fla.



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PROJECT BENEFITS

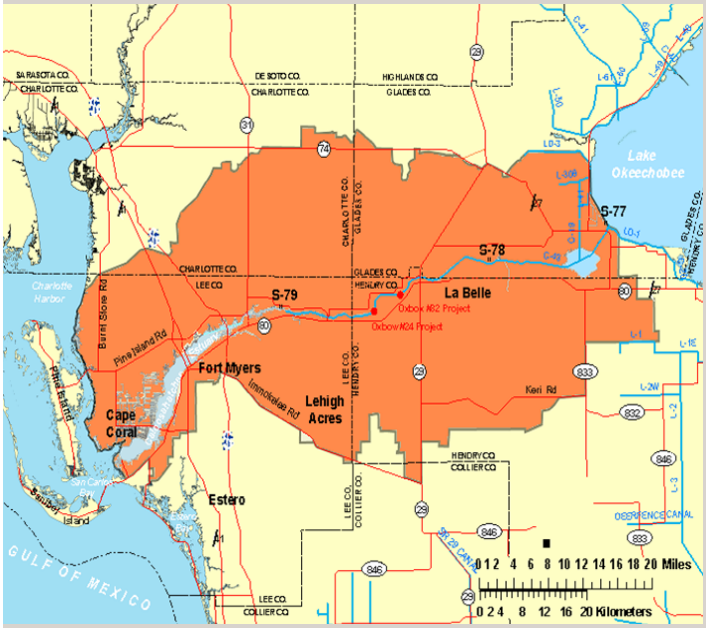
The C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir project is vital for the restoration of the Caloosahatchee River estuary. It will improve the quantity and timing of freshwater flows to the estuary which will improve salinity balance and increase spatial extent of estuarine habitat. It also provides some new flexibility for managing and restoring Lake Okeechobee, which often is referred to as the "liquid heart" of the greater Everglades ecosystem.

PROJECT COST

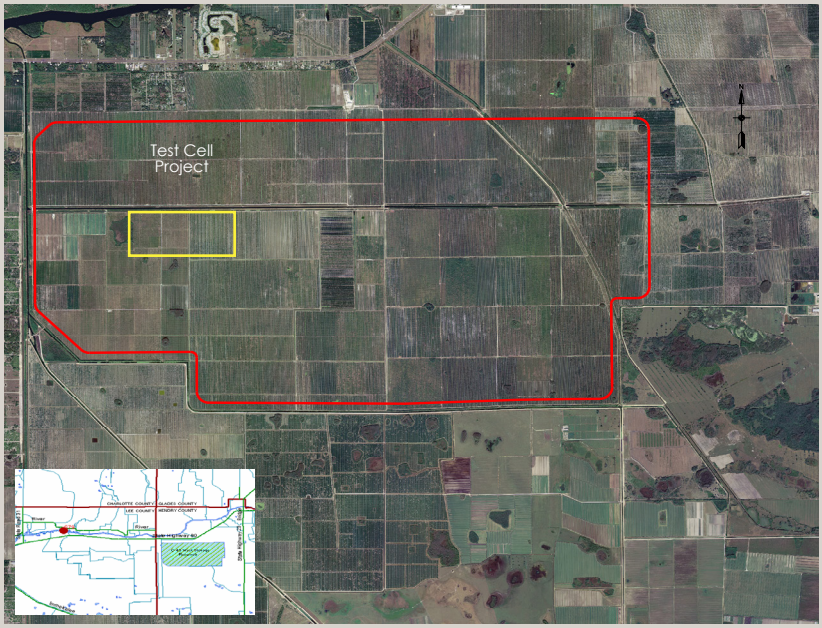
The cost for planning, design, land acquisition, and construction , asestimated in the Project Implementation Report (PIR), is $584.6 million. The federal government and local sponsor, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) will share these costs equally.

Additionally, the SFWMD will also complete an additional $2.9 million recreation component for the project. Construction is estimated to take three to four years once the project is authorized and funding is appropriated by Congress.

CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER (C-43) WEST BASIN STORAGE RESERVOIR



Caloosahatchee Watershed



C-43 Project Location

FOR MORE INFORMATION

STEPHEN BAISDEN
USACE Project Manager
P.O. Box 4970
Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019
stephen.a.baisden@usace.army.mil
904-232-1794
www.saj.usace.army.mil

JANET STARNES
SFWMD Project Manager
P.O. Box 24680
West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680
jstarne@sfwmd.gov
239-338-2929
www.sfwmd.gov