SEMINOLE BIG CYPRESS RESERVATION | Water Conservation Plan

FACTS & INFORMATION

SEPTEMBER 2014

The Seminole Big Cypress Reservation Water Conservation Plan consists of constructing water control and treatment facilities in the western portion of the Big Cypress Reservation that will improve the water quality of agricultural water run-off within the reservation and restore water storage capacity and native vegetation.

BACKGROUND

The Seminole Big Cypress project was authorized in the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 as a critical project. The project will rehydrate wetlands, improve water quality and water storage capacity on the Seminole Tribe's Big Cypress Basin Reservation, the Big Cypress National Preserve, and the Everglades Protection Area. The project accommodates the Seminole Tribe of Florida's water entitlement, supports sustainable agriculture, and contributes to the restoration of the western Everglades ecosystem basin. The project is 50-50 cost shared with a $60 million total project funding cap.

PROJECT BENEFITS

Once completed, the project will:

- Improve 14,000 acres of swamp, hardwood hammocks, cypress sloughs, prairies and pine flatwoods
- Provide water quality treatment of agricultural water runoff within the reservation by naturally removing phosphorus and other pollutants that otherwise would be discharged to the Big Cypress Preserve and Everglades Protection Area
- Reduce the likelihood of exotic plant infestations on native lands and revive the historic patchwork of wetlands, uplands and transitional areas
- Prevent extended periods of flooding on agricultural lands through a network of constructed water retention areas
- Enhance hydroperiods in the Big Cypress Preserve

PROJECT FEATURES

The project consists of constructing features within four basins on tribal lands that include, in total:

- 6 irrigation cells that will provide stormwater protection for the adjacent agricultural fields
- 4 water resource areas (WRA) that will receive stormwater discharges from the irrigation cells and the non-agricultural areas
- 24 pump stations with capacities ranging from 7-256 cubic feet per second
- A series of culverts in and along the existing and new canals

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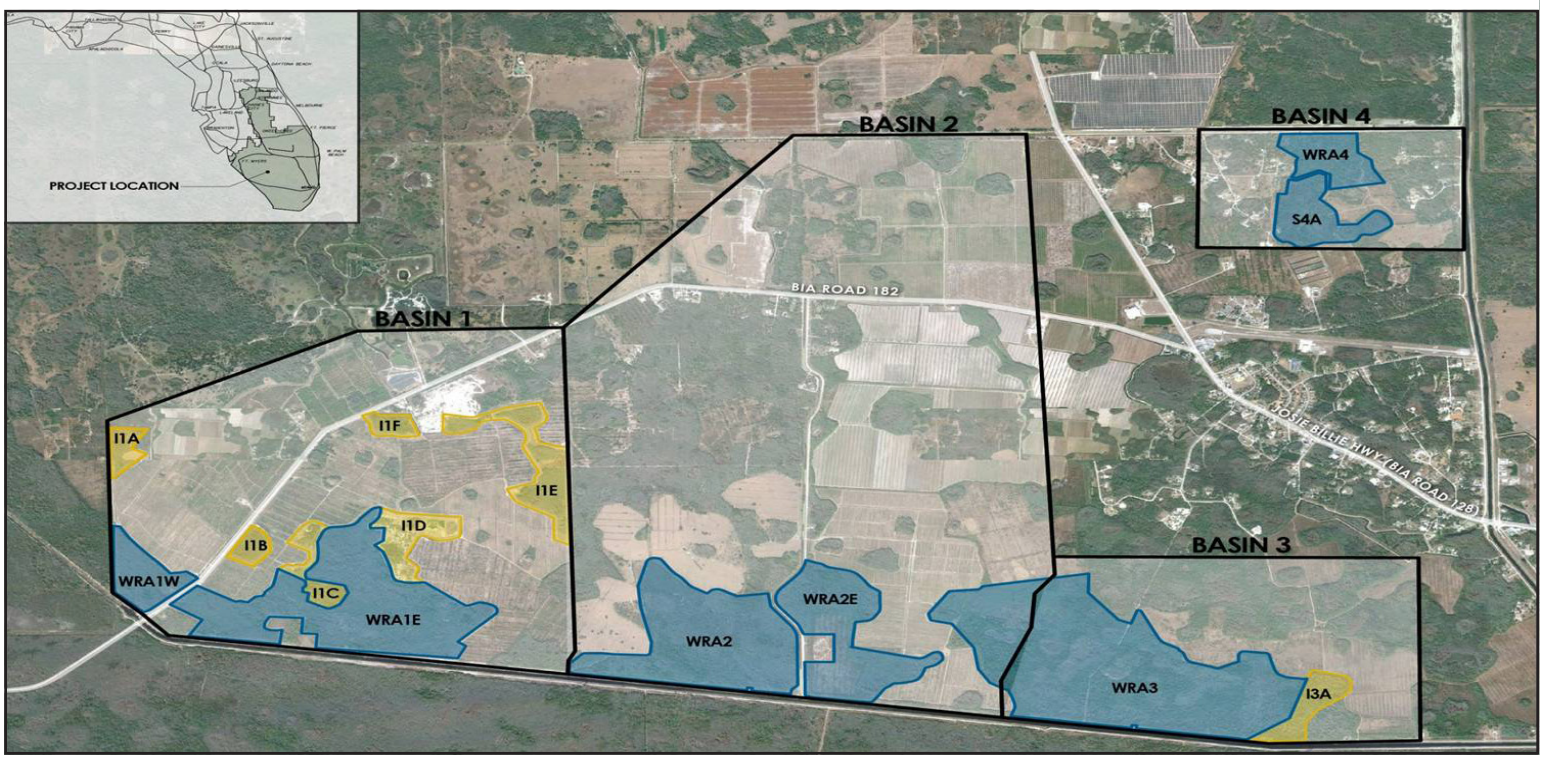

PROJECT STATUS

COMPLETED WORK:

- Construction of the east conveyance canal system was completed in July 2003.
- Construction of Basin 1 was completed in July 2008 and was transferred to the Seminole Tribe of Florida in 2010.
- Construction of Basin 4 was completed in January 2013 and was transferred to the Seminole Tribe of Florida in July 2013.

ONGOING WORK:

- The construction contract for Basin 2 was awarded Sept. 27, 2013, and construction is currently ongoing. Construction is scheduled to be completed in summer 2015.

BASIN COMPONENTS

- Basin 1:
  - 2 wetland resource areas (571 acres)
  - A 60-inch pipe, known as a siphon, passes under the West Feeder Canal from the northern to southern Tribal lands
  - 4 canals with capacity ranging from 50-256 cubic feet per second (cfs)
- Basin 2:
  - 2 wetland resource areas (457 acres)
  - A siphon under the West Feeder Canal
  - 1 canal with the capacity of 50 cfs
- Basin 3:
  - A 511-acre wetland resource area
  - A siphon under the West Feeder Canal
  - 2 canals with the capacity of 27 cfs
- Basin 4:
  - A 142-acre wetland resource area
  - A siphon under the West Feeder Canal
  - 2 canals with capacity ranging from 12-15 cfs

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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