Central Florida Water Initiative

CFWI Water for Tomorrow

September Kissimmee River Headwaters Revitalization Schedule Meetings Encouraged Public Engagement and Input

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD or District) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) hosted two open house and National Environmental Policy Act scoping meetings in early September 2024. The meetings were held in Okeechobee and Kissimmee, FL, giving community members, business owners, and staff from local governments, organizations and agencies the opportunity to learn about the Kissimmee River Headwaters Revitalization Schedule (HRS) and ask questions about the Kissimmee River Restoration Project and the HRS.

More than 100 people attended the meetings, which allowed participants to provide public comments about the Kissimmee River Restoration Project and the HRS.

The completion of construction for the Kissimmee River Restoration Project in 2021 set the stage for gradual implementation of the new water management plan called the Headwaters Revitalization Schedule, which regulates water levels in the Kissimmee River.

The Kissimmee River HRS is the last piece of the Kissimmee River Restoration Project, which was jointly developed and constructed by the USACE and the SFWMD over the last 30 years.

Phased updates to the water management plan will allow successively higher stages in the Headwaters Lakes, (Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress, and Hatchineha), until approximately 2027 when the HRS is expected to be fully implemented, while maintaining the same level of flood protection.

The objective of the HRS is to provide sufficient water storage to reestablish historical (pre-channelization) flow patterns to the Kissimmee River through the increased flow capacity for the S-65 structure. The higher stages allowed by the schedule are also expected to improve littoral zone habitat in the lakes.

For more information contact Nicolle Masters, South Florida Water Management District's External Affairs Specialist, at 407-760-3203 or nmasters@sfwmd.gov.