



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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www.sfwmd.gov/news

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Lake Okeechobee Enjoys Near-Ideal Ecological Conditions *SFWMD scientists to host airboat survey of the healthy ecosystem*



(Click on the photo for a larger version)

WHAT: South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) scientists report Lake Okeechobee's ecological health is the best they have seen in many years.

Water is clear. Emergent and submerged aquatic vegetation is flourishing, which is vital for wildlife. Healthy aquatic plants — such as acres of bright American Lotus flowers — provide a nursery for small fish, which feed larger fish and help support the lake's ecosystem. These conditions also enhance recreational opportunities such as fishing that support the regional economy.

SFWMD scientists will lead an ecological airboat trip on the lake to survey these healthy conditions.

WHEN: Wednesday, September 15, 2010

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

RSVP: [Airboat space is limited. Please call Gabe Margasak at 561-682-2292 to reserve a space.](#)

WHERE: Harney Pond Boat Ramp, Harney Pond Road.
[Click here for a map.](#)

DIRECTIONS:

From the East Coast: Take SR 70 west into the City of Okeechobee. Turn south (left) onto US Hwy. 441, which also is known as Parrott Avenue. Follow US 441 south three miles until it reaches Lake Okeechobee and follow the fork to the west (right), which is SR 78. Continue on SR 78 west for 21 miles. Across from the intersection of SR 78 and County Road 721 (Brighton Reservation Road), turn left, and then follow the road immediately to the right. The road will wind back around to the left and you will arrive at the Harney Pond Canal boat ramp area. The airboat launch is on the left side just south of the first set of bathrooms.

From the West Coast: Take US 27 to the intersection with SR 78, which is slightly north of Moore Haven. Follow SR 78 east for 13.3 miles, crossing Harney Pond Canal also known as the C-41. Across from the intersection of SR 78 and County Road 721 (Brighton Reservation Road) turn right, and then follow the road immediately to the right. The road will wind back around to the left and you will arrive at the Harney Pond Canal boat ramp area. The airboat launch is on the left side, just south of the first set of bathrooms.

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About the South Florida Water Management District

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state’s five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.