NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS | Jacksonville District **BUILDING STRONG®**

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Contact: Michelle Roberts **Phone:** (904) 232-1004

Email: Michelle.L.Roberts@usace.army.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Federal and State Partners Celebrate EAA Reservoir Groundbreaking

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Jacksonville District and South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) are hosting a groundbreaking ceremony at the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir project in Palm Beach County, to celebrate a project that will set the foundation for restoring the central portion of the Everglades ecosystem and sending water south.

The EAA is part of the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and is cost-shared between USACE and SFWMD. CEPP EAA will capture water lost to tide and redirect water flow south to the central Everglades, Everglades National Park and Florida Bay.

The EAA Reservoir project is designed to send an additional annual average of approximately 160,000 acre feet of new water south to the central and southern Everglades.

Due to the magnitude of this project, CEPP EAA construction is divided into two parts:

- A-2 Stormwater Treatment Area (STA): 6,500 Acres constructed by SFWMD
- A-2 Reservoir: 10,500 acres with 240,00-acre-foot storage at 23 feet deep constructed by USACE.

This project is designed to have the flexibility to enable the use of gravity to move the flow of water southward through two existing spillway structures on the southern rim of Lake Okeechobee and into two of the major canals in the Central and Southern Florida Project System.

Once complete, this project will give USACE the flexibility to use nature-based systems to capture, store, treat and release water to the central and southern Everglades and Florida Bay, when and where it is needed, while protecting our estuaries to the east and the west.to the Everglades.

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works - “This project is a crucial milestone for Everglades restoration. The EAA reservoir will continue to improve water quality, reduce algal blooms and provide water for people and the environment in south Florida,” said Michael L. Connor, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. “The Administration remains committed to ensuring the success of Everglades restoration by continuing to dedicate major resources to this project.”

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Jacksonville District Commander: “Today’s groundbreaking is a testament to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its partner’s commitment to Everglades restoration,” said Col. James Booth, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District. “Many consider this project to be the “crown jewel” of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. The Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir and Stormwater Treatment Area phase of the Central Everglades Planning Project is the keystone that deliberately reconnects Lake Okeechobee to the Everglades. Today’s success is due to the collaboration of federal, tribal, state and local partners.”

“Breaking ground on the long-anticipated EAA Reservoir is a monumental achievement for the restoration and protection of America’s Everglades,” said **Drew Bartlett, Executive Director of the South Florida Water Management District**. “Florida Governor Ron DeSantis made this project a top priority when he took office in 2019, and we’re excited to celebrate the EAA Reservoir’s groundbreaking with our partners at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District. With this reservoir in place, there will be less damaging discharges to our coastal communities and more water to benefit our environment and communities across South Florida. Everglades restoration supports the resiliency of our state and economy. We’re going to continue to do everything we can to continue expediting this important project and maintain the momentum for Everglades restoration.”

For more information on the CEPP EAA Reservoir Project and the scope of the work visit: http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/CEPPEAA

US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS | Jacksonville District
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