

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** June 20, 2007  
**CONTACT:**

**EVERGLADES CONSTRUCTION TO CAUSE TRAFFIC  
DELAYS ON U.S. 27**

*--Drivers encouraged to use alternate routes during blasting--*

**PALM BEACH** – Beginning July 16, 2007, construction on the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir is expected to cause travel delays along a seven mile stretch of U.S. 27 in Palm Beach County, about 15 miles south of South Bay. Drivers are encouraged to use alternate routes including I-595, I-95, the Florida Turnpike, SR 80 and I-75 while the construction continues over the next six months.

Engineers and explosives technicians will begin blasting through seven feet of rock and soil layers within 150 feet of the highway's western edge to create a seepage canal that will surround the planned reservoir. For safety reasons, all four lanes of U.S. 27 will be closed during blasting. Experts in electronic detonation plan to set off charges Mondays through Fridays with road closures expected each day from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Construction will continue for at least six months.

Alternate routes will be identified on Florida Department of Transportation signs posted in South Bay on U.S. 27, Belle Glade on S.R. 872 (heading South) and at the intersection of Interstate 75 and U.S. 27, north of Alligator Alley.

The EAA Reservoir is an Everglades restoration project of the South Florida Water Management District. With a capacity of 190,000 acre-feet or 62 billion gallons, the aboveground reservoir will store water released from Lake Okeechobee, reduce harmful freshwater discharges to coastal estuaries and capture stormwater runoff from the Everglades Agricultural Area.

When finished, the canal will capture groundwater that naturally seeps from the reservoir, lessening any impacts the water could have on the surrounding area.

For up-to-date traveler information, drivers can call the Florida Department of Transportation at 511, or visit the website at <http://www.pbfdot.com>.

**Alternate traffic routes:**

Northbound drivers in Broward County can take I-595 East to S.R. 7/S.R. 441 or take I-595 West to Interstate 75. Other routes are the Florida Turnpike or Interstate 95.

Southbound drivers in Palm Beach County can use S.R. 80 East to S.R. 7/S.R. 441, the Florida Turnpike or I-95.

Southbound drivers in Hendry County can use S.R. 80 East to S.R. 29.

Southbound drivers in Lee County can use I-75 South.

For project information, contact Florida Department of Transportation Palm Beach County Public Information Manager Christie Klammer, 561.641.6440, or South Florida Water Management District Project Coordinator Kimberley Koptak, (561) 682-6163 or visit [www.evergladesnow.org](http://www.evergladesnow.org).

Additional SFWMD local contacts are:

Okeechobee Service Center, (863) 462-5260 or (800) 250-4200

Broward Regional Service Center, (954) 713-3200 or (877) 350-3897

Palm Beach County Service Center, (561) 682-2283 or (800) 432-2045

Miami-Dade Regional Service Center, (800) 250-4300 or (305) 377-7274

Lower West Coast Regional Service Center, (239) 338-2929 or (800) 248-1201

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