

CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER (C-43) | WEST BASIN STORAGE RESERVOIR

FACTS & INFORMATION



November 2025

The Caloosahatchee River (C-43) West Basin Storage Reservoir project will improve the timing, quantity, and quality of freshwater flows to the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary.

South Florida's flood reduction system stores water in Lake Okeechobee during the annual wet season. When excess water is released, the resulting unnatural surges of freshwater to the Caloosahatchee River reduce estuarine salinity levels. During the dry season, when irrigation demands are high, little to no water is released to the river. This causes an increase in salinity levels. Both high and low salinity levels can trigger die-offs of sea grasses and oysters, species that are indicators of the estuary's overall health.

On June 10, 2014, the project received congressional authorization in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014. This made the project eligible for funding during the appropriations process.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir will help ensure a more natural, consistent flow of fresh water to the estuary. To restore and maintain the estuary during the dry season, the project will capture and store basin stormwater runoff, along with a portion of water discharged from Lake Okeechobee, and water will be slowly released into the Caloosahatchee, as needed. Project features include:

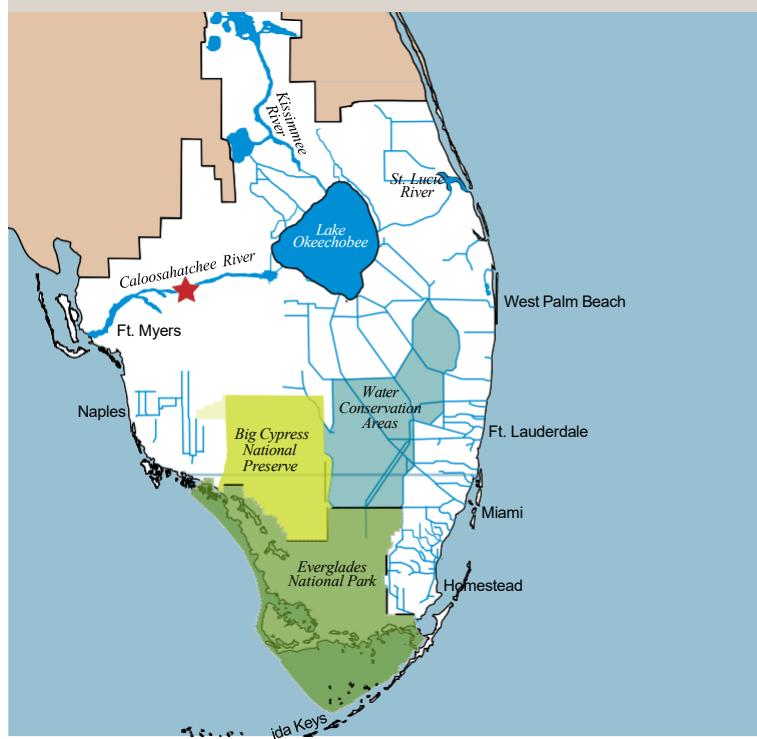
- 10,500-acre storage reservoir.
- 1,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) pump for filling the reservoir and 195 cfs pump for irrigation water supply.
- Perimeter canal to convey flows to Banana Branch and Fort Simmons Canal, as well as permitted irrigation water to adjacent landowners.
- Recreation component.

PROJECT STATUS

The local sponsor, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), is constructing and completing construction in December 2025. Initial fill of the reservoir will take place over the following two wet seasons with operations scheduled to begin in 2028.

PROJECT LOCATION

The C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir project is located in Hendry County, Fla.



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PROJECT BENEFITS

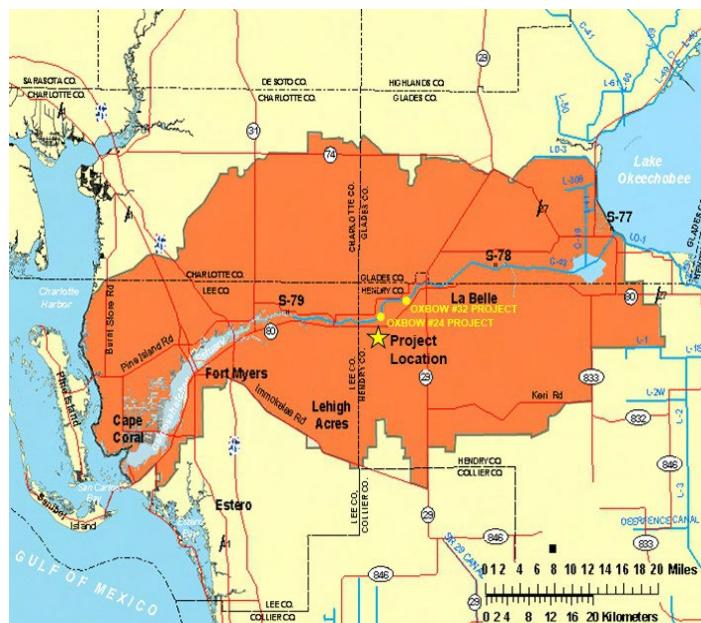
The C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir project is vital for the restoration of the Caloosahatchee River Estuary. It will improve the quantity and timing of freshwater flows to the estuary, which will improve salinity balance and increase spatial extent of estuarine habitat. It also provides some new flexibility for managing and restoring Lake Okeechobee, which is often referred to as the “liquid heart” of the greater Everglades ecosystem.

PROJECT COST

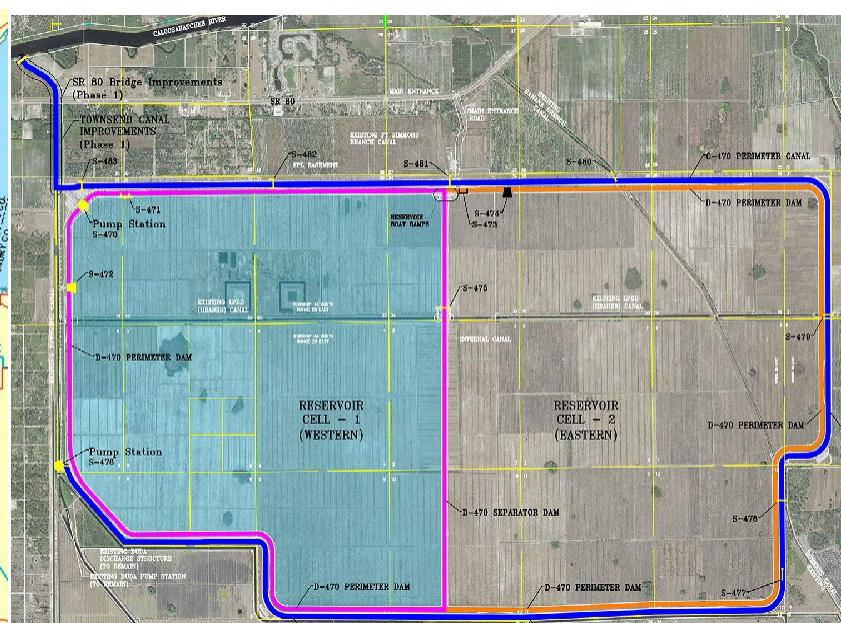
An increase to the project cost was authorized in WRDA 2020, bringing the total project cost to \$1 billion. Construction is estimated to take approximately five years.



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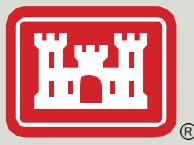


Caloosahatchee Watershed



C-43 Project

FOR MORE INFORMATION



USACE Project Manager
P.O. Box 4970
Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019
904-232-2805
www.saj.usace.army.mil



SFWMD Senior Project Manager
3301 Gun Club Rd., MS 8312
West Palm Beach, FL 33406
561-682-6900
www.sfwmd.gov

