



WATERSHED NEWS

F O U N D A T I O N

JULY 6, 2006

FOUNDATION STAFF

STEVE STEWART

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

VICTORIA ANDERSON

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT /
OFFICE MANAGER

PO Box 6218
BRANSON, MO 65615
417-334-7644
FAX 417-334-7645

UPCOMING EVENTS

Volunteers Needed Friday, July 28, 2006 8:30AM to 12:00PM. Shoreline Clean-up on Fassnight Creek. Meet at Fassnight Creek Farms, 1366 S. Fort Street, Springfield, MO. To help, please contact: Melissa Bettes, Project Asst., James River Basin Partnership (417) 836-4847 melissabettes@missouristate.edu

The date for Secchi Day on Beaver Lake has been rescheduled to Saturday, August 26, 2006. For additional details, contact Suzanne Langley or Fran Free at slangley@audubon.org or ffree@audubon.org or call the Fayetteville Audubon office at 479-527-0700. Event co-sponsored by Beaver Water District and Audubon Arkansas.

WITH YOUR HELP WE
WILL WORK
TOGETHER TO MAKE
BEAVER, TABLE
ROCK, TANEYCOMO
AND BULL SHOALS
LAKES THE FOUR
CLEANEST MANMADE
LAKES IN NORTH
AMERICA.

TODAY'S HEADLINES

SEWER / SEPTIC / WASTEWATER:

- [WEST BYPASS TO BE CLOSED FOR SEWER INSTALLATION](#) – *Springfield News-Leader*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

WATER QUALITY:

- [VILLAGE LEADERS FOCUS ON WATER PROJECTS](#) – *The Morning News*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

DEVELOPMENT / PLANNING:

- [TERRELL PROJECT OVERSIGHT IN DOUBT](#) – *Springfield News-Leader*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

FISHING:

- [FISHING REPORT – BRENT'S BET BET](#) – *The Kansas City Star*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)
- [DESPITE TRAVAILS, WHITE LOADED WITH SMALLIES](#) – *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

EDITORIALS:

- [COLUMNISTS : VOTE, VOTE, VOTE](#) – *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)
- [EVERGLADES RESTORATION MOVING FORWARD](#) – *The Associated Press / NBC6.net*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

WEST BYPASS TO BE CLOSED FOR SEWER INSTALLATION

Springfield News-Leader

Posted on July 6, 2006

URL: <http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060706/NEWS01/607060357/1007/NEWS01>

The West Bypass will be closed to traffic this weekend to install a sanitary sewer under the road between Commercial and Division streets.

The road closes between Kearney and Division streets at 7 p.m. Friday and may not reopen until 6 a.m. Monday.

The bypass is being widened to four lanes from Chestnut Expressway to Kearney. Kearney, Chestnut and Kansas Expressway are suggested as a detour.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

VILLAGE LEADERS FOCUS ON WATER PROJECTS

By [Christy Attlesey](#) The Morning News

Posted on July 5, 2006

URL: <http://www.nwaonline.net/articles/2006/07/06/news/02bzvistawater.txt>

BELLA VISTA -- Bella Vista's west side residents will have better water service by next fall.

S & J Construction has two crews installing the 5.2-mile water line connecting Bella Vista's Boreland Place Water Complex with the Benton-Washington Regional Public Water Authority, said Larry Wilms, utilities director for the Property Owners Association. The 18-inch line will be able to carry 1.8 million gallons of water daily to the Highlands -- the area west of Arkansas 279.

The new westside water line will reduce stress on Bella Vista's 40-year-old system, which requires high pressure levels to move water bought from Bentonville to the far west side of the village. Bella Vista buys water from Bentonville and the water authority.

Crews recently blasted areas in order to install the line.

"The topography of Northwest Arkansas, to the surprise of few, prompted the need for low-level blasting for portions of the project," Wilms said.

The line is being installed about six feet in the ground, deeper than the normal three feet, he said. The extra depth will help protect the line as the area grows and utilities are added.

Wilms, however, said most of the village's water leaks are the result of poor installation or poor quality materials and not hits from other utility companies.

Wilms spends about two hours each day at the site, monitoring work and answering contractors' questions.

The project is slightly behind schedule because of extra time needed to obtain property easements, he said. The association met some resistance from property owners who didn't want to give up easements.

"We remain confident that, by early November, we will be able to provide our westside residents with improved water delivery," Wilms said.

General Manager Tommy Bailey said he is optimistic the project will be complete by late summer.

The association hired Eugene Frost, a right of way negotiator from Missouri, to help the association gather easements. In addition, the association changed the route on the project's north end in order to reduce the number of easements required. Now, the association needs four easements instead of 22 for the top portion, Wilms said.

Wilms said there appears to be increasing acceptance from the property owners who, early on, were opposed to giving property easements.

The association is completing negotiations on acquiring easements for 44 tracts of land to enable the \$2.3 million water line to connect with the Boreland Water Facility.

Bailey said money for the project comes from the association's \$1,258 water capital buy-in fee established in July 2004. The fee, which is used only for increasing the water system capacity needs, is funded completely through new construction, he said. The fee is a one-time charge for each construction project.

The association also is working on a \$2.65 million renovation to the Boreland Water Facility. Its storage capacity will be upgraded from 1 million gallons to 2 million gallons. The project also includes a new water pumping station with electrical back-up in case of power outages. That work is expected to be completed in October, Wilms said.

In addition, the association is working on seven projects to replace 16,000 feet of existing water lines failing throughout the village. Village leaders budgeted nearly \$1 million for the project.

The design work is being completed and the association plans to go out for bids this month. Wilms said all of the work is expected to be done by the end of the year.

The association also is conducting the engineering and design work on several projects expected to be completed in 2007.

The plans include enlarging the Metfield storage tank capacity to 350,000 gallons and installing a new water tank on the village's far east side, which will resolve water storage and pressure issues.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

TERRELL PROJECT OVERSIGHT IN DOUBT

By [Didi Tang](#) Springfield News-Leader

Posted on July 6, 2006

URL: <http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060706/NEWS01/607060376/1007>

Subdivision developer gains more time to file plat, is likely to win court case.

The massive Terrell Creek subdivision project has cleared a time-limit hurdle and probably will overcome a legal challenge in circuit court, but the 1,940-acre housing development in Christian County has at least one more puzzle to solve.

The county is not sure whether an agreement with the city of Republic on which the construction permit for the project is hinged is still valid.

"Republic is not overseeing the development anymore," said Glenda Hammons, the county's interim

planning administrator.

But the county's approval of the development last July was based on the intergovernmental agreement in which Christian County gave Republic the authority to impose its rules over the project and oversee the development.

By January, Missouri Partners Inc., a Hollister-based company, and Republic officials worked out a planned district development plan for the project, one of the largest housing proposals in southwest Missouri.

In May, Steve Redford, the president of the development company, said in a letter to Republic that he would start a new plan for the 1,940 acres in northwest Christian County.

Redford asked the city to provide the sewer service for his new plan, but no longer be involved in oversight of the project as a whole.

Though Redford did not ask for public water, Republic bundles the two services, said Chris Coulter, the city's assistant administrator.

"We can't do one without the other," he said in June.

Meanwhile, a June pre-application conference between Missouri Partners and county staff was canceled without rescheduling.

The meeting would have been held to discuss a new development proposal.

Bryan Wade, attorney for Missouri Partners, said Wednesday that the company is only intending to modify its current plan.

"We will operate within the same framework that we started," Wade said.

Missouri Partners is planning to scale back the project and have fewer residential lots, Wade said.

In his May letter, Redford indicated that he would rather develop 1,500 lots than 2,500 rooftops, which the current plan calls for on the property.

The change won't require additional hearings, said Wade.

"We're not making substantial changes other than reduce the density of the development," he said.

PLAT DEADLINE EXTENDED

Missouri Partners had until Wednesday to file a final plat with the county, one year after it got the construction permit.

The deadline has been extended for nine more months and one week, said Hammons.

Don Busch, a legal counsel for the county, wrote in a letter to Hammons that the project should be given more time because of delays caused by appeals against it.

In September, neighbors of the Terrell Creek project appealed to the county's Board of Adjustment, arguing the construction permit was not valid.

When the board rejected the appeal, the neighbors took the issue to the circuit court.

In June, Judge James Eiffert concluded he couldn't review the request because he did not have a

copy of the county's planning and zoning regulations as part of the evidence.

Wade said he would ask the court to affirm the validity of the construction permit by this week's end. Because of his earlier ruling, it is expected that the judge will affirm the permit.

BACK TO TOP

FISHING REPORT – BRENT'S BEST BET

Compiled by Brent Frazee The Kansas City Star

Posted on July 6, 2006

URL: <http://www.kansascity.com/mld/kansascity/sports/14973758.htm>

Editor's note: As is our custom, we have only included the Missouri portion of this report.

Even in the heart of the busiest time of the year at Lake of the Ozarks, the fish continue to bite. The action for both crappies and bass has been excellent in recent days. Try fishing in the deep brush for the crappies. Use deep-running crankbaits or 10-inch plastic worms off secondary points for the bass.

Missouri

LAKE OF THE OZARKS: 83 degrees, clear, normal. Outlook: Gier's Bass Pro reports: crappies excellent on minnows in 25 feet of water in the brush and near the boat docks; black bass excellent on DD 22 crankbaits at dusk and on 10-inch Power worms at night in 8 to 10 feet of water off secondary points.

TRUMAN: 78 degrees, very clear, normal. Outlook: Sterett Creek Marina reports: black bass good on plastic worms off the points; catfish good on jug, trotlines with cut bait and leeches in 6 feet of water on the flats; white bass fair to good on small spoons, Rooster Tails, Road Runners on the flats; crappies fair on minnows 8 feet down in 15 to 17 feet of water along outside tree rows. Below the dam: Rocky Top Bait and Tackle: all species poor.

TANEYCOMO: 50 degrees, clear, no power generation. Outlook: Fall Creek Marina reports: trout good on Power Bait, worms below Fall Creek.

NORFORK : 85 degrees, clear, normal. Outlook: Cranfield Junction reports: black bass good on 11-inch plastic worms, jig and pig at dusk and night in 35 feet of water; walleyes fair to good on jigging spoons, Shad Raps in 30 to 35 feet of water; stripers fair to good on shad, Road Runners in 30 to 60 feet of water; crappies fair on minnows in 20 to 25 feet of water in the brush.

JACOMO: 80 degrees, clear, normal. Outlook: Forty Woods Bait and Tackle reports: bass good on spinnerbaits in the coves; bluegills good on crickets, wax worms in 10 feet of water; catfish good at night on liver in the coves.

SMITHVILLE: 78 degrees, clear, one-half foot low. Outlook: Burton's Bait and Tackle reports: black bass good on jigs, plastic worms, Carolina rigs off the main-lake points and weed lines; crappies fair on jigs, minnows in 18 feet of water along the tree lines; catfish fair on chicken livers, nights crawlers at night; walleyes fair on crankbaits, jigs tipped with live bait off main-lake points.

POMME DE TERRE: 80 degrees, clear, normal, 1 foot high. Outlook: Nemo Marina reports: bluegills good on worms along the bluffs; crappies fair on minnows in 15 feet of water along bridge pillars; catfish fair on live and plastic worms in 10 feet of water.

LONGVIEW: 79 degrees, 58-inch clarity, 1 foot low. Outlook: Longview Lake Marina reports: catfish good on hot dogs in the coves; crappies fair on jigs, minnows off the docks and in the timber; bass fair on plastic worms in the timber.

TABLE ROCK: 84 to 86 degrees, clear, normal. Outlook: Baxter Boat Dock reports: catfish good on trotlines with perch in 15 to 20 feet of water in the coves; black bass fair on Salt Craws, jigs in 40 to 50 feet of water along main-lake points.

STOCKTON: 80 degrees, clear, 4 feet low. Outlook: Mutton Creek Marina reports: crappies fair on minnows in 8 to 10 feet of water over brush.

JAMES A. REED: 78 degrees, clear, 1 foot low. Outlook: Missouri Department of Conservation reports: black bass fair early and late on jig and pig, spinnerbaits, topwater lures along brush, weeds; channel catfish fair on chicken livers, leeches under bobbers; bluegills, redear sunfish fair on red worms, crickets.

BULL SHOALS: 84 to 88 degrees, clear, 1 1/2 feet low. Outlook: Buck Creek Marina reports: bass fair on Zara Spooks early and jig and pig at night along bluff ends and points.

BLUE SPRINGS: 78 degrees, stained, slightly low. Outlook: Blue Spring Marina reports: all species poor.

BACK TO TOP

DESPITE TRAVAILS, WHITE LOADED WITH SMALLIES

BY BRYAN HENDRICKS

Posted on Thursday, July 6, 2006

URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/adg/Sports/159707/>

This is the fifth installment in a weekly series about Arkansas' smallmouth bass fishing destinations.

MOUNTAIN VIEW — If the guy in the trout boat could have compared his day's catch to ours, he might have chosen his words more carefully.

Alan Thomas and I encountered him and his fishing guide Monday on the White River, moments after launching our canoes at Boswell Shoals for a 9-mile float to Jack's Resort, about a mile upstream from Allison. They were drift fishing for trout while Thomas and I chunked soft-plastics into an enticing assortment of rock cover along the bank.

"What are you fishing for?" the trout guy asked.

"Smallmouth bass," Thomas replied.

"Smallmouth bass?" he asked, incredulous. "The trout ate 'em all. You've got to go to Canada to find those!"

Before 1952, when it flowed freely, the White River was the nation's pre-eminent smallmouth stream. As the story goes, smallmouths were virtually exterminated from the White when the Corps of Engineers built Bull Shoals Dam. The dam altered the riparian habitat and the food chain, and the water entering the river from the depths of Bull Shoals Lake was too cold for smallmouths.

In their place, the federal government stocked rainbow trout, and later brown trout. They did so well that the White is now the nation's pre-eminent trophy trout fishery.

Evidently, it takes a lot more than habitat destruction to purge a fish as tough and mean as a smallmouth. They thrive in Bull Shoals and Table Rock lakes, and Beaver, the first major lake in the White River chain, is developing a top-rate smallmouth fishery of its own.

I'd heard rumors they thrive in the White River below Bull Shoals, but I was skeptical despite Thomas' rave reviews. When we launched at Boswell, I didn't expect much. I simply intended to enjoy a nice, effortless float through the gorgeous heart of Stone County.

That didn't meet my expectations, either.

When we launched at Boswell, the water from the previous night's power surge was beginning to fall, but the current was still swift and full. However, a stiff headwind blew us hard upstream and across the river. This made for difficult paddling and even more difficult fishing because it required so much effort to stay close to the bank. In hindsight, that probably helped us because it forced us to fish slowly.

Not long after his encounter with the trout fisherman, Thomas boated the day's first smallmouth. It hit a three-inch plastic lizard, watermelon / red pumpkin, on a Texas rig.

"Check this out," he said.

In his hand were the remains of a crawdad the fish spit in his mouth.

"That tells me what I need to know," I said, removing the paddletail grub from my hook. "Crawdads imitator, here I come!"

"That really surprises me," Thomas said. "I'd heard the trout ate all the crawdads in this river and that you have to go to Canada to find them."

"I'll bet these aren't even native smallmouths," I said. "Somebody brought 'em down from Canada and put them here."

With that, I tied on a Yamamoto spider grub, watermelon / red metal flake, on a Texas rig. For the last 10 years, I used soft-plastics on a standup jighead, but lately I favor the Texas rig. The Texas rig hides the hook point, making it less likely to snag in rocks. Also, when the bullet weight hits the bottom, it stands the lure upright, just as a standup jig does. In short, the Texas rig is, in most situations, a superior presentation.

To my surprise, the first fish I caught was a 14-inch rainbow trout.

"Check him out!" Thomas yelled. "Usually you have to go to Canada to catch trout on softplastics."

That was the only bite I got for more than an hour, so I switched to what is rapidly becoming my "go-to" bait, a YUM Craw Papi, watermelon / red flake. Fish hit it, but either they spit it out before I could set the hook or they just yanked at the pincers. I needed to find a way to make them hold onto it.

The Craw Papi has a hollow body with an opening at the mouth where you can add a rattle. I wondered what would happen if I stuffed it with YUM Trout Krilla, a soft bait made of shrimp krill that comes in a small jar. I rolled a small pinch of the hot-pink paste into a thin tube and stuffed it into the body. This added scent to the bait, and since the Craw Papi is loaded with salt, I believed the fish would hold it longer. It also gave a bright, pink glow to the Craw Papi's torso, which I

hoped would be a visual stimulant.

The first cast got a savage strike from a smallmouth, and I knew I had my pattern. Within three strikes, fish squeezed all the Trout Krilla from the jig, and by then the lure was usually mangled beyond use.

About halfway through the float, we hit the “magic time” when everything goes right. The bank on river right contained a beautiful mixture of chunk rock and boulders which created numerous eddies and current breaks. Fishing ahead of me, Thomas caught smallmouths in rapid succession, and I caught them almost as fast. I didn’t just catch Al’s rejects, either. They were fat, healthy bronzebacks.

An amazing thing about smallmouth fishing is you can throw your lure into what appears to be a barren stretch of water. A smallmouth rockets up from under a rock to take the lure, and as soon as it starts fighting, a half-dozen smallmouths appear from nowhere to try to steal the bait from the hooked fish. That happened every time we hooked a fish, so the White River is obviously loaded with smallmouths.

It was in this “magic time” that I hooked the biggest smallie of the day. It happened moments before we pulled over for lunch at 4: 10 p. m., and it measured 14. 75 inches.

We didn’t realize how hungry we were until we pulled up on the rocks and divied up the po’ boy sandwich that Thomas had packed. We improved it with pepperoni and extra cheese, and then we practically inhaled the thing, washing it down with ice cold water and orange juice.

“You know, you usually have to go to Canada to get a shore lunch this good,” Thomas said.

The sun was starting to dip below the ridges when we reached the Mt. Olive access. There, Thomas and I caught our last fish of the day. His was a 14-inch smallmouth and mine was a 15-inch rainbow trout. For me, the count was 20 smallmouths, two rainbows and a hefty, palm-size bluegill. Thomas finished the day with 17 smallmouths and a goggleeye.

Heading into the stiffening wind, those last 3 miles were brutal. With aching shoulders, we were exhausted when we pulled ashore at Jack’s Resort, but our spirits glowed.

Ordinarily, you’d have to go to Canada to find smallmouth fishing that good.

BACK TO TOP

COLUMNISTS : VOTE, VOTE, VOTE

George Arnold

<http://www.ardemgaz.com/ShowStoryTemplate.asp?Path=ArDemocrat/2006/07/05&ID=Ar01601&Section=Editorial>

We’ve just celebrated the Fourth of July, Independence Day, a holiday created to note the birthday of our democratic form of government. After all the fireworks and barbecue, it’s still a good day to look at some of the ways we implement this democracy.

Elections aren’t the only indicators of a democratic system, but they’re important ones. By that gauge, Northwest Arkansas-Washington County, in particular-will be participating in a democratic binge of elections over the next five months.

Here's the latest schedule, courtesy of the Washington County clerk's office:

-July 11, Springdale will vote on funding a minor league baseball stadium. Early voting is already under way.

-August 8, Tontitown will vote for a new mayor, even though there's only one candidate for the office.

-September 12, Fayetteville will vote on a complicated sewer and transportation sales tax.

-September 19, school elections.

-October 10, Fayetteville will vote on an annexation proposal.

-November 7, general elections -November 28, runoffs from the general election, if needed.

Whew. If you want to judge democracy by the number of elections being held, Fayetteville's the big winner here. Interested voters in Fayetteville could cast as many as five ballots between now and November.

Of course, the truth is that most of these elections will draw puny vote totals. Even the general election probably won't attract a heavy turnout. That's despite the upsurge of political interest because of the state offices being contested and the declining popularity of the president on the national level. His opponents are invigorated; he's stoking his base.

As all those elections draw nearer, we'll see the obligatory editorials (probably on this page, as well as many others) encouraging voters to get out there and do their patriotic duty by casting their ballots. Many will read the words, agree whole-heartedly, and will be too busy to bother when the actual election rolls around.

Of course, in some of these upcoming races, that's the whole idea. We've grown accustomed to the logic of special elections: On local issues, the trick is often to get your supporters out and avoid calling too much attention to your cause from the aginners. Call it election by stealth. Or, they never knew what hit 'em.

Still, many have wised up to the tactic. It's never been a sure thing. But these days, the skeptics are less likely to let a low-profile election slip past them. For both sides, it's all about getting to the polls in sufficient numbers to carry the day.

A couple of those upcoming Washington County elections will be especially important on the local level, as much for what they tell us about their cities as for letting the will of the people be heard.

The Fayetteville sewer financing vote is turning into a referendum on the administration of Mayor Dan Coody. The sewer project has languished. It's three years behind schedule and \$110 million over budget. In backing new financing to make up the difference, the mayor took some responsibility for the delays and cost overruns-sort of. He said he was responsible as the city's chief executive, then blamed "the system" for failing him.

None of this sits well with his critics, who have blasted him for years for inadequate oversight of the project. They're also irritated by the near certainty that, without the new tax funding, residents face as much as a 68 percent increase in their sewer rates. That's enough to get anybody's attention.

With all that on the table, the sewer vote in Fayetteville isn't likely to be one of those that flies

beneath the radar. Voters will aim to make a statement with this one.

Meanwhile, the vote in Springdale on financing the baseball stadium presents some interesting dynamics, too. Backers are promoting the stadium as a good investment, likely to attract tourist dollars and set off a retail boom.

Springdale has never been a slouch about economic development. But it's been more the business-friendly kind of development, rather than tourist attractions. The stadium vote is turning into one about Springdale's future: Will it become a place to go? Or, as a supporter put it in a recent letter to the editor, will it remain a place you pass through merely to get somewhere else?

In short, when you're called upon to vote in one of the many upcoming elections in the next few months, bear your responsibility proudly. You're not just picking between candidates, or between "Yes" and "No." Tomorrow's very direction could depend on your choices.

George Arnold is opinion editor of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette's northwest edition.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

EVERGLADES RESTORATION MOVING FORWARD

The Associated Press / NBC6.net

Posted on July 6, 2006

URL: <http://www.nbc6.net/news/9476257/detail.html>

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. -- Everglades restoration is on the right track but must continue expeditiously if the vast wetlands system is to regain its health and thrive in one of the most ecologically sensitive regions of the world, according to a federal report released Wednesday.

The state reached a settlement in 1992 after the federal government sued Florida for not abiding by its own clean water standards. The deal produced a consent decree under which a federal judge in Miami oversees Everglades cleanup.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno appointed a special master to oversee restoration efforts and to report to the court on its progress.

The topic has stirred emotion and heated debate as environmental groups and the Miccosukee Indians who live in the Everglades press for quicker progress while state water managers balance the needs of a thirsty and growing South Florida population with agriculture and ecosystem woes.

"The parties need to take some teenage advice and 'chill out' a bit," Special Master John Barkett wrote in a status report released Wednesday. "It is unrealistic to believe that there will not be missteps from time to time in Everglades restoration."

The report comes about year after the special master held a series of hearings on the pace of the 30-year, \$10.5 billion project, the largest wetland restoration effort in the world.

Key to the plan's success is the reduction of the nutrient phosphorus from sugar farms, suburban developments and other sources into the Everglades, where it upsets the environmental balance.

Moreno ruled last year that the state and federal governments had violated the 1992 settlement by allowing excessive phosphorus discharges and failing to meet construction deadlines.

While the special master recommended to the court that it sustain its previous ruling of violations by the state, he also noted that Florida "has made considerable progress in remaining in compliance."

"If flora and fauna could speak, they would be grateful for the efforts to date to reduce phosphorous inflows but would still be making this plea, 'We have received too much phosphorous for too long. Please don't allow any more in,'" Barkett wrote, acknowledging that "this is not an easy task."

Ernie Barnett of the South Florida Water Management District, the agency charged with managing Everglades water, saw the report as a validation of the state's efforts and commitment to cleaning up the wetlands.

"I feel somewhat comfortable in seeing that the special master is sort embracing and validating the efforts in moving forward to get this done," Barnett said. "To us, it's a good indication that the court is appreciative ... and we're going to continue to implement the remedies that we've agreed upon."

The special master recommended continued restoration efforts and more frequent progress reports to the court.

Environmentalists seized on the affirmation that the state remains in violation of the settlement.

"This is a victory for the Everglades," said David Guest, an attorney for Earthjustice which represents a coalition of conservation groups, including National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club and Audubon Society of the Everglades. "The district is going to have to comply with the law from here on forward under close federal scrutiny."

[BACK TO TOP](#)