

UORB monthly project status report - SJRWMD  
For February Board

**Emeralda Marsh**

The contractor completed construction related to reconnection of the K cell and a pump station at Emeralda Marsh in mid-December. Lake County Road Department approved plans for the box culvert under Emeralda Island Road and construction management staff are preparing a work order to complete the installation. The culvert will reconnect Areas 6 & 7 to Area 2 and thence Lake Griffin. Recent aerial photos from Area 2 show significant expansion of beds of spatterdock, a water lily-like plant that once dominated large areas of Lake Griffin. This is a welcome development and an important habitat to return to the Lake Griffin/Emeralda system.

**Shad Harvesting in the ORB and Lake Apopka:**

Shad harvesting on Lake Apopka ended for the season on November 30<sup>th</sup> because of low catches and small fish. The fishermen harvested almost 400,000 pounds of gizzard shad. The fishermen did not catch significant numbers of sunshine bass, a fish that was stocked in the lake last year by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission. The District began the harvest on Newnans Lake near Gainesville on February 1, 2010.

**UORB Lake Level Management**

Lake levels are generally at or above minimum desirable throughout the basin. The Superpond lakes (Harris, Eustis, Dora and Beauclair) are almost at the regulation schedule. Limited discharges did occur last year at Burrell and Moss Bluff in early September when lake levels exceeded the upstream regulation schedules. These were the first major discharges from the basin since February 2006. Planning continues on implementation of enhanced lake level fluctuations for the Harris Chain of Lakes and Lake Apopka. Establishment of MFLs for these lakes will be incorporated into the project. Staff anticipates that this major project will require 4 years to complete.