



## Successful Kissimmee River Headwaters Revitalization Schedule Open House Meetings

The South Florida Water Management District hosted two open house meetings about the Kissimmee River Restoration Project's Phased Implementation of the Kissimmee River Headwaters Revitalization Schedule in Central Florida in January 2024. More than 100 people attended the meetings to learn about the Headwaters Revitalization Schedule, which regulates water levels in the Kissimmee River.



The Headwaters Revitalization Schedule is the last piece of the Kissimmee River Restoration Project, which was jointly developed and constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District over the last 30 years. Construction on the Kissimmee River Restoration Project was completed in 2021, setting the stage for the gradual implementation of the new Headwaters Revitalization Schedule.

The Headwaters Revitalization Schedule will be implemented in phases to hold more water in Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress and Hatchineha to allow historic flows to the Kissimmee River while maintaining the same level of flood protection to achieve full restoration benefits.

Increment 1, the first phase of the Headwaters Revitalization Schedule, proposes raising the regulation schedule elevation approximately 0.5 feet higher than the current regulation schedule in summer and winter. Development of Increment 1 started in 2021 and it is anticipated to be approved in 2024.

Phased updates to the management plan will allow successively higher stages in the Headwaters Lakes (Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress, and Hatchineha) until approximately 2026, when the Headwaters Revitalization Schedule will be fully implemented. Intensive monitoring will occur to assess the effects of modifying water levels. The higher stages allowed by the schedule are also expected to improve littoral zone habitat in the lakes.

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