



2507 Callaway Road #103
Tallahassee, Florida 32303
(850) 222-BIRD
edraper@audubon.org
www.audubonofflorida.org

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**Contact: Eric Draper 850-251-1301
Ray Pilon 941-915-0736**

***Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority
Recognized for Balancing Environment and Water Supply***

Audubon of Florida today recognized the Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority for innovative use of alternative water supply strategies to benefit the environment. The Authority, a regional partnership of Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota counties, is constructing a six billion gallon off-stream surface water reservoir to capture fresh water during the rainy season and make it available during dry periods. The reservoir along with existing Aquifer Storage and Recovery, and a proposed integrated loop water supply source system will result in less competition for water needed for the environment and fish and wildlife.

“The project will take pressure off coastal areas groundwater and estuaries and help the environment,” said Eric Draper, Policy Director for Audubon of Florida.

In presenting the award to Jerry G. Hill, Chair of the Authority and a member of DeSoto County Commissioner, Draper commended the Authority for working with the Southwest Florida Water Management District to secure funds made available from SB 444. The Authority secured \$48 million in special state and district alternative water supply funds.

Audubon supported SB 444 as a way to fund alternatives to taking more water from the environment. State funds provide incentives to water supply utilities and local governments to work together to undertake costly projects that are more protective of the environment.

This is Audubon’s first award to recognize an alternative water supply project and is being given to promote the use of alternative water supply projects.

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