



## NEWS RELEASE 24-16

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### LEE COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY RECEIVES ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD FROM THE FLORIDA AIRPORTS COUNCIL

FORT MYERS, Fla. (Sept. 12, 2024) – The Florida Airports Council (FAC) presented the Lee County Port Authority (LCPA) with the 2024 J. Bryan Cooper Environmental Award at its annual conference held in Miami. This award recognizes a FAC member airport for promoting, implementing or undertaking an environmental project or program that has a positive impact on the Florida Aviation System. The award was given to Southwest Florida International Airport for its innovative and adaptive management of the Airport Mitigation Park.

LCPA was recognized for its efforts to maintain and enhance the 7,000-acre Airport Mitigation Park by demonstrating a balance between environmental and ecological benefits. The multi-year project is eliminating invasive species and exotics in a sensitive habitat, while preserving and enhancing local wetlands of regional significance in Southwest Florida.

“I am pleased that Southwest Florida International Airport has been recognized by FAC for its environmental efforts,” said Steven C. Hennigan, C.M., A.C.E., executive director and CEO of the Lee County Port Authority. “I appreciate the Board of Port Commissioners for their support and thank our staff for their work to balance airport growth with the protection of our unique environment.”

The Airport Mitigation Park was established in 2003 to compensate for the impact of long-term development of Southwest Florida International Airport. Located four miles southeast of RSW, the Mitigation Park lands are among the most pristine and environmentally sensitive in the region with plants and wildlife species protected by state and federal agencies. The site includes the Imperial Marsh, the largest freshwater marsh in Lee County, and extends from the headwaters of the Imperial and Estero River watersheds through the Flint Pen Strand; ultimately, connecting to the Everglades.

The Florida Airports Council is an association of publicly owned and operated airports, airport professionals, experts in the fields of airport design, development and improvement, as well as aviation trades that support the airport industry in Florida. For more information, visit [floridaairports.org](http://floridaairports.org).

Southwest Florida International Airport served more than 10 million passengers in 2023 and is one of the top 50 U.S. airports for passenger traffic. No ad valorem (property) taxes are used for airport operation or construction. For more information, visit [flylcpa.com](http://flylcpa.com) or [facebook.com/flyRSW](https://facebook.com/flyRSW).