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PRESS CONTACT

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**The Southwest Florida Regional Incubator Network Study
Document Available For Public Comment**

FORT MYERS, FL – (August 5, 2009) – Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council announced today that the Florida Regional Incubator Network Study draft document is now available for a public comment period. This document will be available via the web at www.swfrpc.org.

This study is a key foundation in developing a better economic development plan for the region that includes not only local incubators but a regional incubator network that can share and pool resources in a way that is effective and efficient. The regional incubator network is a regional initiative that came out of the CEDS planning process and is incorporated in the region's CEDS plan.

This process was initiated in November 2007; to date the following tasks have been completed.

- Task 1 - Survey Regional Best Practices
- Task 2 - Key Informant Interview and Focus Groups and Resource Inventory
- Task 3 – Develop Regional Incubator Report and Proposed Development Plan

The project has progressed on schedule with a draft report provided to the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council. Major tasks completed include a literature search and review, in-depth manager interviews with eight established U.S. business incubator networks, 22 Southwest Florida key informant interviews and five Southwest Florida focus groups, and development of a Southwest Florida organizational resource list that includes organizations that assist new startup companies.

On August 25th from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m., the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council will be holding a presentation from Florida Gulf Coast University. This meeting will be held at 1926 Victoria Avenue, Fort Myers, Florida 33901.

All changes should be submitted to Jennifer Pellechio via email at jpellechio@swfrpc.org or Rebekah Harp via email at rharp@swfrpc.org no later than August 31, 2009. For further information, please contact Jennifer Pellechio at 338-2550 Ext 218.