

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board Members

FROM: Ernie Barnett, Director, Office of Everglades Policy and Coordination

DATE: March 15, 2012

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Water Quality Studies Cooperative Agreement – Contract 4600002608

Background:

The Florida Legislature created the Save Our Everglades Trust Fund ("SOETF"), codified in Section 373.472, Florida Statutes (F.S.), to be used to fund restoration and conservation of natural systems, including the implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan ("CERP") as authorized by Section 373.470, F.S.. The Legislature outlines in Section 373.1501, F.S., the authority granted to the District to implement various components of CERP, including projects and water quality studies. The District and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) have already entered into a Cooperative Agreement establishing a general procedure for the disbursement of SOETF monies for land acquisition, design and construction to implement CERP projects. The District and FDEP now desire to enter into a Cooperative Agreement establishing a general procedure for the disbursement of SOETF monies to fund studies designed to analyze and evaluate water quality issues as envisioned in Section 373.1501(4)(b), F.S., and the Comprehensive Integrated Water Quality Plan described in the Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study in the development of a CERP project component.

How this helps meet the District's 10-Year Strategic Plan:

This Agreement provides the means for receiving funds from FDEP that can be used for conducting water quality studies that assist with the implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, a key component of the Strategic Plan.

Funding Source:

This Cooperative Agreement, executed as contract 4600002608, establishes a term of 10 years and provides for a procedure to disburse funds from the Save Our Everglades Trust Fund from FDEP to the District on an annual basis in accordance with an annual work plan.

This Board item impacts what areas of the District, both resource areas and geography: The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Water Quality Studies Cooperative Agreement will support the activities of the Office of Everglades Policy and Coordination, Operations-Maintenance-Construction Division, and the Water Resources Division. The geographic region that is impacted is the Northern and Southern

Everglades throughout which the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan effort is being implemented.

What concerns could this Board item raise?

If the Cooperative Agreement is not executed, disbursement of SOETF funds to the District cannot occur and there is a risk that CERP project components could either be delayed or be more costly in the absence of scientific studies specifically designed to address water quality issues associated with project implementation.

Why should the Governing Board approve this item?

Approval of this item will ensure that the District and FDEP, in all aspects of delivering programs associated with CERP, do so in a manner that implements the most effective strategies for restoration, minimizes duplication of effort, and maximizes the utilization of staff and monetary resources, while providing a unified and consistent effort on the part of the two agencies. It will also allow FDEP to disburse funds to the District for specific research, demonstration, cost-share and other appropriate water quality studies mutually agreed upon for implementation of CERP.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at ext. 2110.

EB/TM/svh

Attachment – Resolution and location map

ATTACHMENTS

Figure 1. Map of Everglades Agricultural Area Environmental Protection District, including the Stormwater Treatment Areas

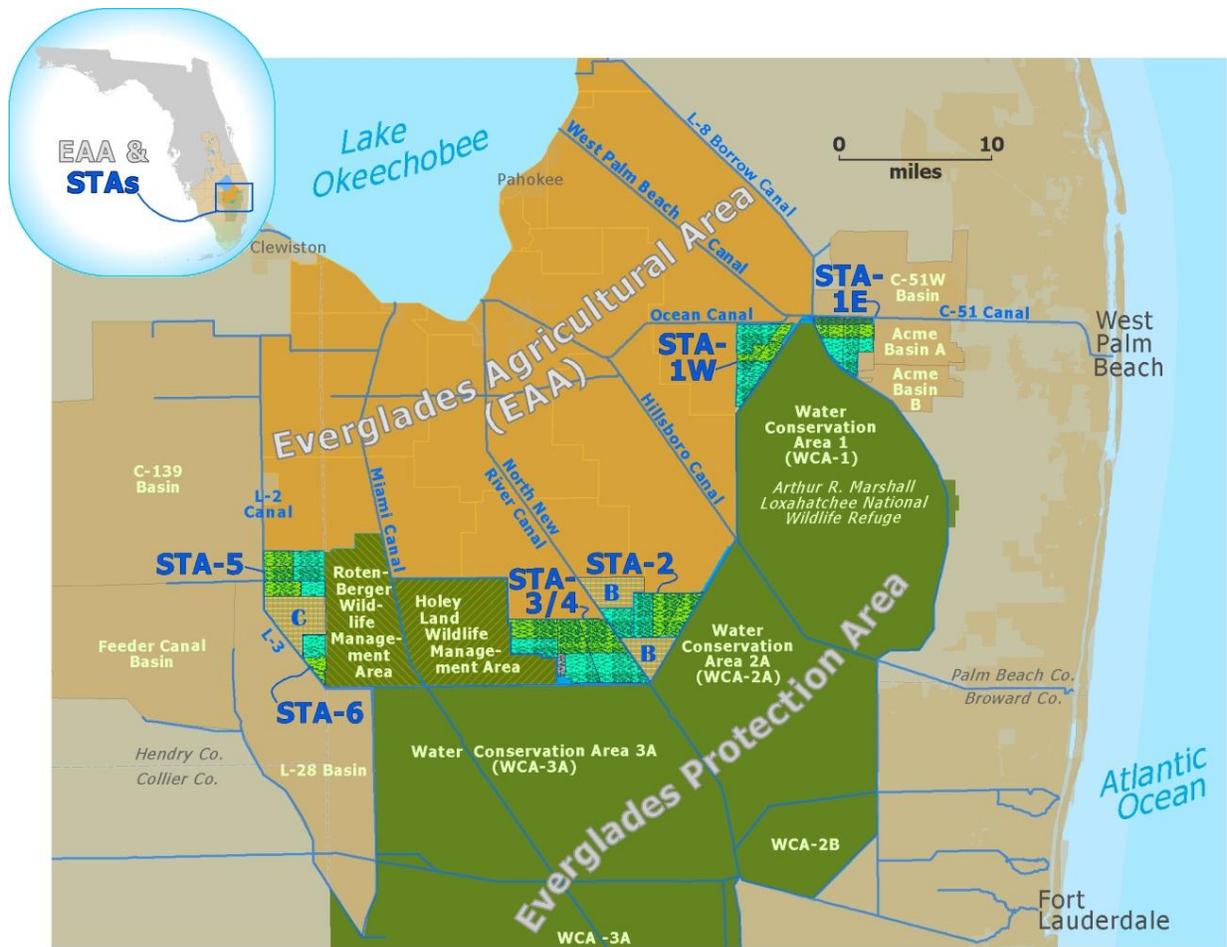


Figure 2. Map depicting locations of the field mesocosm studies for determining the role of sulfate in South Florida wetlands.

