

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Governing Board Members

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

**DATE:** January 2, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Acceptance of 2012 Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Plan Updates

**Background:** Section 373.4595, Florida Statutes authorizes the South Florida Water Management District, in cooperation with other coordinating agencies to develop Protection Plans for the Lake Okeechobee, St. Lucie, and Caloosahatchee watersheds and requires that these plans be updated every three years. District staff has completed the 2012 Updates of the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Plans consistent with the legislative directive and in cooperation with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and with extensive input from stakeholders. The 2012 updates focus on the progress of the coordinating agencies in reducing nutrient loads consistent with the Total Maximum Daily Loads established for the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie estuaries, increasing watershed storage to maintain a healthy salinity envelope and reducing harmful discharges to the estuaries.

**How this helps meet the District's 10-Year Strategic Plan:** The 2012 Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Plan Updates include projects for the improvement of the quality, quantity, timing and distribution of water in the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River Watersheds. Strategic Plan goals for restoring these watersheds will be positively impacted by the implementation of the projects identified in these Plan Updates.

**Funding Source:** District obligations will be met by a number of sources, including but not limited to District Ad Valorem, State Appropriations, Save Our Everglades Trust Fund and Federal Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan funding.

**This Board item impacts what areas of the District, both resource areas and geography:** The Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Plans cover the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie watersheds and downstream estuaries. The Office of Everglades Policy and Coordination will lead the development and implementation of the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Plan Updates, with significant support from many areas of the District including Water Resources, Everglades Regulation, Hydrologic and Environmental Systems Modeling, Operations and Maintenance, Intergovernmental Programs and Office of Chief of Staff.

**What concerns could this Board item raise?**

The St. Lucie River Watershed Plan update identifies strategic projects, promising technologies, and other proposals that can be implemented in the St. Lucie watershed to continue to move toward achieving the TMDL and water storage goals. However, while actions and projects included in the updated protection plan are estimated to reduce both nitrogen and phosphorus loading to the estuary by 43 percent, additional measures will be needed to meet the TMDL target concentrations established for the Caloosahatchee estuary. The current Basin Management Action Plan effort led by FDEP, in collaboration with local stakeholders, is expected to identify a more comprehensive list of water quality projects. The additional strategies identified through this BMAP process will be included in the next plan update.

**Why should the Governing Board approve this item?** The 2012 River Watershed Protection Plan Updates meet the legislative requirement for three year updates on the progress of the coordinating agencies in reducing nutrient loads consistent with the Total Maximum Daily Load established for the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie estuaries, increasing watershed storage to reduce harmful discharges to the estuaries and maintaining a healthy salinity envelope. It also defines current and proposed nutrient reduction and storage projects that will require funding for implementation in order to meet the water quality and storage goals for Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River Estuaries.

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

Attachment – Resolution