

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Governing Board Members

**FROM:** Chip Merriam, Deputy Executive Director, Water Resources Management

**DATE:** March 15, 2007

**SUBJECT:** Cooperative Agreement with the Seminole Tribe of Florida (Tribe) for an Exploratory ASR well at the Brighton Reservation in the amount of \$380,000.

**Background:** The Governing Board has allocated funds to implement alternative water resource development projects and the Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Recovery Plan (LOER). Section 373.0831, Florida Statutes directs the District to implement water resource development projects so that sufficient water can be available for all existing and future reasonable-beneficial uses and the natural systems, and so that the adverse effects of competition for water supplies can be avoided. The District and the Tribe have entered into a Water Rights Compact, wherein the Tribe is entitled to 15 percent of the total amount of water which can be withdrawn from District canals (as calculated on a monthly basis) at the Brighton Reservation. The District has, through various measures, endeavored to assure the Tribe delivery of its entitlement rights. Through this project, the District seeks to assure the Tribe delivery of its entitlement water and provide other users within the Basin the opportunity to further develop surface water resources.

**How this helps meet the District's 10 Year Strategic Plan:** The Strategic Plan states that supporting Alternative Water Supply projects is a District priority. The proposed project is being implemented in an area with limited surface water availability, historically has been the subject of water shortage declarations and has been recommended as a component of the Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Recovery Plan (LOER).

**Funding Source:** State funding from the Water Management Land Trust Fund.

**This Board item impacts what areas of the District, both resource areas and geography:** The recommended project is located within the Indian Prairie Basin, northwest of Lake Okeechobee, in Glades County, Florida. The Water Supply Department will primarily be responsible for implementing this project.

**What concerns could this Board item raise?** Depending on the results of this project, other water supply strategies may be necessary to address the Tribe's water rights.

**Why should the Governing Board approve this item?** The Board should approve this item and direct staff to implement this project. The project, if successful, will provide the Tribe with an increased assurance of water deliveries, and reduce competition for water in the Indian Prairie Basin.