

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Governing Board Members

**FROM:** Sandra Close Turnquest, Deputy Executive Director, Corporate Resources

**DATE:** June 12, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Avon Park Air Force Range Levee Restoration and Water Control Structure Replacements (OT061106)

**Background:** The purpose of this Local Governmental Agreement with Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District is to implement a project for the storage of additional water on the Avon Park Air Force Range (APAFR). The Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Recovery action plan includes an initiative to identify options for storage and/or disposal of excess surface water, to aid in reducing water levels in Lake Okeechobee and high discharge volumes to the estuaries. Potential public lands for water storage in the Lake Okeechobee watershed have been identified and include the APAFR site. This site is anticipated to store an additional 10,000 acre-feet of water as the result of this project's implementation. The project will consist of the improvement and maintenance of existing levees in the vicinity of Arbuckle Marsh, as well as water control structure replacements within the existing levee system. The District will transfer funds to Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District (HSWCD) to enable them to hire and manage a contractor to perform the levee restoration and culvert replacement. HSWCD will receive 5% of the funding to provide this service to the District. In addition, the APAFR will contribute \$33,000 to the project for structure replacements and will assist with project management oversight. The APAFR will also monitor, operate, and maintain the project facilities.

**How this helps meet the District's 10-year Strategic Plan:** Lake Okeechobee protection and restoration is a major program and priority in the District's 10 year strategic plan. Alternative storage of excess surface water assists in achieving the overall Lake Okeechobee restoration and estuary protection goals.

**Funding Source:** The District will provide funding in an amount not to exceed \$254,242 dedicated funds (WMLTF) to the project for levee restoration and water control structure replacements. These funds were originally budgeted towards land acquisition for the Lemkin Creek Urban Treatment Area project, but are no longer needed for that purpose.

**This Board item impacts what areas of the District, both resource areas and geography:** This is a project which will impact flows within the Lake Okeechobee Watershed, specifically flows reaching Lake Okeechobee through Lake Istokpoga. Resource areas include Watershed Management, CERP, Operations, and Water Supply.

**What concerns could this Board item raise?** This project is not yet specifically identified as a component of the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan (LOPP). The project is an alternative water storage project under Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Recovery (LOER).

**Why should the Governing Board approve this item?** SFWMD and its partners are committed to Lake Okeechobee restoration and estuary protection goals.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at extension 6351.

SCT/bmw  
Attachment: Resolution