

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Governing Board Members

**THROUGH:** Kenneth G. Ammon, P.E., Deputy Executive Director  
Everglades Restoration Resource Area

**FROM:** Ruth Clements, Department Director  
Land Acquisition and Land Management

**DATE:** November 15, 2007

**SUBJECT:** Approve Shingle Creek Regional Park Management Plan

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt a resolution of the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District approving Shingle Creek Regional Park Management Plan, dated August 31, 2007; providing an effective date.

### **BACKGROUND**

- Section 140.22(h), South Florida Water Management District Policies Code, encourages the District to enter into cooperative land management agreements with state agencies or local governments to provide the coordinated and cost-effective management of lands.
- On September 8, 1999, the Governing Board approved the 2000 Save Our Rivers Plan which identified the Shingle Creek project as a priority project.
- In April, 2001, the District entered into an interlocal agreement (the "Interlocal Agreement") with Osceola County and the City of Kissimmee whereby the District agreed to reimburse the County for the acquisition of certain lands within the Shingle Creek project, in exchange for the County granting the District a conservation easement over the land.
- In June, 2002, the Interlocal Agreement was amended to include additional land referred to as the Babb Property.
- In July, 2003, the Interlocal Agreement was further amended to include additional land referred to as the St. Clair Property to be managed by the County and the District on a 50/50 cost share basis, and to require the County to submit a management plan for the property, subject to approval by the Governing Board, after closing on the property.
- The first management plan was approved by the District's Governing Board on December 9, 2004 (the "Original Management Plan").

- In February, 2006, the District, the County and the City entered into a second Interlocal Agreement (the "Ruba Agreement") whereby the District agreed to reimburse the County and the City for the acquisition of additional lands within the Shingle Creek project known as the "Ruba Property" in exchange for a conservation easement over the property. The Ruba Property will be managed by the County and the City, with the District sharing management costs on a 50/50 basis. The County is also required to submit a management plan for approval by the Governing Board after closing.
- The Original Management Plan has been re-written to include the recreational development and management of the tracts purchased in accordance with Original Agreement, as amended, and the Ruba Agreement.
- The County has successfully leveraged District funds with Florida Communities Trust grants for each property that they have acquired within the Shingle Creek Save our Rivers project.
- The proposed management plan (the "Revised Management Plan") for the properties was created following the Florida Communities Trust guidelines and has been approved by the Florida Communities Trust Governing Board.

### **MANAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARY**

The Revised Management Plan describes the historical, physical, and ecological aspects of Osceola County's Shingle Creek Regional Park, in conjunction with the stewardship activities that are necessary to properly manage these lands. This plan is a compilation of earlier plans and assessments combined with new information and proposals. Its purpose is to provide guidance to District and County land stewards for logical and consistent land management practices, including goals and objectives.

### **This Board item impacts what areas of the District, both resource areas and geography:**

The Revised Management Plan covers properties acquired within the Osceola County portion of the Shingle Creek Save Our Rivers project pursuant to Original Agreement, as amended, and the Ruba Agreement. The Land Stewardship Division is administering these agreements.

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

Pursuant to the Ruba Agreement which will terminate on February 1, 2009, the District is responsible for 50% of the management costs associated with the property. According to the Revised Management Plan, the District's annual contributions are estimated to be \$100,000. However, if management expenses for a given year are higher than expected, the District's 50/50 cost share would increase accordingly.

Governing Board Members  
November 15, 2007  
Page 3

**Why should the Governing Board approve this item?**

Approval of this item will satisfy the requirement that Osceola County develop and submit a management plan concerning the acquired Shingle Creek properties to the Governing Board for approval.

RC/df