

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Governing Board Members

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

**THROUGH:** Kenneth G. Ammon, P.E., Deputy Executive Director, CERP

**DATE:** November 6, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Treasure Coast Grove Land Clearing Activities

### **Background:**

In July 2002, the South Florida Water Management District (District) acquired citrus groves from Treasure Coast Grove containing 785.91 acres located in St. Lucie County and negotiated a leaseback allowing them to remain on the property for citrus farming at an annual rent of \$119,750.00. The lessee was also responsible for the payment of property taxes. The property was acquired to construct a future water reservoir as part of the Indian River Lagoon Project. Subsequently, citrus canker was discovered in the grove in May 2005, and 159.9 acres of the diseased trees were eradicated pursuant to the Federal Program. The trees were not removed in a contiguous block, and Treasure Coast cleared the remaining non canker trees consisting of 184.97 within the grove block and did additional land preparation/clearing on the area. In June 2005, the Governing Board approved executing an amendment to the existing lease which authorized payment of \$600/acre for land clearing activities associated with the construction project. This request is seeking authorization for payment of \$150/acre for the additional work performed on the land cleared for citrus canker.

### **Staff is requesting:**

Authorize staff to approve payment to Treasure Coast Grove, LLC of \$82,042.20 for land clearing and site preparation activities associated with the C-23/C-24 Storage Reservoir construction project. This amount represents 159.9 acres X \$150/ac and 184.97 acres X \$600/ac less 441.04 acres (remaining acres in citrus) X \$20/ac (rent approved in June '05 amendment) X 6 years

For purposes of a conflict check:

The Minton Family  
Ft. Pierce, Florida

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

The C-23/C-24 Reservoirs are part of the Indian River Lagoon Project. Since citrus canker was discovered in this grove in 2005, 159.9 acres of diseased trees were eradicated under the Federal Program. The lessee performed an additional \$150.00 per acre site clearing and land preparation activities on those areas. The Lessee also cleared an additional 184.97 acres in the grove pursuant to an earlier amendment executed by Treasure Coast Grove, LLC and the District which authorized a \$600.00 credit for land clearing activities.

**Funding Source:** The District has received compensation for diseased citrus canker trees that were eradicated in the Treasure Coast Grove from the USDA in connection with the federal Citrus Canker Tree Replacement Program. Payment will be made from those funds.

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

The grove is located in St. Lucie County and affects the Land Resources area.

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

The Federal Citrus Canker program for eradicating diseased citrus canker trees has been discontinued. Any future land clearing and site preparation activities should be coordinated with the project manager for the C-23/C-24 Storage Reservoirs.