

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board Members

FROM: Chip Merriam, Deputy Executive Director, Water Resources

DATE: January 15, 2009

SUBJECT: Authorize a two year cooperative agreement with the University of Florida (IFAS) and authorize a Waiver of Competition as an exception to the general standards of competition, to evaluate the performance of an Above-Ground Impoundment (AGI) in reducing phosphorus in runoff, in the amount of \$239,470, for which \$78,570 in dedicated funds (Everglades Trust Fund) is budgeted, and the remainder is subject to Governing Board approval of the FY10 and FY11 budgets. (Contract Number 4600001715)

Background: A source control program using Best Management Practices (BMPs) program for the C-139 Basin was initiated in 2002 to achieve compliance with phosphorus loading limits set by the Everglades Forever Act (EFA). Because the historic phosphorus loads were not achieved for WY2003 through WY2006, rule development to amend Chapter 40E-63 was initiated in January 2007. A key component of the proposed rule is the optimization of water management BMPs based on sound scientific and engineering data. This waiver of competition request is for entering into a 2 year contract with the South West Florida Research and Education Center (SWFREC) – University of Florida/IFAS to develop scientific and engineering data to optimize the design and operation of above ground impoundment (AGI) for removal of phosphorus in discharges.

How this helps meet the District's 10-year Strategic Plan: One of the District's priorities is to comply with the EFA requirement for water delivered to the EPA to meet state water quality standards. AGIs are commonly proposed as a water management BMP in the C-139 Basin. However, limited data exist on their actual effectiveness in reducing phosphorus in discharges. Lessons learned during development and implementation of the BMP program in the Basin indicate that AGI optimization is essential to achieve the objectives of the District source control program in the C-139 Basin. This is consistent with the adaptive management approach defined in the EFA. This project is aligned with the District Strategic Plan.

Funding Source: Funds for FY08 are currently budgeted under the Everglades Trust Fund (Long-term Plan.) Subsequent years funding will need to be from the Everglades Trust Fund also.

This Board item impacts what areas of the District, both resource areas and geography? The resource areas impacted are the Everglades Regulation Division, Environmental Resource Regulation Department, and the STA Management Division, Watershed Management Department. The geographic area impacted by this agreement is the C-139 Basin.

What concern could this Board item raise? BMP demonstration projects in the C-139 Basin are also provided through a local grant program funded by the District during fiscal years 2008 – 2010. This project was proposed under that grant program but could not be funded at that time. SWFREC's standard overhead is 25% of project costs for certain state agencies.

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Why should the Governing Board approve this item? Through this contract, scientific and engineering data will be collected so that design and operation criteria for AGIs pertaining to phosphorus can be optimized. In the long-term, improving AGI performance will capitalize on existing infrastructure to more cost-effectively target phosphorus at the source, which amplifies District strategies within phosphorus sensitive watersheds.

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