

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board Members

FROM: Terrie Bates, Director, Water Resources Division 

DATE: August 1, 2011

SUBJECT: Cooperative Agreement with U. S. Department of the Interior National Park Service, Everglades National Park (ENP) for Water Quality Monitoring of ENP Interior Sites, Contract # 4600002430

Background: The purpose of this five-year cooperative agreement with U. S. Department of the Interior National Park Service, Everglades National Park (ENP) is to continue long term water quality monitoring of 15 surface water stations within the ENP, and operation and maintenance of 37 continuous real-time Marine Monitoring Network (MMN) stations for salinity, stage and temperature in adjacent coastal zones. This monitoring effort, ongoing since 2001, is required by a variety of mandates including the Everglades Settlement Agreement and the Total Phosphorus Rule.

The MMN meets mission critical needs of the District. The data collected at these coastal sites are critical for the Florida Bay Minimum Flow and Levels (MFLs), as well as ongoing water management/restoration projects such as Modified Water Deliveries/South Dade Conveyance, and the CERP C-111 Spreader Canal Western Features project. In addition, the MMN data are used on a weekly basis to describe the ecological conditions of Florida Bay for SFWMD and U.S. Army Corps water managers to facilitate water management operational decision-making. Lastly, the MMN data are used by the Everglades National Park managers to understand the relationship between the marine ecosystem and the freshwater marsh ecosystem. This highly sensitive relationship is critical for Everglades National Park's estuarine ecology, including the Florida Bay, Gulf of Mexico, Whitewater Bay, and the 10,000 islands.

This agreement replaces the existing ENP water quality monitoring agreement that ends in September 2011.

How this helps meet the District's 10 Year Strategic Plan: The information generated from this agreement supports the Everglades Restoration & Capital Projects Regional Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment strategic priority.

Funding Source: This is a five-year cooperative agreement in an amount not to exceed the total funding of \$984,250 for which \$196,850 in ad valorem funds are subject to Governing Board approval of the FY12 budget, and the remainder is subject to Governing Board approval for the FY13-16 budgets. The Settlement Agreement and the Total Phosphorus Rule monitoring network consists of 15 stations, and is fully

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funded by the District (\$168,530 per annum). The Marine Monitoring Network consists of 37 stations, and is a cost-shared between the District (33%) and the U. S. Department of the Interior National Park Service (67%). The District contribution is \$28,320 per annum.

This Board item impacts what areas of the District, both resource areas and geography: This agreement will be managed by staff in the Water Quality Monitoring Section of the Water Quality Bureau and will support projects located within the boundaries of Everglades National Park.

What concerns could this Board item raise? There may be concern regarding the amount of work issued to this contractor, which is a federal agency. However, ENP has successfully and efficiently implemented the monitoring effort since 2001.

Why should the Governing Board approve this item? This agreement will provide monitoring services needed to meet legal and regulatory requirements, in addition to providing data for informed management and operation decision making. The technical work carried out by this agency has to date been exemplary and continuing to use this organization avoids legal and logistical complications inherent in operating inside the boundaries of the Everglades National Park.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at extension 6952.

TB/psr
Attachment – Resolution, Map