

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board Members

FROM: Chip Merriam, Deputy Executive Director, Water Resources Management

DATE: November 15, 2007

SUBJECT: A Resolution of the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District to authorize entering into an 8-month cooperative agreement with the Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department for construction of the Lake Region Water Treatment Plant in the amount of \$1,500,000, for which dedicated funds (State Appropriations) are budgeted; providing an effective date. (Contract Number 4600001139) (Chip Merriam, ext. 6597)

Background: The Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department has designed and is currently constructing a new 10 million gallons per day water treatment plant to provide potable water on a wholesale basis to the communities of South Bay, Belle Glade and Pahokee located on the south and southeastern shore areas of Lake Okeechobee, hereafter referenced as the Lake Region area. The Lake Region utilities currently depend on Lake Okeechobee as their water supply source. The Lake Region Water Treatment Plant will utilize reverse osmosis technology to treat source water from the Upper Floridan aquifer. In view of the current 2007 drought that affected water intakes of cities that depend on Lake Okeechobee for their public water supply, the Lake Region project is timely by providing an alternative source. The District has provided a total of \$11.1 million for this project.

How this helps meet the District's 10-year Strategic Plan: This program supports implementation of the Alternative Water Supply and Lake Okeechobee programs. This project is consistent with the long term goals of Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program, Alternative Water Supply Program and the Lower East Coast Regional Water Supply Plan.

Funding Source: The District will fund this project through State Legislative Water Project Appropriations under the Community Budget Issue Request (CBIR). Palm Beach County will provide 50-percent matching funds in the amount of \$1,500,000.

This Board item impacts what areas of the District, both resource areas and geography: This contract will be managed in the Water Supply Department. The project is located in Palm Beach County in the Lower East Coast Planning Area.

What concerns could this Board item raise? None

Why should the Governing Board approve this item? This project is compatible with the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program and it will remove the dependence of the Lake Region residents on Lake Okeechobee water. The use of groundwater from the Floridan Aquifer will improve the residents' water quality and provide a reliable source of water not affected by droughts. This project leverages state funds to accomplish various goals of District programs.