

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board Members

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

DATE: December 2, 2008

SUBJECT: Cooperative Agreement between the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) to Address Excess Surface Water in St. Lucie and Indian River Counties

Background: Significant volumes of water are discharged to the Indian River Lagoon from the regional surface water system in the Upper East Coast (UEC) planning area. As part of Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project, the Indian River Lagoon South (IRL-S) Feasibility Study addressed restoration of the Lagoon and St. Lucie Estuary by redirecting and storing surface runoff in about 21,000 acres of reservoirs and stormwater treatment areas. These facilities are primarily focused in the C-23 and C-24 Basins.

Historically, water in the C-25 Basin flowed north into Indian River County and south until construction of regional canals. The 2004 Upper East Coast Water Supply Plan recommended evaluating restoring this historical flow regime to provide flexibility and efficiency that would store and beneficially use excess surface water. A Phase I cooperative study with SJRWMD was completed in 2006 and quantified excess water being discharged to the Indian River Lagoon from the C-25 Canal and canals in southern Indian River County. This Cooperative Agreement supports a Phase II cooperative study that will include water resource investigation and planning, and identification of water resource development projects to capture, convey, store and beneficially use excess surface water currently being discharged to the Indian River Lagoon. The SFWMD will be taking the lead by utilizing one or more existing work order contracts to get the work done with authorization to expend up to \$300,000 of which SJRWMD will cost share fifty percent of actual expenditures up to a not-to exceed limit of \$150,000.

How this helps meet the District's 10 Year Strategic Plan: This supports the Water Supply Program's strategy to develop alternative sources such as capturing surface water runoff and managing tributary floodplains to the Indian River Lagoon estuary.

Funding Source: There is \$150,000 in the FY2009 budget to support this effort. The SJRWMD will also contribute \$150,000 towards this study to be paid to the SFWMD through this Cooperative Agreement.

This Board item impacts what areas of the District, both resource areas and geography: This initiative could potentially impact the Water Supply Department and the Everglades Restoration Planning Department, and geographically impacts the UEC Planning Area.

What concerns could this Board item raise? Depending on the results of this investigation, a potential issue could be the interbasin transfer of the SFWMD's surface water.

Why should the Governing Board approve this item? This study could identify components that will provide flexibility to surface water management in the UEC planning area, and may result in reductions in cost if the SFWMD were to pursue this on our own.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at extension 6597.

CM/mgc