

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Governing Board Members

**FROM:** Tommy Strowd, Deputy Executive Director,  
Operations and Maintenance Resource Area

**THROUGH:** Dan Thayer, Department Director  
Vegetation and Land Management Department

**DATE:** June 10, 2010

**SUBJECT:** **Authorize the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to Establish Vacant Undesignated Lands Consisting of Approximately 100 acres in the Frog Pond Detention Project Area, Miami-Dade County, as a Public Small Game Hunting Area and Manage Said Lands as a Dove Field.**

**Background:**

As defined by the District's Public Access and Recreational Use Rule (Rule 40E-7.521(30), F.A.C.), "vacant undesignated land" means District lands not designated as a management area, stormwater treatment area, impoundment, or right-of-way which are greater than 10 acres and have legal public access.

Lands within this category were purchased by the District for various water resource projects. In some cases, the projects are not scheduled to immediately go to construction and the properties within the project area do not have leases or other restrictions that would preclude their use for recreational purposes on an interim basis. In an attempt to utilize such vacant lands for recreational purposes, including hunting, these properties are assessed and reviewed annually for recreation potential. This review resulted in the identification of a 100 acre land tract in the Frog Pond Detention Project area in Miami-Dade County that the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has expressed an interest in managing as a Public Small Game Hunting Area for the purpose of operating a public dove field .

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission would establish the site as a Public Small-Game Hunting Area for the 2010-11 and subsequent hunting seasons solely for the purpose of cultivating a dove field and offering quota dove hunts. A check station would be operated during all hunting periods to collect harvest and public use data. Similar hunts were previously administered by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission on the Frog Pond property south of SR 9336 in Miami-Dade County but were terminated due to construction activities related to the Aerojet Canal Connection Project. Comments from the public, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and District staff

regarding the hunting program previously administered on the Frog Pond property indicate the hunts were successful and well received by the public.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is interested in leasing the subject property in order to cultivate a dove field and establish the property as a Public Small-Game Hunting Area. The cultivation and use of the property for a dove field would be controlled by a five-year zero dollar lease, renewed annually based on the availability of the property for such use. The Governing Board's authorization to allow the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to manage hunting on this property would be subject to the District leasing the property to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for the purpose of operating and managing a public dove field.

**How this helps meet the District's Mission:**

This will expand the allowable public uses on District property consistent with the District's Recreational Use Policy without compromising resource protection responsibilities as required by legislative mandates and District policy.

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

This activity will take place in Miami-Dade County east of the Frog Pond Detention Project and will affect the O&M Resource Area.

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

The proposed activities provide public use opportunities and recreational access to District lands as identified in the District's 10-year Strategic Plan.

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

The use of firearms in this area could be viewed as a potential safety issue. However, this site is in a remote area and similar hunting programs have been successfully administered on similar properties in the past.

**Why should the Governing Board approve this item?**

This proposal would increase public hunting opportunities on District lands and expand allowable recreational activities consistent with District policy.