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## South Florida Water Management District

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### GOVERNING BOARD MONTHLY MEETING AGENDA

February 12, 2026  
9:00 AM

District Headquarters, B-1 Auditorium  
3301 Gun Club Road  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

FINAL

1. Call to Order - Chauncey Goss, Chairman, Governing Board
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Employee Recognitions
  - January 2026 Employee of the Month: Tim Kunard, Section Leader, Infrastructure Management
  - January 2026 Team of the Month: Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Team
  - February 2026 Employee of the Month: Mark Wiederstein, SAP Business Warehouse Developer-Lead, Business Services
  - February 2026 Team of the Month: Picayune Strand Restoration Project Team
  - 25-Year Service Award: Laura Layman, Lead Project Manager, Ecosystem Restoration
  - 25-Year Service Award: Danielle Morancy, Section Leader, Systems Modeling Unit
  - 30-Year Service Award: Jenifer Barnes, Systems Data Modeler 4, Systems Modeling Unit
  - 30-Year Service Award: Christopher King, Senior Scientist, Water Quality
4. Agenda Revisions
5. Agenda Item Abstentions by Board Members
6. Consider Approval of the Minutes for the December 11, 2025 Meeting and January 22,

## 2026 Lunch and Learn Workshop

7. Executive Director's Report - Drew Bartlett
8. General Public Comment
9. Board Comment
10. Move Consent Agenda Items to Discussion Agenda
11. Public Comment on Consent Agenda Items
12. Board Vote on Consent Agenda

### **Consent Agenda**

13. Land Acquisition, Shingle Creek Mitigation Project, Orange County (Staff contact, Ray Palmer)

#### **Agenda Item Background:**

Shingle Creek Mitigation Project is located in southern Orange County adjacent to Shingle Creek corridor and is generally considered to be the headwaters for the Everglades. The District has been acquiring land from willing sellers to preserve and protect this important resource. Staff is seeking Governing Board approval to acquire a total of 3.73 acres, more or less, from willing sellers for a cumulative purchase price of \$135,000.

The proposed acquisitions of privately-owned land within the Shingle Creek Project area support the District's environmental mission and strategic priorities. The acquisitions will continue to consolidate District ownership for improved resource protection, enhance land management efficiency, and advance long-term conservation objectives. As more parcels are acquired to fill in the scattered ownership pattern, the District strengthens its ability to manage these environmentally sensitive lands.

#### **Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0201 Authorize the acquisition of land interests in three tracts totaling 3.73 acres, more or less, in the total amount of \$135,000 located in the Shingle Creek Project Area in Orange County, for which dedicated funds (Wetland Mitigation Fund) are budgeted.**

[\*\*Resolution No. 2026-0201\*\*](#)

[\*\*Exhibit A\*\*](#)

14. Release of C-4 Canal Easement, Miami-Dade County (Staff contact, Ray Palmer)

#### **Agenda Item Background:**

An owner of a lot encumbered by the District's C-4 Canal Easement in Miami-Dade County submitted an application request for the release of an approximately 0.14-acre portion of the District's C-4 (Tamiami Canal) Easement in Miami-Dade County. Since this portion of the Easement extends over 57 feet into the adjacent residential lot, it is

not usable for future expansion of the canal. Additionally, the applicant will remove an existing fence located within the remaining portion of the District's C-4 Canal Easement as a condition of this release. This request has been reviewed and approved by the Right of Way Section, Operations and Maintenance, and the Miami Field Station.

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0202 Authorize release of a 0.14 acre, more or less, portion of the C-4 (Tamiami Canal) canal easement, located in Miami-Dade County, for \$50,000, and subject to satisfaction of certain terms, conditions and requirements.**

[Resolution No. 2026-0202](#)

[Exhibit A](#)

[Exhibit B](#)

15. Right of Way Occupancy Permit and Waiver - Buried Parallel Run with Waiver of Criteria in Support of CEPP South - L-29 Canal, Florida Power & Light Company (Staff contact, Rich Virgil, P.E.)

**Agenda Item Background:**

Florida Power & Light Company (Applicant or FPL) requests a Standard Right of Way Occupancy Permit Number 17404-R (ROW Permit) to install a buried parallel run within the south right of way of the L-29 Canal beginning approximately 300 feet east of Structure S-333 and continuing east for approximately 840 feet. The proposed buried parallel run requires a waiver to the requirement that the installation be located within 10 feet of the right of way line. Granting of the waiver will allow for the future removal of FPL's existing aerial parallel line on the north side of L-29 in support of the Central Everglades Planning Project South (CEPP South).

FPL has an existing 11-mile aerial parallel run on the north side of the L-29 Canal within the levee. Utility poles within levees are no longer authorized by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers because they may impact the levee performance. To address this concern, the CEPP South recommends removal of the existing aerial line from the levee. FPL is working with the District to remove the existing aerial line and replace/relocate it with a buried parallel run on the south side of the canal and U.S. 41/Tamiami Trail.

The work proposed by this application will allow FPL to connect existing buried service near S-333 with existing conduit FPL installed on the south side of the roadway and attached to the new Tamiami Trail bridges. Once the new work is completed, service on the south side of the roadway will be activated, allowing for removal of the aerial parallel run on the north side of the L-29 Canal.

According to District criteria, parallel run installations (all types) must be located within 10 feet of the right of way line. As proposed, the new utility installation will vary in distance from the south right of way line. The proposed buried parallel run will be located 29 feet from the right of way line at the east end of the project and 208 feet at the west end.

Applicant has demonstrated a substantial hardship that supports granting of the

requested waiver of the rule to allow the utility to be installed more than 10 feet from the right of way line. The hardship results from the need to install a connection between existing buried service near S-333 and the conduit installed on the south side of the roadway outside of the District's right of way. Without the waiver, it would not be possible to make the connection which is necessary to allow for removal of the existing aerial parallel run within the levee. This component of CEPP South cannot be completed without granting of the requested waiver.

The application has been reviewed by District Field Operations and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which has granted Section 408 authorization. Granting of the waiver will not adversely impact the District's ability to perform routine or emergency operations, maintenance, or future construction activities.

**Recommended Action:**

**Approve issuance of Standard Right of Way Occupancy Permit 17404-R and the order granting the associated petition for waiver to allow the installation of a buried parallel run to be more than 10 feet from the right of way line.**

**(Application No. 250617-53989)**

[Backup Presentation](#)

16. Request to Approve the Compensatory Mitigation Plan and Partial Release of a Recorded Conservation Easement Over Lands Owned by Quarry Real Estate Holdings, LLC (Staff contact, Jill S. Creech, P.E.)

**Agenda Item Background:**

Quarry Real Estate Holdings, LLC requests the partial release of 8.29 acres of a recorded conservation easement, located in Miami-Dade County, for future projects.

The District was granted a conservation easement over 32.39 acres as required by Environmental Resource Permit No. 13-02653-P, Application No. 040127-9 issued October 12, 2005. The 8.29 acres of the Conservation Easement was provided to mitigate 7.59 acres of wetland impacts. To replace the mitigation that was provided by the 8.29 acres of conservation easement, Quarry Real Estate Holdings, LLC will purchase 2.9 freshwater herbaceous mitigation bank credits from Bluefield Ranch Mitigation Bank.

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0203 Approve Quarry Real Estate Holdings, LLC's compensatory mitigation plan to substitute a previously authorized mitigation plan and approve the partial release of a recorded conservation easement.**

[Resolution No. 2026-0203](#)

[Exhibit A](#)

[Exhibit B](#)

17. Rubrik Hardware and Software Maintenance (Staff contact, Akintunde Owosina, P.E.)

**Agenda Item Background:**

The Information Technology Division relies on Rubrik hardware and software to safeguard the District's critical data through comprehensive data center backup operations. This infrastructure supports backup protection for numerous essential

systems and ensures resiliency against unexpected data loss. In addition, select information is securely replicated to the District's disaster recovery site to support continuity of operations. Beyond its core backup and replication capabilities, Rubrik also provides cost effective, integrated security monitoring features that are not commonly available from comparable vendors.

This request is to issue annual purchase orders to Flagler Technologies, LLC (an authorized Promark Technology Inc. distributor) for Rubrik hardware and software maintenance for a three-year period in the total amount of \$914,100.

This maintenance will be purchased using a special procurement pursuant to Sec. 155-6 of the District's Procurement Policy using Promark Technology Advanced Technology Solutions Aggregator Contract Number 01-169 with the Texas Region 14 Education Service Center and OMNIA Partners National Cooperative Purchasing Alliance.

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0204 Authorize issuing annual purchase orders to Flagler Technologies LLC, (an authorized Promark Technology Inc. distributor) for Rubrik hardware and software maintenance, for a three-year period, in the amount of \$914,100, for which \$308,000.13 of Ad Valorem funds are budgeted in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and the remainder is subject to Governing Board approval of future years' budgets, using Promark Technology Advanced Technology Solutions Aggregator Contract Number 01-169 with Texas Region 14 Education Service Center and OMNIA Partners National Cooperative Purchasing Alliance. (Purchase Order No. 4500160096)**

[\*\*Resolution No. 2026-0204\*\*](#)

18. SAP Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning Private Solution (Staff contact, Akintunde Owosina, P.E.)

**Agenda Item Background:**

At the November 13, 2025 business meeting, the Governing Board authorized the SAP Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning Private Solution Contract. The approval materials reflected an expected net expenditure of \$5,915,093.54 which was the amount of the approved resolution. This net expenditure represented a total contract sum of \$7,589,630.50, allowance for an annual 3.3% increase, less a total transformation incentive credit of \$2,103,028.24 expected from SAP to become available to the District upon satisfaction of defined conditions.

This request clarifies the previous authorization to enter into a five-year contract with SAP Public Services for the SAP Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning Private Solution in the amount of \$7,589,630.50 with conditional credits, for a potential net contract amount not to exceed \$5,915,093.54, as an exception to competitive solicitation for proprietary computer software pursuant to Sec. 155-6 of the District's Procurement Policy.

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0205 Clarify the previous authorization, Resolution No. 2025-1109, to enter into a five-year contract with SAP Public Services for the**

**SAP Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning Private Solution in the amount of \$7,589,630.50 with conditional credits, for a potential net contract amount not to exceed \$5,915,093.54, as an exception to competitive solicitation for proprietary computer software pursuant to Sec. 155-6 of the District's Procurement Policy, of which \$58,762.87 of Ad Valorem funds are budgeted in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and the remainder is subject to Governing Board approval of future years' budgets. (Contract No. 4600005276)**

[Resolution No. 2026-0205](#)

19. Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands - Cutler Flow Way - Phase 2 Conveyance System - Change Order No. 8, Miami-Dade County (Staff contact, Lucine Dadrian, P.E.)

**Agenda Item Background:**

As part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands (BBCW) - Cutler Flow Way - Phase 2 Conveyance System Project, located in Miami-Dade County, consists of the construction of an above ground concrete lined channel approximately 7,000 feet in length, cast-in-place concrete box culvert, micro tunnel pipes, rehydration spreader canal approximately 2.5 miles in length and recreational features. The Conveyance System, together with the S-701 Pump Station (BBCW - Cutler Flow Way - Phase 1) being constructed under a separate contract, completes the BBCW Cutler Flow Way Project. The Project's purpose is to deliver freshwater to the Cutler Wetlands to rehydrate coastal wetlands and reduce abrupt point-source freshwater discharge to Biscayne Bay and Biscayne National Park.

On December 14, 2023, the Governing Board awarded the BBCW - Cutler Flow Way - Phase 2 Conveyance System Project contract to Central Florida Equipment Rentals, Inc for \$46,294,000.00 (Contract No. 4600004890).

During the required construction activities associated with installing the concrete box culvert along SW 97th Avenue, layers of marl were discovered beneath the existing roadway. To address potential settlement of the road it was necessary to increase the amount of fill material in the roadway section prior to paving. Additionally, discrepancies were identified between the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Contract Documents at the tie-in location immediately downstream of the S-701 Pump Station. Modifications were necessary to provide a smooth transition at the project tie-in and eliminate conflict between the earthwork limits of the two projects. Change Order No. 8 includes all labor, equipment, and materials necessary to complete the additional earthwork, grading adjustments, sodding and associated activities required for the surcharging of SW 97th Avenue. These changes result in an increase to the contract price by \$412,946.90 for a revised total contract value of \$47,698,217.75 and adds seven days to the contract time.

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0206 Authorize Change Order No. 8 with Central Equipment Rental, Inc, for the construction of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands - Cutler Flow Way - Phase 2 Conveyance System Project, for an additional amount not to exceed \$412,946.90, for which dedicated funds (State Appropriations) are budgeted in Fiscal Year 2025-2026. (Contract No. 4600004890-CO08)**

[Resolution No. 2026-0206](#)

[Backup Presentation](#)

20. Abington Preserve, LLC, Amended and Restated Northern Everglades Payment for Environmental Services Project Agreement (Staff contact, Jennifer Reynolds)

**Agenda Item Background:**

As part of the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program, the Abington Preserve Water Management Project, located in Okeechobee County, supports the Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan. The approximately 1,000-acre project captures direct rainfall and retains regional runoff in five storage basins in order to reduce discharges and moderate flows from the Lower Kissimmee Subwatershed. Originally approved by the Governing Board on October 9, 2011, the existing project stored an average of 325 acre-feet of water annually. The proposed project expansion is estimated to store 1,160 acre-feet of water per year.

The existing Contract No. 4600004474 and its three subsequent amendments provided construction and 11 years of operations at \$672,282.61. Staff requests Governing Board approval to enter into an amended and restated Service Agreement with Abington Preserve, LLC, to expand the storage area and extend project operations for an additional ten years in an amount not to exceed \$1,540,000, for a revised agreement total not to exceed \$2,212,282.61.

The amended and restated agreement updates the terms and conditions and includes construction costs to increase project benefits and efficiency, ten years of additional operation, establishes fixed annual cost including operations and maintenance responsibilities, and removes variability and uncertainty of Consumer Price Index cost increases. The amended and restated agreement includes a fixed cost of \$370,000 for permitting, design, and construction and a total of \$1,170,000 for operations and maintenance over the ten-year term.

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0207 Authorize entering into an Amended and Restated Northern Everglades Payment for Environmental Services Agreement with Abington Preserve, LLC, for the Abington Preserve Water Management Project, to update the terms and conditions, to expand the storage area and extend the term by ten years in an amount not to exceed \$1,540,000, for a revised contract total not to exceed \$2,212,282.61, for which \$487,000 in dedicated funds (State Appropriations) was provided by the Florida Legislature and is budgeted in Fiscal Year 2025-2026, and the remainder is solely dependent on future legislative funding and subject to Governing Board approval of future years' budgets. (Contract No. 4600004474-A04)**

[\*\*Resolution No. 2026-0207\*\*](#)  
[\*\*Existing Project and Project Renewal\*\*](#)

21. Benthic Habitat and Substrate Mapping of the Northern Estuaries (Staff contact, Jennifer Reynolds)

**Agenda Item Background:**

By seeking to restore natural water flow, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) aims to increase the total spatial extent of natural areas, improve habitat

and functional quality, and improve the abundance and diversity of native plant and animal species. The Restoration, Coordination, Verification (RECOVER) program supports CERP through its Monitoring and Assessment Plan (MAP), which tracks ecological responses to restoration across the South Florida region, including the Northern Estuaries (Caloosahatchee, Loxahatchee, and St. Lucie Estuaries). Since the early 2000s, the eastern oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) has been monitored as a key biological indicator of environmental change, particularly in response to salinity stress in the Northern Estuaries region. CERP implementation in the area is expected to improve the management of freshwater flows through increased water storage capacity, thus improving salinity balance and water quality to the benefit of oyster habitats and other regional indicators.

This agenda item supports RECOVER assessment of the Northern Estuaries by providing consistent, repeatable surveys of oyster resources and benthic substrates within each system to determine if CERP Interim Goals are being met, or likely to be met (CERP Programmatic Regulations, 2003). A Request for Proposals solicited technical proposals from qualified firms for benthic habitat and substrate mapping of the Northern Estuaries. Two proposals were received and deemed responsive and responsible. They were then evaluated and ranked in order, as shown on Table 1 below. Contract award is requested for a duration of one year.

**Table 1: Proposals in Ranked Order**

<b>Proposal Rank</b>	<b>Contractor</b>
1	AECOM Technical Services, Inc.
2	Aptim Environmental & Infrastructure, LLC

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0208** Authorize the official ranking and entering into a 1-year contract with AECOM Technical Services, Inc., subject to successful negotiations to provide Benthic Habitat and Substrate Mapping of the Northern Estuaries in an amount not to exceed \$540,043.56, for which dedicated funds (State Grant MN052) are budgeted in Fiscal Year 2025-2026; if negotiations are unsuccessful with the top-ranked firm, the District may proceed with negotiations in ranked order until a contract is successfully negotiated.

[Resolution No. 2026-0208](#)

22. Amendments to the Criteria Manual for Seminole Water Rights Compact (Staff contact, Maricruz R. Fincher)

**Agenda Item Background:**

In 1987, the Seminole Tribe of Indians of Florida (Tribe), the South Florida Water Management District (District), and the State of Florida entered into the Seminole Water Rights Compact (Compact), which was adopted as both state and federal law. The Compact recognizes the Tribe's sovereign status while establishing a regulatory framework consistent with Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, to protect surface and groundwater resources, prevent adverse environmental impacts, and provide a mechanism for resolving disputes among the District, the Tribe, and third parties.

The Compact is implemented through the Criteria Manual for the Seminole Water Rights Compact (Manual), which sets forth detailed criteria comparable to the District's Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) and Consumptive Use Permit (CUP) rules. The Manual addresses consumptive use, surface water management, underground injection, water shortage, well construction, and administrative procedures.

The proposed amendments update the Manual's administrative procedures to improve clarity, efficiency, and predictability in implementing the Compact. The amendments restructure the administrative framework, establish rolling timelines in place of rigid date-specific deadlines, and align review and approval steps with current District permitting practices modeled after the District's ERP and CUP programs.

The amendments allow for multiple Work Plan submittals throughout the year, establish consistent timelines for District review and requests for additional information, and clarify procedures for Work Plan amendments, minor modifications, rehearing requests, and finality of Governing Board actions. The amendments also address early work orders and emergency actions under defined conditions with appropriate notice, coordination, and enforcement safeguards. Overall, the amendments do not alter substantive Compact rights or protections but instead provide a clearer, more structured administrative framework modeled on the District's existing permitting processes.

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0209 Approve amendments to the Criteria Manual for the Seminole Water Rights Compact for the purpose of making changes to the administrative procedures.**

[Resolution No. 2026-0209](#)

[Exhibit A](#)

23. Expert Witness Services, Thalle Construction, Inc. v. SFWMD Litigation Matter (Staff contact, Maricruz R. Fincher)

**Agenda Item Background:**

The District is in litigation with Thalle Construction, Inc. related to the STA-1W Expansion #2 and the District's Office of Counsel seeks to expand its Expert Witness Services with Wagner Hohns Inglis Inc., by increasing Contract No. 4600005102 in an amount not to exceed \$250,000.

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0210 Authorize an amendment to the contract with Wagner Hohns Inglis Inc., for Expert Witness Services in the Thalle Construction, Inc. v. SFWMD litigation matter, to increase the contract by an amount not to exceed \$250,000 for which Ad Valorem funds are budgeted in Fiscal Year 2025-2026. (Contract No. 4600005102-A01)**

[Resolution No. 2026-0210](#)

24. Refunding of Certificates of Participation (Staff contact, Candida Heater)

**Agenda Item Background:**

The District has approximately \$260 million in remaining outstanding debt principal

from Certificates of Participation (COPs) issued in 2006 for restoration projects. Economic conditions were favorable in 2015 and again in 2026 to advance refund the outstanding principle. A refunding at this time is estimated to reduce annual debt service by approximately \$2-3 million over the remaining term of the debt with the maturity date of October 2036 remaining unchanged.

Governing Board debt policy states a target of 5% savings on the refunded obligations par amount is appropriate with minimum of at least 3% savings where market conditions, historical interest rates, and bond maturities make a lower threshold appropriate for consideration. Initial evaluation and documentation may be commenced at the three percent savings level. Additionally, unless circumstances warrant a deviation therefrom, the refunding bonds should be structured to achieve level annual savings and should not exceed the remaining life of the bonds being refunded. These conditions are met with the Series 2026 Refunding.

Chapter 373.566, Florida Statutes gives the Governing Board authority to issue refunding bonds when it is in the best interest of the District to do so. Chapter 373.536(5)(c)(3), Florida Statutes, provides that the Legislative Budget Commission may reject any issuance of debt after July 1, 2012. District staff is working under the management and guidance of the Division of Bond Finance. Final amounts will not be known until the refinancing goes to the market.

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0211 Authorizing and approving the refunding of all or a portion of the outstanding refunding Certificates of Participation, Series 2015; authorizing the execution and delivery of a Series 2026 Supplemental Trust Agreement; authorizing the execution and delivery of a Second Amended and Restated Schedule 2006; authorizing and approving the sale of a series of Certificates of Participation in an aggregate principal amount of not to exceed \$262,000,000; authorizing the official Notice of Sale and Summary Notice of Sale; approving the forms of a Preliminary Offering Statement and an Offering Statement and authorizing their distribution and use in connection with the offering for sale of the Series 2026 Certificates; authorizing the execution and delivery of a Disclosure Dissemination Agent Agreement and an Escrow Deposit Agreement; delegating authority to the Chairman to approve the terms of such agreements and other documents relating thereto; authorizing the Chairman to approve any changes, amendments or modifications to the certificate documents; authorizing other matters in connection therewith.**

25. Authorize Publishing Notices of Rule Development in the Florida Administrative Register to Amend Rules 40E-2.061, 40E-2.071, 40E-2.091 (Incorporating by Reference the Applicant's Handbook for Water Use Permit Applications within the South Florida Water Management District), and 40E-3.301, Florida Administrative Code (Staff contact, Carolina Maran, Ph.D., P.E.)

**Agenda Item Background:**

The areas of Cape Coral and Lehigh Acres have been experiencing rapid growth and therefore increased water demands, primarily from domestic use (i.e., domestic self-supply [DSS] and landscape irrigation). The principal source of water to meet the DSS and landscape irrigation water demands is the Mid-Hawthorn aquifer (MHA) in the

Cape Coral area and the Sandstone aquifer (SSA) in the Lehigh Acres area. Water levels have been declining regionally in both aquifers due to increased groundwater withdrawals.

The water level elevation in some monitor wells in the MHA and SSA has decreased to, or is approaching, a level below what is referred to as the maximum developable limit (MDL). MDLs are part of the District's consumptive use permitting criteria designed to protect the semiconfined Lower West Coast (LWC) aquifers from further groundwater level declines by establishing a "protection zone" and restricting the issuance of new water use permits.

The LWC aquifers are protected by a minimum flow and minimum water level (MFL), and the MDL criteria serve as the regulatory component for the MFL's prevention strategy. The MDL is designed to prevent the water levels in the LWC aquifers from descending below the top of the aquifer, which is the MFL established for each aquifer (Rule 40E-8.331, Florida Administrative Code [F.A.C.] given the uncertainty associated with non-regulated water uses. Since DSS users are exempt from obtaining a permit for drinking water, and domestic landscape irrigation is authorized with a permit by rule, their impact on individual aquifers is difficult to account for, cumulatively.

Establishment of Restricted Allocation Areas (RAAs) for the MHA in the Cape Coral area and for the SSA in the Lehigh Acres area are being proposed. The intent of the RAAs is to clarify and support implementation of the existing MDL criteria in specified areas to account for the cumulative impacts of both consumptive use permit and DSS uses, which is designed to restrict future groundwater withdrawals to prevent MFL violations and protect the resource from significant harm.

**Recommended Action:**

**Resolution No. 2026-0212 Authorize publishing Notices of Rule Development in the Florida Administrative Register to amend Rules 40E-2.061, 40E-2.071, 40E-2.091 (incorporating by reference the Applicant's Handbook for Water Use Permit Applications within the South Florida Water Management District), and 40E-3.301, Florida Administrative Code, to create rule criteria and Restricted Allocation Areas for both the Mid-Hawthorn Aquifer and the Sandstone Aquifer.**

[Resolution No. 2026-0212](#)  
[40E-2 Notice of Rule Development](#)  
[40E-3 Notice of Rule Development](#)

## **Discussion Agenda**

26. Preparations for Water Shortages and Low Lake Okeechobee Levels (Staff contact, Carolina Maran, Ph.D., P.E., and Rich Virgil, P.E.)

**Agenda Item Background:**

The South Florida Water Management District is experiencing a drier-than-normal dry season and low water levels have been observed in some portions of the District.

A water shortage warning was issued by the South Florida Water Management District's Executive Director due to low water levels in the Biscayne Aquifer and its

recharge areas in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, the Lower Tamiami Aquifer in Lee and Collier Counties, and the Indian Prairie Basin in Glades and Highlands Counties. Chapter 40E-21.231(3) allows the Governing Board or the Executive Director to issue a water shortage warning calling for voluntary reductions in demand within a source and encouraging water users to undertake water conservation measures, particularly compliance with the District's year-round landscape irrigation conservation measures and any local landscape irrigation ordinances. It is anticipated that drier-than-normal conditions will persist for the remainder of the dry season which started October 11, 2025, and is expected to last until May 2026.

If voluntary water conservation measures fail to prevent further declines in water levels, the Governing Board delegates to the Executive Director the authority to issue an order declaring a water shortage and imposing restrictions. Any order issued pursuant to this delegated authority shall be submitted to the Governing Board for ratification at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

In addition, low Lake Okeechobee levels provide challenges and opportunities for the advancement of environmental enhancement, water supply, and navigational improvement projects for which transfer authority between state programs is authorized. Additionally, staff requests Governing Board authorization to use District's emergency reserves within the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget to provide for water supply as a result of dry conditions and authorizes the Executive Director or his designee to amend existing contract terms in furtherance of the above purposes superseding District Policy Sec. 155-9.

**Recommended Action:**

**A. Resolution No. 2026-0213 Delegate to the Executive Director the authority to issue an order declaring a water shortage and imposing appropriate water use restrictions when certain hydrological conditions in the Biscayne Aquifer and its recharge areas in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, the Lower Tamiami Aquifer in Lee and Collier Counties, and the Indian Prairie Basin in Glades and Highlands Counties, are present.**

**B. Resolution No. 2026-0214 Authorize within the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget the transfer of funds between programs for Lake Okeechobee low water level activities, which include environmental enhancements, water supply, and navigational improvement projects and to authorize within the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget the transfer of funds from the Economic Stabilization Fund reserves to provide for water supply as a result of dry conditions; amend existing contracts in furtherance thereof.**

A. [Resolution No. 2026-0213](#)  
B. [Resolution No. 2026-0214](#)

## **Technical Reports**

27. Water and Ecological Conditions Report - John P. Mitnik, P.E., and Cassandra Armstrong, Ph.D.

## **Staff Reports**

28. Monthly Financial Report - Candida Heater, Division Director - Administrative Services
  - Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Annual Work Plan Performance
29. General Public Comment
30. Board Comment
31. Adjourn

Project Update

**Agenda Item Background:**  
[NEEPP Report](#)

**Public Comment Procedure**

The South Florida Water Management District Governing Board encourages the public to provide comment and input to the Governing Board. Public comment is accepted at the two dedicated General Public Comment periods at the beginning and the end of the meeting. Public comment is also accepted on the Consent Agenda and each Discussion Agenda item.