



South Florida Water Management District

GOVERNING BOARD MONTHLY MEETING AGENDA

August 14, 2025

9:00 AM

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

FINAL - REVISED*

*Item 18 was revised

1. Call to Order - Scott Wagner, Vice Chairman, Governing Board
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Employee Recognitions
 - August 2025 Employee of the Month: John Creswell, Chief Engineer of Construction, Ft. Myers Service Center
 - August 2025 Team of the Month: Habitat Restoration on Lake Okeechobee Team
 - 35-Year Service Award: Juli Russell, Paralegal Specialist
 - Good Samaritan Award: Assisting After an Accident
 - Brandon Collier, Field Operator/Maintenance Supervisor, Clewiston Field Station
 - Anthony Meszaros, Chief Operator, Pump Station S-5A
4. Agenda Revisions
5. Agenda Item Abstentions by Board Members
6. Consider Approval of the Minutes for the July 10, 2025 Meeting
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. Release of Reservations (Staff contact, Ray Palmer)

Agenda Item Background:

The District has certain reserved rights to construct canal and road rights of way. Applications requesting release of these reservations are received as they constitute a defect on title which must be resolved prior to a property sale, especially when financing is involved. Applications are reviewed to determine if there is a present or future need for the reservations. If it has been determined there is no present or future need, the reservations may be released for a reasonable and appropriate payment based on the value of the land and may require such other terms and conditions determined by the Board.

On December 9, 2004, the City of Coconut Creek initiated the MainStreet Design Standard Document, which established the vision for the mixed-use (commercial, business, residential) development. The District negotiated releases to retain reservations within the Florida Power and Light Transmission easement corridor for potential future canal use. The four parcels proposed for release are non-contiguous.

Staff evaluated the property size and location for future flood control and reclamation purposes related to water storage and conveyance. It has been determined that there is no present or apparent future need for the reservations listed below, therefore staff asks the Board to consider approval of the following:

Broward County

- Release District canal and road reservations for the Main Street at Coconut Creek Development by Johns Family Partners, a Florida limited liability partnership. (File No. 18950) (10.35+/- acres); subject to payment of release value of \$84,534.00.

Recommended Action:

Resolution No. 2025-0801 Authorize release of certain canal and road reservations.

[Memorandum Exhibit A](#)
[Resolution No. 2025-0801](#)
[Maps](#)

14. Expanding Special Hunt Programs on District Lands (Staff contact, Rich Virgil, P.E.)

Agenda Item Background:

In June 2013, the Governing Board authorized the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to utilize District lands for the Youth Hunting Program of Florida and hunts for injured active-duty service members or injured honorably discharged veterans. Since then, these programs have been well received and supported by program participants and recreational user groups. Now, FWC would like to expand its use of District lands to similar programs provided by the FWC's Hunter Safety Section.

District staff request authorization to coordinate with FWC to identify and incorporate additional programs and hunts on District lands. FWC and the District will work closely together to select appropriate District lands these additional programs can be operated on. These programs will continue to be administered by FWC, and will allow individuals to participate in a variety of experiences, including hunting, mentoring, safety techniques, camping, outdoor and environmental education, and nature appreciation, on identified District lands. FWC will work with partnering organizations to provide these opportunities, including selecting and/or verifying participants and ensuring volunteers are provided, as needed, to assist.

FWC and the District will ensure that the implementation of these programs will be compatible with on-going land management activities, project implementation, and other public uses. Approval of this resolution will provide additional public hunting and recreation opportunities on District lands.

Recommended Action:

Resolution No. 2025-0802 Authorize FWC to utilize District lands for programs and hunts provided by the FWC's Hunter Safety Section on such lands.

[Resolution No. 2025-0802](#)

15. Land Management Services Agreement with the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Land and Water Trust, Inc. (Staff contact, Rich Virgil, P.E.)

Agenda Item Background:

The District owns and manages 26,875 acres of land within the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW). In October 2014, the District entered into an agreement with the CREW Land and Water Trust, Inc., to provide public use and resource management services in the CREW Management Area. Services provided under this contract include organizing and leading interpretive hikes and field trips, maintaining hiking trails and informational signage, providing outreach activities to the general public and school groups, assisting District staff in maintaining the public access points and trail system, performing invasive plant management activities, managing volunteer activities to provide land management and public use functions, maintaining public use kiosks and developing interpretive materials for trailheads, performing public use facility inspections, collecting and reporting public use data, and providing special outdoor events highlighting the ecological and hydrological importance of the CREW Management Area. These services provided by CREW Land and Water Trust, Inc., under this contract have been instrumental in providing the public with high quality nature-based recreation and environmental education programs on the CREW Management Area.

This request is to authorize a five-year extension to the existing Contract Number 4600003156-A6 with CREW Land and Water Trust, Inc., to provide an additional five years of resource management services in the CREW Management Area, in an amount not to exceed \$1,050,000.

Recommended Action:

Resolution No. 2025-0803 Authorize amending a contract with the CREW Land and Water Trust, Inc., extending the contract five years to continue to provide land management services and public use on the CREW Management Area in an amount not to exceed \$1,050,000 for a total revised contract amount not to exceed \$2,714,992, of which \$210,000 is made up of \$55,000 in Big Cypress Basin Ad Valorem funds and \$155,000 in dedicated funds (State Appropriations and Lease Revenue), subject to Governing Board approval of the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Adopted Budget and future years' budgets. (Contract No. 4600003156-A7).

[Resolution No. 2025-0803](#)

16. Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan: Cooperative Funding Agreement with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for the South Florida Fish Habitat Assessment Program (Staff contact, Cassondra Armstrong, Ph.D.)

Agenda Item Background:

One of the main goals of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program (CERP) for Florida Bay is to improve vital fisheries habitat, by increasing the species diversity and aerial extent of seagrass communities. Seagrass beds are the primary fisheries habitat in Florida Bay and Whitewater Bay. They are an important baseline for evaluating natural and anthropogenic impacts and are critical indicators of restoration success. This monitoring program is required to assess the effects of the significant restoration projects and changes in water management at the southern end of the Central & Southern Florida Flood Control Project. In addition, it is currently tracking seagrass recovery following the losses experienced in 2015. District funds in support of this monitoring come from the Florida Bay Monitoring program and the Monitoring and Assessment Program (MAP) of RECOVER.

This cooperative agreement with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is to continue seagrass and macroalgae monitoring within Florida Bay and the lower southwest coast. Data from this agreement will be used to assess estuarine changes and conditions associated with the C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project, Modified Water Deliveries, South Dade Conveyance System operations, and Florida Bay Minimum Flows and Levels. It is also tracking recovery from the 2015 seagrass die-off event. The monitoring program is specified in the RECOVER MAP as Component 3.2.3.3 and is also a component of the C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project Implementation Report monitoring plan. The proposed cooperative agreement is for three additional years of monitoring and seven months of data analysis and reporting, with the District providing \$840,576.

Recommended Action:

Resolution No. 2025-0804 Authorize a 43-month cooperative agreement with the FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute to provide services to support the

South Florida Fish Habitat Assessment Program for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan in the amount of \$840,576, of which \$160,192 in Ad Valorem and dedicated funds (State Appropriations) are subject to Governing Board approval of the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Adopted Budget and the remainder is subject to Governing Board approval of future years' budgets. (Contract Number 4600005232)

[Resolution No. 2025-0804](#)

17. Kissimmee River Restoration: Request to Extend Riverwoods Field Laboratory Contract (Staff contact, Cassandra Armstrong, Ph.D.)

Agenda Item Background:

The Kissimmee River Restoration Project is a 50/50 cost share between the federal government (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) and the District. The District is charged with assessing physical, chemical, biological, and functional responses within the restored river/floodplain to evaluate project success. The District currently has a contract with Florida Atlantic University (FAU) to manage the Riverwoods Field Laboratory as a base for field operations for District scientists due to the remote location of the project and distance from District headquarters. This contract also provides two scientific staff to support evaluation of ecosystem response and supports outreach and education of the project. The proposed three-year extension to the contract for \$1,125,648 is to continue FAU providing two scientific staff, project outreach and education, and site maintenance/security for the 15-acre Riverwoods site located in Cornwell, Florida; for a revised total six-year contract amount not to exceed \$2,142,816. Costs for this contract, both expended and proposed, are creditable and included in the District's total project cost estimate for Kissimmee River Restoration.

Recommended Action:

Resolution No. 2025-0805 Authorize amending a contract with the Florida Atlantic University Board of Trustees for site maintenance, outreach, and scientific support of the Riverwoods Field Laboratory as part of the Kissimmee River Restoration Project; for an additional three years and increasing in the amount of \$1,125,648 for a revised total of \$2,142,816, for which \$368,276 in Ad Valorem funds are subject to Governing Board approval of the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Adopted Budget and the remainder is subject to Governing Board approval of future years' budgets. (Contract No. 4600004634-A01)

[Resolution No. 2025-0805](#)

18. S-333 Maintenance Dredging and Low-Sill Weirs Project, Miami-Dade County (Staff contact, Lucine Dadrian, P.E.)

Agenda Item Background:

The S-333 Maintenance Dredging and Low-Sill Weirs Project, located in Miami-Dade County, will dredge sediment from the bottom of the L-67A and L-29 canals, 1,500 feet upstream of the S-333/S-333N complex along each canal, and install low-sill weirs in the canals. It is anticipated that dredging the fine sediments will remove existing buildup of sediment and the low-sill weirs will create a sediment trap for future sediment deposition.

Observed total phosphorus levels spike when the canal stages are low. Through the

multi-agency Technical Working Group (the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the District, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) coordination, maintenance dredging and low-sill weirs were recommended and approved for implementation by Agency Leadership in September 2023. The dredging activities will remove about 50,000 cubic yards of sediment. The scope includes dredging by barge, mechanical dewatering, and installation of 5 low-sill weirs in the canals.

The lowest responsive and responsible bidder is recommended for award. In accordance with District policy and consistent with state law for Request for Bids procurements, this item was competitively bid through a sealed bid process. The bid opening for this project was on August 5, 2025.

Recommended Action:

Resolution No. 2025-0806 Authorize entering into a 300-day contract with Phillips Heavy, Inc., the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for the S-333 Maintenance Dredging and Low-Sill Weirs Project, in the amount of \$27,500,832, for which dedicated funds (State Appropriations) are subject to Governing Board approval of the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Adopted Budget. (Contract No. 4600005249)

[Resolution No. 2025-0806](#)
[Presentation Backup](#)

19. Settlement Agreement (Staff contact, Maricruz R. Fincher)

Agenda Item Background:

On December 7, 2023, a former employee filed an employment discrimination lawsuit in the Circuit Court of the 15th Judicial Circuit in and for Palm Beach County. The parties entered into a proposed settlement agreement that will completely resolve the claims alleged against the District. By settling now, the District will avoid fees and costs associated with further litigation of this matter.

Recommended Action:

Resolution No. 2025-0807 Approve a proposed settlement agreement to resolve an employment discrimination lawsuit filed in the Circuit Court of the 15th Judicial Circuit in and for Palm Beach County Florida, Case No. 50-2023-CA-016440-XXX-AMB, on December 7, 2023.

[Resolution No. 2025-0807](#)

20. Authorize Amending the Adopted Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget to Recognize Specific Appropriations 1531E and 1531I from the 2025 Florida Legislative Session in the Amount of \$95,500,000 (Staff contact, Candida Heater)

Agenda Item Background:

The Governor signed into the Laws of Florida, Chapter 2025-198 Senate Bill No. 2500 General Appropriations Act (GAA). The GAA includes Specific Appropriations 1531E and 1531I Grants and Aids to Local Governments and Nonstate Entities - Fixed Capital Outlay Everglades Restoration Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund. These intergovernmental funds were not included in the District's Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Adopted Budget. Pursuant to the

requirements of Section 373.536(4)(c), Florida Statutes - If the district receives unanticipated funds after the adoption of the final budget, the final budget may be amended, following review and approval by the Executive Office of the Governor, by including such funds, if notice of intention to amend is provided to the Legislative Budget Commission and is published in the notice of the governing board meeting at which the amendment will be considered, pursuant to Section 120.525, Florida Statutes. The notice must set forth a summary of the proposed amendment. The District anticipates receiving \$95,500,000 from the 2025 GAA Specific Appropriations 1531E and 1531I from the Department of Environmental Protection to facilitate and support payment of invoices. The District's Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Tentative Budget will be reduced by the respective amounts, if approved, and the remaining balance of the specific appropriations will remain in the District's Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget subject to Governing Board approval and adoption on September 23, 2025.

Recommended Action:

Resolution No. 2025-0808 Implement from the 2025 Legislative Session Senate Bill 2500 General Appropriations Act Specific Appropriations 1531E and 1531I Grants and Aids to Local Governments and Nonstate Entities - Fixed Capital Outlay Everglades Restoration Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) - from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund in an amount of \$95,500,000; and authorize an amendment to the Adopted Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget.

[Resolution No. 2025-0808](#)

[Resolution Exhibit A](#)

Discussion Agenda

21. Briefing: New Landmark Agreement between the State of Florida and the U.S. Department of the Army to Accelerate Everglades Restoration (Staff contact, Drew Bartlett)

Agenda Item Background:

The State of Florida and the U.S. Department of the Army signed a new agreement to accelerate the restoration of America's Everglades. The new agreement will accelerate the Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir's construction timeline, allow Florida to assume responsibility for the Blue Shanty Flow Way, enable Florida to manage future CERP projects through expedited permitting and an updated federal memoranda of understanding, and redirect resources to fast-track critical restoration. This agreement will ensure that we send more clean freshwater south to Everglades National Park and Florida Bay.

Technical Reports

22. Water and Ecological Conditions Report - John P. Mitnik, P.E., and Cassondra Armstrong, Ph.D.

Staff Reports

23. Monthly Financial Report - Candida Heater, Division Director - Administrative Services

24. General Public Comment
25. Board Comment
26. Adjourn

Draft Presentations and Project Reports

Agenda Item Background:

[21 Bartlett New Landmark Agreement](#)

[22 Mitnik Armstrong Water and Ecological Conditions Report](#)

[CERP Report](#)

[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.