

SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Matthew Cantrell, Project Manager, Office of Agriculture and Environmental Projects

THRU: Steve Minnis, Deputy Executive Director, Business and Community Services

DATE: October 2, 2020

RE: On-Farm Best Management Practices Task of Sustainable Suwannee Project

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with the University of Florida to implement tasks and transfer ownership of equipment relating to the On-Farm Best Management Practices and Sustainable Suwannee Project.

BACKGROUND

At the September 13, 2016, Governing Board Meeting, the Board approved the District to enter into a contract with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to receive \$5,000,000 in Springs Funding for the Sustainable Suwannee Program. Under the original program, agriculture producers were invited to submit proposals to implement lower input rotations in their operations that will cost-effectively reduce nutrients (nitrogen) in groundwater that contributes to spring flow.

The scope of this project was amended with FDEP in August 2020 to add a task for equipment purchases related to a best management practices (BMPs) on-farm demonstration project. This project is a part of a five-year collaborative effort between the District, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), and University of Florida IFAS Extension. The University of Florida will, through the North Florida Research and Education Center – Suwannee Valley, implement this project to demonstrate to growers the benefits of side-dressing applications, soil moisture sensors, and cover crops.

Deliverables will include but are not limited to:

- Yearly list of demonstration locations, and
- Annual reports and a final report that addresses relevant information.

This work is consistent with the scope of the FDEP grant. The equipment being transferred to UF's ownership includes the following: retrofitted sprayer with Y-drops and air seeder, semi-truck, 35-ton detachable lowboy trailer, and pick-up truck.

Funding for this project is included in the Fiscal Year 2021 Final Budget under account code 06-2586-7-2400-06-03.

MC/tm