

SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Patrick Webster, Chief, Office of Agriculture and Environmental Projects

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

DATE: January 29, 2021

RE: Agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to Receive Water Quality Improvement Funds and to Enter into Agreements

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to receive funds and to enter into agreements with the appropriate entities to implement the projects.

BACKGROUND

On June 29, 2020, Governor DeSantis signed the “Bolder, Brighter, and Better Future” state budget, which includes an investment of \$25 million for grants and aids to local governments and non-state entities for water quality improvement projects relating to the St. John’s, Suwannee, and Apalachicola Rivers and Springs Coast Watershed.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has informed the District that it will receive \$4.0 million in grant funding for two projects. The District will enter into agreements with the selected cooperators upon notification by FDEP. The District will enter into an agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and Columbia County on the I-75/SR 247 Quail Heights project. FDEP will contract directly with City of Lake City for the Lake City Public Access Reuse/Chlorine Contact Chamber Upgrades project.

The first project is the I-75/SR 247 Quail Heights project which the Governing Board approved entering into an agreement with FDOT for the acquisition of the Quail Heights parcel at the December, 2020 Governing Board Meeting. This project involves a partnership between the District, FDOT, and Columbia County. On September 10, 2020, the FDOT acquired fee interest in 40.83 acres +/- of real property located in Columbia County within Quail Heights. The FDOT portion of the project will serve as direct treatment for roadway improvements on SR 247 and I-75. The construction of the joint-use stormwater pond will treat and attenuate runoff from Cannon Creek. It will treat existing untreated runoff and provide a net benefit to Cannon Creek, a tributary of the Santa Fe River. Over 800 pounds of nitrogen are estimated to be removed each year by the project. The total project cost is estimated at \$9,664,300 with a match of \$6,503,195 from FDOT that includes \$968,195 for land acquisition and \$5,535,000 for construction, \$651,105 from the District for land acquisition, and an FDEP Grant request of \$2,510,000.

The second project is the Lake City Public Access Reuse/Chlorine Contact Chamber Upgrades. The City of Lake City’s public access reuse system is currently offline. The reuse system was designed with the chlorine contact chamber within the 1.5 million-gallon reclaimed water storage tank. However, the City’s Utility Department only runs one shift of workers per day and cannot