

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Governing Board Members

**FROM:** Ray Palmer, Real Estate

**DATE:** June 11, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Release of Reservations

### **Agenda Item Background:**

Palm Beach County is proposing to place a conservation easement over the existing District's 7,070.46-acre conservation easement to further enhance the preservation of the Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area for its cultural and environmental significance. Palm Beach County has requested the District release existing reservations within the conservation area so that Palm Beach County can enter into an agreement with Conservation Florida, Inc., a member of the Land Trust Alliance, to help the County protect and manage their lands. The property is owned by Palm Beach County and is currently used for conservation, with no proposed change in land use. District canal, road and oil, gas and mineral reservations overlap and cover approximately 4,326.7 acres in the Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area.

Applications for the release of reservations 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 and may require such other terms and conditions determined by the Board. The District is retaining all the existing conservation easements, and the Conservation Florida easement will contain language acknowledging the priority position of the District's easement. The District is also retaining reservation rights for 100 ft. lying northerly of the present State Road 710 Road Right of Way; the present C-18 Canal and C-18 West Canal Rights of Way; and 100 ft. lying on each side of the present C-18 Canal and C-18 Canal West Rights of Way. The District is also retaining oil, gas and mineral reservations, but staff is recommending that issuing a non-use commitment is compatible with the District's conservation purpose. The applicant is a government entity; therefore, release value payments are not required (District Policy No. 140-86). For canal reservations held by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (TIITF) and Board of Education (BOE), the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires a recommendation from the District that there is no District or local need for TIITF-held canal reservations prior to a release being issued by DEP.

Staff evaluated the size and location of the properties for future flood control and reclamation purposes related to water storage and conveyance. After review by internal subject matter experts and affected external agencies, 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 Palm Beach County's (fee simple owner) release of reservations to facilitate their proposal to place a conservation easement over the Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area, as follows:

### **Palm Beach County**

- Release District road reservations for the Palm Beach County - Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area. The District reservation was reserved in 1944. The property contains 38.48 acres, more or less, of the Conservation land.
- Release District canal reservations and issue Non-Use Commitment for oil, gas and mineral reservations for Palm Beach County - Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area. The District canal and oil, gas and mineral reservations were reserved in 1925, 1944, and 1946, respectively. The property contains 313.53 acres, more or less, of canal reservations and 2,922.06 acres, more or less, of oil, gas, and mineral reservations of the Conservation land.
- Recommend release of Board of Education (BOE) canal reservations for Palm Beach County - Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area. The BOE reservation was reserved in 1955. The property contains 9.60 acres, more or less, of the Conservation land.
- Recommend release of canal reservations held by the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund for Palm Beach County - Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area. The reservations were reserved in 1917, 1946 and 1951, respectively. The property contains 3,254.39 acres, more or less, of the Conservation land.

**Additional Item Background:**

See Memorandum Exhibit "A" and maps attached hereto and made a part hereof, which contain the details and location of the releases and recommendations to be issued.

Pursuant to Section 373.096 of the Florida Statutes, the Governing Board of the District may issue a release for any reservation for which it has no present or apparent use under terms and conditions determined by the Board.

**Staff Contact and/or Presenter:**

Ray Palmer, [rpalmer@sfwmd.gov](mailto:rpalmer@sfwmd.gov), 561-682-2246

**ATTACHMENTS:**

[Memorandum Exhibit A](#)

[Resolution No. 2026-0601 with Exhibit A](#)

[Map](#)