

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Governing Board Members

FROM: LeRoy Rodgers, Field Operations Division

DATE: August 13, 2026

SUBJECT: Supply and Delivery of Plants for Everglades Stormwater Treatment Areas to Improve Resiliency and Performance

Agenda Item Background:

The South Florida Water Management District (District) is committed to delivering clean water to the Everglades. The State of Florida built Everglades Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) to improve water quality and reduce nutrient pollution.

The District operates 64,000 acres of Everglades STAs to help restore Everglades water quality and has constructed approximately 19,000 acres of Flow Equalization Basins that further optimize the ability of Everglades STAs to treat water. Over 1 million plants were planted in the STAs during the last water year.

This item requests Governing Board authorization to enter into an agreement for the delivery of aquatic plants to the District's Everglades STAs. The contract will provide for the delivery of aquatic plants to various STA sites throughout the District. Plant installation will be performed by separate contractors under other District contracts.

The aquatic plants are needed to enhance and restore emergent vegetation communities within the STAs to improve resiliency and performance. Based on operational experience and scientific monitoring, the District determined that augmentative planting of emergent vegetation improves STA performance by promoting more uniform distribution of water flows through treatment cells, stabilizing sediments, reducing turbidity, and increasing the resiliency of plant communities through greater species and functional diversity. These improvements help maintain the ecological function of the STAs in support of the District's water quality restoration mission. The agreement will have an initial term of one year and include two 1-year renewal options.

This contract supports the District's core mission by providing aquatic vegetation needed to maintain and enhance the treatment performance of the STAs. Healthy, diverse emergent plant communities promotes uniform flow distribution, stabilizes sediments, reduces turbidity, and increases ecosystem resiliency. These functions help the District meet its water quality restoration objectives and support state and federal restoration commitments.

Additional Item Background:

Core Mission and Strategic Priorities:

This contract supports the District's core mission by providing aquatic vegetation needed to maintain and enhance the treatment performance of the STAs. Healthy, diverse emergent plant communities promotes uniform flow distribution, stabilizes sediments, reduces turbidity, and increases ecosystem resiliency. These functions help the District meet its water quality

restoration objectives and support state and federal restoration commitments.

Funding Source:

Funding is from Ad Valorem funds, Lease Revenue and Land Acquisition Trust Fund land management funds subject to Governing Board approval of the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Adopted Budget.

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ATTACHMENTS:

[Resolution No. 2026-0805](#)