M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Governing Board Members

FROM: Rich Virgil, P.E., Field Operations Division

DATE: November 12, 2026

SUBJECT: Designation of the C-139 Flow Equalization Basin as an Impoundment Area for Public Recreation, and Authorization for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to Establish the Property as a Public Small Game Hunting Area and Alligator Harvest Unit, Hendry County

Agenda Item Background:
Construction activities have been completed on the approximately 3,035-acre C-139 Flow Equalization Basin (FEB), located in Hendry County (Property). The District proposes to designate the Property as an Impoundment Area in accordance with Rules 40E-7.521(13) and 40E-7.5384, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). This designation will provide a regulatory framework for managing nature-based recreational use on the Property consistent with the purpose for which the Property was acquired and consistent with the operation of the project as an FEB. This includes establishing public access points and providing for recreational activities including hunting, hiking, biking, fishing, and wildlife viewing opportunities.

The District also proposes to authorize the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to establish the Property as a Public Small Game Hunting Area and Alligator Harvest Unit to allow public waterfowl and alligator hunting opportunities on the Property in accordance with Rule 40E-7.527, F.A.C.

Following approval of this agenda item, District staff will work towards providing nature-based recreational opportunities including Audubon led birding tours and FWC managed hunts, as well as construction of a public parking trailhead, which would include a stabilized parking area, interpretive kiosk(s), and signage. Once construction of these facilities is complete, the Property would be open for regularly scheduled public access and recreation starting in early 2027.

Additional Item Background:
Core Mission and Strategic Priorities:
This Governing Board item supports the District's core mission and strategic goals by allowing for public recreation consistent with Section 373.1391, F.S. The Land Resources Bureau within the Field Operations Division is responsible for implementing this item and administering public recreation on District lands.

Funding Source:
This item does not require the expenditure of District funds.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter:
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ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution No. 2026-1104

Exhibit A