

## **M E M O R A N D U M**

**TO:** Governing Board Members

**FROM:** Jennifer Reynolds, Ecosystem Restoration

**DATE:** September 11, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Phase Two of the Lower Kissimmee Basin Stormwater Treatment and Recreation Area Project

### **Agenda Item Background:**

As part of the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program (NEEPP), the Lower Kissimmee Basin Stormwater Treatment and Recreation Area (LKBSTA) Project, located in Okeechobee County, will remove Total Phosphorus (TP) loads from key contributing basins before they enter Lake Okeechobee.

In December 2021, the District entered into a Project Agreement with EIP Florida Water Quality, LLC, for the design, construction, operation, and land acquisition of the LKBSTA Project for an amount not to exceed \$300,000,000. In May of 2024, the Project Agreement was amended to expand the total project footprint from 3,400 acres to approximately 4,824.90 acres in Okeechobee County within which the LKBSTA Project components will be constructed and operated increasing the project benefits from approximately 12-15 metric tons of TP removed to 20-22 metric tons of TP removed per year. The land will be acquired for \$41,250,000, which is equal to the appraised value.

Phase One of the LKBSTA Project included all due diligence work to determine project viability as well as preparation of the preliminary design and necessary permit applications. Phase Two of the LKBSTA Project will include transferring project land to District ownership, completing the design, permitting and pre-construction services, construction and post-construction tasks, and operation of the project until turnover to the District occurs. Staff requests Governing Board approval to amend the Project Agreement with EIP Florida Water Quality, LLC, for Phase Two of the Project.

### **Additional Item Background:**

The basins that will be treated by this project routinely contribute some of the highest TP loads to Lake Okeechobee. For the five-year period of Water Years 2020-2024 (WY2020-2024), the average TP load from the Lake Okeechobee Watershed was 355 metric tons per year, which is 250 metric tons above the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) target set by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

### **Core Mission and Strategic Priorities:**

The LKBSTA Project and the land being acquired represent critical components of the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program. The construction and operation of the LKBSTA provides a major boost to remove total phosphorus levels from contributing basins before entering Lake Okeechobee.

### **Funding Source:**

State Water Quality Grant through Florida Department of Environmental Protection (State Grant MN022).

**Staff Contact and/or Presenter:**

Jose Otero, [jotero@sfwmd.gov](mailto:jotero@sfwmd.gov), 561-682-6578

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

**ATTACHMENTS:**

[A. Resolution No. 2025-0912](#)

[B. Resolution No. 2025-0913](#)

[C. Resolution No. 2025-0914](#)

[LKBSTA Location Map](#)