

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board Members

FROM: Jennifer Reynolds, Ecosystem Restoration

DATE: March 5, 2026

SUBJECT: Amendment to the Funding Agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for Priority Review Permit Applications

Agenda Item Background:

The District is required to obtain permits for its restoration projects under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, and Section 103 of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act. The Jacksonville District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has limited resources for the evaluation of the District's Department of the Army permit applications, so District permit applications go to various USACE offices within the State of Florida resulting in lengthy permit processing timeframes and delays in obtaining permit decisions. The USACE and the District believe that having this dedicated, full-time USACE project manager has improved the efficiency of the permit review process and resulted in more timely permit decisions. District staff recommend a three-year (June 1, 2026 - May 31, 2029) extension to the current Funding Agreement to continue prioritizing the review of District projects. The USACE will continue to dedicate District funds to the USACE employee whose primary focus will be to manage District's permit applications based on District project schedules and priorities. The Jacksonville District's Regulatory Division will establish a separate account to track receipt and expenditure of the funds to ensure they are used for the intended purpose.

Section 214 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (WRDA 2000, Public Law No. 106-541), as amended and codified at 33 U.S.C. 2352, authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to accept and expend funds to prioritize permit reviews. A Section 214 funding agreement draft has been prepared (Agreement No. 4600004728-A01).

Additional Item Background:

Core Mission and Strategic Priorities:

This multi-year USACE Dedicated Reviewer position under Agreement No. 4600004728-A01 will help the District greatly to carry out its mission to protect water quality, flood protection and restoration by obtaining the federal permits in a timely manner to implement projects in association with restoration or capital projects, operations and maintenance projects, land stewardship projects, and recreational projects.

Funding Source:

Funding for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 will come from the projects' budgets in dedicated funds (multiple state and federal sources) or ad valorem funds. Funding for future years will be subject to Governing Board approval of future years budgets.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter:

Jennifer Reynolds, Division Director, Ecosystem Restoration, 561-682-6672

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution No. 2026-0306

Funding Agreement Modification