

# Use of Federal Cost-Share to Implement Best Management Practices on District Lands

***Governing Board  
Discussion Agenda  
October 13, 2011***

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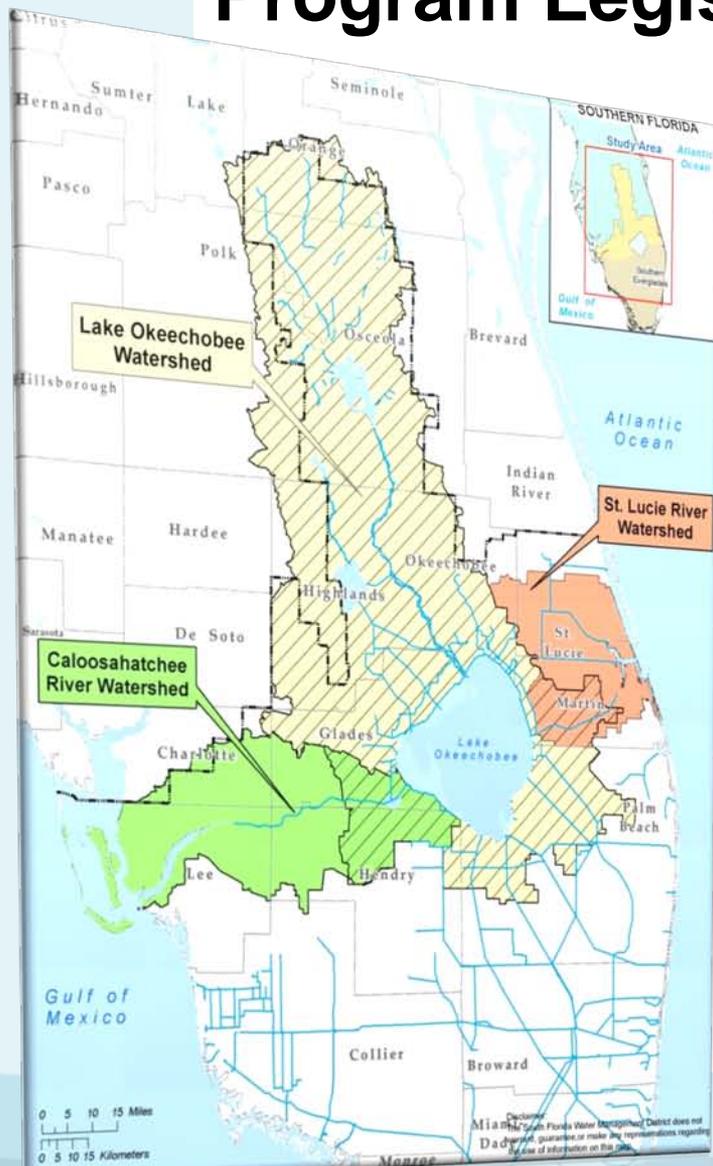
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# Northern Everglades & Estuaries Protection Program Legislation (2007)



- Implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) critical for protection of Northern Everglades (Florida Statute 373.4595)
- Legislation establishes partnership among agencies to coordinate implementation of BMPs within Northern Everglades and Estuaries Watershed (F.S. 373.4595(3)(c))
- Legislative intent is to implement BMPs across all properties including public lands

# Northern Everglades Agricultural BMP Program

- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) cooperative and incentive-based BMP program for agriculture
- Cow/Calf Assessments (BMP identification) being conducted by FDACS and SFWMD staff on District leased lands to bring District agricultural lands into the program
- Majority of District Lessees are private landowners already working with FDACS
- District Lessees approached FDACS for assistance with Federal cost-share programs
- FDACS will coordinate implementation of BMPs

# Water Quality Improvement On-Site

Typical Best Management Practices (BMPs) are as follows:

- Nutrient Management (e.g. soil and tissue testing) is existing District base lease BMP condition
- Water Control Structures (water quality, quantity, particulates)
- Alternative Water Supply (pumps, troughs, incentive to keep animals out of waterways)
- Prescribed Grazing
- Exotic Plant Control

# Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Programs

- Two primary funding sources for implementation
  - FDACS provides cost share to private landowners (in addition to USDA NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program [EQIP]) – providing 12.5 – 25%
  - *Seven District Lessees at this time are pursuing FY12 EQIP (October 31<sup>st</sup> deadline – not guaranteed)*
    - *Williamson Cattle Company (4800 acre District lease) already implemented BMPs utilizing EQIP on private 9000 acres*
- Examples of typical cost share items:
  - Exotic plant control
  - Brush Management
  - Fence
  - Watering facility
  - Water control structures
  - Well plugging or decommissioning

# Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Programs

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Funding
  - Provides approximately 50 – 75% cost share (average standard) to private landowners or lessees
  - Lessee needs to provide proof of control of the public land for the contract term (EQIP is used on public lands, common in Western States)
    - Existing EQIP contracts on public lands in Florida
  - Evaluation and ranking of applications no preference to private or public land
  - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Northern Everglades EQIP Funded \$31 M to date

## District Interests

- No foreseeable District project construction on subject leased lands
  - Kissimmee River
  - Allapattah
  - C-23/24
- Subject lease lands within Northern Everglades
- Provides additional funding for BMP implementation
- Reduces land management costs

# Participation Parameters for District Lands

Amend District Policy Code regarding Administration of Agricultural Leases to include following:

- Prior to cost-share participation, advance approval is required from either District Project and Lands Committee or Executive Director.
- Prior to implementation of any Cost-Share Program BMPs, advance approval is required from either District Project and Lands Committee or Executive Director.
- Prior to cost-share participation, Lessee must be in full compliance with all applicable state/federal rules and regulations.

## Participation Parameters for District Lands, cont.

Amend District Policy Code regarding Administration of Agricultural Leases to include following:

- Lessee shall be solely responsible for any and all cost-share obligations.
- South Florida Water Management District shall have no responsibility for any Lessee's unpaid cost-share.
- South Florida Water Management District shall have no obligations under any Lessee's Cost-Share Contract.
- Federal Cost-Share participation does not preclude requirement to comply with current District AG Lease Policy including six (6) month District discretionary termination provision.

# QUESTIONS

# STAFF RECOMMENDATION

A Resolution of the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District to authorize District Lessees to apply for Federal Cost-Share Funding to implement Best Management Practices on District Leased Lands; providing an effective date.

# STAFF RECOMMENDATION

A Resolution of the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District amending Subsection 4 of Section 140-10, District Policy Code, regarding administration of agricultural leases to make certain revisions; providing for inclusion in the District Policy Code, providing for severability; providing an effective date.