

Agenda

November 19, 2024

Subject

Approve interlocal agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service) to implement the Peace River Streambank Restoration project north of Bowling Green in Polk County (one-time cost \$250,000).

Description

The Peace River flows south from its headwaters in Polk County to Charlotte Harbor, Florida's second largest open water estuary. Water quality in the Peace River has declined in many sections of the river due to impacts such as urbanization, mining, agriculture, and habitat degradation. As a result, several sections of the river in Polk County have been labeled as "impaired" by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Through partnerships and creative projects, progress has been made to improve the water quality of this regionally important resource.

The goal of the project is to improve the water quality, aquatic habitat, and stabilize a quickly eroding streambank of the Peace River located on a state land. The eroding streambank is releasing significant amounts of sediment and associated nutrients into the river. Additionally, by restoring the site, we will be creating new wetland areas that will help reduce nutrient pollution. This project demonstrates steps being taken to meet requirements addressing impaired waters of the Peace River.

The Peace River Streambank Restoration project consists of design, permitting, and restoration of 500 feet of Peace River shoreline to be completed by the Service. The Service has highly qualified employees in the field of river and stream restoration and have completed numerous projects across the southeastern United States ranging from small to large rivers including the Peace River, St. Mary's River, Chipola River, and the Myakka River. Based on other projects completed in central Florida, the project should help the river meet water quality standards and was approved by County Stormwater Technical Advisory Committee (STAC).

Project is funded by a State Wildlife Grant Funding Agreement No. 23044 with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to co-fund the streambank restoration project (\$162,500 one-time revenue and \$87,500 non-FWC match). The project is in the Community Investment Program (CIP) under the Peace River Corridor Project and FWC contribution is to be matched by the County's Stormwater Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU).

Recommendation

Approve interlocal agreement between Polk County and the Service to implement the Peace River Streambank Restoration project north of Bowling Green in Polk County in the amount of \$250,000.

Fiscal Impact

Funds were included in the Parks and Natural Resources five-year CIP as part of the Peace River Corridor Project.

Contact Information

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