

Subject

Approve Amendment #1 to Agreement #22FRP12 with the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to provide funding for the project: "Polk County Peace Creek Canal Basin Wetland Restoration" (no fiscal impact).

Description

The Peace Creek Basin is entirely within Polk County and along with the Saddle Creek Watershed form the headwaters of the Peace River. The wetlands within the Peace Creek basin have been extensively ditched and canaled resulting in a lack of water storage and loss of historic aquatic habitat. Additionally, the changes within the Peace Creek basin have contributed to downstream water quality nutrient impairments in the Peace River. Polk County is currently evaluating the Peace Creek Canal Basin and has identified priority areas to restore historic wetlands that will minimize flood risk, increase wetland function, increase water storage, and improve water quality.

In response to that evaluation, Polk County submitted an application called "Restoring Historic Wetland to provide Resiliency and Minimize Flood Risk in the Peace Creek Canal" to the State's Resiliency Implementation Grant cycle in 2022. As part of implementing resiliency efforts, the state awarded Polk County funding for property acquisition and restoration within the Peace Creek Basin.

Through agreement #22FRP12, FDEP awarded Polk County with \$7,050,000 towards acquisition of lands in the Peace Creek Canal project area. This Amendment #1 updates several grant requirements including performance measures, consequences for non-performance, payment request schedule, project timeline and budget details. The most notable change is this Amendment removes the previously required Polk County matching funds of (\$7,950,000) and associated task. This amendment does not change funding sources for Peace Creek Canal.

Approval of this Amendment #1 is the next step towards moving this resiliency project forward to protect and restore critical wetlands as approved by FDEP.

The project has been approved by the Stormwater Technical Advisory Committee (STAC).

Recommendation

Approve Amendment #1 to Agreement #22FRP12 with the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to provide funding for the project: "Polk County Peace Creek Canal Basin Wetland Restoration".

Fiscal Impact

No fiscal impact.

Contact Information

Tabitha Biehl, Land and Water Natural Areas Manager

Parks and Natural Resources Division

(863) 534-7377

tabithabiehl@polk-county.net

Gaye Sharpe, Director

Parks and Natural Resources Division

(863) 534-7377

gayesharpe@polk-county.net