

\$5 million allocated for alternative water projects

15 projects help sustain water resources

The South Florida Water Management District has approved the investment of an additional \$5 million for the development of alternative water supplies to better protect water resources for the public and the environment across South Florida. Together with water conservation measures, developing alternative water supplies will help ensure a more reliable and sustainable supply of water for Florida's future.

In September, the District Governing Board invested more than \$22 million in 24 projects to help local communities build alternative water supply projects. This includes \$3.8 million in matching funds from the state.

Last month, the board authorized using an additional \$5 million to pay for 15 more projects. When completed, these 39 projects will collectively provide nearly 27 million gallons of additional water per day. That's the average daily water use of nearly 151,000 South Florida residents.

The new projects include \$172,200 for the East Water Reclamation Campus Phase 1 and \$370,000 for Eastwood Golf Course Onsite Reclaimed Water Storage. Both projects are in Fort Myers.

Alternative water supplies include treatment of saltwater and brackish water, capture and storage of surface water during wet weather, and use of reclaimed water and stormwater from reservoirs or aquifer storage and recov-

ery systems. Once constructed, projects that produce usable water from these sources will provide a community with millions of gallons of additional water supply.

The District administers funds through the Alternative Water Supply Funding Program. Cities, utilities, homeowners associations, community development districts and other water users and suppliers can be awarded up to 40 percent of a project's construction costs, based on total funding available and project type. Project sponsors finance the balance, although economically disadvantaged communities may be eligible for full funding.

Florida's growing population has focused attention on future availability of sufficient water supplies. Since 2005, the state legislature has approved annual funding for diversifying water resources, specifically the development of alternative water supplies. The District and the State of Florida have invested approximately \$163 million since 1996 to fund more than 400 alternative water supply projects. These projects collectively are adding more than 300 million gallons per day of "new" water to the regional supply.

For more information about alternative water supply and related funding programs from the South Florida Water Management District, visit www.sfwmd.gov. ■



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