



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 23-0846A, Version: 1

Subject:

Declaration of Cooperation of the Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium.

Recommended Action:

Approval of the Declaration of Cooperation of the Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium (NMC).

- The NMC proactively manage nitrogen loads entering Tampa Bay to reduce nutrient pollution and improve water quality for the benefit of seagrass habitat through its Action Plan.
- Participants of the Consortium declare their intent to cooperate to ensure continuing recovery of the Tampa Bay Estuary and abide by the Action Plan by signing a Declaration of Cooperation every five years.
- County funding of \$7,500.00 in support of the 2027 Reasonable Assurance Update Document, will be derived from the Surface Water Utility Fund and the Sewer Revenue and Operating Fund (Utilities). Funding is either budgeted in or can be absorbed within the Fiscal Year 2023 Adopted Budget for each department and Fund.
- Payment is due no later than October 31, 2024.

Funding in the amount of \$7,500.00; Authorize the Chairman to sign and the Clerk of the Circuit Court to attest.

Strategic Plan:

Practice Superior Environmental Stewardship

3.3 Protect and improve the quality of our water, air, and other natural resources

Summary:

Signature of this Declaration of Cooperation indicates Pinellas County's willingness to continue being an active participant in the NMC. The Declaration includes a Reasonable Assurance Plan (RAP) that provides details on the actions of partners and progress towards attaining water quality improvements. An updated RAP is required to be submitted to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) every five years.

Background Information:

The NMC is a public/private partnership originally formed in 1996 with the goal to cooperatively develop a plan of action to meet an initial nitrogen load reduction target in Tampa Bay. A Total Maximum Daily Load was established for Tampa Bay in 1998 which required a five-year strategy to address nitrogen loads and subsequently provide a RAP update every five years. The RAP incorporates information about completed, ongoing, and planned partner projects in order to

accurately represent nitrogen loads in Tampa Bay and track progress towards improving water quality.

This Declaration of Cooperation indicates Pinellas County's intent to work with the other partners over the Fiscal Year 2022 - Fiscal Year 2026 period to collaboratively fund, develop, and implement water quality management actions which will be included in the 2027 RAP update, as described in the declaration document.

Fiscal Impact:

The total estimated cost of the 2027 Reasonable Assurance Update Document is \$250,000.00 to be shared equally among Consortium participants. The County's portion of the funding is \$7,500.00 and will be split funded from the Surface Water Utility Fund and the Utilities Sewer Revenue and Operating Fund. The payment, due no later than October 31, 2024, is anticipated to occur in FY23. The contract is not consistent with Public Works' FY23 Budget, resulting in a variance of approximately \$3,500, or 100.0%. However, due to historical lapse, no negative budgetary impacts anticipated.

Staff Member Responsible:

Kelli Hammer Levy, Director, Public Works
Jeremy Waugh, Interim Director, Utilities

Partners:

Consortium
Tampa Bay Estuary Program
FDEP
EPA

Attachments:

Declaration of Cooperation
Exhibit B - 2022 Reasonable Assurance Update