South Florida Water Management District
Environmental Resource General Permit No. 11-105129-P
Date Issued: May 7, 2021

Permittee: Big Cypress National Preserve
33100 Tamiami Trail East
Ochopee, FL 34141-1000

Project: Tomato Farm Restoration Project

Location: Collier County, See Exhibit 1

Application No. 210305-5528

Description: The proposed project is to restore the native vegetation and hydrology of a 272 acre former agricultural development within the Big Cypress National Preserve. The project will restore three separate farm fields and is located east of State Road 29 and north of Interstate 75 in Collier County, Florida. See Exhibit No. 1.0 for Location Map. The restoration activities involve removing dikes, ditches, swales and perimeter berms, and restoring these areas to natural wetland grades. Invasive plants will also be removed within the restoration area. See Exhibit No. 2.0 for Project Details.

Rule: **62-330.631, F.A.C.:** General Permit to Governmental Entities for Limited Environmental Restoration or Enhancement Activities

Expiration: May 7, 2026

Your application to use a General Environmental Resource Permit has been approved. This action is taken based on Chapter 373, Part IV, of Florida Statutes (F.S.) and the rules in Chapter 62-330, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). Please read this entire agency action thoroughly and understand its contents.

This permit is subject to:

- Not receiving a filed request for a Chapter 120, F.S., administrative hearing.
- The attached General Conditions for Environmental Resource General Permits.
- The attached Specific Conditions.
- All referenced Exhibits.

Should you object to these conditions, please refer to the attached "Notice of Rights" which addresses the procedures to be followed if you desire a public hearing or other review of the proposed agency action. Please contact this office if you have any questions concerning this matter. If we do not hear from you in accordance with the "Notice of Rights", we will assume that you concur with the District's action.

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that this written notice has been mailed or electronically transmitted to the Permittee (and the persons listed in the distribution list) on May 7, 2021 , in accordance with Section 120.60(3), F.S. Notice was also electronically posted on this date through a link on the home page of the District's website (www.sfwmd.gov/ePermitting).

Laura Layman

Laura Layman
Section Leader

General Conditions for All General Permits, 62-330.405, F.A.C.

1. The general permit is valid only for the specific activity indicated. Any deviation from the specified activity and the conditions for undertaking that activity shall constitute a violation of the permit and shall subject the permittee to enforcement action and revocation of the permit under Chapter 373, F.S.

2. The general permit does not eliminate the necessity to obtain any required federal, state, local and special district authorizations prior to the start of any construction, alteration, operation, maintenance, removal or abandonment authorized by this permit; and it does not authorize any violation of any other applicable federal, state, local, or special district laws (including, but not limited to, those governing the “take” of listed species).

3. This general permit does not convey to the permittee or create in the permittee any property right, or any interest in real property, nor does it authorize any entrance upon or activities on property which is not owned or controlled by the permittee, or convey any rights or privileges other than those specified in the general permit.

4. The general permit does not relieve the permittee from liability and penalties when the permitted activity causes harm or injury to: human health or welfare; animal, plant or aquatic life; or property. It does not allow the permittee to cause pollution that violates state water quality standards.

5. Section 253.77, F.S., provides that a person may not commence any excavation, construction, or other activity involving the use of state-owned or other lands of the state, the title to which is vested in the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund without obtaining the required consent, lease, easement, or other form of authorization authorizing the proposed use. Therefore, the permittee is responsible for obtaining any necessary authorizations from the Board of Trustees prior to commencing activity on state-owned lands.

6. The authorization to conduct activities under a general permit may be modified, suspended or revoked in accordance with Chapter 120, F.S., and Section 373.429, F.S.

7. The general permit is not transferable to a new third party. To be used by a different permittee, a new notice to use a general permit must be submitted in accordance with rule 62-330.402, F.A.C. Activities constructed in accordance with the terms and conditions of a general permit are automatically authorized to be operated and maintained by the permittee and subsequent owners in accordance with subsection 62-330.340(1), F.A.C. Any person holding the general permit, persons working under the general permit, and owners of land while work is conducted under the general permit shall remain liable for any corrective actions that may be required as a result of any permit violations prior to sale, conveyance, or other transfer of ownership or control of the permitted project, activity, or the real property at which the permitted project or activity is located.

8. Upon reasonable notice to the permittee, Agency staff with proper identification shall have permission to enter, inspect, sample and test the permitted system to ensure conformity with the plans and specifications approved by the general permit.

9. The permittee shall maintain any permitted project or activity in accordance with the plans submitted to the Agency and authorized in this general permit.

10. A permitee's right to conduct a specific activity under this general permit is authorized for a duration of five years.

11. Activities shall be conducted in a manner that does not cause or contribute to violations of state water quality standards. Performance-based erosion and sediment control best management practices shall be implemented and maintained immediately prior to, during, and after construction as needed to stabilize all disturbed areas, including other measures specified in the permit to prevent adverse impacts to the water resources and adjacent lands. Erosion and sediment control measures shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the State of Florida Erosion and Sediment Control Designer and Reviewer Manual (Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Florida Department of Transportation, June 2007), available at https://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-04227, and the Florida Stormwater Erosion and Sedimentation Control Inspector's Manual (Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Nonpoint Source Management Section, Tallahassee, Florida, July 2008), available at http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/DEAR/Stormwater_Training_Docs/erosion-inspectors-manual.pdf.

12. Unless otherwise specified in the general permit, temporary vehicular access within wetlands during construction shall be performed using vehicles generating minimum ground pressure to minimize rutting and other environmental impacts. Within forested wetlands, the permittee shall choose alignments that minimize the destruction of mature wetland trees to the greatest extent practicable. When needed to prevent rutting or soil compaction, access vehicles shall be operated on wooden, composite, metal, or other non-earthen construction mats. In all cases, access in wetlands shall comply with the following:
(a) Access within forested wetlands shall not include the cutting or clearing of any native wetland tree having a diameter four inches or greater at breast height;
(b) The maximum width of the construction access area shall be limited to 15 feet;
(c) All mats shall be removed as soon as practicable after equipment has completed passage through, or work has been completed, at any location along the alignment of the project, but in no case longer than seven days after equipment has completed work or passage through that location; and
(d) Areas disturbed for access shall be restored to natural grades immediately after the maintenance or repair is completed.

13. Barges or other work vessels used to conduct in-water activities shall be operated in a manner that prevents unauthorized dredging, water quality violations, and damage to submerged aquatic communities.

14. The construction, alteration, or use of the authorized project shall not adversely impede navigation or create a navigational hazard in the water body.

15. Except where specifically authorized in the general permit, activities must not:
(a) Impound or obstruct existing water flow, cause adverse impacts to existing surface water storage and conveyance capabilities, or otherwise cause adverse water quantity or flooding impacts to receiving water and adjacent lands; or
(b) Cause an adverse impact to the maintenance of surface or ground water levels or surface water flows established pursuant to section 373.042, F.S., or a Works of the District established pursuant to section 373.086, F.S.

16. If prehistoric or historic artifacts, such as pottery or ceramics, projectile points, stone tools, dugout canoes, metal implements, historic building materials, or any other physical remains that could be associated with Native American, early European, or American settlement are encountered at any time within the project site area, the permitted project shall cease all

activities involving subsurface disturbance in the vicinity of the discovery. The permittee or other designee shall contact the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Compliance Review Section (DHR), at (850)245-6333, as well as the appropriate permitting agency office. Project activities shall not resume without verbal or written authorization from the Division of Historical Resources. If unmarked human remains are encountered, all work shall stop immediately and the proper authorities notified in accordance with section 872.05, F.S.

17. The activity must be capable, based on generally accepted engineering and scientific principles, of being performed and of functioning as proposed, and must comply with any applicable District special basin and geographic area criteria.

18. The permittee shall comply with the following when performing work within waters accessible to federally- or state-listed aquatic species, such as manatees, marine turtles, smalltooth sawfish, and Gulf sturgeon:
(a) All vessels associated with the project shall operate at “Idle Speed/No Wake” at all times while in the work area and where the draft of the vessels provides less than a four-foot clearance from the bottom. All vessels will follow routes of deep water whenever possible.
(b) All deployed siltation or turbidity barriers shall be properly secured, monitored, and maintained to prevent entanglement or entrapment of listed species.
(c) All in-water activities, including vessel operation, must be shut down if a listed species comes within 50 feet of the work area. Activities shall not resume until the animal(s) has moved beyond a 50-foot radius of the in-water work, or until 30 minutes elapses since the last sighting within 50 feet. Animals must not be herded away or harassed into leaving. All onsite project personnel are responsible for observing water-related activities for the presence of listed species.
(d) Any listed species that is killed or injured by work associated with activities performed shall be reported immediately to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Hotline at 1(888)404-3922 and ImperiledSpecies@myFWC.com.
(e) Whenever there is a spill or frac-out of drilling fluid into waters accessible to the above species during a directional drilling operation, the FWC shall be notified at ImperiledSpecies@myfwc.com with details of the event within 24 hours following detection of the spill or frac-out.

19. The permittee shall hold and save the Agency harmless from any and all damages, claims, or liabilities which may arise by reason of the construction, alteration, operation, maintenance, removal, abandonment or use of any activity authorized by the general permit.

20. The permittee shall immediately notify the Agency in writing of any submitted information that is discovered to be inaccurate.

Specific Conditions for General Permits, 62-330.631, F.A.C.

1. All disturbed areas, including intertidal slopes, shall be stabilized and re-vegetated with appropriate non-invasive, annual ground cover vegetation within 72 hours after completion of construction. Subsequently, the areas shall be planted and maintained as necessary to ensure that there is at least 33 percent cover of planted or naturally re-established native wetland or upland plant species within 18 months of completion of authorized work. The areas shall also be maintained free of exotic invasive species.

2. Riprap material shall be clean limestone, granite, other native rock, or clean rebar-free concrete rubble measuring one foot to three feet in diameter.

3. Except as otherwise allowed under this general permit, fill material used to backfill dredge holes or planting areas shall comply with the standard of not more than 10 percent of the material passing through a number 200 standard sieve and containing no more than 10 percent organic content, and be free of contaminants that cause violations of state water quality standards.

4. Turbidity shall be monitored at least twice daily during construction. Monitoring records shall be maintained and available for inspection by the Agency for the period of in-water construction and an additional 90 days beyond in-water construction.

Distribution List

Valerie Clark, Big Cypress National Preserve

Audubon of Florida

Div of Recreation and Park - District 4

US Army Corps of Engineers - Permit Section

Exhibits

The following exhibits to this permit are incorporated by reference. The exhibits can be viewed by clicking on the links below or by visiting the District's ePermitting website (http://my.sfwmd.gov/ePermitting) and searching under this application number 210305-5528 .

Exhibit No. 1.0 Location Map

Exhibit No. 2.0 Drawings

NOTICE OF RIGHTS

As required by Chapter 120, Florida Statutes, the following provides notice of the opportunities which may be available for administrative hearing pursuant to Sections 120.569 and 120.57, Florida Statutes, or judicial review pursuant to Section 120.68, Florida Statutes, when the substantial interests of a party are determined by an agency. Please note that this Notice of Rights is not intended to provide legal advice. Some of the legal proceedings detailed below may not be applicable or appropriate for your situation. You may wish to consult an attorney regarding your legal rights.

RIGHT TO REQUEST ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING

A person whose substantial interests are or may be affected by the South Florida Water Management District's (District) action has the right to request an administrative hearing on that action pursuant to Sections 120.569 and 120.57, Florida Statutes. Persons seeking a hearing on a District decision which affects or may affect their substantial interests shall file a petition for hearing in accordance with the filing instructions set forth herein within 21 days of receipt of written notice of the decision unless one of the following shorter time periods apply: (1) within 14 days of the notice of consolidated intent to grant or deny concurrently reviewed applications for environmental resource permits and use of sovereign submerged lands pursuant to Section 373.427, Florida Statutes; or (2) within 14 days of service of an Administrative Order pursuant to Section 373.119(1), Florida Statutes. "Receipt of written notice of agency decision" means receipt of written notice through mail, electronic mail, posting, or publication that the District has taken or intends to take final agency action. Any person who receives written notice of a District decision and fails to file a written request for hearing within the timeframe described above waives the right to request a hearing on that decision.

If the District takes final agency action that materially differs from the noticed intended agency decision, persons who may be substantially affected shall, unless otherwise provided by law, have an additional point of entry pursuant to Rule 28-106.111, Florida Administrative Code.

Any person to whom an emergency order is directed pursuant to Section 373.119(2), Florida Statutes, shall comply therewith immediately, but on petition to the board shall be afforded a hearing as soon as possible.

A person may file a request for an extension of time for filing a petition. The District may grant the request for good cause. Requests for extension of time must be filed with the District prior to the deadline for filing a petition for hearing. Such requests for extension shall contain a certificate that the moving party has consulted with all other parties concerning the extension and whether the District and any other parties agree to or oppose the extension. A timely request for an extension of time shall toll the running of the time period for filing a petition until the request is acted upon.

FILING INSTRUCTIONS

A petition for administrative hearing must be filed with the Office of the District Clerk. Filings with the Office of the District Clerk may be made by mail, hand-delivery, or e-mail. Filings by facsimile will not be accepted. A petition for administrative hearing or other document is deemed filed upon receipt during normal business hours by the Office of the District Clerk at the District's headquarters in West Palm Beach, Florida. The District's normal business hours are 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., excluding weekends and District holidays. Any document received by the Office of the District Clerk after 5:00 p.m. shall be deemed filed as of 8:00 a.m. on the next regular business day.

Additional filing instructions are as follows:

- Filings by mail must be addressed to the Office of the District Clerk, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, Florida 33406.
- Filings by hand-delivery must be delivered to the Office of the District Clerk. Delivery of a petition to the District's security desk does not constitute filing. It will be necessary to request that the District's security officer contact the Office of the District Clerk. An employee of the District's Clerk's office will receive and process the petition.
- Filings by e-mail must be transmitted to the Office of the District Clerk at clerk@sfwmd.gov. The filing date for a document transmitted by electronic mail shall be the date the Office of the District Clerk receives the complete document.

INITIATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING

Pursuant to Sections 120.54(5)(b)4. and 120.569(2)(c), Florida Statutes, and Rules 28-106.201 and 28-106.301, Florida Administrative Code, initiation of an administrative hearing shall be made by written petition to the District in legible form and on 8 1/2 by 11 inch white paper. All petitions shall contain:

1. Identification of the action being contested, including the permit number, application number, District file number or any other District identification number, if known.
2. The name, address, any email address, any facsimile number, and telephone number of the petitioner, petitioner's attorney or qualified representative, if any.
3. An explanation of how the petitioner's substantial interests will be affected by the agency determination.
4. A statement of when and how the petitioner received notice of the District's decision.
5. A statement of all disputed issues of material fact. If there are none, the petition must so indicate.
6. A concise statement of the ultimate facts alleged, including the specific facts the petitioner contends warrant reversal or modification of the District's proposed action.
7. A statement of the specific rules or statutes the petitioner contends require reversal or modification of the District's proposed action.
8. If disputed issues of material fact exist, the statement must also include an explanation of how the alleged facts relate to the specific rules or statutes.
9. A statement of the relief sought by the petitioner, stating precisely the action the petitioner wishes the District to take with respect to the District's proposed action.

MEDIATION

The procedures for pursuing mediation are set forth in Section 120.573, Florida Statutes, and Rules 28-106.111 and 28-106.401–.405, Florida Administrative Code. The District is not proposing mediation for this agency action under Section 120.573, Florida Statutes, at this time.

RIGHT TO SEEK JUDICIAL REVIEW

Pursuant to Section 120.68, Florida Statutes, and in accordance with Florida Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.110, a party who is adversely affected by final District action may seek judicial review of the District's final decision by filing a notice of appeal with the Office of the District Clerk in accordance with the filing instructions set forth herein within 30 days of rendition of the order to be reviewed, and by filing a copy of the notice with the appropriate district court of appeals via the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal.