



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

September 14, 2009

Mr. Todd Pressman
Chair, Governing Board
Southwest Florida Water Management District
2379 Broad Street
Brooksville, Florida 34604-6899

Dear Mr. *Todd* Pressman:

In accordance with Section 373.536, Florida Statutes, I have reviewed and hereby approve the Southwest Florida Water Management District's annual budget for Fiscal Year 2009-2010.

During this past year, the Legislature, State agencies, and each of the five water management districts have worked diligently to reduce spending where possible and to use taxpayer's dollars most efficiently. I applaud efforts by your Governing Board to hold property taxes constant for two years in a row even though the result is a decrease to the district budget. For Floridians, this means property taxes levied by the Southwest Florida Water Management District have been level for three consecutive years.

Your District has experienced a considerable reduction in total revenue, primarily due to declining revenues from property tax sources and state appropriations. In response, your Governing Board has aligned its priority program expenditures with the District's core mission, and utilized fund balances in the current year to plan for contingencies and capital projects in Fiscal Year 2009-2010, and beyond.

I commend you and the Governing Board for implementing the difficult and substantial cost cutting measures necessary to balance the Fiscal Year 2009-2010 budget. At the same time, your Governing Board remains committed to provide cost-share assistance to regional and local water supply utilities for reuse, conservation, and other options to relieve stressed ground water supply sources. In addition, I recognize the great efforts by your staff to restore minimum flows and levels of impacted wetlands, lakes, rivers and streams, and aquifers resulting from historic ground-water withdrawals

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in the Northern Tampa Bay area and the Southern Water Use Caution Area. Recovery of these resources is critical to meet growing demands for water supply in this multi-county, rapidly growing region.

Furthermore, in the midst of challenging and unpredictable economic times, your Governing Board has budgeted and negotiated approximately \$129 million for water supply resource development projects, leveraged with a match of \$120 million by partners for a total investment of \$249 million.

I appreciate your staff's success in managing the state's most critical water and natural resource issues, and with an approach which reflects a strong spirit of cooperation with stakeholder groups as well as state, federal, and local partners. I look forward to working with you in the coming year to preserve our state's reputation as an excellent place to do business, visit, and live.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charlie Crist". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "C".

Charlie Crist