

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-02

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF ST. LEO, FLORIDA EXPRESSING ITS POSITION REGARDING TAMPA BAY WATER'S RECENTLY MODIFIED MASTER WATER GOALS AND OPPOSITION TO NEW GROUNDWATER PROJECTS IN PASCO COUNTY; EXPRESSING ITS SUPPORT FOR THE POSITION PAPER PROMULGATED BY THE COALITION TO PRESERVE OUR WATER RESOURCES AND THE PASCO COUNTY WATER TEAM 2007 SUMMARY REPORT; AND EXPRESSING ITS CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR ALTERNATIVE WATER PROJECTS THAT UTILIZE RECLAIMED WATER, SURFACE WATER AND DESALINATION.

WHEREAS, Tampa Bay Water is the regional water supply entity for a large section of *west central Florida including portions of Pasco County, and has recently spent over \$280 million dollars of taxpayer money to set up Alternative Sources of Water;* and

WHEREAS, wide areas of Pasco County's environment have suffered greatly from over-pumping of groundwater, with environmental damage created through reduction in lake levels, complete drying of lakes, loss of wetlands and wildlife habitat, and soil subsidence and sinkholes; and

WHEREAS, although the Southwest Florida Water Management District has recently reported that the minimum flows and levels in the Northern Tampa Bay area continue to show regional improvement, two years past the midpoint in the 10-year Consolidated Permit period, long-term recovery has not been achieved. Restoration projects are long-term and may take years to show any substantial improvement; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, Tampa Bay Water initiated its latest 5-year long range planning process and updated the goals of the Master Water Supply Plan; and

WHEREAS, based on this new Plan, the factors that Tampa Bay Water now proposes to use to evaluate proposed projects contain weighting factors which include 30% of the "environmental stewardship" goal as energy consumption, thereby skewing the weighting of projects towards cost rather than environmental stewardship or sustainability; and

WHEREAS, this new weighting structure will likely result in groundwater projects getting the highest rankings in their evaluation; and

WHEREAS, Tampa Bay Water has recently short-listed five new project concepts across all three member counties including brackish groundwater, seawater desalination, reclaimed water, fresh groundwater, and surface water; and

WHEREAS, in October 2008, Tampa Bay Water's Board of Directors is scheduled to further consider the Master Water Plan Update to meet the long-term water demand of the Tampa Bay Region, which Update includes two other new groundwater projects in

Pasco County: the East Pasco Regional Well Field (a linear well field between Cypress Creek and San Antonio) and Central Pasco Regional Well Field (a linear well field connecting to Cypress Creek); and

WHEREAS, the Pasco County area aquifer, however, is still significantly depleted from previous pumping, and wetland recovery has barely begun under pumping reductions. In addition, both of these well fields are located where past environmental damage due to over-pumping has been severe; and

WHEREAS, it is critically important to the Town of St. Leo and Pasco County to ensure that the pumping level for the Consolidated Well Fields is set at a scientifically based level that will protect the ecological resources of our County; and

WHEREAS, the Town of St. Leo Commission agrees with and supports the positions taken by the Pasco County Board of County Commissioners in their Pasco Water Team 2007 Summary Report, and the recent position paper from the Coalition to Preserve Our Water Resources, and finds that alternative water supplies still best meet the goals and objectives of the Master Water Plan because they maximize the use of reclaimed water, utilize alternative water supplies, minimize environmental impacts, and help to ensure adequate water supply for the future needs of the Town of St. Leo area, its citizens and natural systems.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED by the Town Commission of the Town of St. Leo in regular session duly assembled, that:

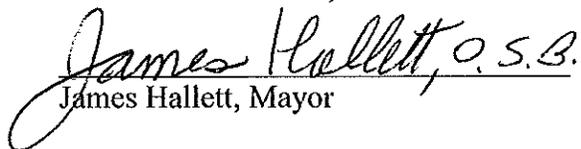
1. The Town of St. Leo expresses its strong support for alternative water projects that utilize reclaimed water, surface water and desalination to meet Tampa Bay Water's regional water supply needs; and
2. The Town of St. Leo supports the findings and official position taken by the Pasco County Board of County Commissioners in their Pasco Water Team 2007 Summary Report and the position paper promulgated by the Coalition to Preserve Our Water Resources; and
3. The Town of St. Leo is strongly opposed to newly proposed projects involving the East Pasco Regional Well Field and the Central Pasco Regional Well Field and urges Tampa Bay Water Board to continue the use of alternative water supplies.

DONE AND RESOLVED this 13th day of October 2008.

ATTEST:


Joan Miller, Town Clerk

TOWN OF ST. LEO, FLORIDA


James Hallett, Mayor