



# Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Agenda Item No. \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Date \_\_\_\_\_

Consent Section

Regular Section

Public Hearing

Subject: Tampa Bay Water's Water Use Permit Transfer from Suburban Land Reserve, Inc.			
Department Name: Environmental Service Department			
Contact Person: Kevin Moran		Contact Phone: 813 209-3073	
Sign-Off Approvals:			
<i>George Cassady</i>		3/12/2024	
Assistant County Administrator	Date	Department Director	Date
Management and Budget – Approved as to Financial Impact Accuracy	Date	County Attorney – Approved as to Legal Sufficiency	Date
Deputy County Administrator	Date		

**Staff's Recommended Board Motion:**  
 Direct staff to not arbitrate Tampa Bay Water's (TBW) transfer of 590,100 gallons per day from Water Use Permit No. 2000656.013 owned by Suburban Land Reserve to Tampa Bay Water's Balm Farm Water Use Permit, to serve Hillsborough County customers. Staff has reviewed the proposed permit and found no issues that warrant arbitration. Should the Board of County Commissioner's (BOCC) direct staff to arbitrate this item, arbitration costs could exceed \$50,000 and would require a budget amendment to allocate additional funds for arbitration services.

**Financial Impact Statement:**  
 Should the BOCC direct staff to arbitrate this item, arbitration costs could exceed \$50,000 and would require a budget amendment to allocate additional funding for arbitration services.

**Background:**  
 In accordance with the County's Policy on TBW's Water Use Permits, the following agenda item is presented to the BOCC because it involves a decision on whether or not to seek arbitration under TBW's Interlocal Agreement.

Hillsborough County and TBW have been working closely together to bring additional water supply to the Southern Hillsborough County service area to meet the growing water demand. Hillsborough County purchased the Ag-Mart property in the Balm area of southern Hillsborough County in late 2021. This property is the proposed site of Tampa Bay Water's South Hillsborough Wellfield. The eastern portion of the property purchased by the Water Resources Division is the site of the new water supply Point of Connection with Tampa Bay Water and a planned, future water treatment campus for Hillsborough County. The western portion was purchased for preservation under the Environmental Lands Acquisition and Protection Program (ELAPP).

TBW and Hillsborough County's ELAPP acquired a Water Use Permit on the former Ag-Mart property by harvesting permitted quantities that the previous landowner could not transfer to other properties. This Balm Farm Water Use Permit No. 20021046.000 was issued on July 21, 2022 for an average annual quantity of 250,000 gallons per day (gpd) designated for agricultural use. This WUP modification requests a reclassification of the current permitted quantity of 250,000 gpd annual average for agricultural water use to a use type of public supply for a revised quantity of 225,000 gpd. This 10% reduction in quantity for net environmental benefit is a specified requirement in the Southwest Florida Water Management District permitting rules.

WUP No. 2000656.013, also located in Hillsborough County, is held by Suburban Land Reserve, Inc. They have applied for a permit modification to reduce their current permitted quantity by 590,100 gpd following a reduction in irrigated acreage due to the sale of a portion of their property. TBW staff have negotiated an Agreement for Payment and Permanently Retired Water Right Transfer between Suburban Land Reserve, Inc. and Tampa Bay Water, in a separate agreement. This agreement specifies that the 590,100 gpd to be reduced from the Suburban Land Reserve permit will be transferred to the Tampa Bay Water Balm Farm permit through transferable groundwater credits. Both permits are located in the Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA); therefore, a transfer of groundwater quantity must provide a net benefit of a 10% increase in groundwater levels which slightly reduces the transferrable permit quantity. A groundwater modeling analysis indicates that this transfer of groundwater credits will yield an increase of 550,000 gpd annual average quantity to the Balm Farm WUP. This transfer of 590,100 gpd at the Suburban Land Reserve WUP 200656.014 meets the District's net benefit requirements.

This WUP modification requests the change in the current 250,000 gpd quantity from agricultural use to 225,000 gpd of public supply use and a transfer of 550,000 gpd from WUP 200656.014. This application to modify the Tampa Bay Water Balm Farm permit requests a new annual average quantity of 775,000 gpd for public supply use.

List Attachments: