

**Ron DeSantis**  
GOVERNOR



**Dane Eagle**  
SECRETARY

June 14, 2022

The Honorable Andrew White, Mayor and  
The Honorable Scott Levesque, Councilman  
Town of Inglis, Florida  
135 Highway 40 West  
Post Office Drawer 429  
Inglis, Florida 34449

Re: FY 2022-2023 Community Planning Technical Assistance Grants

Dear Mayor White and Councilman Levesque:

We appreciate your interest in the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Community Planning Technical Assistance grant program and we are pleased to inform you that your grant proposal to *develop a Community Action Plan* was selected for funding in the amount up to \$75,000.

The Department will provide additional information to finalize the scope of work and complete the grant agreement. For your convenience, we have enclosed a copy of our grant agreement template for you to begin your internal review. Beginning on or after July 1, 2022, any invoice for work specifically related to the grant project will be eligible for reimbursement after the grant agreement has been fully executed. If for any reason the grant agreement is not executed by both parties, cost reimbursement for work performed will not be available.

We look forward to our continued partnership, and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Barbara Powell, Regional Planning Administrator, by telephone at 850-717-8504 or by email at [Barbara.Powell@DEO.MyFlorida.com](mailto:Barbara.Powell@DEO.MyFlorida.com).

Sincerely,

Benjamin M. Melnick, Deputy Secretary  
Division of Community Development

BM/ai

Enclosure

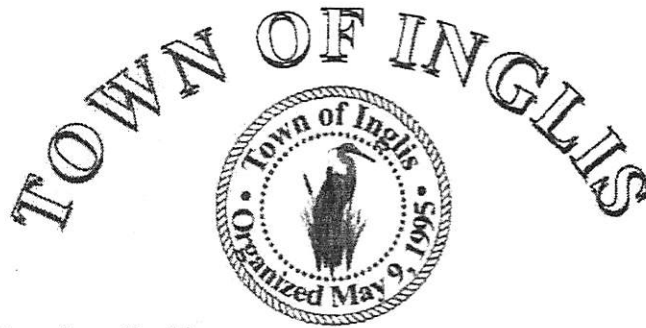
cc: Amanda Iscrupe, Agreement Manager, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity  
Michele Glaum, Water Clerk, Town of Inglis, Florida

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity | Caldwell Building | 107 E. Madison Street | Tallahassee, FL 32399  
(850) 245.7105 | [www.FloridaJobs.org](http://www.FloridaJobs.org) | [www.Twitter.com/FLDEO](http://www.Twitter.com/FLDEO) | [www.Facebook.com/FLDEO](http://www.Facebook.com/FLDEO)

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135 Highway 40 West  
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Inglis, Florida 34449

(352) 447-2203  
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Mayor Andrew White and Councilman Scott Levesque

April 11, 2022

Benjamin M. Melnick, Deputy Secretary  
Division of Community Development  
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity  
107 East Madison Street, MSC 160  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

RE: Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant, State Fiscal Year 2022-2023  
Town of Inglis

The Town of Inglis is pleased to submit a grant application to develop a Community Action Plan to restore flow of the Lower Withlacoochee River, entitled "Engineering Evaluation of Inglis Dam and Inglis Bypass".. The point of contact for this application is Dr. Ursula Schwuttke, Ph.D., 16219 W River Rd, Inglis, FL 34449. Her phone number is 352-949-3747 and her email is Ursula.schwuttke@gmail.com. Dr. Schwuttke is a director of the organization Withlacoochee Aquatic Restoration.

Inglis and Yankeetown are located along the Lower Withlacoochee River on the border of Citrus and Levy Counties, in an economically-challenged area. This section of river is designated as an Outstanding Florida Waterway, but over the past two decades it has seen significant impairment. Withlacoochee Aquatic Restoration, in partnership with the towns of Inglis and Yankeetown, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the Southwest Florida Water Management District, has worked with Wetland Solutions, Inc. to conduct an extensive, multi-year water quality monitoring study and to develop a recovery plan. One of the key elements of the recovery plan resulting from this study is to restore the original flows to the river.

Much of the historic river flow is now being discharged to the Gulf of Mexico through the Cross Florida Barge Canal, instead of following its original path down the Lower Withlacoochee. As a result of this diversion, historic peak flows, which are needed to scour the river bottom, no longer occur - regardless of the amount of rainfall received.

An additional benefit is likely in the context of sea level rise. As increasing sea levels continue to impact the vegetative and biological life along the river, additional flow (as would have existed historically) would help maintain the saline interface further downstream. The impact of increased salinity is already visible in the areas within a few miles of the gulf, where native hardwood trees including ancient cypress and oaks have been dying in alarming numbers, likely because of increased salinity brought about by reduced flows and increasing sea levels. These trees have root structures that support islands and hammocks that act as buffers during extreme weather events and serve to shelter the inland lowlands. As we lose these trees, we will also lose acres of the land they are holding in place, and gain vulnerability in coastal flooding events.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) have also performed studies on the Withlacoochee River Watershed for more than twenty years. The extent of those studies includes approximately 2,100 square miles of watershed area along the 157 mile long Withlacoochee River. In 2003, SWFWMD funded a feasibility study considering alternatives for restoration of flow to the Lower Withlacoochee River. To date, none of the alternatives have been initiated, while the water quality of the river continues to be degraded. The Town of Inglis wants to take action.

This project would provide us planning tools needed to restore historic flows to the lower Withlacoochee River, with positive impacts on water quality of this Outstanding Florida Waterway. There would be benefits to the local economy, as well as protection against some of the impacts of sea-level rise and local flooding.

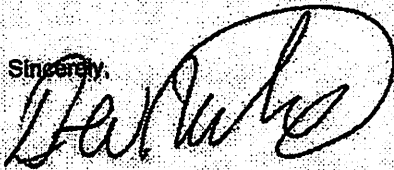
Through this project, we hope to achieve the following goals:

1. Perform an engineering review of existing study information on the Inglis Dams, locks, and spillways that control flow from Lake Rousseau to the Cross-Florida Barge Canal and the Lower Withlacoochee River.
2. Conduct stakeholder input meetings to facilitate discussion about alternatives to restore flow.
3. Develop a Community Action Plan to restore flow of the Lower Withlacoochee River. The total amount of funding that is requested is \$75,000.

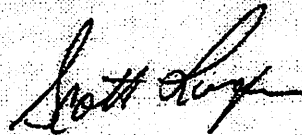
Further information about this project is provided in the Scope of Work and Budget. Upon being awarded a Technical Assistance Grant, the Town will pursue a qualified consultant to complete the project within the proposed schedule.

We look forward to the possibility of funding for this important project. Attached are letters of support from Levy County and Citrus County, which would also benefit from this work.

Sincerely,



Andrew White, Mayor



Scott Levesque, Councilman

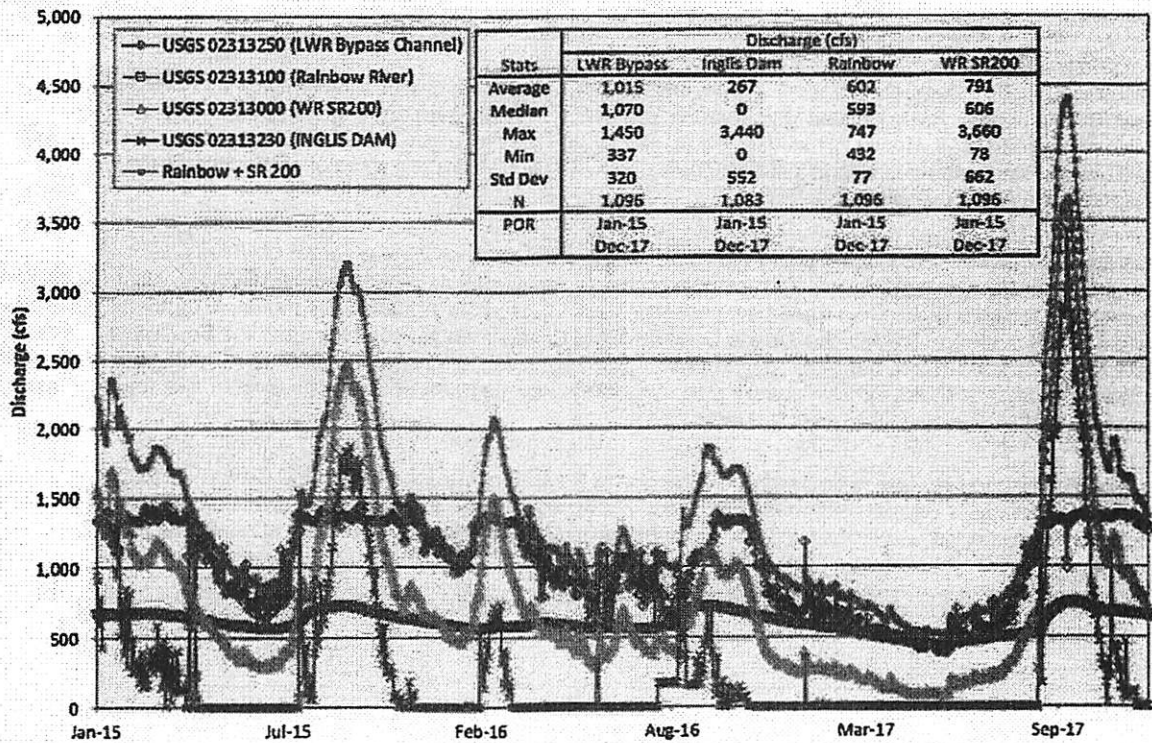
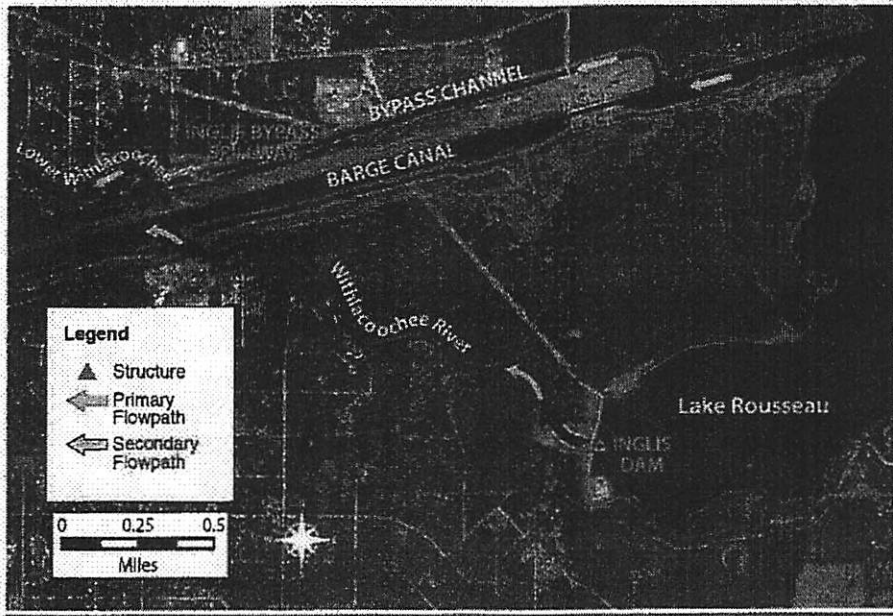


Figure 4. Flows on the Lower Withlacoochee River during the Phase 2 Study.

As determined by the Wetlands Solutions report, this lack of scouring action is one of the primary reasons for the river's impairment. The communities of Inglis and Yankeetown are motivated to understand how to best address and remedy the flow issue, because restoration of the Lower Withlacoochee River is key to the area's economic development. Ecotourism and fishing are vital to both communities, and restoring the quality of this Outstanding Florida Waterway is of importance to the towns, their residents, and their visitors, and the surrounding areas in Levy and Citrus County.

## Scope of Work

Deliverables/Tasks	Project Documentation to be sent to DEO	Due Date (received by DEO)	Cost (Not to Exceed)
<p><b>Deliverable 1. Data Collection and Analysis</b>            Engineering review of existing studies for information on the Inglis Dam, locks, and spillway that control flow from Lake Rousseau to the Cross-Florida Barge Canal and the Lower Withlacoochee River; Review alternatives to increase flow to the Lower Withlacoochee; Site visit of the existing facilities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Summary memo of existing studies, data, and alternatives.</li> <li>2. Photos of site visit.</li> </ol>	January 31, 2023	\$30,000
<p><b>Deliverable 2. Draft Community Action Plan</b>            Based on the above deliverable/task, prepare a draft Community Action Plan with alternatives to increase flow to the Lower Withlacoochee River. The plan will identify actionable steps to move forward with each alternative, a conceptual budget estimate, and estimated timeline. The draft plan will be submitted to DEO for review.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Draft Community Action Plan to Restore Flow to the Lower Withlacoochee River.</li> </ol>	March 15, 2023	\$20,000
<p><b>Deliverable 3. Public Workshops</b>            Hold two (2) public workshop meetings to present the draft Community Action Plan and request stakeholder input.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sign-in sheets from public workshops.</li> <li>2. Summary of workshops to include minutes and presentation material.</li> <li>3. Summary of comments received.</li> </ol>	April 15, 2023	\$5,000
<p><b>Deliverable 4. Final Community Action Plan</b>            Based on the above deliverables/tasks, prepare a final Community Action Plan with alternatives to increase flow to the Lower Withlacoochee River. The plan will identify actionable steps to move forward with each alternative, a conceptual budget estimate, and estimated timeline. The final plan will be submitted to DEO for review.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Final Community Action Plan to Restore Flow to the Lower Withlacoochee River.</li> </ol>	May 31, 2023	\$20,000

**Town of Inglis  
Grant Application for 2022-23 Community Planning Technical Assistance.**

**Budget**

<b>Data Collection and Analysis</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>
<b>Draft Community Action Plan</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>Public Workshops</b>	<b>\$ 5,000</b>
<b>Final Community Action Plan</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>



**LEVY COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
Government Serving Citizens

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Rock Meeks, Chair  
Lilly Rooks  
Matt Brooks

April 6, 2022

Benjamin M. Melnick, Deputy Secretary  
Division of Community Development  
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity  
107 East Madison Street, MSC 160  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

Dear Mr. Benjamin Melnick,

On behalf of the Levy County Board of County Commissioners, this letter is being sent in support of the grant application being submitted to the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) by the Town of Inglis titled "Evaluation of Inglis Dam and Inglis Bypass for the purpose of establishing repairs or modifications to improve structural integrity and restore flow to the lower Withlacoochee River." This project would restore much-needed historic flows to the lower Withlacoochee River, with positive impacts on water quality and corresponding benefits to the local economy, as well as protection against some of the impacts of sea-level rise and local flooding.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our support for the Town of Inglis grant application. Please do not hesitate to contact my office, should you have any questions or if we might be able to offer additional support during your review process.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russell Meeks Jr." in a cursive style.

Russell Meeks Jr., Chairman  
Levy County Board of County Commissioners

P.O. Box 310 Bronson Florida 32621  
Telephone (352) 486-5218 Fax (352) 486-5167  
Email: [levybocc@levycounty.org](mailto:levybocc@levycounty.org), Website: [www.levycounty.org](http://www.levycounty.org)



**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**  
**Board of County Commissioners**  
Executive Offices

3600 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto, FL 34461  
Phone: (352) 527-5205 Fax: (352) 527-5204

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April 11, 2022

EOL 22-07

Benjamin M. Melnick, Deputy Secretary  
Division of Community Development  
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity  
107 East Madison Street, MSC 160  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4120

Dear Mr. Melnick,

I am pleased to recommend to the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners support for the grant application entitled "Engineering Evaluation of Inglis Dam and Inglis Bypass to improve structural integrity and restore flow to the lower Withlacoochee River" **provided it does not change the lake levels in Lake Rousseau or decrease the flows in the other waterways.**

This project would ensure safety and potentially have a positive impact on water quality of this former Outstanding Florida Waterway. This will benefit the local economy, as well as protection against impacts of sea-level rise and local flooding.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Charles R. "Randy" Oliver  
County Administrator

CRO/ra