



DADE COUNTY FARM BUREAU

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April 27, 2006

Mr. Roger Carlton
Assistant County Manager, Miami-Dade County
VIA FACSIMILE: (305) 375-2862

Re: Request to Accept Appointment as an Ex-Officio Member of the Subcommittee of the South Miami-Dade Watershed Study and Plan Advisory Committee

Dear Roger:

I want to thank you for the confidence that you have in my ability to represent the views of the Miami-Dade County Agricultural Community. However, I must regretfully decline to accept your appointment as an ex-officio member of the appointed subcommittee.

As you know, I serve as Executive Director of the Dade County Farm Bureau. As part of my duties, I must interact with the members of my Board, share information with them regarding issues of importance to our association and assist them in developing the Bureau's position on these issues. Those duties require me to communicate with members of my Board who are also members of the Advisory Committee. Because these communications are an essential function of my job, these responsibilities would be inconsistent with the provisions of Florida's Sunshine Law, that I understand would be applicable to me if I were to accept the appointment.

At a minimum, I would have to obtain consent from my Board to waive these responsibilities that are part of my duties as an Executive Director, with respect to members that are also serving on the Watershed Committee. My Board does not meet until June, and you have set a very aggressive timeline for the subcommittee to meet and produce its report. Obtaining a waiver from my Board is therefore not feasible. Nevertheless, even if I could obtain a waiver on a more timely basis, my service on the subcommittee alongside a member of my Board, may create an inappropriate perception, and cause for speculation from those who may not understand the Bureau's strict directive to its Board members and employees, who at all times represent our association in an ethical manner and in strict compliance with the law.

I have no doubt that your offer to appoint me as an ex-officio member was motivated strictly by a desire to afford my organization the opportunity to vet our concerns in the sub-committee. This however can be accomplished through the participation of Mr. Fredrick, and my participation as a citizen, if and when given the opportunity to speak before the subcommittee.

If I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katie Edwards", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Katie Edwards
Executive Director

Cc: Executive Committee Members
John Fredrick



FACT SHEET

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Aid For Agricultural Producers Affected By Hurricanes Of 2005

Overview

On January 26, 2006, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced \$2.8 billion in aid to assist victims of the 2005 hurricane season. USDA will provide \$1.2 billion in aid to agricultural producers; primarily in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Texas. USDA will provide disaster payments to farmers, ranchers and others through eight separate programs. Funding is provided through (1) Section 32 of the Act of August 24, 1935 and (2) The Department of Defense, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations to Address Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, and Pandemic Influenza Act, 2006.

Programs Created with Section 32 Funds

USDA is providing \$250 million for crop disaster, livestock, tree, and aquaculture assistance from Section 32 funds. These funds will be distributed by way of five new programs:

- Hurricane Indemnity Program (HIP);
- Tree Indemnity Program (TIP);
- Feed Indemnity Program (FIP);
- Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); and
- Aquaculture Grants.

Producers in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Texas counties declared primary presidential or secretarial disaster areas in 2005 because of hurricanes are eligible for the new programs. A complete list of the counties is posted online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/PAS/news/releases/>. Producers must also meet other eligibility requirements.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer the five programs. Sign-up dates for the new programs (HIP, TIP, FIP, and LIP) will be announced as soon as new regulations and software are developed. Application procedures for aquaculture funds will be made by governors or their designees.

Hurricane Indemnity Program (HIP) - HIP will provide payments to farmers who received crop insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) payments as a result of the hurricanes. The payment will be 30 percent of the crop insurance indemnity or NAP payment and will be capped at 95 percent of the expected crop returns.

