

LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT: FY2026 Joint Funding Agreement with USGS

DATE OF MEETING: August 12, 2025

Work
Session/Regular
Session

BUDGET IMPACT: \$29,750.00

FUNDING SOURCE:

- ☒ Annual - \$29,750.00
- ☐ Capital
- ☐ N/A
- ☐ SPLOST
- ☐ TSPLOST

COUNTY ACTION REQUESTED ON: Approval of FY2026 Joint Funding Agreement with USGS

HISTORY, FACTS AND ISSUES: In 2009, Lowndes County entered into an agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to install and maintain a stream gauge on the Little River, located at the Highway 122 bridge just west of Hahira. While the USGS provided the equipment and covered installation costs, the County agreed to fund the ongoing maintenance to ensure continued operation. From 2009 to 2019, Lowndes County was responsible for maintaining this single gauge only.

In 2019, the City of Valdosta informed the USGS that it could no longer fund the stream gauge on the Withlacoochee River at Skipper Bridge. To maintain this critical monitoring site, Lowndes County agreed to contribute funding in collaboration with the USGS and the Suwannee River Water Management District.

Under the proposed renewal agreement, Lowndes County's total contribution will be \$29,750.00, comprising \$18,300.00 for the Little River site and \$11,450.00 for the Withlacoochee River site. This reflects an increase of \$1,900.00 from the previous year. One change that took effect last year was that the USGS now includes the cost of maintaining the precipitation gauges associated with each stream gauge separately from the cost of the actual stream monitoring equipment. However, these rain gauges are vital to the accuracy of stream monitoring, as precipitation data directly supports more reliable river level forecasting; therefore, the benefit provides justification for the additional cost.

OPTIONS: 1. Authorize the Chairman to sign the Joint Funding Agreement with the USGS for \$29,750 to continue operation of the stream gauges on the Little River and the Withlacoochee River at Skipper Bridge.

2. Board's Pleasure.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve

DEPARTMENT: Emergency Management

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Ashley Tye