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CARES recognition event stage decoration.

DISTRICT AND PARTNERS HONOR CARES RECIPIENTS

LIVE OAK, FLA., May 15, 2017 – Suwannee River Water Management District (District) assisted Florida Farm Bureau (FFB) in honoring ten farm operations from around the District at the 17th Annual County Alliance for Responsible Environmental Stewardship (CARES) Event on Thursday, May 11. CARES is a partnership between the District, FFB, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), the

University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS), the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS), and other Suwannee River Partnership (SRP) members. The CARES mission is to recognize farmers for conserving water and nutrients in their farming operations through the implementation of best management practices (BMP).

The 2017 CARES recipients are Brandon Overstreet, Rufus Ogden, Jason Dicks, Bart Geiger, Jerry Quincey, Kim Jones, Blair Beauchamp, Bryan McHargue, Billy Murphy, and Brandon Douglas. These individuals and their families were the honored guests of the CARES recognition event that took place at UF/IFAS Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center. Hundreds of attendees gathered to sample delicious food items produced by various commodity groups located throughout the north Florida region. Following dinner, CARES recipients received recognition for their conservation efforts. The ceremony was led by Sarah Carte and included speakers such as FFB President John Hoblick; FDACS Deputy Commissioner Alan Edwards; Associate Dean of UF/IFAS Dr. Saqib Mukhtar; USDA NRCS State Conservationist Russell Morgan; and District Executive Director Noah Valenstein.

In his address to the CARES recipients, Valenstein remarked on CARES impressive 17-year history of impactful, data-driven results and commended the CARES recipients on their commitment to creating a sustainable future for Florida's natural resources.

The mission of the Suwannee River Water Management District is to protect and manage water resources using science-based solutions to support natural systems and the needs of the

public. The District holds true to the belief of water for nature, water for people. Headquartered in Live Oak, Florida, the District serves 15 surrounding north-central Florida counties.

For more information about the District, visit www.mysuwanneeriver.com or follow us on Facebook and Twitter, search @SRWMD.

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