

Consolidated Annual Report

March 1, 2026



Southwest Florida
Water Management District



Consolidated Annual Report

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Executive Summary

Section 373.036, Florida Statutes (F.S.) requires the water management districts to prepare a “Consolidated Water Management District Annual Report” consisting of several reporting documents that had historically been submitted separately. The legislation requires the consolidated report to be submitted by March 1 of each year to the Governor, DEP, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. In addition, copies must be provided, “... to the chairs of all legislative committees having substantive or fiscal jurisdiction over the districts and the governing body of each county in the district having jurisdiction or deriving any funds for operations of the District. Copies of the consolidated report must be made available to the public, either in printed or electronic format.

This consolidated report is an important communication tool for the District. The report’s components were formerly individually distributed at various times of the year. The consolidation results in streamlining the reporting documents in one package. It also allows greater efficiency in comparing different reporting mechanisms.

Descriptions and highlights from the chapters that make up the 2026 Consolidated Annual Report follow:

The Minimum Flows and Levels Annual Priority List and Schedule The District's expenditures for minimum flows and levels (MFLs) and reservation adoption have changed from approximately \$1 million in fiscal year 1998 to a peak of \$4.9 million in 2009, with nearly \$750,000 expended in FY2025. As of FY2025, District rules included 207 MFLs and two water reservations. In addition to efforts that supported the establishment of these rules, 104 waterbodies have been reevaluated at least once to confirm, revise or repeal established MFLs. By the end of 2028, four new MFLs are scheduled for adoption, and 23 existing MFLs and one reservation are scheduled for reevaluation.

The Minimum Flows and Levels/Water Quality Grade for Projects Report This document satisfies new reporting called for in Section 373.036(7)(b)9, F.S. The report contains grades for each watershed, water body or water segment expected to be impacted by a project listed in the Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program. Two grades are provided: 1) a grade that reflects the severity of a water quality impairment, and 2) a grade that represents the level of violation of an adopted minimum flow or minimum level. In total 76 projects (64 water resource development projects plus 12 Basin Management Action Plan projects) from the Work Program are listed with the corresponding impacted watershed, water body or water segment, the water quality impairment grade and the minimum flow or level grade.

The Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan This includes projected revenues and expenditures for improvements for fiscal year (FY) 2025-26 through FY2029-30. Some of the major highlights for FY2025-26 include:

Research, Data Collection, Analysis and Monitoring:

- \$1,620,000 for coring, drilling, testing and construction of monitor wells at Regional Observation and Monitor-well Program sites, as well as special project sites within the Central Florida Water Initiative region.

Land Acquisition:

- \$16,700,000 for potential land acquisition under the Florida Forever program and funded from dollars generated from the sale of land or real estate interests within the state of Florida.

Works:

- \$1,500,000 for the replacement of two structures, P-1 and P-3 in Polk County, which are nearing end of life and require replacement or refurbishment to improve operations and maintenance. The project will ensure they continue to provide their intended benefits while increasing reliability and reducing maintenance costs.
- \$1,000,000 for the replacement of the District's water control structures' remote-control systems. Replacement of the control systems will increase reliability and decrease unexpected failures, which will reduce future maintenance costs.

The Alternative Water Supplies Annual Report This Legislatively required report describes alternative water supply projects funded as well as the quantity of new water to be created by these projects. The report also accounts for other funding sources, such as grants or the use of District lands or facilities to implement regional water supply plans. For FY2026, the District budgeted more than \$94 million for alternative water supply projects, including brackish desalination, surface water/stormwater and regional transmission, projected to provide more than 22.5 mgd of water supply. In addition to infrastructure funding, the District continues to participate in studies and research with utilities and entities on alternative water sources in support of the District's mission to find and maintain adequate and ecologically sustainable resources.

The Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program The Work Program describes the District's implementation strategy for the Water Resource Development component of the District's 2025 Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP) and the 2025 Central Florida Water Initiative RWSP. This 25th edition of the Work Program covers the period from FY2026 to 2030. The Work Program presents the data collection and analyses activities and more narrowly defined "projects" that the District is financially and technically undertaking to enhance the water available to meet projected demands. To meet Subsection 373.536(6) F.S., the Work Program includes the anticipated five-year funding for Water Supply and Water Resource Development Assistance projects that are developed by cooperating water providers and qualify for District financial assistance, and an appendix of projects that help to implement Basin Management Action Plans. The Work Program outlines activities and projects that will make available 81.7 mgd of water supply upon completion, including reuse water and new potable supply. These benefits are associated with approximately \$122 million budgeted for FY2026.

The Polk Regional Water Cooperative Status Report This annual report provides a status on Polk Regional Water Cooperative (PRWC) projects receiving priority state funding. For the 2024 report, the cooperative and its members identified 29 prioritized projects and requested FY2026 funding by the Florida Legislature, with approximately \$1.6 million in funding being received. For this 2025 report, a prioritized list of two PRWC and 29 local member government projects are being submitted for FY2027 funding consideration by the Florida Legislature. For FY2027, a total of \$194.3 million would be required to implement the 14 ranked priority projects, with \$151.8 million committed in local member government funding. A total of \$42.4 million for these 14 ranked priority projects is being requested from the state and their implementation is subject to approval of state funding for the FY2027 budget year. An additional \$20 million in annual funding is also being requested over the next five years for the PRWC's Southeast Wellfield Project and member local government receiving facilities.

The Florida Forever Work Plan The Florida Forever Act established the Florida Forever Program that provided for the issuance of bonds to state agencies, water management districts and local governments. Florida Forever funds allocated to the water management districts were required to be used for land acquisition including less-than-fee interests, water resource development and water body restoration. Over the life of the program, at least 50 percent of the

funds allocated to each water management district must have been used for land acquisition. The District fully utilized its total funding allocation by FY2023 and expended approximately 6 percent on water resources development projects and approximately 94 percent on land acquisition. The District's acquisitions under this program supports the District's Four Areas of Responsibilities by providing ecosystem benefits including: water quality and quantity, resiliency from storm impacts, and natural systems protection.

As required by Section 373.199 (7), Florida Statutes, the District must submit an annual update of its Florida Forever Work Plan (Work Plan). The Work Plan must include modifications or additions, a description of land management activity for each property or project area owned by the water management district, a list of any lands surplused and the amount of compensation received, and the progress of funding, staffing, and resource management for projects funded pursuant to the Preservation 2000 Act, the Florida Forever Act and the Water Management Lands Trust Fund. Modifications to the 2025 Work Plan are set forth in Chapter 7.

The Mitigation Donation Annual Report This report identifies all cash donations, if any, accepted during the preceding fiscal year for wetland mitigation purposes. Similar to last year, no donations were received.

The 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, and the 2025 Strategic Plan Annual Work Plan The Strategic Plan is the guiding document for the District, identifying targets and how success will be achieved and measured. The plan identifies 12 Districtwide strategic initiatives, including regional water supply planning; alternative water supplies; reclaimed water; water conservation; water quality assessment and planning; water quality maintenance and improvement; minimum flows and levels establishment and monitoring; conservation, restoration and management; floodplain management; programs, projects and regulations; flood protection facilities; and emergency flood response and 34 regional priorities/objectives. The plan has a five-year time horizon and is updated on an annual basis. Resiliency was added to core business practices, for a total of ten (10) core business practices.

The Strategic Plan Annual Work Plan details progress on efforts implementing priorities and objectives of the Strategic Plan. Notable accomplishments for the Northern Planning Region in FY2025, During FY2025 the District's Water Incentives Supporting Efficiency (WISE) program funded two projects. In the Tampa Bay Planning Region and the Southern Water Caution Use Area (SWUCA), the District has offset approximately 28.9 mgd of groundwater through Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) projects that are operational, under construction and/or have pending contracts. Of significant note, in the Tampa Bay, Heartland and Southern regions, a status assessment completed in 2024 indicated that the SWUCA saltwater intrusion minimum aquifer level (SWIMAL) continues to be met. This success is based on the 13.1 ft. upper Floridan aquifer elevation associated with the SWIMAL being equaled or exceeded for five consecutive years, from 2019 through 2023.

Consolidated **Annual**
Report
March 1, 2026

2025 Priority List and Schedule

*for the Establishment of Minimum Flows,
Minimum Water Levels and Reservations*



Southwest Florida
Water Management District



Chapter 1 2025 Southwest Florida Water Management District Priority List and Schedule for the Establishment of Minimum Flows, Minimum Water Levels and Reservations

Overview

Pursuant to Sections 373.036(7) and 373.042(3), Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Southwest Florida Water Management District is required to annually update its priority list and schedule for the establishment of minimum flows and minimum water levels, submit the updated list and schedule to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) by November 15th for approval, and include the approved list and schedule in the District's Consolidated Annual Report by March 1st. Minimum flows and minimum water levels are rules adopted by the state water management districts or DEP that define the limit at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area. In addition to prioritized minimum flows and minimum water levels, the priority list and schedule must include reservations proposed for establishment. Reservations are rules that reserve water from use by permit applications, as necessary for the protection of fish and wildlife or public health and safety.

The District prepared this 2025 priority list and schedule to address all relevant statutory directives, and guidance concerning minimum flow, minimum water level and water reservation prioritization included in Rules 62-40.473, and 62-40.474 within the State Water Resource Implementation Rule, Chapter 62-40, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) and in Rule 62.41.304 within the Regulation of the Consumptive Use of Water Rule (Chapter 62-41, F.A.C.) of the DEP that address the Central Florida Water Initiative Area defined in Section 373.0465(2)(a), F.S.

Established Minimum Flows, Minimum Water Levels and Reservations

As of October 2025, District rules include minimum flows or minimum water levels for 207 water bodies (Chapter 40D-8, F.A.C.) and reservations for 2 water bodies (Chapter 40D-2, F.A.C.). As listed below, minimum flows or water levels are established for 126 lakes, 34 wetlands, 28 freshwater and estuarine river segments, 10 springs or spring groups (including all first magnitude springs and all second magnitude springs within the District that occur within state or federal lands purchased for conservation purposes), 7 upper Floridan aquifer (UFA) sites in the northern Tampa Bay area, an UFA site in the Dover/Plant City area, and the UFA in the Most Impacted Area of the Southern Water Use Caution Area. In addition, 130 minimum flow or level reevaluations have been completed to confirm or support the revision or repeal of established minimum flows or minimum water levels. As also listed below, reservations have been established for Lake Hancock/Lower Saddle Creek and Morris Bridge Sink to support minimum flow recovery in 2 rivers.

Water Bodies with Adopted and Effective Minimum Flow and Minimum Water Level Rules, Including Those That Have Been Reevaluated

Waterbody Name or Compliance Point	County	Waterbody Type	Year	MFL Type
Alafia River (lower segment)	Hillsborough	River, Estuary	2010	Initial
Alafia River (upper segment)	Hillsborough, Polk	River	2008	Initial
Alice	Hillsborough	Lake	2018	Initial
Allen	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Anclote River (lower segment)	Pasco	River, Estuary	2010	Initial
Anclote River (upper segment)	Pasco	River	2010	Initial
Angelo	Highlands	Lake	2008	Reeval
Annie	Polk	Lake	2007	Initial
Anoka	Highlands	Lake	2009	Reeval
Aurora	Polk	Lake	2018	Reeval
Barbara	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Bell	Pasco	Lake	2004	Initial
Big Fish	Pasco	Lake	2017	Initial
Big Gant	Sumter	Lake	2007	Initial
Bird	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Bird	Pasco	Lake	2004	Initial
Black	Sumter	Lake	2007	Initial
Blind Spring	Citrus, Hernando	Spring-2	2020	Reeval
Bonable	Marion	Lake	2013	Initial
Bonnie	Polk	Lake	2007	Reeval
Braden River (upper segment)	Manatee	River	2008	Initial
Brant	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Buddy	Pasco	Lake	2017	Initial
Calm Lake (Hillsborough)	Hillsborough	Lake	2020	Initial
Camp	Pasco	Lake	2015	Initial
Carroll	Hillsborough	Lake	2012	Initial
Charles	Hillsborough	Lake	2020	Initial
Charlie Creek	Hardee, Polk	River	2024	Initial
Chassahowitzka River	Citrus, Hernando	River-Estuary	2020	Reeval
Chassahowitzka Spring Group (OFS)	Citrus, Hernando	Spring-1	2020	Reeval
Church Lake	Hillsborough	Lake	2020	Initial
Clear	Pasco	Lake	2021	Initial
Clinch	Polk	Lake	2017	Initial
Cone Ranch 1 (CR1)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cone Ranch 2 (CR2)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cone Ranch 3 (CR3)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cone Ranch 4 (CR4)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cone Ranch 5 (CR5)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cone Ranch 6 (CR6)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Crenshaw	Hillsborough	Lake	2003	Initial
Crescent	Hillsborough	Lake	2005	Initial

2025 Priority List and Schedule

Waterbody Name or Compliance Point	County	Waterbody Type	Year	MFL Type
Crews	Pasco	Lake	2016	Initial
Crooked	Polk	Lake	2017	Reeval
Cross Bar Q-1 (CBARWF Q-1)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cross Bar T-3 (CBARWF T-3)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Crystal	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Crystal	Polk	Lake	2011	Initial
Crystal River	Citrus	River-Estuary	2018	Reeval
Crystal Springs	Pasco	Spring-2	2008	Initial
Cypress	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Cypress Bridge 16 (CBRWF #16)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cypress Bridge 25 (CBRWF #25)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cypress Bridge 32 (CBRWF #32)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cypress Bridge 4 (CBRWF #4)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cypress Creek W-11 (CC W-11)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cypress Creek W-12 (CC W-12)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cypress Creek W-17 (CC W-17)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Cypress Creek W-56 (G) (CC Site G)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Damon	Highlands	Lake	2018	Initial
Dan	Hillsborough	Lake	2017	Initial
Deaton	Sumter	Lake	2007	Initial
Deer	Hillsborough	Lake	2018	Initial
Denton	Highlands	Lake	2008	Reeval
Dinner	Polk	Lake	2007	Initial
Dona Bay/Shakett Creek System	Sarasota	River-Estuary	2010	Initial
Dosson	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
DV-1 Suwannee	Hillsborough	Aquifer	2022	Reeval
Eagle Lake	Polk	Lake	2017	Reeval
Easy	Polk	Lake	2018	Reeval
Echo Lake	Hillsborough	Lake	2020	Initial
Eldridge Wilde 11 (NW-44) (EWWF NW-44)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Eldridge Wilde 5	Pinellas	Wetland	2020	Initial
Ellen	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Eva	Polk	Lake	2018	Reeval
Fairy (Maurine)	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Fort Cooper	Citrus	Lake	2007	Initial
Garden	Hillsborough	Lake	2004	Initial
Green	Pasco	Lake	2004	Initial
Gum Springs	Sumter, Marion	Spring-2	2016	Reeval
Halfmoon	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Hancock	Pasco	Lake	2021	Initial
Hancock	Polk	Lake	2016	Initial
Hancock, Lake/Lower Saddle Creek (Reeval, first)	Polk	Lake, River	2020	Reservation
Hanna	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Reeval
Harvey	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Helen	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Hillsborough River (lower segment)	Hillsborough	River-Estuary	2007	Recovery Strategy Reeval

2025 Priority List and Schedule

Waterbody Name or Compliance Point	County	Waterbody Type	Year	MFL Type
Hillsborough River (upper segment)	Hillsborough, Polk	River	2008	Initial
Hobbs	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Homosassa River	Citrus	River-Estuary	2020	Reeval
Homosassa Spring Group (OFS)	Citrus	Spring-1	2020	Reeval
Hooker	Hillsborough	Lake	2012	Initial
Horse	Hillsborough	Lake	2017	Initial
Horse Creek	Hardee, DeSoto	River	2024	Initial
Hunters	Hernando	Lake	2021	Initial
Iola	Pasco	Lake	2008	Initial
Jackson	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Jackson	Highlands	Lake	2017	Reeval
Jessamine	Pasco	Lake	2008	Initial
Juanita	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
June-In-Winter	Highlands	Lake	2006	Initial
Keene	Hillsborough	Lake	2014	Initial
Kell	Hillsborough	Lake	2014	Initial
King	Pasco	Lake	2008	Initial
King (East)	Pasco	Lake	2008	Initial
Kings Bay Spring Group (OFS)	Citrus	Spring-1	2018	Reeval
Lee	Polk	Lake	2007	Initial
Letta	Highlands	Lake	2017	Reeval
Linda	Pasco	Lake	2008	Initial
Lindsey	Hernando	Lake	2021	Initial
Lithia/Buckhorn Spring Group	Hillsborough	Spring-2	2010	Initial
Little Bonable	Marion	Lake	2013	Initial
Little Jackson	Highlands	Lake	2017	Reeval
Little Manatee River (lower segment)	Hillsborough	River-Estuary	2024	Initial
Little Manatee River (upper segment)	Hillsborough, Manatee	River	2024	Initial
Little Moon	Hillsborough	Lake	2017	Initial
Lotela	Highlands	Lake	2017	Reeval
Lowery	Polk	Lake	2018	Initial
Mabel	Polk	Lake	2007	Initial
Marion	Levy	Lake	2020	Initial
McLeod	Polk	Lake	2017	Reeval
Merrywater	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Middle	Pasco	Lake	2005	Initial
Miona	Sumter	Lake	2007	Initial
Moon	Pasco	Lake	2017	Initial
Morris Bridge Clay Gully Cypress (MBR-88)(MBWF Clay Gully Cypress)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Morris Bridge Entry Dome (MBR-35) (MBWF Entry Dome)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Morris Bridge Sink	Hillsborough	Sink	2007	Reservation
Morris Bridge Unnamed (MBR-16) (MBWF Unnamed)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Morris Bridge X-4 (MBR-89) MBWF X-4)	Hillsborough	Wetland	2020	Initial
Mound	Hillsborough	Lake	2004	Initial
Mountain	Hernando	Lake	2021	Initial

Waterbody Name or Compliance Point	County	Waterbody Type	Year	MFL Type
Myakka River (lower segment)	Sarasota	River-Estuary	2012	Initial
Myakka River (upper segment)	Sarasota	River	2006	Initial
Neff	Hernando	Lake	2021	Initial
North Lake Wales	Polk	Lake	2011	Reeval
North Pasco 21 (NPWF #21)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
North Pasco 3 (NPWF #3)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Okahumpka	Sumter	Lake	2007	Initial
Padgett	Pasco	Lake	2015	Initial
Panasoffkee	Sumter	Lake	2007	Initial
Parker	Polk	Lake	2021	Initial
Parker (Ann)	Pasco	Lake	2004	Initial
Pasadena	Pasco	Lake	2017	Initial
Peace River (lower segment)	DeSoto, Charlotte	River-Estuary	2021	Reeval
Peace River (middle segment)	DeSoto, Hardee	River	2006	Initial
Peace, Upper above Bartow	Polk	River	2006	Reeval
Peace, Upper above Ft. Meade	Polk	River	2006	Reeval
Peace, Upper above Zolfo	Hardee, Polk	River	2006	Reeval
Pierce	Pasco	Lake	2019	Reeval
Pithlachascotee River (lower segment)	Pasco	River-Estuary	2018	Initial
Pithlachascotee River (upper segment)	Pasco	River	2018	Initial
Placid	Highlands	Lake	2008	Initial
Platt	Hillsborough	Lake	2004	Initial
Pretty	Hillsborough	Lake	2005	Initial
Rainbow	Hillsborough	Lake	2017	Initial
Rainbow River	Marion	River	2020	Reeval
Rainbow Spring Group (OFS)	Marion	Spring-1	2020	Reeval
Raleigh	Hillsborough	Lake	2013	Initial
Reinheimer	Hillsborough	Lake	2004	Initial
RMP-13D	Hillsborough	Aquifer	2000	Initial
RMP-16D (Sheldon Road Deep)	Hillsborough	Aquifer	2000	Initial
RMP-8D1	Hillsborough	Aquifer	2000	Initial
Rogers	Hillsborough	Lake	2013	Initial
Round	Hillsborough	Lake	2018	Initial
Saddleback	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Sapphire	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Shell Creek (lower segment)	Charlotte	River-Estuary	2022	Initial
South Pasco 2 (NW-49) (SPWF NW-49)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
South Pasco 6 (NW-50) (SPWF NW-50)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
South Pasco South Cypress (SPWF South Cypress)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Spring	Hernando	Lake	2005	Initial
Starkey Central (STWF Central Recorder)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Starkey Eastern (S73) (STWF Eastern Recorder)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Starkey M (S-69) (STWF M)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Starkey N (STWF N)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Starkey S-75 (STWF S-75)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Starkey S-99	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial
Starkey Z (STWF Z)	Pasco	Wetland	2020	Initial

Waterbody Name or Compliance Point	County	Waterbody Type	Year	MFL Type
Starr	Polk	Lake	2017	Reeval
Starvation	Hillsborough	Lake	2015	Initial
Stemper	Hillsborough	Lake	2014	Initial
Strawberry (North Crystal)	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Sulphur Springs	Hillsborough	Spring-2	2007	Reeval
Sunset	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Sunshine	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
SWF 201-M	Pinellas	Aquifer	2000	Initial
SWF EW 2S Deep	Pinellas	Aquifer	2000	Initial
SWI-18S	Pinellas	Aquifer	2000	Initial
SWUCA SWIMAL	Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota	Aquifer	2007	Reeval
Tampa Bypass Canal	Hillsborough	River-Estuary	2007	Initial
Tarpon Rd. Deep	Pinellas	Aquifer	2000	Initial
Taylor	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Tiger	Marion	Lake	2013	Initial
Tooke	Hernando	Lake	2013	Initial
Tsala Apopka (Floral City Pool)	Citrus	Lake	2007	Initial
Tsala Apopka (Hernando Pool)	Citrus	Lake	2007	Initial
Tsala Apopka (Inverness Pool)	Citrus	Lake	2007	Initial
Tulane	Highlands	Lake	2024	Reeval
Unnamed No. 22	Pasco	Lake	2008	Initial
Venus	Polk	Lake	2007	Initial
Verona	Highlands	Lake	2024	Reeval
Virginia	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial
Wailles, Lake	Polk	Lake	2017	Reeval
Weeki Wachee River	Hernando	River-Estuary	2009	Initial
Weeki Wachee Spring Group (OFS)	Hernando	Spring-1	2009	Initial
Weekiwachee Prairie (Theresa)	Hernando	Lake	2005	Initial
Whitehurst	Hernando	Lake	2013	Initial
Wimauma	Hillsborough	Lake	2021	Initial

Prioritized Water Bodies for Establishment or Reevaluation of Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels

Minimum flows and minimum water levels proposed for establishment or reevaluation through 2028 are listed by water body name in tabular form on the following pages. The single reservation prioritized for reevaluation during this period is also listed.

System name is provided for each water body to distinguish waterbodies that may be part of a larger system. Water body type, i.e., lake, river, river-estuary, spring, or aquifer is identified along with water body location information. Spring magnitude based on flow rate is provided for prioritized spring systems.

District intent regarding completion of voluntary, independent, scientific peer review is also identified for each water body. Voluntary scientific peer review is proposed for minimum flows development or reevaluation for all prioritized river segments and the single prioritized minimum

aquifer level reevaluation based on the expected level of complexity of these minimum flows and levels, and the anticipated degree of public concern regarding their development. None of the prioritized lake minimum levels are expected to be subjected to voluntary scientific peer review, based on anticipated use of previously peer-reviewed criteria for their development.

Prioritized water bodies that may be affected by withdrawals occurring in other water management districts due to cross-boundary impacts are identified to support coordination of regulatory activities among the districts and DEP. This includes those specifically associated with withdrawals from within the Central Florida Water Initiative area. Development of minimum flow or water levels by the DEP for any of these water bodies is not, however, currently considered necessary or appropriate.

The status of rulemaking for each prioritized water body is also listed.

Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels Adopted in 2025.

New or Re-Evaluation	Waterbody Name or Compliance Point	System Name ^a	Waterbody Type	County(s)	Voluntary Peer Review to be Completed?	Cross-Boundary Impacts from Adjacent Water Management District?	Latitude	Longitude	Rulemaking Status ^b
Reevaluation (first)	Bonnie, Lake	Bonnie, Lake	Lake	Polk	No	Yes ^c	27.9118	-81.5573	N/A
Reevaluation (first)	North Lake Wales	North Lake Wales	Lake	Polk	No	Yes ^c	27.9096	-81.5805	N/A
Reevaluation (second)	Wailes, Lake	Wailes, Lake	Lake	Polk	No	Yes ^c	27.9015	-81.5726	N/A
Reevaluation (first)	Peace River (upper segment, U.S. Geological Survey Zolfo Springs gage to U.S. Geological Survey Ft. Meade gage)	Peace River (upper segment, U.S. Geological Survey Zolfo Springs gage to U.S. Geological Survey Ft. Meade gage)	River	Hardee, Polk	Yes	Yes ^c	27.5042	-81.8011	N/A
Reevaluation (first)	Peace River (upper segment, U.S. Geological Survey Ft. Meade gage to U.S. Geological Survey Bartow gage)	Peace River (upper segment, U.S. Geological Survey Ft. Meade gage to U.S. Geological Survey Bartow gage)	River	Polk	Yes	Yes ^c	27.7511	-81.7822	N/A
Reevaluation (first)	Peace River (upper segment, upstream of U.S. Geological Survey Bartow gage)	Peace River (upper segment, upstream of U.S. Geological Survey Bartow gage)	River	Polk	Yes	Yes ^c	27.9019	-81.8175	N/A

Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels to be Adopted in 2026.

New or Re-Evaluation	Waterbody Name or Compliance Point	System Name ^a	Waterbody Type	County(s)	Voluntary Peer Review to be Completed?	Cross-Boundary Impacts from Adjacent Water Management District?	Latitude	Longitude	Rulemaking Status ^b
Reevaluation (first)	Aurora, Lake	Aurora, Lake	Lake	Polk	No	Yes ^c	27.8791	-81.4655	N/A
Reevaluation (second)	Eagle Lake	Eagle Lake	Lake	Polk	No	Yes ^c	27.9867	-81.7665	N/A
Reevaluation (first)	Eva, Lake	Eva, Lake	Lake	Polk	No	Yes ^c	28.0952	-81.6281	N/A
Reevaluation (second)	McLeod, Lake	McLeod, Lake	Lake	Polk	No	Yes ^c	27.9675	-81.7529	N/A
Reevaluation (first)	Gum Slough Spring Run/Group	Gum Slough Spring Run/Group	Spring-2	Sumter, Marion	Yes	Yes	28.9511	-82.2500	N/A
New	Withlacoochee River (lower segment)	Withlacoochee River (lower segment)	River-Estuary	Citrus, Levy	Yes	Yes	29.0208	-82.6381	N/A
New	Withlacoochee River (upper segment, U.S. Geological Survey Holder gage to U.S. Geological Survey Wysong gage)	Withlacoochee River (upper segment, U.S. Geological Survey Holder gage to U.S. Geological Survey Wysong gage)	River	Citrus, Marion, Sumter	Yes	Yes	28.9886	-82.3497	N/A
New	Withlacoochee River (upper segment, U.S. Geological Survey Wysong gage to U.S. Geological Survey Croom gage)	Withlacoochee River (upper segment, U.S. Geological Survey Wysong gage to U.S. Geological Survey Croom gage)	River	Citrus, Sumter, Hernando	Yes	No	28.8231	-82.1833	N/A
New	Withlacoochee River (upper segment, upstream of U.S. Geological Survey Croom gage)	Withlacoochee River (upper segment, upstream of U.S. Geological Survey Croom gage)	River	Hernando, Sumter, Pasco, Lake, Polk	Yes	Yes ^c	28.5925	-82.2222	N/A
Reevaluation (first)	Southern Water Use Caution Area Saltwater Intrusion Minimum Aquifer Level (SWIMAL)	Southern Water Use Caution Area Saltwater Intrusion Minimum Aquifer Level (SWIMAL)	Aquifer	Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota	Yes	Yes ^c	27.5603	-82.4013	N/A

Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels to be Adopted in 2027.

New or Re-Evaluation	Waterbody Name or Compliance Point	System Name ^a	Waterbody Type	County(s)	Voluntary Peer Review to be Completed?	Cross-Boundary Impacts from Adjacent Water Management District?	Latitude	Longitude	Rulemaking Status ^b
Reevaluation (first)	Easy	Lake Easy	Lake	Polk	No	Yes ^c	27.8581	-81.5620	N/A
Reevaluation (second)	Jackson	Lake Jackson (Highlands)	Lake	Highlands	No	Yes	27.4910	-81.4625	N/A
Reevaluation (second)	Little Jackson	Little Lake Jackson	Lake	Highlands	No	Yes	27.4677	-81.4635	N/A
Reevaluation (second)	Starr	Starr, Lake	Lake	Polk	No	Yes ^c	27.9566	-81.5874	N/A
Reevaluation (first)	Crystal River	Crystal River	River-Estuary	Citrus	Yes	No	28.9064	-82.6239	N/A
Reevaluation (first)	Kings Bay Spring Group (OFS)	Crystal River	Spring-1	Citrus	Yes	No	28.9064	-82.6239	N/A

Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels to be Adopted in 2028.

New or Re-Evaluation	Waterbody Name or Compliance Point	System Name ^a	Waterbody Type	County(s)	Voluntary Peer Review to be Completed?	Cross-Boundary Impacts from Adjacent Water Management District?	Latitude	Longitude	Rulemaking Status ^b
Reevaluation (first)	Anoka	Lake Anoka	Lake	Highlands	No	Yes	27.5805	-81.5121	N/A
Reevaluation (second)	Dan	Lake Dan	Lake	Hillsborough	No	No	28.1655	-82.6471	N/A
Reevaluation (second)	Letta	Lake Letta	Lake	Highlands	No	Yes	27.5603	-81.4618	N/A
Reevaluation (second)	Lotela	Lake Lotela	Lake	Highlands	No	Yes	27.5773	-81.4821	N/A
Reevaluation (first)	Mound	Mound Lake	Lake	Hillsborough	No	No	28.1475	-82.572	N/A

Reservations Priority List.

Waterbody Name	Waterbody Type	County(s)	Proposed Year	Rulemaking Status ^b
Hancock, Lake/Lower Saddle Creek (reevaluation)	Lake, River	Polk	2025	N/A

^a System name identifies larger system that the water body is associated with for minimum flows or minimum water levels rule development; otherwise, system name is same as waterbody name or compliance point.

^b Last rulemaking action taken: Notice of Rule Development published; Notice of Proposed Rule published; Rule challenge pending; Rule adopted, Ratification not required; Rule adopted, awaiting ratification; Rule adopted, Ratified. N/A indicates formal rulemaking has not been initiated.

^c Potential cross-boundary withdrawal impacts from adjacent water management district associated with the Central Florida Water Initiative area.

Consolidated **Annual**
Report
March 1, 2026

2025 **Minimum**
Flows and Levels /
Water Quality Grade
for Projects



Southwest Florida
Water Management District



Chapter 2 MFL Water Quality Grade and Projects

Overview

Section 373.036(7)(b)9., F.S., provides that the Consolidated Annual Report shall contain a “grade for each watershed, water body, or water segment in which a project listed under subparagraph 8 is located representing the level of impairment and violations of adopted minimum flow or minimum water level. The grading system must reflect the severity of the impairment of the watershed, water body, or water segment.”

Table 1 lists the projects contained within the 2026 Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program, the watershed, water body, or water segment, the project impacts, and a grade of two items: 1) the water quality level of impairment and 2) the level of violation of a minimum flow or minimum water level.

Level of Impairment Grade

The Level of Impairment grade is represented as follows:

Impaired – High: This grade is assigned if the water body is impaired for one or more parameters other than mercury and based on a consideration of other factors, including the number of impairments, presence of Outstanding Florida Waters, proximity to ongoing or planned restoration activities, ecological priority of the water for threatened and endangered species, environmental justice concerns, the amount of anthropogenic land use, and local aquifer vulnerability.

Impaired: The grade is assigned if the water body is impaired for one or more parameters other than mercury.

Not Impaired: This grade is assigned if the water body is not impaired for any parameters other than mercury.

The DEP provided the impairment grades based upon Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for each Water Body ID (WBID). Projects that impact specific WBIDs were identified in Table 1 for that WBID. As an example, a project that replaced disposal of treated wastewater in a spray field or Rapid Infiltration Basin (RIB) with beneficial use of reclaimed water utilized the impairment grade associated with the WBID where the spray field or RIB were originally located. It is important to note that projects contained within a Water Resource Development Work Program are focused on water use/conservation with the exception of the projects contained in Appendix A – District Projects for Implementing Basin Management Action Plans.

Level of Violation of Adopted MFL

Each water body with an established MFL not currently being met or projected to not be met within 20 years was evaluated based on the relative magnitude of the MFL violation and rated as close, moderately close, or not close to meeting the MFL. In evaluating this element, the District considered the magnitude of the variance from the MFL, the magnitude of the ecological impact, the time frame for recovery, and the time frame for completion of the projects.

The water body was also evaluated based on the regional significance of the water body and rated as Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3 with Tier 1 being the highest rating for regional significance and Tier 3 being the lowest rating. When evaluating this element, the District considered the water body's size and geographical extent, anticipated timeframe for recovery, ecological importance, recreational uses, navigation, threatened/endangered species, wildlife utilization, aesthetics, and historical and archeological significance.

Level 0: This grade is assigned if the water body is meeting the MFL but is projected to not meet the MFL within 20 years (that is, the water body is in prevention).

Level I: This grade is assigned if the water body is close to meeting the MFL and the water body is rated as a Tier 3 or Tier 2 for regional significance; or the water body is moderately close to meeting the MFL and the water body is rated a Tier 3 for regional significance.

Level II: This grade is assigned if the water body is close to meeting the MFL and the water body is rated a Tier 1 for regional significance; or the water body is moderately close to meeting the MFL and the water body is rated a Tier 2 for regional significance; or the water body is not close to meeting the MFL and the water body is rated a Tier 3 for regional significance.

Level III: This grade is assigned if the water body is moderately close to meeting the MFL and the water body is rated a Tier 1 for regional significance; or the water body is not close to meeting the MFL and the water body is rated a Tier 2 or Tier 1 for regional significance.

The majority of the projects in the Water Resource Development Work Program will directly assist in a recovery strategy for a Water Use Caution Area (WUCA). The projects are anticipated to impact all water bodies that are included within the WUCA. As an example, the Southern Water Use Caution Area covers a 5,100 square mile area over all or parts of eight counties. There are seven lakes that are not achieving their established minimum flow or level in this region in 2024. Because the basis for not meeting these MFLs is due to groundwater withdrawals within the confined upper Floridan aquifer in the SWUCA, a project within this area is anticipated to impact the entire area. Therefore, all the impacted waterbodies within a WUCA have been included for each project.

Table 1 Water Resource Development Projects

Project Number	Water Resource Development Projects	Watershed, Water Body, Water Segment*	Level of Water Quality Impairment	Level of Violation of Adopted MFL
1) Alternative Water Supply Feasibility Research and Pilot Projects (Programmatic Code 2.2.1.1)				
N855	Southern Hillsborough Aquifer Recharge Expansion (SHARE) Phase 1	SWUCA Water Bodies Hillsborough Bay Upper 1558E and 1558D Palm River 1536E McKay Bay 1584B	WBID 1558E - Not Impaired WBID 1536E - Impaired WBID 1584B - Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
P925	Optical Borehole Imaging Data Collection from LFA Wells	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
P926	Sources/Ages of Groundwater in LFA Wells	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q050	City of Venice Reclaimed Water Aquifer Storage Recovery	SWUCA Water Bodies Curry Creek 2009 Curry Creek 2009A Sarasota Bay 8053	WBID 2009B - Impaired WBID 2009C - Impaired WBID 8053 - Not Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q064	Direct Aquifer Recharge - North Hillsborough Aquifer Recharge Program Phase 2	NTBWUCA Water Bodies Old Tampa Bay 1558I Old Tampa Bay 1558H	WBID 1558I - Impaired WBID 1558H - Impaired	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
Q159	Sarasota County - Bee Ridge Water Reclamation Facility Aquifer Recharge	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
2) Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) (Programmatic Code 2.2.1.2)				
H529	Mini-FARMS Program (H529) 3	SWUCA Water Bodies NTBWUCA Water Bodies DPCWUCA Water Bodies Shell Creek Prairie Creek	WBID 2041 - Impaired WBID 1962 - Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H807	FARMS- Sizemore Group Automation	DPCWUCA Water Bodies Howell Branch	WBID 1568 - Impaired	DPCWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 0 water bodies Level 2 - 0 water bodies Level 3 - 0 water bodies

H817	B 8 TURF CO., LLC	SWUCA Water Bodies Myakka River	WBID 1917 - Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H821	JAMES KEEN 62	SWUCA Water Bodies Little Manatee River	WBID 1812 - Not Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H825	Berry RED FARMS, LLC	SWUCA Water Bodies Manatee River	WBID 1861 - Not Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H826	FD BERRIES USA LLC - Twitty Road South	SWUCA Water Bodies Kissimmee River	WBID 1860A - Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H828	G & G FARMS LLC - NORTH 40	SWUCA Water Bodies Hillsborough River	WBID 1489 - Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H830	MCCLURE PROPERTIES, LTD - PHASE 2	SWUCA Water Bodies Manatee River	WBID 1828 - Not Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H831	GAPWAY MIXON CUPS, LLC	SWUCA Water Bodies Peace River	WBID 1677D - Not Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H832	T&T ENVIRONMENTAL, LLC - DESOTO GROVES	SWUCA Water Bodies Peace River	WBID 1623C - Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H833	MIDWAY FARMS, LLC - Raulerson Road	SWUCA Water Bodies Kissimmee River	WBID 1730F - Not Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H834	JIM RASH, INC - ZOFFAY ROAD	SWUCA Water Bodies Kissimmee River	WBID 1706A - Not Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H835	Green Grass Farms of Hardee County	SWUCA Water Bodies Peace River	WBID 1897 - Not Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies

3) Environmental Restoration/Minimum Flows and Levels Recovery (Programmatic Code 2.2.1.3)				
H089	MIA Recharge SWIMAL Recovery at Flatford Swamp	SWUCA water bodies Upper Myakka 1877B	WBID 1877B - Not Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 1 water bodies Level 2 - 5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
H404-1	Pump Stations on Tampa Bypass Canal, Morris Bridge Sink	Lower Hillsborough River 1443E	WBID 1443E - Impaired	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
H400-7	Third Five-Year Assessment of the Lower Hillsborough River Recovery Strategy	Lower Hillsborough River 1443E	WBID 1443E - Impaired	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
H400-13	Lower Hillsborough River Biological Data Collection	Lower Hillsborough River 1443E	WBID 1443E - Impaired	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
Surface Water Projects				
Water Supply Development Assistance - Surface Water Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.1)				
Q272	PRMRWSA - Reservoir No. 3	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Regional potable Interconnects				
Water Supply Development Assistance - Regional Potable Water Interconnects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.2)				
Q216	PRWC Regional Transmission Southeast Phase 1	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q241	TBW - Southern Hillsborough County Transmission Expansion	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies

Q313	PRMRWSA- Regional Integrated Loop System Ph 3C	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q355	PRMRWSA- Reg Integr Loop Sys Ph 2b	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Reclaimed Water Projects				
Water Supply Development Assistance - Reclaimed Water Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.3)				
N339	Winter Haven #3 Reclaimed Interconnect, Storage, Pumping	SWUCA Water Bodies Peace Creek Drainage Canal 1539	WBID 1539 - Impaired - High	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
N791	Pasco County Starkey Ranch Reclaimed Water Transmission Phase C	NTBWUCA Water Bodies Magnolia - Aripeka Springs 1391B Direct Runoff to Gulf 1400	WBID 1391B - Impaired - High WBID 1400 - Not Impaired	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
N868	Polk County Utilities NERUSA Ernie Caldwell Blvd Reclaimed Water Transmission	SWUCA Water Bodies Big Creek East Watershed 1406	WBID 1406 - Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q066	Polk County Utilities - NERUSA Lake Wilson Road Reuse	SWUCA Water Bodies Big Creek East Watershed 1406	WBID 1406 - Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q067	Polk County Utilities - NERUSA Southeast Reuse Loop	SWUCA Water Bodies Big Creek East Watershed 1406	WBID 1406 - Impaired	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q105	Citrus County Sugarmill Woods Golf Course Reuse	Chassahowitzka River 1361 Baird Creek 1348D	WBID 1361 - Impaired WBID 1348D - Impaired - High	None**
Q113	City of Plant City McIntosh Park Indirect Potable Reuse Feasibility Study	NTBWUCA Water Bodies Mill Creek 1542A East Canal 1518 Itchepackasassa Creek 1495A Blackwater Creek 1482 Hillsborough River 1443D	WBID 1542A - Impaired - High WBID 1518 - Impaired WBID 1495A - Impaired WBID 1482 - Impaired - High WBID 1443D - Not Impaired	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body

Q139	North Port Direct Potable Reuse Feasibility	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q160	Sarasota County Honore Avenue Reclaimed Water Transmission	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q209	Polk County Direct Potable Reuse Feasibility and Pilot Demo	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q268	Bradén River Utilities Taylor Road Area Transmission	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q274	Zephyrhills - Zephyr to Pasco Reclaimed Water Interconnect	NTBWUCA Water Bodies	None*	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
Q353	Pinellas Co- Southcross RW Expan/Surface Aug Study	NTBWUCA Water Bodies	None*	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
Brackish Groundwater Projects				
Water Supply Development Assistance - Brackish Groundwater Development Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.4)				
Q184	PRWC Southeast Wellfield Implementation	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies

Q308	PRWC- West Polk Wellfield	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q309	PRWC- Test Prod Well #2 West Polk Wellfield	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Aquifer Recharge and Aquifer Storage and Recovery Projects				
Water Supply Development Assistance - Aquifer Recharge & Aquifer Storage and Recovery Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.5)				
N435	City of Bradenton Surface Water Aquifer Storage Recovery 2	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q142	Pinellas County Chestnut Park Aquifer Storage, Recovery & Recharge	NTBWUCA Water Bodies Lake Tarpon Canal 1541A and 1541B Safety Harbor 1558IA Old Tampa Bay 1558F and G Old Tampa Bay 1558H Old Tampa Bay 1558I	WBID 1541A - Impaired WBID 1541B - Not Impaired WBID 1558IA - Impaired WBID 1558F - Not Impaired WBID 1558G - Impaired WBID 1558H - Impaired WBID 1558I - Impaired	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
Water Conservation Projects				
Water Supply Development Assistance - Conservation Rebates, Retrofits, Etc. Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.7)				
B015	Water Incentives Supporting Efficient (WISE) Program	SWUCA Water Bodies NTBWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
N973	Winter Haven Consumption/Conservation Programs Data Management Software	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies

Q145	Longboat Key Club - Advanced Irrigation System	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q215	TBW - Demand Management Program Phase 2	NTBWUCA Water Bodies	None*	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
Q245	Pinellas County AMI Metering Analytics	NTBWUCA Water Bodies	None*	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
Q256	St. Petersburg - Sensible Sprinkling Program - Phase 10	NTBWUCA Water Bodies	None*	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
Q265	North Port - Water Distribution Ridgewood/ Lamplighter Area Looping	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q266	Polk County - Florida Water Star Builder Reimbursement Program	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q267	PRWC- Demand Management Implementation	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
P964	Water Use Evals for Non-Ag Users	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies

Q304	Venice Toilet Rebate and Retrofit Phase 9	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q306	WRWSA Irrigation Eval Program, phase 7	Northern District/Springs Coast	None*	None**
Q311	Bay Laurel CCDD Water Conservation Program phase 2	Northern District/Springs Coast	None*	None**
Q319	Manatee County Toilet Rebate phase 15	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q371	Polk County Irrigation System Evaluation Program, Phase 8	SWUCA Water Bodies	None*	SWUCA water bodies Level 1 -1 water bodies Level 2 -5 water bodies Level 3 - 2 water bodies
Q387	St. Pete Sensible Sprinkling Program, Phase 11	NTBWUCA Water Bodies	None*	NTBWUCA water bodies Level 1 - 2 water body
Water Supply Planning Projects				
Water Supply Planning (Programmatic Budget 1.1.1)				
Q324	WS Planning - WRWSA - Regional Water Supply Plan 2024 Update	Northern District/Springs Coast	None*	None**
Q414	TBW Demand Management Plan Implementation	NTBWUCA Water Bodies	None*	None**

Appendix A. District Projects for Implementing Basin Management Action Plans				
Projects for Implementing BMAPs				
W401	Crystal River Preserve State Park Redfish Hole Restoration	Crystal River 1341 Crystal River 1341C Crystal River 1341D Crystal River 1341E Crystal River 1341F Crystal River 1341G Crystal River 1341H	Crystal River 1341 - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341C - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341D - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341E - Not Impaired Crystal River 1341F - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341G - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341H - Impaired - High	None**
W432	Citrus County Cambridge Green Septic to Sewer	Crystal River 1341 Crystal River 1341C Crystal River 1341D Crystal River 1341E Crystal River 1341F Crystal River 1341G Crystal River 1341H	Crystal River 1341 - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341C - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341D - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341E - Not Impaired Crystal River 1341F - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341G - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341H - Impaired - High	None**
W466	Weeki Wachee Education Campaign	None*	None*	None**
W466	Chassahowitzka Education Campaign	None*	None*	None**
WH04	Citrus County Old Homosassa West Septic to Sewer Project	Homosassa River 1345 Homosassa Springs Group 1345G	WBID 1345 - Not Impaired WBID 1345G - Impaired - High	None**
Q134	Citrus County Old Homosassa East Septic to Sewer Project	Homosassa River 1345 Homosassa Springs Group 1345G	WBID 1345 - Not Impaired WBID 1345G - Impaired - High	None**
WS01	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping	Homosassa River 1345 Homosassa Springs Group 1345G	WBID 1345 - Not Impaired WBID 1345G - Impaired - High	None**
WS01	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping	Homosassa River 1345 Homosassa Springs Group 1345G	WBID 1345 - Not Impaired WBID 1345G - Impaired - High	None**

WS01	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping	Homosassa River 1345 Homosassa Springs Group 1345G	WBID 1345 - Not Impaired WBID 1345G - Impaired - High	None**
WS01	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping	Weeki Wachee Spring Group 1382B Weeki Wachee Spring Run 1382F Weeki Wachee River 1382I	WBID 1382B - Impaired WBID 1382F - Impaired - High WBID 1382I - Impaired	None**
WS01	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping	Crystal River 1341 Crystal River 1341C Crystal River 1341D Crystal River 1341E Crystal River 1341F Crystal River 1341G Crystal River 1341H	Crystal River 1341 - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341C - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341D - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341E - Not Impaired Crystal River 1341F - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341G - Impaired - High Crystal River 1341H - Impaired - High	None**
WW05	Hernando County Weeki Wachee Springshed Nitrogen Removal Stormwater Retrofit	Weeki Wachee Spring Group 1382B Weeki Wachee Spring Run 1382F Weeki Wachee River 1382I	WBID 1382B - Impaired WBID 1382F - Impaired - High WBID 1382I - Impaired	None**

None* - Project has no water quality impact on a surface water body

None** - Project is in an area with no MFL recovery strategy and is not expected to fall below a minimum flow or level in 20 years

Note that "SWUCA Waterbodies" includes the SWUCA SWIMAL

Consolidated **Annual**
Report
March 1, 2026

Five-Year **Capital**
Improvements
Plan *2025-2026*
through 2029-2030



Southwest Florida
Water Management District



Chapter 3 Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan

Introduction

The Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) includes projected revenues and expenditures for capital improvements for FY2025-26 through FY2029-30. As directed by Section 373.536(6)(a)3, Florida Statutes (F.S.), the CIP is presented in a manner comparable to the fixed capital outlay format set forth in Section 216.043, F.S. The format for this report was jointly developed by the Executive Office of the Governor, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the water management districts. Capital improvement projects may be budgeted in three standard program categories. Those programs and their activities and sub-activities are represented below:

1.0 Water Resource Planning and Monitoring

- 1.1 District Water Management Planning
 - 1.1.1 Water Supply Planning
 - 1.1.2 Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels
 - 1.1.3 Other Water Resources Planning
- 1.2 Research, Data Collection, Analysis and Monitoring
- 1.3 Technical Assistance
- 1.4 Other Water Resources Planning and Monitoring Activities
- 1.5 Technology and Information Services

2.0 Land Acquisition, Restoration and Public Works

- 2.1 Land Acquisition
- 2.2 Water Source Development
 - 2.2.1 Water Resource Development Projects
 - 2.2.2 Water Supply Development Assistance
 - 2.2.3 Other Water Source Development Activities
- 2.3 Surface Water Projects
- 2.4 Other Cooperative Projects
- 2.5 Facilities Construction and Major Renovations
- 2.6 Other Acquisition and Restoration Activities
- 2.7 Technology and Information Services

3.0 Operation and Maintenance of Works and Lands

- 3.1 Land Management
- 3.2 Works
- 3.3 Facilities
- 3.4 Invasive Plant Control
- 3.5 Other Operation and Maintenance Activities
- 3.6 Fleet Services
- 3.7 Technology and Information Services

The activity under program 1.0 Water Resource Planning and Monitoring that may include capital improvement projects is 1.2 Research, Data Collection, Analysis and Monitoring. The activities and sub-activities under program 2.0 Land Acquisition, Restoration and Public Works that may include capital improvement projects are 2.1 Land Acquisition, 2.2.1 Water Resource Development Projects, 2.2.3 Other

Water Source Development Activities, 2.3 Surface Water Projects, 2.5 Facilities Construction and Major Renovations, and 2.6 Other Acquisition and Restoration Activities. The activities under program 3.0 Operation and Maintenance of Works and Lands that may include capital improvement projects are 3.1 Land Management and 3.2 Works.

The purpose of the CIP is to project future needs and anticipate future funding requirements to meet those needs, including expenditures for basic construction costs (permits, inspections, communications requirements, utilities, outside building, site development, etc.) and other related capital project costs (land, survey, existing facility acquisition, professional services, etc.). The District uses a pay-as-you-go approach and does not incur bonded debt. The plan contains only those projects that will be owned and capitalized as fixed assets by the District.

The District's current planned capital improvement projects are budgeted under the following program activities: 1.2 Research, Data Collection, Analysis and Monitoring, 2.1 Land Acquisition, 2.5 Facilities Construction and Major Renovations, 3.1 Land Management, and 3.2 Works. The following standard definitions for these programs and activities are used by all five water management districts:

1.0 Water Resource Planning and Monitoring

This program includes all water management planning, including water supply planning, development of minimum flows and minimum water levels, and other water resources planning; research, data collection, analysis and monitoring; and technical assistance (including local and regional plan and program review).

1.2 Research, Data Collection, Analysis and Monitoring – Activities that support district water management planning, restoration and preservation efforts, including water quality monitoring, data collection and evaluation, and research.

2.0 Land Acquisition, Restoration and Public Works

This program includes the development and construction of all capital projects (except for those contained in Programs 1.0 and 3.0) including water resource development projects, water supply development assistance, water control projects, support and administrative facilities construction, cooperative projects, land acquisition and the restoration of lands and water bodies.

2.1 Land Acquisition – The acquisition of land and facilities for the protection and management of water resources. This activity does not include land acquisition components of "water resource development projects," "surface water projects" or "other cooperative projects."

2.5 Facilities Construction and Major Renovations – The proposed work for the facilities improvement program includes project management, permitting and conceptual, preliminary, and detailed engineering for the development and preparation of contract plans; and specifications for the construction of planned replacement, improvement or repair to the district's administrative and field station facilities.

3.0 Operation and Maintenance of Works and Lands

This program includes all operation and maintenance of facilities, flood control and water supply structures, lands and other works authorized by Chapter 373, Florida Statutes.

3.1 Land Management – Maintenance, custodial and restoration efforts for lands acquired through federal, state and locally sponsored land acquisition programs.

3.2 Works – The maintenance of flood control and water supply system infrastructure, such as canals, levees and water control structures. This includes electronic communication and control activities.

Southwest Florida Water Management District
Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan Schedule
 Fiscal Year 2025-26 through Fiscal Year 2029-30

1.0 WATER RESOURCE PLANNING AND MONITORING

1.2 RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND MONITORING

REVENUES	FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
Ad Valorem	\$1,770,000	\$9,803,000	\$8,371,000	\$8,399,500	\$1,174,000
TOTAL	\$1,770,000	\$9,803,000	\$8,371,000	\$8,399,500	\$1,174,000

EXPENDITURES	FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
Aquifer Exploration and Monitor Well Drilling Program	\$1,620,000	\$9,653,000	\$8,221,000	\$8,249,500	\$1,024,000
Data Collection Site Acquisitions	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
TOTAL	\$1,770,000	\$9,803,000	\$8,371,000	\$8,399,500	\$1,174,000

2.0 LAND ACQUISITION, RESTORATION AND PUBLIC WORKS

2.1 LAND ACQUISITION

REVENUES	FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
Balance from Prior Years - District Investment Account	\$16,700,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$16,700,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

EXPENDITURES	FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
Florida Forever Work Plan Land Purchases	\$16,700,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$16,700,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

2.5 FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION AND MAJOR RENOVATIONS

REVENUES	FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
Ad Valorem	\$975,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$975,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

EXPENDITURES	FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
Districtwide HVAC, Pavement and Roof Renovations	\$900,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Districtwide Building Automation and Access Controls System	75,000	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$975,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

3.0 OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF WORKS AND LANDS

3.1 LAND MANAGEMENT

REVENUES	FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
Ad Valorem	\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

EXPENDITURES	FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
Hampton Tract Security Site Improvements at Green Swamp East	\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

3.2 WORKS

REVENUES	FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
Ad Valorem	\$3,300,000	\$7,710,000	\$2,410,000	\$2,900,000	\$0
Structures Capital Improvements Reserve	-	9,000,000	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$3,300,000	\$16,710,000	\$2,410,000	\$2,900,000	\$0

EXPENDITURES	FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
Flood Control Structure Gate Replacement and Lift System Conversions	\$0	\$4,710,000	\$2,410,000	\$2,900,000	\$0
Water Control Structure Control System Replacements	1,000,000	-	-	-	-
WC-2 Flood Control Structure Replacement	600,000	-	-	-	-
P-1 and P-3 Structure Replacement	1,500,000	-	-	-	-
Wysong-Coogler Structure Refurbishment	200,000	12,000,000	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$3,300,000	\$16,710,000	\$2,410,000	\$2,900,000	\$0

TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	\$22,780,000	\$26,513,000	\$10,781,000	\$11,299,500	\$1,174,000
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Project Descriptions

Program: Water Resource Planning and Monitoring

Activity: Research, Data Collection, Analysis & Monitoring

Project Title: Aquifer Exploration and Monitor Well Drilling Program

Type: Monitor Well Construction and Associated Activities

Physical Location: District's 16-County Region

Square Footage/Physical Description: Monitor Wells

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Historical Background/Need for Project: This is an ongoing project for coring, drilling, testing, and construction of monitor wells at Regional Observation and Monitor well Program (ROMP) sites and support project sites including the Upper Floridan Aquifer Nutrient Monitoring Network (UFANMN). The ROMP was established in 1974 to construct a Districtwide network of groundwater monitoring wells to provide key information concerning existing hydrologic conditions of groundwater sources (Section 373.145, Florida Statutes). The ROMP has expanded to include the drilling and construction (and associated data collection activities) of numerous wells associated with key support projects such as the Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area wellfield recovery monitoring, the Northern Water Resources Assessment Project, and the Southern Water Use Caution Area. Exploratory core drilling and intensive data collection are performed by District staff and well construction is generally performed under contract with private sector drilling firms. Drilling and testing will be performed at strategic well sites to characterize the hydrogeology from land surface to the saltwater interface, the base of the upper Floridan aquifer, or the base of the Floridan aquifer system. Key sites will include exploratory data collection to characterize the middle confining units and lower Floridan aquifers. Each well site will have permanent monitor wells installed into the surficial, Hawthorn, upper Floridan, and lower Floridan aquifers, as needed. In addition, most well sites will have temporary observation wells installed for conducting aquifer performance tests. The data collected during construction of the well sites will be used in numerous District projects including models for water supply development, rulemaking for minimum flows and levels, and long-term water level and water quality monitoring.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan, Regional Water Supply Plan, Hydrologic Data Section Data Monitoring Budget, and the Geohydrologic Data Section Work Plan. Areas of Responsibility include Water Supply, Water Quality and Natural Systems.

Area(s) of Responsibility: Water Supply, Water Quality

Alternative(s): Impact: Hydrogeologic data necessary for supporting groundwater modeling efforts, monitoring saltwater intrusion, and establishing minimum flows and levels will not be collected. Alternative: The monitor wells are currently constructed by private sector well drilling companies. The District would have to purchase well drilling rigs to perform the well construction in-house.

Basic Construction Costs: The FY2026 funding request of \$1,620,000 is for construction of monitor wells at ROMP sites and support project well sites. Funding for future years pending Governing Board approval through the annual budget process.

Other Project Costs: No other project costs associated with this request have been identified.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: Initial operating costs anticipated in FY2026 not included in the funding schedule below are for monitor well water level instrumentation estimated at \$18,340 with \$16,450 for equipment and supplies and \$1,890 for installation.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: Annual operating cost to maintain the monitor well water level instrumentation is approximately \$718.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$1,620,000	\$9,653,000	\$8,221,000	\$8,249,500	\$1,024,000

Program: Water Resource Planning and Monitoring

Activity: Research, Data Collection, Analysis & Monitoring

Project Title: Data Collection Site Acquisitions

Type: Land and Interests in Land Acquired for Data Collection Sites

Physical Location: District's 16-County Region

Square Footage/Physical Description: To Be Determined

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Historical Background/Need for Project: The District acquires perpetual easements for sites necessary to assess groundwater sustainability and development of water supply solutions and to preserve existing sites necessary to construct a Districtwide network of groundwater monitoring wells. The District relies upon a network of groundwater monitor wells to provide information on water levels and water quality of various aquifer systems. The data obtained from these wells is utilized for a large variety of tasks including potentiometric surface map construction, saltwater intrusion and other contaminant status reporting site-specific project work to establish and modify minimum levels, and assessment of current water supplies. Regulation of the Floridan and the intermediate aquifers depend on the data collected from these sites. District computer models also rely heavily on water level information.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan; Watershed Management Plans; Southern Water Use Caution Area; Regional Water Supply Plan; Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program

Area(s) of Responsibility: Water Supply, Water Quality

Alternative(s): An alternative to obtaining permanent easement for key well sites that are used for minimum flows and minimum water levels (MFLs) and having an extensive history of data collection critical for performance monitoring of the MFLs program, as well as other District initiatives would be to obtain new sites. The cost to obtain a permanent easement on an existing well site is generally lower than the cost to replace that well site because the new site will still need to have some form of title interest, including well construction costs to replace the wells. In addition, the heterogeneity of the aquifer systems might impact the new well location and not allow for a good comparison of data from a destroyed well site to the new well site.

Basic Construction Costs: The cost of well construction and related activities associated with upper and lower Floridan aquifers, wetland and lake monitoring is budgeted separately under Aquifer Exploration and Monitor Well Drilling Program. It includes contracted well construction of permanent and temporary wells and associated materials such as casings and cement.

Other Project Costs: The FY2026 funding request of \$150,000 is for acquisition of perpetual easements in support of the District's network of groundwater monitoring wells. This includes the purchase of perpetual easements and associated ancillary costs such as surveys, appraisals, title insurance, environmental site assessments, and documentary stamps. It is projected that \$150,000 will be required annually from FY2027 through FY2030 based on background information that has been acquired for the

sites. Funding for future years pending Governing Board approval through the annual budget process.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: District staff time and travel costs associated with this project are to be determined and are excluded from the amounts referenced.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: There are no additional recurring operating costs anticipated at this time.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000

Program: Land Acquisition, Restoration and Public Works

Activity: Land Acquisition

Project Title: Florida Forever Work Plan Land Purchases

Type: Lands Acquired through the Florida Forever Program

Physical Location: District's 16-County Region

Square Footage/Physical Description: To Be Determined

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Historical Background/Need for Project: The District has recognized land acquisition as one of its primary tools for achieving its statutory responsibilities. Section 373.139, Florida Statutes, authorizes the District to acquire fee simple or less-than-fee interests to the lands necessary for flood control, water storage, water management, conservation and protection of water resources, aquifer recharge, water resource and water supply development, and preservation of wetlands, streams and lakes. The District purchases land and interests in land through fee simple land acquisition and acquisition of less-than-fee simply interests (e.g., conservation easements) under the state's Florida Forever program. This program provides funding for land acquisition and capital improvements to state agencies, the water management districts, and local governments.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan; Watershed Management Plans; SWIM Plans; Southern Water Use Caution Area

Area(s) of Responsibility: Natural Systems

Alternative(s): The alternatives to purchasing necessary land or interests to achieve statutory responsibilities would be to place additional regulations and restrictions on lands requiring protection. Many of these alternatives are not within the District's authority.

Basic Construction Costs: No construction costs are associated with this request.

Other Project Costs: It is projected that the District will have an estimated \$16,784,479 available in prior year funds generated from the sale of land or real estate interests. For FY2026, \$16,700,000 is budgeted for land acquired through the Florida Forever Work Plan. This includes funds for land acquisition and associated ancillary costs such as surveys, appraisals, title insurance, environmental site assessments, and documentary stamps. No funding is currently projected for land acquisition and associated ancillary costs from FY2027 through FY2030.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: District staff time and travel costs associated with this project are to be determined and are excluded from the amounts referenced.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: The District acquires real estate interests for projects that would enhance its existing ownership responsibilities or provide management benefits. Depending on the size of the property, location and interest acquired, the operating costs may increase and are evaluated at the time of acquisition.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$16,700,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Program: Land Acquisition, Restoration and Public Works

Activity: Facilities Construction and Major Renovations

Project Title: Districtwide HVAC, Pavement and Roof Renovations

Type: Facility Renovations

Physical Location: Brooksville, Tampa, Sarasota and Lake Hancock Offices

Square Footage/Physical Description: HVAC, Pavement and Roof Renovations as Required

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Historical Background/Need for Project: The District currently owns and maintains three public offices in Brooksville, Tampa, and Sarasota and one field office in Bartow at Lake Hancock. These facilities consist of approximately 70 acres with a total of 261,799 square feet of buildings under roof and 725,408 square feet of paved parking and driveways. Some of the construction dates back more than 50 years. This ongoing program was created to proactively maintain District assets and provide a safe and healthy environment for staff and the public. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVAC), pavement, and roof renovations are planned and budgeted according to a multi-year schedule that minimizes the opportunity for building damage and loss of staff productivity. Renovations do not change the function of existing facilities; they simply maintain them in the state of their intended use.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan

Area(s) of Responsibility: Water Supply, Water Quality, Flood Protection, Natural Systems

Alternative(s): If the Districtwide HVAC, pavement and roof renovations are not funded, the facilities maintenance costs are expected to increase significantly as additional maintenance activities are required to keep facilities in a safe and operational order. Not funding the projects would allow for degraded and deteriorated conditions requiring extensive restoration, such as moisture damage to buildings and expanded pavement cracks, resulting in higher costs than currently proposed. These projects are prioritized in a proactive effort to avoid damage and unnecessary costs while maximizing the life of the equipment, structures and grounds.

Basic Construction Costs: Funding for future years pending Governing Board approval through the annual budget process.

FY2026

- Brooksville Building 5 Roof (Replacement): \$300,000
- Lake Hancock Roof (Replacement): \$100,000
- Tampa Service Office Parking Lot Resurfacing: \$300,000
- Brooksville Building 3 Rooftop HVAC (Replacement): \$200,000.

A facilities assessment was completed in FY2025 and is currently being reviewed, upon finalization this assessment will provide guidance on projects for FY2027 through FY2030.

Other Project Costs: There is no other project costs anticipated at this time.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: There are no additional initial operating costs anticipated at this time.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: There are unforeseen operating costs/savings that cannot be identified at this time.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$900.000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Program: Land Acquisition, Restoration and Public Works

Activity: Facilities Construction and Major Renovations

Project Title: Districtwide Building Automation and Access Controls System

Type: Facility Renovations

Physical Location: Brooksville, Tampa, Sarasota and Lake Hancock Offices

Square Footage/Physical Description: Building Automation and Access Controls System Installation or Upgrades as Required

Expected Completion Date: 09/2026

Historical Background/Need for Project: The District currently owns and maintains three public offices in Brooksville, Tampa, and Sarasota and one field office in Bartow at Lake Hancock. These facilities consist of approximately 70 acres with a total of 265,879 square feet of buildings under roof. A building automation system is used to monitor and operate the major building functions, such as lighting and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC). Utilization of this system allows staff to program and operate the buildings during occupied and unoccupied times, specify weekend and holiday settings, and for special provisions such as meetings outside of normal business hours. This minimizes the use of energy when possible and reduces unanticipated drive time. An access control system allows staff to define who has access to District offices, what they have access to within each office, and the hours they are permitted that access. Use of access controls provides a high-level layer of security for the protection of District assets and staff.

This request is to equip the Sarasota office and Lake Hancock field office with a building automation system, as well as equip the Lake Hancock field office with the same badge access control system as the rest of the District offices.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan

Area(s) of Responsibility: Water Supply, Water Quality, Flood Protection, Natural Systems

Alternative(s): If the building automation and access control systems are not installed as requested at the Sarasota office and Lake Hancock field office, we will not be able to control HVAC and lighting in occupied buildings. Additionally, these functions are essential during severe weather events and allow staff to resume operations without delay.

Basic Construction Costs: Funding for installation of building automation and access control systems at the Sarasota office and Lake Hancock field office is \$75,000.

Other Project Costs: There is no other project costs anticipated at this time.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: There are no additional initial operating costs anticipated at this time.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: There are unforeseen operating costs/savings that cannot be identified at this time.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$75,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Program: Operation and Maintenance of Works and Lands

Activity: Land Management

Project Title: Hampton Tract Security Site Improvements at Green Swamp East

Type: Pole Barn Construction

Physical Location: Green Swamp East

Square Footage/Physical Description: A 30x45x14 (1,350 sq-ft) open pole barn (1,350 sq-ft), 29ga Galvalume roofing, and a concrete slab.

Expected Completion Date: 09/2026

Historical Background/Need for Project: The purpose of replacing the existing residence with a pole barn is to retain ongoing security services performed by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Law Enforcement in Green Swamp East and the surrounding area, by allowing officer(s) with RV trailers to live onsite and thus removing O&M from the District. The existing residence is at the end of useful life and is cost prohibitive to perform large maintenance/repairs. The District received greater cost benefit to security services on its lands with live-on security than through the Security contract.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan

Area(s) of Responsibility: Natural Systems

Alternative(s): (1) Replacement of the existing residence at a higher cost of ~\$80-\$90k. (2) Remove the existing trailer and not facilitating a space for a new officer would result in the loss of live-on security officer. Additional funds would need to be budgeted in the security services contract (minimum \$1,000.00/month per property covered) to obtain equal or lesser services.

Basic Construction Costs: For FY2026, \$35,000 is budgeted for all preparation, materials and construction of a new engineered pole barn.

Other Project Costs: In FY2025, \$8,000 was budgeted for the demolition/hauling of existing trailer that will not be capitalized, therefore it is excluded from the funding table below.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: There are no additional initial operating costs with this request.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: A reduction of approximately \$7,500 per year in operating costs is anticipated.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Program: Operation and Maintenance of Works and Lands

Activity: Works

Project Title: Flood Control Structure Gate Replacement and Drum & Cable Conversions

Type: Structure Refurbishment/Modification

Physical Location: Districtwide

Square Footage/Physical Description: Structure Gates and Lifting Systems

Expected Completion Date: 09/2028

Historical Background/Need for Project: The District owns 15 flood control structures, most of which are associated with the Four River Basins Federal project. Five of the owned flood control structures are classified as High Hazard Potential Facilities, meaning that a failure has the potential to result in loss of human life and significant property destruction. Failure of any of these flood control structures has the potential to cause public health and safety, property, financial, environmental, and function impacts.

There are a total of 39 water control gates of various types and sizes associated with the 15 District-owned flood control structures. There are 28 gates with hydraulic lift systems that are aging which are the focus of this project. Fourteen of the 28 gates and hydraulic lift systems are over 50 years old. This project is for the replacement, where needed, of the existing carbon steel gates with stainless steel gates. The stainless-steel gates will not require routine recoating, like carbon steel gates, greatly reducing future maintenance costs. Recoating of a carbon steel gate can cost as much as \$400,000 per gate each time it is needed (12-to-15-year cycles). This project also includes converting the existing hydraulic lift systems with electric drum and cable lift systems. These drum and cable systems will require less maintenance and are more reliable than the existing hydraulic systems. While this project will replace existing gates and lift systems that have reached the end of their useful life based on age and condition, it will not change the function of the 15 flood control structures.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan

Area(s) of Responsibility: Flood Protection

Alternative(s): If the District does not replace the aging water control gates and associated hydraulic lift systems, maintenance costs will continue to increase, and the reliability of these critical flood control structures will decrease resulting in increased risk of failures.

Basic Construction Costs: In FY2024, \$7,250,000 was budgeted to start the construction phase of the project and an additional \$7,640,000 was budgeted in FY2025. The total cost for engineering and construction services for gate replacements and lift system conversions is \$25,250,000*.

- Total engineering services for design and construction oversight: \$1,690,000
- Total construction: \$23,560,000

Structure	No. of Gates	Gate Replacements	Lift System Conversions	Total Cost per Structure
S-160	6	\$3,300,000	\$3,300,000	\$6,600,000
S-162	7	\$3,710,000	\$3,710,000	\$7,420,000
S-551	4	\$2,190,000	\$2,190,000	\$4,380,000
S-161	2	\$1,130,000	\$1,130,000	\$2,260,000
S-155	2	N/A	\$1,160,000	\$1,160,000
S-159u	2	N/A	\$1,740,000	\$1,740,000

* Funding began in FY2021, with a total of \$340,000 through FY2023. Funding schedule is based on known information at this time. Future funding amounts and timing have the potential to change based on unforeseeable circumstances and subject to future Governing Board approval.

Other Project Costs: There are no other project costs anticipated at this time.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: District staff time and travel costs associated with this project are to be determined and are excluded from the amounts referenced.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: There are no additional recurring operating costs anticipated at this time.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$0	\$4,710,000	\$2,410,000	\$2,900,000	\$0

Program: Operation and Maintenance of Works and Lands

Activity: Works

Project Title: Water Control Structure Control System Replacements

Type: Structure Enhancement

Physical Location: District Structures

Square Footage/Physical Description: Up to 43 Water Control Structures

Expected Completion Date: 09/2027

Historical Background/Need for Project: Previously, remote operability was added to structures without standardization of equipment, wiring, and routing, as well as lacking wiring diagrams. Additionally, the main components associated with the remote operability have reached or exceeded their useful life. The remote operability of the District's water control structures is critical to protecting life and property within the region.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan.

Area(s) of Responsibility: Water Supply, Flood Protection, Natural Systems

Alternative(s): If not funded, the remote operability of the District's most critical water control structures would be increasingly unreliable, and unexpected failures would increase. These structures protect life and property, so a failure presents a significant risk. Additionally, the increasing number of failures will increase maintenance and repair costs.

Basic Construction Costs: The FY2026 funding request of \$1,000,000 is the second year of funding providing a total of \$2,000,000 required for the construction phase to replace the control system of up to 43 of the District's remotely operated structures.

Other Project Costs: In FY2024, \$250,000 was budgeted for the design of the project which began that fiscal year.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: There are no additional initial operating costs.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: There are no additional ongoing operating costs.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$1,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Program: Operation and Maintenance of Works and Lands

Activity: Works

Project Title: WC-2 Flood Control Structure Replacement

Type: Structure Replacement

Physical Location: The structure is located on the Gant Lake Canal; 3.4 miles downstream from S-11 and 0.2 miles east-northeast of the Little Withlacoochee River.

Square Footage/Physical Description: The existing structure is a gated four-bay, reinforced concrete structure with four 8ft wide x 5ft high steel, radial-arm, manually operated gates to be replaced with a fixed concrete weir system.

Expected Completion Date: 09/2026

Historical Background/Need for Project: The WC-2 structure was built in 1967 and transferred to the District in 1970 to provide flood protection to local farmlands and maintain optimum water surface elevations in Gant Lake Canal for local agricultural use. The structure's four gates are manually operated by means of hoists consisting of a hand-wheel, open-gears, driveshaft resting on a trunnion, and wire ropes. These gates are currently inoperable and have been set at a fixed elevation, essentially functioning as a fixed weir allowing water to flow through the structure once the water elevation reaches the top of the gates. Rather than repairing the gates, replacing the existing structure with a permanent fixed weir system would be more efficient and cost-effective by eliminating the need to send an operator to the remote site to operate as needed, as well as reduce maintenance requirements.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan

Area(s) of Responsibility: Flood Protection

Alternative(s): One alternative is to replace the inoperable gate systems within kind design. For time, safety and recurring maintenance cost measures, it is not the preferred solution. The other alternative is to not fund the request. The structure would continue to be inoperable and further deteriorate. More maintenance would be required with increased costs for maintenance and repairs.

Basic Construction Costs: Construction costs are budgeted at \$2,600,000 beginning in FY2025.

Other Project Costs: Design costs were budgeted at \$250,000.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: There are no additional initial operating costs.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: There are no additional ongoing operating costs.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$600,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Program: Operation and Maintenance of Works and Lands

Activity: Works

Project Title: P-1 and P-3 Structure Replacement

Type: Structure Replacement

Physical Location: Both structures are located in Polk County. P-1 is on Lake Lena and P-3 is located on Lake Arrieta.

Square Footage/Physical Description: P-1 is a single-pedestal, gearhead-stem operated, Armco sluice gate measuring 12 feet by 2.5 feet, situated in a concrete weir attached to the upstream wingwall of a double box culvert. P-3 is designed with an integral spillway-riser system and a 42-inch diameter pipe culvert.

Expected Completion Date: 05/2027

Historical Background/Need for Project: Polk County structures P-1 and P-3 are nearing the end of their service life. This project will improve operations and maintenance of the two structures, ensuring they continue to provide their intended benefits.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan

Area(s) of Responsibility: Flood Protection, Natural Systems

Alternative(s): One alternative would be to refurbish instead of replacing the structures. A consultant is currently analyzing if refurbishment would suffice.

Basic Construction Costs: Funds to construct both replacements are requested in FY2026 in the amount of \$1,500,000.

Other Project Costs: In FY2025, \$225,000 for design services are excluded from the funding schedule below.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: There are no additional initial operating costs.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: There are no anticipated continuing operating costs.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Program: Operation and Maintenance of Works and Lands

Activity: Works

Project Title: Wysong-Coogler Structure Refurbishment

Type: Structure Modification

Physical Location: The Wysong-Coogler Dam is located on the Withlacoochee River near Carlsons Landing in both Citrus County and Sumter County.

Square Footage/Physical Description: The main dam foundation is comprised of a 15-foot wide, cast-in-place concrete foundation. An electro-mechanical system controls the inflatable dam, to inflate and deflate it with water that is pumped through the piping system.

Expected Completion Date: 12/2026 for Design. Construction is to-be-determined.

Historical Background/Need for Project: The purpose of this project is to refurbish the inflatable dam and boat lock at the Wysong structure. Aging air bladders and pneumatic components that leak are requiring refill by the compressor multiple times a day. Also, the structure and lock gates are showing signs of severe structural corrosion. This project will improve operation and maintenance of the structure and lock, allowing for more efficient and accurate gate operations in response to storm events or during periods of low water. An improved maintenance system will reduce staff time and allow for year-round maintenance or inspections that are currently limited when river levels are high.

Plan Linkages: Strategic Plan

Area(s) of Responsibility: Natural Systems

Alternative(s): One alternative is to remove the structure. However, this would not be a good solution as it has already been removed and then put back. The other alternative is not to fund the request. With this, the structure would continue to deteriorate and eventually become inoperable. More maintenance would be required with increased costs.

Basic Construction Costs: Construction is estimated to be \$12,000,000 based on 30% completed design. Funding for construction is contingent upon Governing Board approval in future years.

Other Project Costs: Design totals \$700,000 with \$500,000 budgeted in FY2025 and an additional \$200,000 requested in FY2026.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial: There are no additional initial operating costs.

Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing: There are no additional operating costs.

FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28	FY2028-29	FY2029-30
\$200,000	\$12,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0

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2026 Alternative Water Supplies Annual Report



Southwest Florida
Water Management District



Chapter 4 Alternative Water Supplies

Introduction

Section 373.707(2), Florida Statutes (F.S.), requires the governing boards of the water management districts to include funding in their annual budgets for development of alternative water supply projects where Water Resource Caution Areas have been designated. The section, as well as 2005 legislation related to the Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund (Subsection 373.707(8)(n), F.S.), further requires each district to submit an annual alternative water supply report to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives by March 1 of each year. This report identifies all currently funded projects and accounts for funds provided through grants, matching grants, revolving loans, and use of Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) lands or facilities. As the District has designated Water Resource Caution Areas and implemented alternative water supply funding, this report is submitted pursuant to the requirements of Florida Statutes (Sections 373.707, 373.036, and 403.890, F.S.).

The District has funded regional water resource-related projects since its creation in 1961. Originally focused on flood control projects, District priorities began to shift in the late 1980s to include projects related to water conservation and development of alternative water sources. To support growing water supply needs of local governments, the District adopted a more proactive role and structured approach in addressing local non-regulatory water issues. The District's Cooperative Funding Initiative (CFI) was subsequently established in response to the need for a set system for receiving project assistance requests and criteria regarding timing, project eligibility, funding and other conditions for participation.

In addition to the CFI, the District is involved in other programs and initiatives besides those specifically defined in the statute, which are also saving significant amounts of water. Examples include assistance on leak detection, drought tolerant landscaping, ultra-low-flow toilet rebates, water saving ordinance development, industrial and residential water audits, landscape irrigation system efficiency, the Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) Program, and many others, including major public education efforts.

The District is committed to solving the region's water resource issues through cooperative programs, primarily through the CFI which has been in place since 1988. These efforts have been highly successful resulting in a combined investment (District and its cooperators) of more than \$4 billion in incentive-based funding assistance for a variety of water projects addressing its four areas of responsibility: water supply, natural systems, flood protection, and water quality.

FY2026 Annual Report Information

As defined in Florida Statutes, alternative water supplies include "salt water; brackish surface and groundwater; surface water captured predominately during wet-weather flows; sources made available through the addition of new storage capacity for surface or groundwater; water that has been reclaimed after one or more public supply, municipal, industrial, commercial, or agricultural uses; the downstream augmentation of water bodies with reclaimed water; stormwater; and any other water source that is designated as nontraditional for a water supply planning region in the applicable regional water supply plan." Table 1 lists FY2026 District budgeted alternative water supply projects and their associated funding pursuant to statutory requirements. It should be

noted, however, that funding of projects requiring large capital investments and multi-year construction often occurs over several fiscal years to maximize annual funding availability for multiple regional projects and cooperators. The funding totals presented in Table 1 are based on the FY2026 Adopted Budget and may reflect updates to project costs from previous years. Funding totals are provided per Board approved budgets and do not include District project management expenses. The Appendix of this report provides a short description of each project.

Table 1. Summary of FY2026 Budgeted Alternative Water Supply Projects

Project Name	Project Type	Quantity of Water Made Available upon Completion (MGD)	Reuse Flow Made Available upon Project Completion (MGD)	Storage Capacity Created (MG)	Use of District Lands or Facilities	Total Budgeted Funding FY 2026	Project Totals			
							District Funding	Cooperator Funding	State/Federal Funding	Revolving Loans
TBW Southern Hillsborough Transmission Expansion (Q241)	Surface Water Transmission	0	0	0	No	\$17,500,000	\$145,054,000	\$290,755,630	\$2,900,000	\$0
PRMRWSA Peace River Regional Reservoir No. 3 (Q272)	Surface Water Storage	0	0	9,000	Yes	\$14,000,000	\$115,700,000	\$224,577,000	\$34,800,000	\$0
PRMRWSA Southern Regional Phase 2B Loop System (Q355)	Surface Water Transmission	0	0	0	Yes	\$10,403,906	\$36,150,000	\$49,790,545	\$1,500,000	\$0
PRWC Southeast Wellfield (Q184)	Brackish Groundwater	12.5	0	0	No	\$14,500,000	\$110,940,000	\$114,480,013	\$22,109,987	\$0
PRWC Southeast Transmission Phase 1 (Q216)	Brackish Groundwater Transmission	0	0	0	No	\$27,811,312	\$76,013,000	\$79,699,113	\$18,388,487	\$0
PRWC West Polk Wellfield (Q308)	Brackish Groundwater	10.0	0	0	No	\$10,000,000	\$107,052,000	\$120,027,692	\$1,064,308	\$0
Totals:		22.5	0	9,000		\$94,215,218	\$590,909,000	\$879,329,993	\$80,762,782	\$0

Conclusion

The District's alternative water supply development program has been developed through efficient utilization of resources available to its Governing Board and those provided by the Florida Legislature. These efforts have included a long history of commitment to cooperative efforts with state and local governments, regional entities, private industry, and the public through sponsored research, conservation, natural system and water quality improvements, and a special emphasis on development of alternative water supplies. The District is confident in its continued mission to identify and maintain adequate and ecologically sustainable water supplies within its boundaries.

Appendix(Projects with FY2026 Funding)

Project Name: Tampa Bay Water Southern Hillsborough Co. Transmission (Q241)

Type of Alternative Supply: Surface Water

Cooperator: Tampa Bay Water (TBW)

Locale: Hillsborough County

Project Description: New alternative water supply (AWS) 26-mile potable water pipeline to supply alternative water from TBW's High Surface Pump Station to Hillsborough County. It is expected to deliver 65 mgd nominal capacity.

Project Name: Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority (PRMRWSA) – Reservoir No. 3 (Q272) **Type of Alternative Supply:** Surface Water

Cooperator: Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority

Locale: Desoto County

Project Description: Design, permitting, and construction of Reservoir No. 3 to provide 9.0 billion gallons of regional surface water storage.

Project Name: PRMRWSA Southern Regional Loop Phase 2B (Q355)

Type of Alternative Supply: Surface Water

Cooperator: Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority

Locale: Charlotte & Sarasota County

Project Description: New transmission, pumping and chemical addition facility and any infrastructure requirements that will enable installation of the southern loop between the Authority's regional transmission system at Serris Boulevard in Charlotte County and the Carlton Water Treatment Facility in Sarasota County.

Project Name: Polk Regional Water Cooperative Southeast Wellfield Water Treatment Facility (Q184) **Type of Alternative Supply:** Brackish Groundwater

Cooperator: Polk Regional Water Cooperative

Locale: Polk County

Project Description: Design, permitting, and construction of the Southeast Wellfield Water Treatment Facility. It is expected to provide 12.5 mgd of regional water supply.

Project Name: Polk Regional Water Cooperative Regional Transmission Southeast (Q216)

Type of Alternative Supply: Regional Transmission System.

Cooperator: Polk Regional Water Cooperative

Locale: Polk County

Project Description: Design, permitting, and construction of the Southeast Wellfield's Regional Transmission System. It is expected to interconnect and deliver alternative water supplies from the Southeast Wellfield to 11 municipal and county service areas.

Project Name: Polk Regional Water Cooperative West Polk Wellfield Water Treatment Facility (Q308) **Type of Alternative Supply:** Brackish Groundwater

Cooperator: Polk Regional Water Cooperative

Locale: Polk County

Project Description: Design, permitting, and construction of the West Polk Wellfield Water Treatment Facility. It is expected to provide 10.0 mgd of regional water supply.

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2026 Five-Year **Water**
Resource
Development
Work Program



Southwest Florida
Water Management District



Chapter 5 Five-Year Water Resources Development Work Program

Introduction/Purpose

The water management districts are required to prepare a Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program (Work Program) as a part of their annual budget reporting process. The Work Program describes the District's implementation strategy relating to water resource development (WRD) and water supply development (including alternative water supply development) components over the next five years. The Work Program must be submitted annually to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the chairs of all legislative committees and subcommittees having substantive or fiscal jurisdiction over the Districts, the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the governing board of each county. Pursuant to Subsection 373.536(6)(a)4, Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Work Program must:

- Address all the elements of the WRD component in the District's approved Regional Water Supply Plans (RWSPs), as well as the water supply projects proposed for District funding and assistance;
- Identify both anticipated available District funding and additional funding needs for the second through fifth years of the funding plan;
- Identify projects in the Work Program which will provide water;
- Explain how each water resource and water supply project will produce additional water available for consumptive uses;
- Estimate the quantity of water to be produced by each project;
- Provide an assessment of the contribution of the District's RWSPs in supporting the implementation of minimum flows and minimum water levels (MFLs) and water reservations; and
- Ensure sufficient water is available to timely meet the water supply needs of existing and future reasonable-beneficial uses for a 1-in-10-year drought event and to avoid the adverse effects of competition for water supplies.

This report represents the District's 25th Work Program and covers the period from fiscal year (FY) 2026 through FY2030. In August of 2025 the DEP provided a guidance document and template spreadsheets to improve the consistency among the Water Management Districts' Work Program submittals. This Work Program is consistent with the planning strategies of the Central Florida Water Initiative 2020 Regional Water Supply Plan (CFWI RWSP) and the District's 2020 Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP) which can be found at:

<https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/resources/plans-reports/rwsp/previous-regional-water-supply-plans>

The water resource and water supply development components of the District's Work Program are presented in three sections:

- WRD Data Collection and Analysis Activities that include routinely funded programmatic efforts by the District to monitor and support the health of natural systems, evaluate and establish MFLs, conduct watershed management planning, and improve water quality and stormwater storage and conveyance.

- WRD Projects that are undertaken by the District and/or partnering entities for evaluating aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) feasibility, the Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) projects to reduce groundwater withdrawals and improve natural systems, and environmental restoration efforts including MFL recovery projects.
- Water Supply Development Projects, which are usually led by other entities with District funding assistance, to develop and deliver new alternative potable water supplies, reclaimed water and reuse, aquifer storage and recovery and aquifer recharge systems, and numerous conservation projects to help manage water needs.

Also included is an overview of funding mechanisms, a summary of the adequacy of District expenditures to ensure the availability of water for reasonable-beneficial uses and natural systems and an appendix listing projects with District funding to implement projects identified in the Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs).

Water Resource Development

Water resource development is defined in Section 373.019(24), F.S., as *“the formulation and implementation of regional water resource management strategies, including the collection and evaluation of surface water and groundwater data; structural and nonstructural programs to protect and manage water resources; the development of regional water resource implementation programs; the construction, operation, and maintenance of major public works facilities to provide for flood control, surface and underground water storage, and groundwater recharge augmentation; and related technical assistance to local governments, government-owned and privately owned water utilities, and self-suppliers to the extent assistance to self-suppliers promotes the policies as set forth in s. 373.016.”*

The intent of WRD activities and WRD projects is to enhance the amount of water available for reasonable-beneficial uses and for natural systems. The District is primarily responsible for implementing WRD activities and projects; however, additional funding and technical support may come from state, federal, and local entities.

WRD Data Collection and Analysis Activities

Data collection and analysis activities are a critical part of the water resource development component implemented by the District. The District has budgeted approximately \$24.4 million in FY2026 to implement and continue activities to collect scientific data necessary to manage water resources and evaluate new water supplies, support the evaluation and establishment of MFLs, conduct watershed management plans, improve groundwater quality, and implement best management practices (BMPs) for stormwater storage and conveyance. These activities are summarized in **Table 1**.

Funding for these activities is primarily from the District's Governing Board; in some cases, additional funding that supports these efforts comes from local governments, and the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Each item was included in the District's Tentative Budget Submission Appendix C and can be referenced by the sub-activity code. Each activity is further described below.

Scientific Data Collection

The District has a comprehensive scientific data monitoring program that includes the assembly of information on key indicators such as rainfall, surface water and groundwater levels, water quality, hydrogeology, and stream flows. The program includes data collected by District staff as well as

data collected as part of the District's cooperative funding program with the USGS. Data collected allows the District to gage changes in the health of water resources, monitor trends in conditions, identify and analyze existing or potential resource problems, and develop programs to correct existing problems and prevent future problems from occurring. The data collection activities support District structure operations, water use and environmental resource permitting and compliance, MFLs evaluation and status assessments, the Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program, the Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area (NTBWUCA), the Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA), and the Dover/Plant City Water Use Caution Area (DPCWUCA), water supply planning in the District and CFWI regions, modeling of surface water and groundwater systems, cooperative and district initiative project development and monitoring, and many resource evaluations and reports.

The categories of scientific data that are collected and monitored by District staff are discussed by station type and collection entity below. At the time of writing, the District and USGS are working together to reduce data collection performed by the USGS due to changes in their available FY 2026 funding and staffing. A portion of their data collection may be assumed by the District or restarted by the USGS in future fiscal years. Therefore, the numbers in the text below and Table 1 may change. In addition to data collection completed or contracted by the District, scientific data submitted by Water Use Permit (WUP) holders are also considered to assess compliance with permit conditions.

- a) Surface Water Flows and Levels. Funding supports data collection at the District's approximately 795 surface water level gauging stations, and cooperative funding with the USGS for long-term discharge and water-level data collection at 137 river, stream, and canal stations. The USGS data are available to District staff and the public through the District's Environmental Data Portal (EDP) and the USGS National Water Dashboard.
- b) Hydrogeologic Data. The District collects hydrogeologic data including lithologic, hydraulic, and water quality through exploratory coring, testing, and construction of monitor wells at sites across the District. Administered by the Geohydrologic Data section, the Regional Observation and Monitor Well Program (ROMP) has been the District's primary source of hydrogeologic data and monitor well construction since its establishment in 1974. These hydrogeologic data support projects such as the CFWI, Water Resource Assessment Projects (WRAPs), MFLs, sea level rise, and development of alternative water supplies. The monitor wells constructed through the ROMP also serve as essential infrastructure for long-term monitoring of groundwater levels and water quality.
- c) Meteorologic Data. The meteorologic data monitoring program consists of measuring rainfall totals at 171 rain gauges, all of which provide near real-time data. The funding is for costs associated with measurement of rainfall including sensors, maintenance, repair, and replacement of equipment. Funding allows for the operation of one District evapotranspiration (ET) station for reference near Lake Hancock, and for District participation in a cooperative effort between the USGS and all five Florida water management districts to map statewide potential and reference ET using data measured from the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellites (GOES). Funding also includes a collaborative effort between the five districts to provide high-resolution gauge adjusted radar rainfall data that are used for hydrologic conditions reporting and modeling purposes.
- d) Water Quality Data. The District collects data from water quality monitoring networks for springs, streams, lakes, wells, and coastal and inland rivers. The well monitoring networks include the Coastal Groundwater Quality Monitoring Network (CGWQMN), Inland Floridan Aquifer System Monitoring Network (IFASMN), and the Upper Floridan Aquifer Nutrient Monitoring Network (UFANMN).

Data from monitor well stations are used to evaluate seasonal and long-term changes in groundwater levels and quality, as well as the interaction and connectivity between groundwater and surface water bodies. The Coastal Groundwater Quality Monitoring Network, which involves sample collection and analysis from approximately 380 wells across the District, monitors saltwater intrusion and/or the upwelling of mineralized waters into potable aquifers. The USGS collects long-term water quality data at 21 stations, which are available from their website.

- e) Groundwater Levels. The funding provides for the maintenance and support of about 1,655 monitor wells in the data collection network. Data may be collected in 15-minute intervals, hourly, daily, or monthly. The District also uses funding to contract with the USGS to obtain continuous and monthly water levels at 15 sites. Groundwater level data are available to the public through the District and USGS websites.

Table 1. FY2026 - FY2030 Water Resource Development Data Collection and Analysis Activities

WRD Data Collection and Analysis Activities ²	Budget Reference ¹	FY2026 Costs (\$)	FY2027 Costs (\$)	FY2028 Costs (\$)	FY2029 Costs (\$)	FY2030 Costs (\$)	Total Costs (\$)	Funding Source ²
1) Research, Data Collection, Analysis & Monitoring	1.2.1, p.62							District, Local Cooperators, USGS
a) Surface Water Flows & Levels Data		\$3,980,641	\$3,980,641	\$3,980,641	\$3,980,641	\$3,980,641	\$19,903,205	
b) Geologic (includes ROMP) Data		\$3,057,888	\$3,057,888	\$3,057,888	\$3,057,888	\$3,057,888	\$15,289,440	
c) Meteorologic Data		\$285,384	\$285,384	\$285,384	\$285,384	\$285,384	\$1,426,920	
d) Water Quality Data		\$836,642	\$836,642	\$836,642	\$836,642	\$836,642	\$4,183,210	
e) Groundwater Levels Data		\$1,064,385	\$1,064,385	\$1,064,385	\$1,064,385	\$1,064,385	\$5,321,925	
f) Biologic Data		\$962,172	\$962,172	\$962,172	\$962,172	\$962,172	\$4,810,860	
g) Data Support		\$4,243,906	\$4,243,906	\$4,243,906	\$4,243,906	\$4,243,906	\$21,219,530	
2) Minimum Flows and Levels Program	1.1.2, p.58							District
a) Technical Support		\$959,646	\$959,646	\$959,646	\$959,646	\$959,646	\$4,798,230	
b) MFL Establishment/ Evaluation		\$765,563	\$765,563	\$765,563	\$765,563	\$765,563	\$3,827,815	
3) Watershed Management Planning	1.1.3.2, p.60	\$5,848,499	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$3,000,000	\$15,348,499	District, Local Cooperators, DEP
4) Quality of Water Improvement Program	2.2.3, p.84	\$781,515	\$781,515	\$781,515	\$781,515	\$781,515	\$3,907,575	District
5) Stormwater Improvement- Implementation of Storage and Conveyance BMPs	2.3.1, p.86	\$1,661,383	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,661,383	District
Totals		\$24,447,624	\$18,937,742	\$18,937,742	\$19,437,742	\$19,937,742	\$101,698,592	

Source: SWFWMD FY2025-26 Tentative Budget Submission.

¹ The Program Activity/Sub-Activity and page number in the Tentative Budget Submission where the WRD Data Collection and Analysis Activities reside. The funding amounts within this table are subsets of the referenced Program Activity/Sub-Activity.

² Acronyms: BMPs - Best Management Practices, DEP - Florida Department of Environmental Protection, MFL - Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels, ROMP - District Regional Observation and Monitor-well Program

- f) Biologic Data. The District monitors ecological conditions as they relate to both potential water use impacts and changes in hydrologic conditions. Funding for biologic data collection includes support for routine monitoring of approximately 149 wetlands annually to document changes in wetland health and assess level of recovery in impacted wetlands. Funding also supports SWIM Program efforts for mapping of seagrasses every two years along the Suncoast (Tampa Bay south to Charlotte Harbor), and every four years along the Springs Coast (Anclote Key to Waccasassa Bay). Additionally, submerged aquatic vegetation mapping occurs twice annually for each of the first-magnitude springs, all five of which are listed as SWIM Priority Water Bodies.
- g) Data Support. This item provides administrative and management staff support for the hydrologic, water quality, meteorologic and hydrogeologic data programs as well as the chemistry laboratory, surveying, and the District's LoggerNet data acquisition system and Kister's Water Information System (WISKI) and associated Environmental Data Portal used for database management, storage and reporting.

Minimum Flows and Levels Program

Section 373.042, F.S., requires the state water management districts or the DEP to establish minimum flows and minimum water levels (MFLs) for aquifers, surface watercourses, and other surface water bodies to identify the water level or limit at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area. Minimum flows for rivers, streams, estuaries, and springs, and minimum water levels for lakes, wetlands and aquifers are adopted into the District's Water Levels and Rates of Flow rules, Chapter 40D-8, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), and are used in the District's water use permitting and water supply planning programs.

Reservations are rules that reserve water from use by permit applications, as necessary for the protection of fish and wildlife or public health and safety. Reservations are adopted into the District Consumptive Use of Water rules, Chapter 40D-2, F.A.C., pursuant to Section 373.223, F.S., and are also used for water use permitting and water supply planning.

The District's processes for establishing MFLs and reservations include opportunities for interested stakeholders to review and comment on proposed MFLs or reservations and participate in public meetings. A publicly noticed independent scientific peer review process is used to support establishment of MFLs for flowing systems and aquifers, for establishing MFLs for other system types that are based on methods that have not previously been subjected to peer review, and for establishing reservations. Stakeholder input and peer review findings are considered by the Governing Board when deciding whether to adopt proposed MFLs and reservations. District monitoring programs provide data for evaluating compliance with the adopted MFLs and reservations, determining the need for MFLs recovery or prevention strategies, assessing the recovery of water bodies where significant harm has occurred, and also support MFL's and reservation reevaluations.

As of June 2025, the District has planned to monitor and assess the status of 207 adopted MFLs, including MFLs for 28 river segments, 10 springs or spring groups, 126 lakes, 34 wetlands, 9 aquifer sites including 7 Upper Floridan Aquifer (UFA) wells in the NTBWUCA, and the UFA in the Most Impacted Area (MIA) of the SWUCA and the UFA in the DPCWUCA. The District also plans to monitor and assess the status of 2 adopted reservations, including a reservation for water stored in Lake Hancock and released to Lower Saddle Creek for recovery of MFLs adopted for the Upper Peace River, and a reservation for water from Morris Bridge Sink for recovery of MFLs adopted for the Lower Hillsborough River. In addition, the District is scheduling the establishment or reevaluation of 26 MFLs and 1 reservation through calendar year 2028.

The District's annual MFLs Priority List and Schedule and Reservations List and Schedule is approved by the Governing Board in October, submitted to DEP for review in November, and published in the Consolidated Annual Report the following March. The currently approved and proposed priority lists and schedules are also posted on the District's Minimum Flows and Levels Documents and Reports webpage at: <https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/mfl/documents-and-reports>.

Watershed Management Planning

The District addresses flooding problems in existing areas by preparing and implementing Watershed Management Plans (WMPs) in cooperation with local governments. The WMPs define flood conditions, identify flood level of service deficiencies, and evaluate BMPs to address those deficiencies. The WMPs include consideration of the capacity of a watershed to protect, enhance, and restore water quality and natural systems while achieving flood protection. The plans identify effective watershed management strategies and culminate in defining floodplain delineations and constructing selected BMPs.

Local governments and the District combine their resources and exchange watershed data to implement the WMPs. Funding for local elements of the WMPs is provided through local governments' capital improvement plans and the District's Cooperative Funding Initiative.

Additionally, flood hazard information generated by the WMPs is used by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to revise flood insurance rate maps. This helps to better define flood risk and is used extensively for land use planning by local governments and property owners. Since the WMPs may change based on growth and shifting priorities, the District also cooperates with local governments to update the WMPs when necessary, giving decision-makers opportunities throughout the program to determine when and where funds are needed.

Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP)

Established in 1974, the Program's primary goal is to preserve groundwater and surface water resources by providing funding assistance to incentivize landowners to properly plug abandoned, deteriorating, or improperly constructed artesian wells on their property. Thousands of wells constructed prior to current well construction standards are often deficient in casing, interconnecting aquifers with distinct water qualities. This enables mineralized groundwater to migrate upward, potentially altering the natural water quality of overlying aquifers and surface water bodies. When an abandoned artesian well is plugged with cement and/or bentonite from the bottom to the top, it re-establishes the natural isolation between aquifers and eliminates the upward flow of groundwater to the surface. Artesian wells within the District typically occur where the upper Floridan aquifer is confined, so the region of emphasis for the Program is primarily in the Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA). Historically, the Program has proven to be a cost-effective method to promote the plugging of artesian wells.

Stormwater Improvements - Implementation of Storage and Conveyance BMPs The District's WMPs and SWIM programs implement stormwater and conveyance BMPs for preventative flood protection, particularly in urban areas, and to improve surface water quality for SWIM Priority Water Bodies. The BMPs involve construction of improvements identified and prioritized in the development of watershed management plans or in SWIM Plans. While the District may take the lead for some projects, most of these activities are developed through cooperative funding with a local government entity, DEP, or other state funding.

WRD Projects

The District has budgeted for 25 WRD projects that are ongoing. At the start of FY2026 (October 1, 2025), the District has allocated approximately \$5 million in the budget for 5 of these projects. If a project received funding in prior years and is still ongoing it remains in the Work Program until completion. District funding for a number of the projects is matched to varying degrees by local cooperators including municipalities, state agencies, private agricultural operations, and others. The total cost of these projects, including the cooperator shares, is approximately \$34.1 million. It's estimated that approximately 52.29 million gallons per day (mgd) of additional water supply will be produced or conserved. The projects are listed in **Table 2** and are consistent with Programmatic Code 2.2.1 in the District's FY2026 budget. The WRD projects are organized into three groups:

Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility and Pilot Testing

These projects are research and/or pilot projects designed to further the development of the innovative alternative water sources described in the RWSP. The projects for investigation of the Lower Floridan aquifer are primarily District-led initiatives. The ASR and Aquifer Recharge projects may involve both technical and financial assistance from the District.

Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS)

The FARMS Program is an agricultural BMP cost-share reimbursement program. The program is a public/private partnership developed by the District and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). The program provides incentives to the agricultural community within the District to implement agricultural BMPs that will provide resource benefits including the reduction of groundwater withdrawals from the upper Floridan aquifer, improvement of ground and surface water quality impacted by groundwater withdrawals, and improvement of natural-system functions within wetlands and priority watersheds.

The FARMS Program operates under District Governing Board Policy to fund projects that provide these benefits while assisting in the implementation of the District's RWSP. This plan identifies strategic initiatives and regional priorities to meet the District's water management goals. These goals are based on improving and/or maintaining the water resource conditions of several regions within the District. Five primary goals for the FARMS Program are to:

1. Improve surface water quality which has been impacted by groundwater withdrawals with a priority given to projects in the Shell, Prairie, and Joshua Creek, or Horse Creek watersheds;
2. Conserve, restore or augment the water resources and natural systems in the Upper Myakka River Watershed;
3. Reduce groundwater use in the SWUCA;
4. Reduce groundwater use for Frost/Freeze Protection within the DPCWUCA;
5. Reduce Upper Floridan aquifer groundwater use and nutrient loading impacts in the Northern District.

The FARMS projects implement FDACS-approved BMPs that offset groundwater use with surface water and/or increase the overall efficiency of irrigation water use. Many projects have the added benefit of reducing agricultural impacts to surface water features. Properly implemented BMPs protect and conserve water resources and may increase crop production.

Environmental Restoration and MFL Recovery Projects

These projects include MFL recovery projects for the Hillsborough River Recovery Strategy, and SWUCA Salt Water Intrusion Minimum Aquifer Level (SWIMAL) in support of the SWUCA Recovery Strategy.

At the DEP's guidance, additional project details are available in spreadsheet format. The DEP will present Work Program project data from each of the water management districts on their website for public review, in accordance with Section 373.536(6)(b), F.S. The detailed spreadsheet includes project descriptions, schedules, cooperator and state funding levels, and the water bodies and planning regions supported. The District's proposed Work Program spreadsheet is available online at: <https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/resources/plans-reports/water-resource-development-work-program>

Table 2. FY2026 - FY2030 District Funding and Total Project Cost for Water Resource Development Projects

Project Number	WRD Projects ¹	Total Prior District Funding	FY2026 District Cost	FY2027 District Cost	FY2028 District Cost	FY2029 District Cost	FY2030 District Cost	Total Cost District + Cooperator	Funding Source	Quantity developed or conserved (mgd) ¹
1) Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility and Pilot Testing (Programmatic Code 2.2.1.1)										
N855	Southern Hillsborough Aquifer Recharge Program (SHARP) Phase 2	\$4,800,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,700,000	District, Hillsborough County	4
P925	Optical Borehole Imaging Data Collection from LFA Wells	\$100,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$167,000	District, USGS	NA
P926	Sources/Ages of Groundwater in LFA Wells	\$368,300	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$736,600	District, USGS	NA
Q050	City of Venice Reclaimed Water Aquifer Storage Recovery	\$2,744,876	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,489,752	District, City of Venice	Storage
Q064	Direct Aquifer Recharge - North Hillsborough Aquifer Recharge Program Phase 2	\$750,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,500,000	District, Hillsborough County	Study
Q159	Bee Ridge Water Reclamation Facility Aquifer Recharge	\$915,511	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,831,022	District, Sarasota County	5
P189	Aquifer Recharge Testing at Flatford Swamp	\$760,000	\$451,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,211,000	District	NA
2) Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) (Programmatic Code 2.2.1.2)										
H017	FARMS Projects (H017) ²	Annual Request	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	Annual Request	District	33.6
H807	Sizemore Group Automation	\$182,857	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$243,809	District, Sizemore Group Automation	0.0307
H817	B 8 Turf Co., LLC	\$751,229	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,001,639	District, B 8 Turf Co., LLC	0.130
H821	James Keen 62	\$380,400	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$662,700	District, James Keen 62	0.082
H825	Berry Red Farms, LLC	\$164,640	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$219,251	District, Berry Red Farms, LLC	0.060
H826	FD Berries USA LLC - Twitty Road South	\$119,129	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$171,129	District, FD Berries Usa LLC - Twitty Road South	0.025

H828	G & G Farms LLC - North 40	\$212,246	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$282,995	District, G & G Farms LLC - North 40	0.045
Project Number	WRD Projects¹	Total Prior District Funding	FY2026 District Cost	FY2027 District Cost	FY2028 District Cost	FY2029 District Cost	FY2030 District Cost	Total Cost District + Cooperator	Funding Source	Quantity developed or conserved¹
H830	McClure Properties, LTD - Phase 2	\$195,706	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$296,355	District, McClure Properties, LTD - Phase 2	0.045
H831	Gapway Mixon Cups, LLC	\$64,171	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$85,562	District, Gapway Mixon Cups, LLC	0.020
H832	T&T Environmental, LLC - Desoto Groves	\$652,782	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$870,377	District, T&T Environmental, LLC - Desoto Groves	0.130
H833	Midway Farms, LLC - Raulerson Road	\$45,468	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$60,624	District, Midway Farms, LLC - Raulerson Road	0.020
H834	Jim Rash, Inc - Zoffay Road	\$64,214	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$85,619	District, Jim Rash, Inc - Zoffay Road	0.018
H835	Green Grass Farms of Hardee County	\$771,933	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,173,838	District, Green Grass Farms of Hardee County	0.18
H529	Mini-FARMS Program ²	Annual Request	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	Annual Request	District	3.000
3) Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels Recovery³ (Programmatic Code 2.2.1.3)										
H089	MIA Recharge SWIMAL Recovery at Flatford Swamp	\$6,635,702	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,635,702	District	2
H404-1 ³	Lower Hillsborough River Recovery Strategy Morris Bridge Sink	\$1,329,982	\$20,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,349,982	District	3.90
H400-7 ³	Third Five-Year Assessment of the Lower Hillsborough River Recovery Strategy	\$263,944	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$263,944	District	NA
H400-13 ³	Lower Hillsborough River Biological Data Collection	\$40,000	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$90,000	District	NA
Water Resource Development Project Totals		\$22,313,290	\$5,021,000	\$4,500,000	\$4,500,000	\$4,500,000	\$4,500,000	\$34,128,900		52.29

1. Acronyms: NA - not applicable, mgd - million gallons per day, MIA - Most Impacted Area of the SWUCA, SWIMAL - Salt Water Intrusion Minimum Aquifer Level, USGS - United States Geological Survey, ASR - Aquifer Storage Recovery, LFA - Lower Floridan Aquifer.
 2. The FARMS lead program (H017) and Mini-FARMS quantities conserved represents period of record offsets plus estimated conserved in future during WRDWP planning. Sub-projects list active project savings as of July 2025.
 3. H400 and H404 consists of many sub-projects. WRDWP only represents ongoing efforts and aligns with STAR reporting.

Water Supply Development Assistance

Water supply development is defined as the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of public or private facilities for water collection, production, treatment, transmission, or distribution for sale, resale, or end use (Section 373.019(26), F.S.). Regional water supply authorities, local governments, and public and privately-owned water utilities typically have the lead role in implementing water supply development projects (Section 373.705, F.S.). The District provides funding assistance to these entities for projects that are consistent with the District's Strategic Plan, Surface Water Improvement and Management Plans, and the District and CFWI RWSPs. Final decisions regarding the funding of projects are the exclusive responsibility of the District's Governing Board. The District's primary funding mechanism for water supply development assistance is the Cooperative Funding Initiative (CFI) Program, which is described in the Funding Sources section of this Work Program.

The District has 40 budgeted or ongoing water supply development projects in FY2026, including 1 water supply planning projects that support water supply development. As shown in **Table 3-h**, the District is funding approximately \$93.2 million in FY2026 for 8 projects that achieve water supply development assistance. The project budgets shown are consistent with the District's Programmatic Budget under activity codes 2.2.2 (water supply development) and (water supply planning). The water supply projects are listed in **Table 3-a** to **3-g**, grouped by the following budget sub-categories and sorted by project code number:

- Surface Water Projects
- Regional Potable Water Interconnect Projects
- Reclaimed Water Projects
- Brackish Groundwater Development Projects
- ASR and Aquifer Recharge Projects
- Conservation Projects
- Water Supply Planning Projects

Most water supply development projects are funded within one year, but large projects may have construction budgets over multiple years to coincide with each year's predicted expenses. Since the District budget is adopted on an annual basis, the future funding for ongoing projects is estimated based on projected costs and schedules. Additional future funding will be needed for new projects that aren't yet proposed through the CFI Program. The District anticipates new reclaimed water and conservation projects will require funding levels less than previous years. The amount needed for new regional interconnects and water treatment facilities can vary greatly from year to year, peaking as large infrastructure projects move from design to construction phases.

Significant new funding has been proposed in the FY2026-30 timeframe for the PRMRWSA Reservoir No.3, next phases of the PRWC's Southeast and West Polk Lower Floridan Aquifer Wellfields, and Tampa Bay Water's Southern Hillsborough County Transmission Expansion.

The listed projects that have no FY2026 or future funding are ongoing with prior year funding. Projects are omitted from the Work Program when they are completed, and final reimbursement is provided.

Table 3-a. Surface Water Projects

Project Number	Water Supply Development Assistance - Surface Water Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.1)	Prior District Funding	FY2026 Funding	FY2027 Funding	FY2028 Funding	FY2029 Funding	FY2030 Funding	Total Project Cost	Supply (mgd)
Q272	PRMRWSA - Reservoir No. 3	\$32,682,867	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$375,077,000	NA
Total Surface Water Projects		\$32,682,867	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$375,077,000	0.000

Table 3-b. Regional Potable Interconnects

Project Number	Water Supply Development Assistance - Regional Potable Water Interconnects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.2)	Prior District Funding	FY2026 Funding	FY2027 Funding	FY2028 Funding	FY2029 Funding	FY2030 Funding	Total Project Cost	Supply (mgd)
Q216	PRWC Regional Transmission Southeast	\$35,482,459	\$26,083,215	\$14,447,326	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$174,100,600	NA
Q241	TBW - Southern Hillsborough County Transmission Expansion	\$15,859,207	\$17,500,000	\$37,231,598	\$37,231,598	\$37,231,597	\$0	\$438,709,630	NA
Q313	PRMRWSA- Regional Integrated Loop System Ph 3C	\$26,550,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$63,850,000	NA
Q355	PRMRWSA- Regional Integrated Loop System Ph 2b	\$25,746,094	\$10,403,906	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$87,440,545	NA
Total Regional Potable Water Interconnect Projects		\$103,637,760	\$53,987,121	\$51,678,924	\$37,231,598	\$37,231,597	\$0	\$764,100,775	0

Table 3-c. Reclaimed Water Projects

Project Number	Water Supply Development Assistance - Reclaimed Water Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.3)	Prior District Funding	FY2026 Funding	FY2027 Funding	FY2028 Funding	FY2029 Funding	FY2030 Funding	Total Project Cost	Benefit (mgd)
N339	Winter Haven #3 Reclaimed Interconnect, Storage, and Pumping	\$2,750,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,466,000	0.3
N791	Pasco County Starkey Ranch Reclaimed Water Transmission Phase C	\$456,800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$913,600	0.29
N868	Polk County Utilities NERUSA Ernie Caldwell Blvd Reclaimed Water Transmission	\$1,056,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,113,000	0.414
Q066	Polk County Utilities- NERUSA Lake Wilson Road Reuse	\$262,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$525,500	0.18
Q067	Polk County Utilities-NERUSA Southeast Reuse Loop	\$2,186,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,373,500	0.522
Q105	Citrus County Sugarmill Woods Golf Course Reuse	\$1,834,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,918,000	0.5
Q113	City of Plant City McIntosh Park Indirect Potable Reuse Feasibility Study	\$300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$600,000	Study
Q139	North Port Direct Potable Reuse Feasibility	\$125,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$250,000	Study
Q160	Sarasota County Honore Avenue Reclaimed Water Transmission	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,000,000	0.533

Q209	Polk County Direct Potable Reuse Feasibility and Pilot Demo	\$795,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,591,582	Study
Q268	Braden River Utilities Taylor Road Area Transmission	\$3,550,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,100,000	1.57
Q274	Zephyrhills - Zephyr to Pasco Reclaimed Water Interconnect	\$880,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,760,000	NA
Total Reclaimed Water Projects		\$15,696,800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$36,611,182	4.309

Table 3-d. Brackish Groundwater Projects

Project Number	Water Supply Development Assistance - Brackish Groundwater Development Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.4)	Prior District Funding	FY2026 Funding	FY2027 Funding	FY2028 Funding	FY2029 Funding	FY2030 Funding	Total Project Cost	Supply (mgd)
Q184	PRWC - Southeast Wellfield Implementation	\$29,334,987	\$14,500,000	\$14,500,000	\$14,500,000	\$14,500,000	\$14,500,000	\$247,530,000	12.5
Q308	PRWC - West Polk Wellfield	\$13,015,498	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$228,144,000	10
Q309	PRWC - Test Prod Well #2 West Polk Wellfield	\$1,448,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,125,000	Study
Total Brackish Groundwater Projects		\$43,798,985	\$24,500,000	\$24,500,000	\$24,500,000	\$24,500,000	\$24,500,000	\$479,799,000	22.5

Table 3-e. Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) and Aquifer Recharge Projects

Project Number	Water Supply Development Assistance - Aquifer Recharge/ Storage and Recovery Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.5)	Prior District Funding	FY2026 Funding	FY2027 Funding	FY2028 Funding	FY2029 Funding	FY2030 Funding	Total Project Cost	Benefit (mgd)
N435	City of Bradenton Surface Water Aquifer Storage Recovery 2	\$2,350,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,700,000	Storage
Q142	Pinellas County Chestnut Park Aquifer Storage, Recovery & Recharge	\$893,500	\$0	\$2,779,875	\$926,625	\$0	\$0	\$9,200,000	Storage
Total Aquifer Recharge/ASR Projects		\$3,243,500	\$0	\$2,779,875	\$926,625	\$0	\$0	\$13,900,000	0

Table 3-f. Conservation Projects

Project Number	Water Supply Development Assistance - Conservation Rebates, Retrofits, Etc. Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.7)	Prior District Funding	FY2026 Funding	FY2027 Funding	FY2028 Funding	FY2029 Funding	FY2030 Funding	Total Project Cost	Benefit (mgd)
B015	Water Incentives Supporting Efficient (WISE) Program	Annual Request	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	Annual Request	0.652
N973	Winter Haven Consumption/Conservation Programs Data Management Software	\$60,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$120,000	0.016
Q145	Longboat Key Club - Advanced Irrigation System	\$508,516	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,115,000	0.095
Q215	TBW - Demand Management Program Phase 2	\$1,432,238	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,864,476	0.93

Q245	Pinellas County AMI Metering Analytics	\$139,414	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$278,828	0.111
Q256	St. Petersburg - Sensible Sprinkling Program - Phase 10	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$100,000	0.055
Q265	North Port - Water Distribution Ridgewood/Lamplighter Area Looping	\$173,950	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$347,900	0.015
Q266	Polk County - Florida Water Star Builder Reimbursement Program	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$40,000	0.005
Q267	PRWC- Demand Management Implementation	\$102,679	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$205,358	0.064
P964	Water Use Evals for Non-Ag Users	\$103,400	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$103,400	0.011
Q304	Venice Toilet Rebate and Retrofit Phase 9	\$16,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$33,000	0.005

Table 3-f. Conservation Projects (continued)

Project Number	Water Supply Development Assistance - Conservation Rebates, Retrofits, Etc. Projects (Programmatic Budget 2.2.2.7)	Prior District Funding	FY2026 Funding	FY2027 Funding	FY2028 Funding	FY2029 Funding	FY2030 Funding	Total Project Cost	Benefit (mgd)
Q306	WRWSA Irrigation Eval Program, Phase 7	\$51,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$102,000	0.025
Q311	Bay Laurel CCDD Water Conservation Program Phase 2	\$191,900	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$383,800	0.055
Q319	Manatee County Toilet Rebate Phase 15	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$100,000	0.017
Q371	Polk County Irrigation System Evaluation Program, Phase 8	\$72,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$178,750	0.053
Q387	St. Pete Sensible Sprinkling Program, Phase 11	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$100,000	0.055
Q414	TBW Demand Management Plan Implementation	\$0	\$528,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,056,000	0.45
Total Conservation Rebates, Retrofits, Etc.		\$3,022,097	\$753,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$7,128,512	2.614

Table 3-g. Water Supply Planning Projects

Project Number	Water Supply Planning (Programmatic Budget 1.1.1)	Prior District Funding	FY2026 Funding	FY2027 Funding	FY2028 Funding	FY2029 Funding	FY2030 Funding	Total Project Cost	Supply (mgd)
Q324	WRWSA Regional Water Supply Plan 2024 Update	\$175,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$350,000	NA
Total Planning Projects		\$175,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$350,000	0

Table 3-h of Funding for Water Supply Development Projects

Water Supply Development Assistance Project Totals (Programmatic Budget 2.2.Summ 1.1.1)	Prior District Funding	FY2026 Funding	FY2027 Funding	FY2028 Funding	FY2029 Funding	FY2030 Funding	Total Project Cost	Supply (mgd)
Surface Water Projects	\$32,682,867	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$375,077,000	0.00
Regional Potable Water Interconnect Projects	\$103,637,760	\$53,987,121	\$51,678,924	\$37,231,598	\$37,231,597	\$0	\$764,100,775	0.00
Reclaimed Water Projects	\$15,696,800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$36,611,182	4.31
Brackish Groundwater Development Projects	\$43,798,985	\$24,500,000	\$24,500,000	\$24,500,000	\$24,500,000	\$24,500,000	\$479,799,000	22.50
Aquifer Recharge/ Storage and Recovery Projects	\$3,243,500	\$0	\$2,779,875	\$926,625	\$0	\$0	\$13,900,000	0.00
Conservation Projects	\$3,022,097	\$753,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$7,128,512	2.61
Water Supply Planning Projects	\$175,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$350,000	0.00
Total Funding for Water Supply Development Projects	\$202,257,009	\$93,240,121	\$93,183,799	\$76,883,223	\$75,956,597	\$38,725,000	\$1,676,966,469	29.42

Acronyms: ASR - aquifer storage and recovery, BMPs - best management practices, ET - evapotranspiration, mgd - million gallons per day, NERUSA/NWRUSA - Northeast/Northwest Regional Utility Service Areas of Polk County Utilities, PRMRWSA - Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority, PRWC - Polk Regional Water Cooperative, WRWSA - Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority, TBW - Tampa Bay Water, CDD - Community Development District

Funding Sources

The District provides significant financial assistance for water resource development and water supply development projects through the District's Cooperative Funding Initiative (CFI) and District Initiatives. The financial assistance is provided primarily to governmental entities, but private entities may also participate in these programs. Portions of state funding are allocated to the District through the DEP and legislative appropriations for the Springs Initiative, the Florida Forever Program, the Water Protection and Sustainability Program, and the District's FARMS Program. These sources are described below.

District Funding

Cooperative Funding Initiative –The District's primary funding mechanism is its CFI program, which includes funding for major regional water supply and water resource development projects and localized projects throughout the District's 16-county jurisdiction. The CFI program is a matching grant program that enables the Governing Board to jointly participate with local governments and other entities to ensure proper development, use, and protection of the regional water resources of the District. Projects of mutual benefit are generally funded 50 percent by the District and 50 percent by the public or private cooperators. Communities or counties qualifying under the Rural Economic Development Initiative (Section 288.0656, F.S.) may be eligible for greater matching shares.

Projects with construction costs exceeding \$5 million will undergo a third-party review to confirm costs, schedules, and ability to meet its resource benefits. Any state and federal funds received for the projects are applied directly against the project costs, with both parties benefitting equally.

Beginning in 2023, state and federal funds may be applied to eligible cost increases incurred above the Governing Board approved total project cost, before equally reducing both parties' share. The District is committed to solving the region's water resource issues through cooperative programs, such as the CFI program which has been in place since 1988. These efforts have been highly successful resulting in a combined investment (District and cooperators) of more than \$4.3 billion in incentive-based funding assistance for a variety of water resource projects addressing the District's four areas of responsibility: water supply, natural systems, flood protection and water quality.

District Initiatives – Projects implemented through District Initiatives are of great importance or a regional priority and, in most cases, are fully funded by the District. Examples of these initiatives include Water Resource Development (WRD) projects such as: (1) the Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP) to plug deteriorated, free-flowing wells that waste water and cause inter-aquifer contamination; (2) the Utilities Services Group to conserve water by assisting utilities in controlling their water loss; (3) data collection and analysis to support major District initiatives such as the MFLs program; (4) the FARMS program and other various agricultural research projects designed to increase the water-use efficiency of agricultural operations; (5) WRD investigations and MFLs Recovery projects which may not have local cooperators; and (6) the WISE (Water Incentives Supporting Efficiency) program launched in 2019 offers cost-share funding for a wide variety of water conservation projects (50 percent match with a maximum of \$20,000 per project) to non-agricultural entities.

State Funding

DEP Springs Initiative – A legislative appropriation specific to providing for the protection and restoration of Florida's major springs systems has enabled the DEP to assist local governments in achieving

restoration goals through its Springs Initiative program. Eligible project types include agricultural best management practices, water conservation, hydrologic restoration, reuse, land acquisition, septic-to-sewer, wastewater treatment upgrades and stormwater treatment. Projects funded by this initiative within the District's boundaries include the re-establishment of aquatic and shoreline vegetation near spring vents; construction of infrastructure necessary to convey wastewater in a priority focus area of Outstanding Florida Springs currently treated in septic systems or package plants to a centralized wastewater treatment facility which may increase reclaimed water production; and implementation of other BMPs within springshaded basins. Projects that have been awarded funding from the DEP Springs Initiative grant may also be eligible for funding through the District's CFI program. These projects are listed in the Work Program Appendix A - Projects for Implementing BMAPs. The District did not receive applications for FY2026 for new funding.

The Florida Forever Program – The Florida Forever Act, as originally passed by the Florida Legislature in 1999, established the 10-year \$3 billion statewide Florida Forever Program. The program was extended by the Legislature during the 2008 legislative session, allowing the program to continue for 10 more years at \$300 million annually. A specific \$30.8 million appropriation in the state's FY2026 budget was provided to the District for the acquisition of Kirkland Ranch property, approximately 947 acres in Pasco County, for water and land conservation. Previously, FY2011 was the last year the District received any new funding for the program. Since 1999, the District has allocated \$95 million (\$81.6 million for land acquisition and \$13.4 million for water body restoration) of Florida Forever funding Districtwide in support of water resource development. A "water resource development project" eligible for funding under the Florida Forever program is defined in Section 259.105, F.S., as a project that increases the amount of water available to meet the needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state by enhancing or restoring aquifer recharge, facilitating the capture and storage of excess flows in surface waters, or promoting reuse. Implementation of eligible projects under the program includes land acquisition, land and water body restoration, aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) facilities, surface water reservoirs, and other capital improvements. Numerous tracts have been acquired in the northern region including Potts and Flying Eagle preserves, Three Sisters Springs, and coastal preserves at Weeki Wachee and Chassahowitzka Rivers. A primary example of how the funds were used by the District for water resource development was the purchase of lands around Lake Hancock within the Peace River watershed, as the first step in restoring minimum flows to the Upper Peace River. In addition, the District Governing Board expended \$35.7 million in ad valorem-based funding to complete the acquisition of lands associated with the Lake Hancock project which were acquired on a voluntary basis and through eminent domain proceedings. In FY2023, the District expended the final balance of its prior-year funds held in the state's Florida Forever Trust Fund.

Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) Program – The District's FARMS Program is an agricultural best management practice (BMP) cost-share reimbursement program that involves both water quantity and water quality. This public/private partnership program was developed by the District and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) in 2003. The purpose of the FARMS Program is to implement production-scale agricultural BMP projects that will provide water resource benefits including water quality improvement, reduction of Upper Floridan withdrawals, conservation, and restoration or augmentation of the area's water resources and ecology. Since 2003 the District has co-funded \$57.1million dollars towards \$97.7 million dollars in total project costs for 262 FARMS projects resulting in 33.1 million gallons per day (mgd) of water resource benefits. Operating under District Governing Board Policy, the program utilizes state funding when available. Since inception of the program, the District has utilized \$7.3 million in state appropriations and \$1.2 million from the FDACS. No funding has been provided by state appropriations since FY2009.

NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) – The EQIP provides technical, educational, and financial assistance to eligible farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their lands while complying with federal, state of Florida, and tribal environmental laws that encourage environmental enhancement. The District's FARMS Program partners with the NRCS on both financial and technical levels and has coordinated dual cost-share projects whenever possible. The maximum funding for using both FARMS and EQIP is 75 percent of the total project cost.

Water Protection and Sustainability Program – Large areas of Florida do not have sufficient traditional water resources to meet the future needs of the state's growing population and the needs of the environment, agriculture and industry. The state's Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund (WPSPTF) was created in the 2005 legislative session through Senate Bill 444 to accelerate the development of alternative water sources and later recreated in Chapter 373, F.S., as part of the 2009 legislative session. Legislation focused on encouraging cooperation in the development of alternative water supplies and improving the linkage between local governments' land use plans and water management districts' regional water supply plans (RWSP). The program provides matching funds to the District for alternative water supply development assistance. From FY2006 through FY2009, the District was appropriated a total of \$53.75 million by the Legislature through the WPSPTF for water supply development projects. An additional \$700,000 in appropriations were allocated to the District between FY2020 and FY2021. Program funds are applied toward a maximum of 20 percent of eligible project construction costs. In addition, the Legislature established a goal for each water management district to annually contribute funding equal to 100 percent of the state funding for alternative water supply development assistance, which the District has exceeded annually. The legislation also requires that a minimum of 80 percent of the WPSPTF funding be related to projects identified in a district water supply plan. The District's RWSP is utilized in the identification of the majority of WPSPTF-eligible projects. Projects are evaluated for funding based on consideration of the 14 factors described in Subsections 373.707(8)(f) and (g), F.S., and additional District evaluation factors as appropriate.

Water Supply and Water Resource Development Grant Program – In FY2020, the state appropriated funds in addition to the Water Protection and Sustainability Program through the establishment of a Water Supply and Water Resource Development grant program in order to maximize the effort of addressing the demands on Florida's water supply to meet the future needs of the state's growing population and the needs of the environment. By identifying and researching all viable alternative water supply resources, the grant program is intended to help communities plan for and implement conservation, reuse, and other water supply and water resource development projects. Projects selected for funding are prioritized by areas of greatest need and greatest benefit, including timeliness of implementation. From FY2020 through FY2025, more than \$61 million has been awarded to the District by DEP for alternative water supply development through this grant program with an additional \$10 million anticipated in FY2026.

Summary/Conclusions

The Work Program presented herein is adequate to ensure water is available to timely meet the water supply needs of existing and future reasonable-beneficial uses for a 1-in-10-year drought event and to avoid the adverse effects of competition for water supplies. Over the next five years, this Work Program outlines the District’s commitment to ensure the availability of adequate water supplies for all reasonable-beneficial uses and to maintain the function of natural systems. It additionally illustrates the contributions of the District in support of MFLs and water reservations. This Work Program outlines activities and projects that will make available 81.71 mgd of water upon completion, including reuse water and new potable supply. These benefits are associated with approximately \$122.7 million budgeted for FY2026. The proposed funding for the 5-year Work Program is approximately \$502.7 million through FY 2026-30. **Table 4** below summarizes the funding categorized in the Work Program as WRD data collection and analysis activities, WRD Projects, and Water Supply Development Projects.

Table 4. Work Program Summary

WRD Data Collection and Analysis Activities	Sum of Current Year District Funding (FY2026)	Sum of Five-Year District Funding (F2026-30)	Sum of Water Made Available (mgd)
Water Resource Development - Data Collection and Analysis Activities (Table 1)	\$24, 447, 624	\$101,698,592	NA
Water Resource Development - Projects (Table 2)	\$5,021,000	\$23,021,000	52.29
Water Supply Development - Projects (Table 3-h)	\$93,240,121	\$377,988,740	29.42
Totals	\$122,708,745	\$502,708,332	81.71

At the DEP’s guidance, specific project details are provided in spreadsheet format. The DEP will present Work Program project data from each of the water management districts on their website for public review, in accordance with Section 373.536(6)(b), F.S. The detailed spreadsheet includes project schedules, cooperator and state funding levels, and the waterbodies and planning regions supported. The District’s proposed Work Program projects spreadsheet is available online at: <https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/resources/plans-reports/water-resource-development-work-program>

The WRD and water supply projects set forth a commitment to develop projects associated with the implementation of MFLs, recovery/prevention strategies, and water reservations. The majority of projects are located within the SWUCA or NTBWUCA and support their recovery strategies by reducing impacts to the upper Floridan aquifer. The remaining projects are located in the District’s Northern Planning Region, where a proactive, preventative approach is taken to optimize available water resources. The data collection and analysis activities are a critical part of the WRD component implemented by the District. These activities support the District’s MFLs programs. At the beginning of FY2026, the District has established and continues to monitor 207 adopted MFLs and has scheduled the establishment or revaluation of 26 MFLs through FY2028. The District’s annual MFLs Priority List and Schedule and Reservations List and Schedule is published in the Consolidated Annual Report, and can also be found on the District’s webpage at: <https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/mfl/documents-and-reports>

Other data collection and analysis activities include conducting watershed management planning, the QWIP program to preserve water resources through proper well abandonment, and the Implementation of stormwater storage and conveyance BMPs.

Appendix A

District Projects for Implementing Basin Management Action Plans

Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs), led by the DEP, provide technical direction for restoring impaired waters by achieving pollutant reductions established by a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). In 2016, the Florida Legislature amended Section 373.036, F.S., to require the identification of all specific projects that implement a BMAP or a recovery or prevention strategy in the Work Program. Consistent with section 373.036, F.S., and in a manner directed by the DEP and coordinated with all five water management Districts, this Appendix A of the Work Program provides a five-year funding outlook for projects that are BMAP related and include District funding. The District budgeted for thirteen BMAP projects, each benefitting the water quality of first- magnitude springs in the District's northern planning region.

Kings Bay/Crystal River Basin Management Action Plan

- Citrus County Cambridge Greens Septic to Sewer (W432)
- Crystal River Preserve State Park Redfish Hole Restoration (W401)
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping (WS01)
- Three Sisters Education Campaign (W466)

Chassahowitzka, Homosassa Springs Basin management Action Plan

- Citrus County Old Homosassa West Septic to Sewer Project (WH04)
- Citrus County Old Homosassa East Septic to Sewer project (Q134)
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping – Chassahowitzka (WS01)
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping – Homosassa (WS01)
- NW Hernando Septic to Sewer Feasibility Study (Q419)

Weeki Wachee Springs Basin Management Action Plan

- Hernando County Weeki Wachee Springshed Nitrogen Removal Stormwater Retrofits (WW05)
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping (WS01)
- Weeki Wachee Education Campaign (W466)
- NW Hernando Septic to Sewer Feasibility Study (Q419)

Rainbow Springs Basin Management Action Plan

- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping (WS01)

The projects are categorized under various District Programmatic Budget activity codes. District funding shares are presented in **Table A-1**. Funding awarded from the DEP is reflected in the funding columns. Additional funding from the local cooperator shares, including state appropriations are reflected under the total project cost. Project details are available in the Work Program BMAP spreadsheet available online at:

<https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/resources/plans-reports/water-resource-development-work-program>

Table A-1. Projects for Implementing BMAPs.

BMAPs Projects	Prior Funding	FY2026 Funding	FY2027 Funding	FY2028 Funding	FY2029 Funding	FY2030 Funding	Total Project Cost	Funding Sources
Citrus County Cambridge Greens Septic to Sewer (W432)	\$7,200,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,243,000	District, DEP, Citrus County, State
Citrus County Old Homosassa West Septic to Sewer Project (WH04)	\$8,950,800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,333,000	District, DEP, Citrus County, State
Citrus County Old Homosassa East Septic to Sewer Project (Q134)	\$15,660,800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,131,600	District, DEP, Citrus County, State
Hernando County Weeki Wachee Springshed Nitrogen Removal Stormwater Retrofits (WW05)	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000,000	District, County
Crystal River Preserve State Park Redfish Hole Restoration (W401)	\$197,601	\$0	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,197,601	District
Weeki Wachee Education Campaign (W466)	Annual Request	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	Annual Request	District
Three Sisters Education Campaign (W466)	Annual Request	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	Annual Request	District
Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping (WS01)	Annual Request	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	Annual Request	District

Five-Year Water Resources Development Work Program

Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping (WS01)	Annual Request	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	Annual Request	District
Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping (WS01)	Annual Request	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	Annual Request	District
Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping (WS01)	Annual Request	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	Annual Request	District
Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Mapping (WS01)	Annual Request	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	Annual Request	District
NW Hernando Septic to Sewer Feas. Study (Q149)	\$0	\$75,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$150,000	District, Hernando County
Totals	\$33,009,701	\$365,000	\$2,290,000	\$290,000	\$290,000	\$290,000	\$43,055,201	

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Polk Regional Water Cooperative

Status Report



Southwest Florida
Water Management District



Chapter 6 Polk Regional Water Cooperative Status Report

The Polk Regional Water Cooperative (PRWC) was created in 2016 through Interlocal Agreement and consists of Polk County and 15 municipal governments. The Polk Regional Water Cooperative (PRWC) was created in 2016 through Interlocal Agreement and consists of Polk County and 15 municipal member governments. The PRWC was formed to provide for regional cooperation on the development and delivery of water resources to meet future water demands within Polk County. The majority of the PRWC jurisdiction is located within the District's Southern Water Use Caution Area, while the entirety of its jurisdiction is located within the Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI) planning area.

In 2017, the Florida Legislature passed the Heartland Headwaters Protection and Sustainability Act (HB 573) to recognize the critical importance of Polk County's aquifers to the economic and ecological health of the region as headwaters for six of Florida's major river systems. The Act requires the development of a comprehensive annual report to be completed by the PRWC and submitted to the Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, Department of Environmental Protection and water management districts by December 1 of each year. In addition, the Act further requires the PRWC to coordinate with the appropriate water management district to provide a status report on projects receiving priority state funding and to include such status report in the consolidated water management district annual report (Section 373.463(3), Florida Statutes). This section of the District's Consolidated Annual Report serves as the PRWC status report for 2025.

For the FY2024-25 funding cycle, a ranked list of 47 PRWC member projects were submitted for state funding consideration, with \$2,614,387 received from the Florida Legislature for priority projects. A total of 29 ranked member projects were submitted for state funding support in FY2025-26, with \$1,560,167 received for priority projects.

For FY2026-27, a prioritized list of 31 PRWC and local member government projects are being submitted for funding consideration by the Florida Legislature. Table 1 lists the 2 PRWC and 29 local member government projects, including total project cost, requested state funding, and local member government funding. A detailed description of each project is included in the Heartland Headwaters Protection and Sustainability Act Annual Comprehensive Water Resources Report recently published and available from the PRWC. For FY2026-27, \$194,288,581 will be required to implement the 14 ranked priority projects, with \$151,804,581 committed in member local government funding. A total of \$42,409,000 for these 14 ranked priority projects is being requested from the state and their implementation is subject to approval of state funding for the FY2026-27 budget year. In addition, annual reoccurring funding of \$20,000,000 is requested over the next five years for the PRWC's Southeast Wellfield Project and member local government receiving facilities.

Table 1. FY2025-26 Project Cost and Rank

Priority Ranking	Project Name	Member Government	Total Project Cost (All Years)	Total Project Cost (FY 25-26)	State Funding Requested (FY 25-26)	Local Gov. Funding (FY 25-26)
1	Polk Regional Water Cooperative Southeast Wellfield Construction and Land Acquisition	PRWC	\$ 587,866,056	\$ 194,789,130	\$ 12,585,095	\$ 182,204,034
2	Polk Regional Water Cooperative Demand Management Implementation Program	PRWC	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
3	Bartow PRWC AWS Receiving Facility	City of Bartow	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -
3	Lake Alfred PRWC Receiving Facility	City of Lake Alfred	\$ 7,000,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -
3	Auburndale PRWC AWS Receiving Station	City of Auburndale	\$ 2,900,000	\$ 2,900,000	\$ 2,700,000	\$ 200,000
3	Dundee PRWC AWS Receiving Station	City of Dundee	\$ 6,569,000	\$ 6,569,000	\$ 6,369,000	\$ 200,000
3	Eagle Lake PRWC AWS Receiving Station	City of Eagle Lake	\$ 6,700,000	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 2,500,000	\$ -
3	Winter Haven Pollard Rd WPF - PRWC AWS Receiving Facility	City of Winter Haven	\$ 15,990,000	\$ 12,990,000	\$ 3,900,000	\$ 9,090,000
3	Winter Haven PRWC - (Auburndale, WH Transmission Main Extension)	City of Winter Haven	\$ 415,000	\$ 51,600	\$ 51,600	\$ -
3	Polk County Utilities ERUSA PRWC AWS Receiving Facility	Polk County Utilities	\$ 3,943,875	\$ 2,157,500	\$ 1,078,750	\$ 1,078,750
3	Polk County Utilities CRUSA PRWC AWS Receiving Facility	Polk County Utilities	\$ 1,068,875	\$ 372,500	\$ 186,250	\$ 186,250
3	Polk County Utilities NERUSA PRWC AWS Receiving Facility	Polk County Utilities	\$ 6,297,283	\$ 3,850,000	\$ 1,925,000	\$ 1,925,000
3	Haines City PRWC AWS Receiving Facility	City of Haines City	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 4,400,000	\$ 1,760,000	\$ 2,640,000
Sub-total:			\$ 647,900,089	\$ 235,229,730	\$ 37,630,695	\$ 197,599,034
NR	Bartow Water Master Plan	City of Bartow	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -
NR	Bartow Wastewater Master Plan	City of Bartow	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -
NR	Bartow Doug Allen WRF Flood Protection	City of Bartow	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -
NR	Bartow New Ground Storage Tank	City of Bartow	\$ 1,750,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 750,000
NR	Bartow Secondary Distribution Water Line	City of Bartow	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 550,000	\$ 450,000
NR	Bartow Sludge Drying Bed	City of Bartow	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 375,000	\$ 375,000
NR	Auburndale Hickory Road Sprayfield	City of Auburndale	\$ 1,700,000	\$ 1,700,000	\$ 1,700,000	\$ -
NR	Winter Haven Lake Idyl Nutrient Reduction & Stormwater Reuse Feasibility Study & Design	City of Winter Haven	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
NR	Winter Haven Water Resource Facility at Pollard Road	City of Winter Haven	\$ 200,000,000	\$ 39,000,000	\$ 19,500,000	\$ 19,500,000
NR	Winter Haven Bradco Farms MAR / ASR Wellfield (A Sapphire Necklace Project)	City of Winter Haven	\$ 50,149,600	\$ 50,149,600	\$ 25,074,800	\$ 25,074,800
NR	Winter Haven Aquifer Recharge Project	City of Winter Haven	\$ 3,300,000	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 600,000	\$ 600,000
NR	Winter Haven Logistics Parkway Storm Water Reclamation	City of Winter Haven	\$ 4,600,000	\$ 450,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000
NR	Winter Haven ONE Water DPR Mobile Demonstration Unit	City of Winter Haven	\$ 2,700,000	\$ 550,000	\$ 275,000	\$ 275,000
NR	Frostproof Septic-to-Sewer Conversion Project - Phase 1	City of Frostproof	\$ 7,500,000	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 2,500,000	\$ -
NR	Frostproof Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements	City of Frostproof	\$ 950,000	\$ 475,000	\$ 475,000	\$ -
NR	Frostproof Water Treatment Plant No. 4 Improvements	City of Frostproof	\$ 4,800,000	\$ 4,800,000	\$ 4,200,000	\$ 600,000
Sub-total:			\$ 282,549,600	\$ 106,274,600	\$ 58,324,800	\$ 47,949,800
Total for all PRWC and PRWC Member Projects			\$ 930,449,689	\$ 341,504,330	\$ 95,955,495	\$ 245,548,834

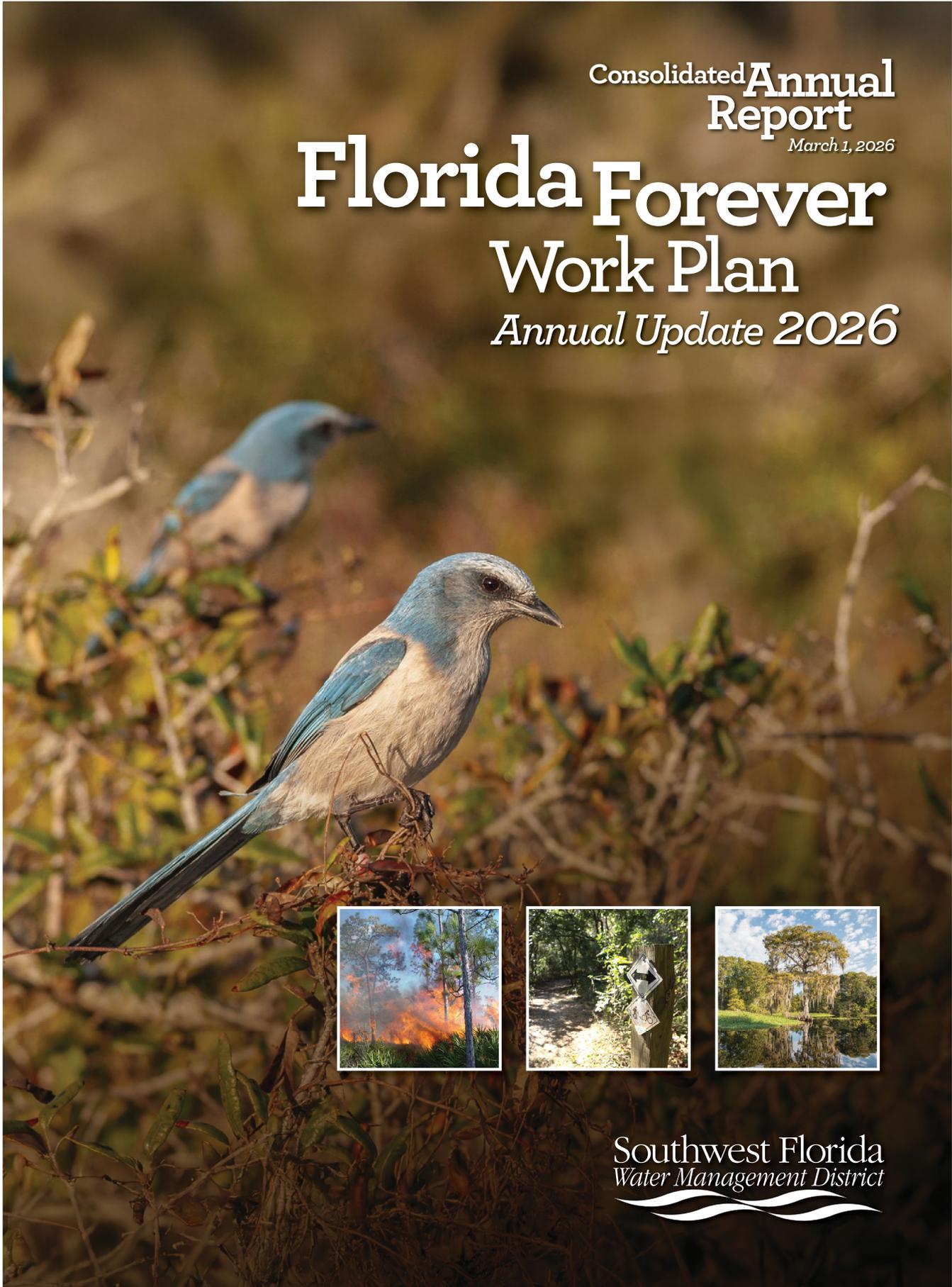
Source: Heartland Headwaters Protection and Sustainability Act Annual Comprehensive Water Resources Report, PRWC, 2024.

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Florida Forever

Work Plan

Annual Update 2026



Southwest Florida
Water Management District



Chapter 7 Florida Forever Work Plan

Introduction

As required by Section 373.199 (7), Florida Statutes (F.S.), this report is the District's annual update of its original Florida Forever Work Plan. The District's approach to the Florida Forever Work Plan is to provide a discussion of the eligible projects the District could consider acquiring using funding under the Florida Forever Act, Section 259.105, Florida Statutes (Florida Forever) over a five-year period using existing District funds or additional funds received through the sale of surplus lands. The District could also consider the acquisition of Florida Forever projects if it receives future funding under Florida Forever. Per Florida Statutes subsection 373.139 (6) revenue received from the sale of surplus lands may not be used for any purpose except the purchase of other conservation lands. Additionally, the District's Governing Board Policy, Sale, Exchange or Conveyances of Interest in Lands by the District states that revenue derived from the sale of lands may not be used for any purpose except for the purchase of other lands related to the District's four areas of responsibility. This report depicts eligible properties on the maps included herein and reports on progress and changes since the report's last update.

Florida Forever initially provided for the issuance of up to \$3 billion in bonds to state agencies, water management districts and local governments. Water management district funding is to be used for land acquisition (including less-than-fee purchases), water resource development, and water body restoration. Over the life of the program, at least 50 percent of the funds allocated to the water management districts must be spent on land acquisition.

This annual update is organized into nine sections including the introduction, modifications to last year's Florida Forever Work Plan, land acquisitions completed during fiscal year 2025 (FY2025), restoration projects, land acquisition status, lands surplusd during FY2025, summaries of land management activities, progress of funding, staffing and resource management activities, and project maps that identify lands for potential acquisition by planning region.

Florida Forever funds must contribute to achieving the following goals as set forth in Section 259.105, F.S.:

- Enhance the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects.
- Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels.
- Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state.
- Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state.
- Increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities. Preserve significant archaeological or historic sites.
- Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources.
- Increase the amount of open space available in urban areas.

The District used funds received through the sale of surplus lands that included Florida Forever funding to support land acquisition in FY2025. This annual update has been prepared with the anticipation of no new Florida Forever funds through the planning period of fiscal year 2026-2027.

A summary of past Florida Forever expenditures is depicted in Table 1. The District fully utilized its total allocation of \$233.57 million of Florida Forever funding by FY2023. The District expended about 6 percent of the Florida Forever funding on water resources development projects and about 94 percent on land acquisition.

Table 1. Past expenditure through FY 2024 – 2025, expressed in millions of dollars.

Fiscal Year	Water Resource Development	Land Acquisition	Cumulative Expenditures
2024 & Prior	\$13.44	\$220.13	\$233.57
2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Florida Forever Expenditures	\$13.44	\$220.13	\$233.57

Project Modifications and Additions to the Florida Forever Work Plan

Modifications to the Florida Forever Work Plan in FY2025 include additions, deletions and changes in land interest to be acquired under proposed acquisition project areas. A total of 1,415 acres were added as proposed fee simple acquisitions, and a total of 4,669 acres were added as proposed less-than-fee acquisitions. A total of 1,383 acres were moved from less than fee to fee simple. Areas identified as proposed fee simple were reduced by 6,557 acres and proposed less-than-fee was reduced by 11,332 acres for lands that have been acquired by other conservation entities or by the District and due to changes in the project’s surplus status. These modifications resulted in a net reduction of 11,805 acres in the proposed acquisition project areas. Acres owned, managed, and surplus by the District along with funds budgeted were also updated.

Land Acquisitions in FY2025

In FY2025, the District provided joint funding to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), through the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program to purchase a conservation easement over Headwaters Ranch, approximately 993 acres, within the Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve, East Tract. FDACS holds title to the property with the District retaining third party enforcement rights.

Restoration Projects

The Lake Hancock restoration project is completed and there are no restoration projects for which Florida Forever funding is being utilized.

District Land Acquisition Status

The following table depicts all lands owned in fee simple and less-than-fee (LTF) interests acquired by the District as of September 30, 2025.

Table 2. District Land Acquisition Status, Rounded Acreages Derived Using Geographic Information System.

Project	Fee Acres	LTF Acres	Total
Alafia River Corridor	4,498	1,498	5,996
Alafia River Reserve	334		334
Annutteliga Hammock	1,735	465	2,200
Bright Hour Watershed		32,247	32,247
Brooker Creek Headwaters Nature Preserve	1,039	67	1,106
Brooker Creek Preserve	1,615	1	1,616
Charlotte Harbor State Park	7,421		7,421
Chassahowitzka River & Coastal Swamps	5,740	10	5,750
Chito Branch Reserve	5,389		5,389
Cliff Stephens Park	43		43
Conner Preserve	3,486		3,486
Crooked Lake	3,586		3,586
Cypress Creek Preserve	8,506	815	9,321
Data Collection Sites	19	262	281
Edward Medard Park and Reservoir	1,291		1,291
Edward W. Chance Reserve - Coker Prairie Tract	2,136		2,136
Edward W. Chance Reserve - Gilley Creek Tract	5,798	65	5,863
Flying Eagle Preserve	16,304	133	16,437
Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve - Colt Creek State Park	5,068		5,068
Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve - Green Swamp East	67,182	4,531	71,713
Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve - Little Withlacoochee	4,622	19,545	24,167
Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve - Green Swamp West	36,655	4,974	41,629
Gum Slough - Half Moon	4,096	5,831	9,927
Hálpata Tastanaki Preserve	8,171	4	8,175
Hidden Lake	589		589
Hillsborough River Corridor	276	79	355
Horse Creek		4,365	4,365
Jack Creek	1,349		1,349
Lake Hancock - Circle B Bar Reserve	1,268	4	1,272
Lake Hancock - Marshall Hampton Reserve	1,078		1,078
Lake Hancock Project	3,754	1,180	4,934

Project	Fee Acres	LTF Acres	Total
Lake Lowry	390		390
Lake Marion Creek Horseshoe Scrub Tract	290		290
Lake Panasoffkee	9,767	6,909	16,676
Lake Tarpon Outfall Canal	161	101	262
Lake Tarpon Sink Enclosure	10		10
Lake Thonotosassa	144		144
Little Manatee River - Southfork Tract	971		971
Little Manatee River - Upper and Lower Tracts	6,596		6,596
Lower Cypress Creek		290	290
Lower Hillsborough Wilderness Preserve	16,064	3	16,067
Lower Manatee River Floodway	42		42
Lower Peace River Corridor		743	743
Lower Peace River Corridor – Deep Creek	2,084		2,084
Masaryktown Canal	168	2	170
Myakka Conservation Area	4,747	18,283	23,030
Myakka Conservation Area - Lewis Longino Preserve		3,419	3,419
Myakka River - Deer Prairie Creek Preserve	6,136		6,136
Myakka River - Schewe Tract	3,993		3,993
Myakka River State Park - Myakka Prairie Tract	8,248		8,248
Myakka State Forest	8,565	15	8,580
Panasoffkee/Outlet Tract	813		813
Peace Creek Canal System	3	18	21
Peck Sink		10	10
Potts Preserve	9,374	3	9,377
Prairie/Shell Creek	609		609
Rainbow River Corridor	112	12	124
RV Griffin Reserve	5,922		5,922
Sawgrass Lake	389		389
Starkey Wilderness Preserve	19,469	175	19,644
Structure Sites/Office Sites	100	55	155
SWIM Conservation Easements		171	171
Tampa Bay Estuarine Ecosystem (TBE) - Clam Bayou	84		84

Project	Fee Acres	LTF Acres	Total
TBE- Frog Creek	119		119
TBE- Fred and Ida Schultz Preserve	133		133
TBE- Jeanie and Pete Johnson Nature Preserve	84		84
TBE– Rock Ponds	2,530		2,530
TBE- Terra Ceia Preserve State Park	1,463		1,463
TBE – Huber Tract	287		287
Tampa Bypass and Harney Canals	1,379	321	1,700
Three Sisters Springs	57		57
Tsala Apopka Outfall Canal	3	141	144
Two Mile Prairie - Tsala Apopka Connector	462		462
Two-Mile Prairie - Withlacoochee State Forest	3,090		3,090
Upper Hillsborough Preserve	9,460	7,915	17,375
Upper Myakka River Watershed	2,357	2,264	4,621
Upper Saddle Creek	37		37
Weeki Wachee Springs State Park	539		539
Weekiwachee Preserve	12,821	2	12,823
Wysong Park	4	1	5
Total	343,124	116,929	460,053

Surplus Lands

The following table depicts surplus lands sold by the District during FY2025.

Table 3. Surplus Lands, Acreage Derived Using Geographic Information System Software.

Project	County	Acres Surplused	Compensation	Parent Tract Funding Source	Comments
Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve/ East Tract	Lake	9.88	\$40,355	Donation	Deed Restricted
Annutteliga Hammock	Hernando	0.58	\$14,000	Preservation 2000	Deed Restricted
Marshall Hampton Reserve	Polk	19.36	\$2,262,000	Florida Forever	
Tampa Bypass Canal	Hillsborough	1.60	\$270,000	Ad Valorem / Federal	
Total		31.42	\$2,586,355		

Land Management Activities

The District manages its properties using a variety of tools including but not limited to direct management as well as utilizing management partnerships that match land use to agency mission. For example, Colt Creek State Park was purchased with District, State, and Polk County Florida Forever funds, and is managed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection as a state park. Hunting at the Green Swamp is via a wildlife management area agreement with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Additionally, the District's conservation lands have land management plans that outline the management goals and objectives for the property as well as authorized activities. The following is a brief description of the land projects and land management activities for properties owned by the District.

Alafia River (including Alafia River Corridor, Chito Branch Reserve and Alafia River Reserve) – The Alafia River Corridor Project contains parcels of land along the Alafia River from Bell Shoals Road extending upstream to the headwaters of the Alafia River and spans both Hillsborough and Polk Counties. The Alafia River's natural floodplain is a mixture of hardwood swamps and upland hammocks. Acquisition of the land within Hillsborough County was co-funded by the District and Hillsborough County with fee simple title held entirely by the District. In 1996, the District entered into a lease agreement with Hillsborough County that designated the County as manager of lands jointly purchased by the County and the District. Recreational improvements provided by Hillsborough County include hiking trails, equestrian trails, fishing, and primitive and group camping. Project lands in Hillsborough County acquired by the District for the C.W. "Bill" Young Reservoir are jointly managed by the District and Tampa Bay Water and are known as the Chito Branch Reserve. In Polk County, the District and Polk County have co-funded and co-own the Alafia River Reserve. Polk County is responsible for a park site on the property and the District is responsible for resource management and trail development on the property. Parcels within this project with less-than-fee ownership are monitored by the District pursuant to the corresponding conservation easements.

Annutteliga Hammock – The Annutteliga Hammock project is in Hernando County generally within a regional area located between Homosassa Springs to the northwest, the Withlacoochee State Forest to the northeast, Brooksville to the southeast, and Weeki Wachee Springs to the southwest. Since lands acquired to date are for the most part not contiguous, recreational use is limited to foot traffic and equestrian riding on more than eight (8) miles of marked trails. Land management activities consist of security, prescribed burning, resource monitoring, exotic species control, and public use/recreational development and conservation easement monitoring.

Bright Hour Watershed – The Bright Hour Watershed project is within DeSoto County and consists of extensive, high-quality prairie, hammock, marsh, and slough systems that provide water management benefits. Hydrologic values include protection of the headwaters of several important creek systems, such as Prairie and Shell creeks. Water storage, conveyance, and flood control are also provided by the watershed's poorly drained landscape. Habitat protection for numerous rare plant and animal species and globally imperiled, high quality natural communities is amply afforded by this project. Since the District does not hold fee simple title to lands within the project, land management activities consist of monitoring the terms of conservation easements located within the project. There is no public recreation available since these are conservation easements.

Brooker Creek – The Brooker Creek Project is located within Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties. The Brooker Creek Headwaters Nature Preserve located in Hillsborough County remains as islands of undeveloped natural and rural lands in the changing landscape

of northwest Hillsborough County. The lands include several extensive and interconnected cypress swamps which form the headwaters of Brooker Creek. These headwater swamps are an important water resource feature on their own, as well as for their contribution to downstream elements of the creek. Lands within the Brooker Creek Headwaters are managed by Hillsborough County. The County has developed and made available several miles of unimproved interior roads that are open to hikers. The dominant habitats within the Brooker Creek Preserve, located in Pinellas County, include cypress and mixed hardwood swamps along portions of Brooker Creek. As part of the area's natural drainage system, Brooker Creek is an important water resource feature. Local low-lying areas are drained by the creek's system of sloughs and swamps. Floodplain vegetation offers treatment of runoff prior to discharging into Lake Tarpon. Lands within the Brooker Creek project in Pinellas County are managed by Pinellas County. Recreational improvements/amenities available on the tract include equestrian trails, hiking trails and an interpretive foot trail. The District's Land management activities primarily consist of coordination with the lead land managers from Pinellas County and easement monitoring.

Charlotte Harbor State Park – The Charlotte Harbor project is located in Charlotte County and was jointly purchased by the District and the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida. Lands within the project area are characterized by a variety of natural communities including isolated freshwater marshes, pine flatwoods, tidal marshes, and tidal swamps. Under a management agreement with the State, the Florida Division of Recreation and Parks is lead land manager for the project. Currently, the park offers hiking, birding, canoeing and boating. The District's land management activities consist primarily of coordination with the State Parks land manager.

Chassahowitzka River and Coastal Swamps – The Chassahowitzka River project is located in western Citrus and Hernando Counties and contains the Chassahowitzka River and its expansive coastal swamps. This project includes nearly two miles along the Chassahowitzka River and the Chassahowitzka Springs, which form the river's headwaters. The project is contiguous with the federally owned Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge to the west, the Withlacoochee State Forest's Homosassa Tract to the north and the Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area to the south. The project contains the Chassahowitzka River Campground, which is operated and maintained by a private vendor through an agreement between the vendor and the District. Recreational activities/amenities are primarily managed by the vendor and include canoe/boat launch, campsites (some with full hook-ups), canoe rental; picnic pavilions; restrooms; potable water; and primitive camp sites along the river. Land management activities are conducted by the District directly and consist of prescribed burning, resource monitoring, land maintenance, and recreational monitoring.

Conner Preserve – The Conner Preserve project is in Pasco County and includes the upper portion of Cypress Creek, a regionally important surface water feature and tributary creek of the Hillsborough River. Cypress Creek originates near I-75, east of CR 581 and north of CR 578 and has a contributing watershed of 74.5 square miles. Land use of the project area is primarily agricultural, dominated by several large cattle ranches. Land cover consists primarily of improved pasture, rangeland, live oak hammocks, pine flatwoods, xeric oak/longleaf pine, cypress domes and freshwater marshes/wet prairies. The project includes several shallow lakes, many of which include extensive marshes or open prairies. The project area itself is located between the District's Cypress Creek Preserve and the Cross Bar/Al-Bar Ranch complex, representing two major public supply wellfields operated by Tampa Bay Water. Recreational activities/amenities available include 1.7 miles of hiking trails, and approximately 15 miles of shared-use trails for hiking,

horseback riding and biking. Land management activities are conducted by the District directly and consist of prescribed burning, restoration, resource monitoring, and recreational development/monitoring.

Crooked Lake/Bowlegs Creek –The Crooked Lake/Bowlegs Creek project, which is located in Polk County, represents opportunities taken to protect important water resource ecosystems in the east central region of the District. Acquisition benefits include protecting important areas and habitat for aquifer recharge associated with the Lake Wales Ridge (Ridge) and protecting the water quality of Crooked Lake and Lake Cinch and Lake Reedy which receive flow from Crooked Lake. Crooked Lake is one of the largest lakes within the Ridge and is the only designated Outstanding Florida Water (OFW) in Polk County. The lake has good water quality because of existing shoreline vegetation coverage and relatively little urbanization around it. Although the alteration of natural lands throughout the region has resulted in habitat loss and fragmentation, this tract represents one of the few larger tracts remaining relatively intact and more importantly, is the last remaining large tract adjacent to a large Ridge lake. Lands within the project are jointly owned by the District and Polk County, and contain easements acquired by the United States Department of Agriculture/Natural Resources Conservation Services. Polk County manages the property.

Cypress Creek Preserve– Cypress Creek Preserve project, located in Pasco County, was purchased to provide flood protection, and to serve as a public water supply. Cypress Creek Well Field serves as an important source of water for the surrounding region and is managed by Tampa Bay Water. Cypress Creek Preserve includes the heavily forested Cypress Creek swamp, formed by its namesake, Cypress Creek, as it flows to the Hillsborough River. As part of the tributary system to the Hillsborough River, the project serves both a water detention role and a water conveyance role. Additionally, the low-lying swamps provide treatment and assimilation of runoff waters. Within the property, the creek threads its way through an expanse of cypress and hardwood forests. Recreational activities/amenities available include equestrian and primitive camping, 3.5 miles of hiking trails, and approximately 15.5 miles of shared-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and biking. Land management activities are conducted by the District and include prescribed burning, mowing, exotic species control, timber management, resource management, public use, recreation development/maintenance, and easement monitoring.

Edward W. Chance Reserve – In 2007, the former Lake Manatee Reserve was dedicated and renamed as the Edward W. Chance Reserve project (Reserve), in honor of departed Governing Board member, Ed Chance. The Reserve, which is located in Manatee County, extends over a large area which includes narrow floodplain forests and native pine flatwoods surrounded by vast areas of rangeland, improved pastures, croplands, and citrus groves. Lands purchased within this project protect an existing regional water resource, protect floodplains, and restore adjoining wetlands in the headwaters. Recreational amenities available include more than 10 miles of hiking trails and approximately 13 miles of shared-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and biking. Management units include the Coker Prairie and Gilley Creek Tracts. Land management activities conducted by the District include prescribed burning, mowing, exotic species control, timber management, resource management, public use, and recreation development/maintenance.

Flying Eagle Preserve – The Flying Eagle Preserve project is located within the Lake Tsala Apopka region of Citrus County. The property includes over five miles of frontage on the Withlacoochee River and its forested floodplain. A broad expanse of mixed hardwoods and

cypress swamps cover the floodplain along the river. Areas of hammocks and xeric oak scrub lands occur throughout the higher elevations of the interior portions. Scattered marshes and wet prairies complete the landscape. The Tsala Apopka system is important because it has been described as a primary recharge area for the Floridan aquifer. Recreational activities/amenities available at Flying Eagle include four (4) miles of hiking trails and approximately 18 miles of shared-use hiking, horseback riding and bicycle trails; and primitive and equestrian camping. Hunting opportunities are available on both the wildlife management area administered by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and by the District on the Boy Scout tract. Land management activities are conducted by the District directly and include prescribed burning, resource monitoring, natural systems restoration, mowing, exotic species control, security patrol, public use and recreational development/maintenance.

Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve (including Colt Creek State Park) – The Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve project, (GSWP) is the District’s largest landholding and is located in Pasco, Lake, Sumter and Polk counties. The GSWP includes Green Swamp East, Green Swamp West, Hampton tract, Little Withlacoochee Tract which is managed by the Florida Forest Service, and Colt Creek State Park which is managed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The GSWP is the headwaters for four major rivers: the Withlacoochee River, the Ocklawaha River, the Hillsborough River, and the Peace River. Acquisitions have been directed at protecting the headwater swamps, floodplains, and watershed areas in the Green Swamp region and along the two principal river systems (Withlacoochee and Hillsborough). The Green Swamp and its river systems are of hydrologic importance to central Florida, both in terms of surface water and ground water resources. Swamps, floodplains, and headwaters serve as natural flood detention areas, while uplands serve as areas for recharge. Recreational amenities on District-managed lands in the GSWP include over 31 miles of hiking trails (including approximately 15 miles of the Florida National Scenic Trail) and 140 miles of shared-use hiking, horseback riding and bicycle trails. Primitive, equestrian and backcountry camping is also available. Hunting is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Land management activities are mostly conducted by the District directly and include prescribed burning, resource monitoring, natural systems restoration, mowing, exotic species control, security patrol, public use and recreational development/maintenance.

Gum Slough – Lands within the Half Moon Gum Slough project are located within Marion and Sumter counties and are dominated by densely forested swamps and hammocks. Nearly 1,100 acres of forested hardwood swamps that line the Gum Slough run from a common boundary with state-owned lands to the east (Half-Moon Wildlife Management Area). The lands within the area offer protection to portions of the Withlacoochee River, Gum Slough, and its various hydrologic characteristics. Recreational amenities available on the property are shared-use trails available for hiking, bicycling and horseback riding. The property is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) as part of the Half Moon Wildlife Management Area. Land management activities are conducted by FWC and include prescribed burning, resource monitoring, natural systems restoration, mowing, exotic species control, security patrol, public use, and recreational development/maintenance. Parcels within this project with less-than-fee ownership are monitored by the District pursuant to the corresponding conservation easements.

Hálpata Tastanaki Preserve – The Hálpata Tastanaki Preserve project, located in Marion County, adjoins the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway to the north and Ross Prairie State Forest to the east. To the southwest is the Two Mile Prairie tract of the Withlacoochee State Forest in Citrus County. Primary surface water features include five miles of floodplain along the

northern bank of the Withlacoochee River. The isolated wetlands and marshes scattered throughout the site form the site's internal drainage system and provide local surface water storage. The site of Camp Izard, an important battleground during the second Seminole War, is located within the project lands. Recreational amenities include approximately four (4) miles of hiking trails and more than 12 miles of shared-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and bicycling. Land management activities conducted by the District directly include prescribed burning, natural systems restoration, timber management, exotic species control, resource monitoring, recreation development/maintenance and security.

Hidden Lake – The Hidden Lake project is in the west-central Pasco County and is part of an interconnected system of lakes within the Rocky Sink/Boggy Creek basin of the Bear Creek Watershed. District ownership ensures protection of the lake and the surrounding forested wetlands and will help preserve water quality within the lake and sub-basin. Recreational use of the lands within the project is extremely limited due to development in the vicinity and the fact that the lands are essentially a “lake swamp.” Limited land management is required, primarily security patrols for illegal activities (dumping and archaeological digging) and is conducted by the District.

Horse Creek – The Horse Creek project, located in DeSoto and Hardee Counties, provides a buffer for Horse Creek, a high water-quality tributary of the Peace River. The project supports additional resource protection for the Peace River watershed and riverine wetlands. The Horse Creek natural communities include mesic and wet flatwoods, bottomland forest, depression and basin marshes, mesic hammock, scrubby flatwoods, baygall, and blackwater streams. The natural uplands are principally longleaf-pine-dominated mesic flatwoods with pockets of scrubby flatwoods on the highest elevations and more hydric wet flatwoods in the ecotone between the uplands and the Horse Creek floodplain. Recreation is not available on this project as the District holds a less-than-fee interest. Land management activities primarily consist of monitoring the associated conservation easement.

Jack Creek – The Jack Creek project, located in Highlands County, includes a significant part of Jack Creek, its 100-year floodplain, and outlying forested areas associated with the creek system and local lake outflow wetlands. The project area also includes portions of sand pine scrub and mixed scrub—among Florida's most unique threatened upland habitats. Jack Creek and its associated swamps serve as the natural drainage basin for the immediate area, as well as the water conveyance system for lakes in the area. The District has a management agreement with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) wherein FWC manages both recreation and natural resources on the land. Land management activities consist of prescribed burning, security patrols, public use/recreation maintenance and enhancements, exotic species control, mowing and monitoring for listed plants and animals. Recreational amenities/activities on the Jack Creek property are limited to 6.5 miles of hiking trails due to its remote location, environmental sensitivity, and access constraints.

Lake Hancock – The Lake Hancock project is located southeast of the City of Lakeland and north of the City of Bartow in Polk County. At approximately 4,500 acres, Lake Hancock is the largest lake associated with the Peace River and is the third largest lake in Polk County. A statutorily mandated minimum flow has been established for the Peace River and accordingly requires development of a recovery strategy. The strategy for the upper Peace River is to restore storage in Lake Hancock and release some of the water during the dry season to help meet the minimum flow requirements. Historically, Lake Hancock fluctuated more than a foot higher than it has during the past several decades. Lands acquired within this project assist in reversing those

impacts by replacing the District's outfall structure so that water levels can be maintained at historical levels until released to help meet the upper Peace River minimum flow. The District acquired fee simple and less-than-fee interests to accomplish the recovery strategy. Additionally, the District and Polk County jointly acquired Circle B Bar and entered into a management agreement authorizing Polk County to manage the recreation and resources on both Circle B Bar Reserve and the Marshall Hampton Reserve. Recreational activities available at the Circle B Bar Reserve include a Discovery Center, six (6) miles of hiking trails and wildlife viewing opportunities. Recreational activities available on Marshall Hampton Reserve include 11 miles of hiking and equestrian trails and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Lake Panasoffkee—The Lake Panasoffkee project is in Sumter County and is comprised of a large, contiguous area of relatively undisturbed lands along the eastern portion of Lake Panasoffkee's watershed. The project extends north to include Big Jones and Little Jones creeks, both tributaries to the lake. Wetlands dominate the area with extensive mixed hardwood and maple swamps, lake front marshes, and willow areas. Lands within the project protect local and regional drainage features and provide storage and detention of surface waters, while providing important wildlife resources. Recreational activities/amenities more than 15 miles of shared-use hiking, horseback riding and bicycle trails; group picnic pavilion, horse stalls, primitive and equestrian camping, restrooms, and a campground host site to help oversee the facilities. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission manages hunting on the property and the District directly manages the other natural resources. Land management activities include exotic species control, land security, cattle lease management, maintenance of facilities located on the property, public use, recreation development/maintenance, prescribed burning, timber management, natural systems restoration, resource, and conservation easement monitoring.

Little Manatee River – The Little Manatee River project, located in Hillsborough and Manatee Counties, contains parcels of land along the Little Manatee riverine corridor from downstream estuarine waters to the river's headwaters. Dense forest dominates the land along the river's floodplain with the adjoining uplands being comprised of a mixture of pine flatwoods, mixed hardwoods, and shrub and brushlands. The District has an interlocal agreement with Hillsborough County wherein the County has lead management responsibility for lands jointly purchased by Hillsborough County and the District located within Hillsborough County. Lands within Manatee County, known as the Southfork Tract, are directly managed by the District, and include approximately six (6) miles of hiking trails. Recreational improvements/amenities made available by Hillsborough County include canoe landing sites adjacent to primitive campsites along the river, fishing, and hiking trails. District land management activities on the Southfork Tract consist of road stabilization, prescribed burning, natural systems restoration, mowing and recreational development/maintenance.

Lower Hillsborough Wilderness Preserve – The Lower Hillsborough Wilderness Preserve project located in Hillsborough County includes several miles of the Hillsborough River and its broad flood plain. The project contains important areas of natural flood conveyance and storage associated with the Hillsborough River, the Tampa Bay Bypass Canal and levee system, and houses the Morris Bridge Wellfield. Recreational activities available include five developed park sites managed by Hillsborough County with such amenities as hiking, paved and off-road bicycle trails, picnic pavilions, restrooms, boat launches and visitor centers. The District has also made available an additional 25 miles of equestrian trails and two primitive camping areas. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission oversees the Lower Hillsborough wildlife management area which offers family hunting opportunities. Other land management activities

conducted by the District directly include exotic species control, land security, public use and recreation development/maintenance, prescribed burning, timber management, wildlife management, natural systems restoration, and mowing.

Lower Peace River Corridor (including Deep Creek) – Located in Hardee, DeSoto and Charlotte Counties, the Lower Peace River Corridor project includes an extensive network of tributaries, floodplain swamps and connected headwaters. Recreational activities available include, approximately two (2) miles of hiking trails; more than six (6) miles of shared-use trails for hiking and horseback riding. Land Management activities are conducted by the District directly and include prescribed burning, mowing, exotic species control, recreational amenity development/monitoring, and security. Parcels within this project with less-than-fee ownership are monitored by the District pursuant to the corresponding conservation easements.

Myakka River/Deer Prairie Creek/Myakka State Forest – A majority of the lands within the Myakka River project were jointly purchased with the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida (Myakka State Forest) and Sarasota County (Deer Prairie Creek). Lands within the project area are characterized by a variety of natural lands and lands altered by development including mesic pine flatwoods, oak hammocks, shell mounds, prairie hammock and improved pasture. The project area includes portions of the Myakka River and its floodplain forests. Lands included within the Myakka State Forest boundary are managed by the Florida Forest Service (FFS). The FFS has made the following recreational improvements/amenities available on the property: shared-use trails for bicycling, horseback riding and hiking, and primitive camping. Lands within Deer Prairie Creek are jointly managed by the District and Sarasota County with the County managing recreation and the District managing the natural resources. Recreation on Deer Prairie Creek includes over 70 miles of unpaved and paved hiking and bicycling trails, canoe launch, fishing pier, picnic facilities, and restrooms. Land management activities include fencing, road maintenance, exotic species control, public use, prescribed burning and mowing.

Myakka Conservation Area (including Myakka Prairie) – The Myakka Conservation Area project consists of oak/cabbage palm hammock dominated banks along the southern portions of the creek, isolated marshes and improved pastures within the upland portions and mixed natural lands scattered throughout. The property is characterized by the region's flat topography and includes landscapes of extensive shrub and brushlands, pine flatwoods and pastures. Numerous isolated freshwater marshes dot the site's flatlands. The main surface water feature, Myakkahatchee Creek, is a 21.5-mile-long tributary creek of the Myakka River. Approximately 4,700 acres are managed by Sarasota County. The Myakka Prairie is adjacent to lands within the Myakka River State Park and is managed by the Division of Recreation and Parks. Recreational development/amenities on the property made available by the State Park include hiking, bicycling and horseback riding trails. Land management activities conducted directly by the District include conservation easement monitoring.

Panasoffkee/Outlet Tract – Lands within the Panasoffkee/Outlet Project extend over three miles along the eastern floodplain of the Withlacoochee River in Sumter County. For the most part, the areas are representative of the river's five-year floodplain, which include the regularly flooded cypress and mixed hardwood forests, as well as some areas of temperate hammock. Preservation of these lands along the river will maintain their function and protect forested swamps important to the water resources and water quality of the river system. Recreational activities on the property include approximately three (3) miles of hiking trails, fishing, and boat

access. Land management activities conducted directly by the District include prescribed burning, mowing, road maintenance, exotic species control, cattle lease management, public use, and recreation development/ maintenance.

Potts Preserve – The Potts Preserve project is located within the Lake Tsala Apopka region in eastern Citrus County and includes portions of the Hernando Pool. The Preserve’s eastern boundary is formed along 5.5 miles of the Withlacoochee River and its associated floodplain. The lands are a mixture of lakes, ponds, and marshes surrounding islands of oak forests and lands partially cleared for agriculture. The Tsala Apopka system is considered important as an area of recharge for the Floridan aquifer. Recreational activities/amenities available include approximately 12 miles of hiking trails, nine (9) miles of shared-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and bicycling, equestrian, primitive, and backcountry camping. Hunting is also allowed on the property and is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Land management activities conducted by the District directly include public use and recreation development/maintenance, land security, prescribed burning, natural systems restoration, and mowing.

Prairie/Shell Creek – The Prairie/Shell Creek project is envisioned as a greenway corridor from the mouth of the Peace River to the District’s Bright Hour Watershed project to the north and to the State’s Babcock Ranch to the south. The District to date has acquired the Prairie Shell Creek Preserve in northern Charlotte county along the Peace River. The project protects a portion of the Peace River shoreline as well as provides a place to attenuate floodwaters along the Prairie and Shell Creeks. Recreational activities/amenities available on the Preserve include approximately five (5) miles of hiking trails. Land management activities conducted by the District directly include prescribed burning, resource monitoring, resource protection, and recreational development.

Rainbow River Ranch – The District’s Rainbow River Ranch project is located along the eastern bank of the Rainbow River below the head spring. The property is located in Marion County adjacent to Rainbow Springs State Park. Rainbow Springs is the seventh largest first magnitude spring in Florida and is the primary source of water for the Rainbow River which flows for approximately 5.7 miles until it discharges into the Withlacoochee River. The District’s Rainbow River Ranch tract comprises about 16 percent of the eastern bank of the Rainbow River and is the last major undeveloped property along the eastern bank of this natural river corridor. Its shoreline includes marshes, wetlands, and giant bald cypress trees. The property is managed by the Division of Recreation and Parks as part of Rainbow Springs State Park. The District is developing two projects to restore natural communities and improve water quality.

RV Griffin Reserve (including Lewis Longino Preserve) – The RV Griffin Reserve project is in DeSoto and Sarasota counties and includes lands supporting and surrounding the existing facilities at the Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority reservoirs and water treatment plant. Lands in the project area include mixed hardwood forests along the river; however, a majority of the land consists of pine flatwoods, rangelands, pastures, and pine plantations. The Reserve supports and protects present potable water supplies. The Water Supply Authority manages the approximately 6,000 acres owned by the District in fee simple. Recreational activities/amenities include shared-use trails available for bicycling, horseback riding and hiking. The District monitors a conservation easement known as the Lewis Longino Preserve.

Sawgrass Lake – The Sawgrass Lake project is located in Pinellas County. The acquisition of the Sawgrass Lake project began in the 1970s to provide flood protection to the City of Pinellas Park. A water control structure was built to facilitate drainage canal improvements and to maintain desirable water level fluctuations in Sawgrass Lake and the surrounding swamp. The lake and swamp system provides natural water treatment to enhance the quality of water draining to Tampa Bay. In 1976, the District, Pinellas County, and the Pinellas County School Board cooperatively agreed to establish a county park and an environmental education center on the site. The property is managed by Pinellas County and Pinellas County School Board. Pinellas County has developed a wide array of recreational amenities on the property including restrooms, potable water, elevated boardwalks, hiking trail, nature center, outdoor interpretive displays, and they offer interpretive tours by reservation. The School Board has established an environmental education program onsite that serves area students from kindergarten through fifth grade.

Starkey Wilderness Preserve – The Starkey Wilderness Preserve project is located in southwestern Pasco County. The Starkey Wilderness Preserve protects portions of Five-Mile Creek, Pithlachascotee River, Anclote River, South Branch, Sandy Branch, and Cross Cypress Branch. The property consists of a combination of pine flatwoods, sand pine scrub, oak forests, scattered marshes, and cypress swamps. The Starkey Wellfield and part of the J. B. Starkey Wilderness Park (Starkey Wilderness Park) are located within the project limits. Recreation at the Starkey Wilderness Park is managed by Pasco County, while the District manages recreation on the Serenova Tract. Recreational activities/amenities available at Starkey Wilderness Park include paved bicycle trails, equestrian trails, hiking/backpacking trails, cabin rental, primitive camping, horse corral, picnic pavilions, self-guided educational nature trail, and restrooms. Recreational amenities on the Serenova tract include approximately 16 miles of shared-use hiking, horseback riding, and bicycle trails; and equestrian and primitive camping. Land management activities conducted by the District on the Preserve include prescribed burning, natural systems restoration, exotic species control, land security, recreational development/management, and mowing.

Tampa Bay Estuarine Ecosystem – The Tampa Bay Estuarine Ecosystem project spanning Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Manatee Counties, furthers the Tampa Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) plan. Approximately half the project consists of mangroves and salt marsh which dominate the northern project area along Bishop Harbor and the western area associated with the tidal bays of Moses Hole, Clambar Bay and Williams Bayou. The natural upland and wetland habitats within the project area provide natural water quality treatment of overland flows before reaching the receiving waters of Tampa Bay. A majority of lands within the Tampa Bay Estuarine Ecosystem project were jointly purchased with the State or other local governments. Under an agreement with the State, the Division of Recreation and Parks is the lead land manager for Terra Ceia Preserve State Park. Hillsborough County manages the Ekker Preserve and Schultz Preserve tracts; Pinellas County manages the Clam Bayou tract; and the District manages the Rock Ponds, Frog Creek, and Terra Ceia/Huber tracts. Land management activities conducted by the District on the Rock Ponds, Frog Creek and Huber include prescribed burning, natural systems restoration, exotic species control, land security, recreational development/management, and mowing.

Two Mile Prairie Tract – Two-Mile Prairie tract project, located in Citrus County lies along the southern bank of the Withlacoochee River at the northern end of the Tsala Apopka Lake system and includes a variety of upland plant communities characterized by well-drained soils. Wetlands and surface water features include several miles of the Withlacoochee River and isolated

depression marshes. The project protects natural floodplain areas along portions of the southern bank of the river, while adjoining uplands provide buffer areas to protect the river from high intensity land uses. The majority of lands within this project were jointly purchased between the District and the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida (TIITF). Under a management agreement with the TIITF, the Florida Forest Service (FFS) is the lead land manager and Two Mile Prairie is managed as part of the Withlacoochee State Forest. Recreational improvements/amenities made available by the FFS include a trail network north of CR-491 for bicycling and horseback riding, canoeing and non-gas-powered boating, fishing, primitive camping, picnicking, and 2.8 miles of registered "trail walkers" trail. Land management activities consist of monitoring and coordinating with the FFS regarding their management of the tract.

Two Mile Connector – The Two Mile Prairie/Tsala Apopka Connector project is located in northeastern Citrus County with Two Mile Prairie State Forest to the northwest and Potts Preserve to the southeast. This project provides a connection between the Tsala Apopka and Two-Mile Prairie projects allowing for conveyance of surface waters and floodwater attenuation. Natural communities include basin marsh, scrub, and xeric and mesic hammock. Land management activities conducted by the District directly include resource monitoring and land maintenance. At this time there are no developed trails available on this tract, but it is open to the public for passive recreation.

Upper Hillsborough Preserve – The Upper Hillsborough project, located in Pasco and Polk counties, includes the headwaters of the Hillsborough River, and lies just south of a unique hydrologic feature - the Withlacoochee River/Hillsborough River overflow. At this point, a portion of the flow of the Withlacoochee River naturally conveys to the Hillsborough River north of U.S. Highway 98. Lands within this project protect the hydraulic features of the river system along with extensive areas of forested wetland habitats. Recreational activities/amenities available include non-potable water; approximately nine (9) miles of hiking trails; more than 30 miles of shared-use hiking, horseback riding and bicycling trails; primitive, back country, and equestrian camping, and fishing. Hunting is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission through a wildlife management area agreement. Land management activities conducted by the District directly include prescribed burning, exotic species control, public use and recreational development/maintenance, land security and natural systems restoration.

Upper Lake Marion Creek Watershed – The Upper Lake Marion Creek Watershed project, located in Polk County, is a relatively undisturbed creek system of the Upper Lake Marion Creek Watershed that flows north out of Lake Marion, joins Snell Creek, and ultimately flows southeast to Lake Hatchineha. The entire Lake Marion Creek basin extends over 18,300 acres and includes portions of both the Southwest and South Florida water management districts. This district has an agreement with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to assist in the management of this land since the property's proximity to SFWMD-managed lands enables the SFWMD to manage the property more cost-effectively. District land management consists primarily of coordination with the SFWMD.

Upper Myakka River Watershed – The Upper Myakka River Watershed project is in Manatee County and includes forested floodplain swamps and marshes along the upper portions of the Myakka River watershed. The headwater swamps function as retention and detention areas for local drainage. Wetland forests and adjoining uplands provide treatment of surface runoff. Access to the property is limited to hiking and fishing since the project lands are predominately

wetland, which is not conducive to recreational trail development, however there are two (2) miles of hiking trails available. Land Management conducted by the District directly includes natural systems restoration, exotic species control, land security, public use and recreational development/maintenance, prescribed burning, road maintenance and mowing. Additionally, activities include monitoring of conservation easements.

Upper Saddle Creek Corridor – The Upper Saddle Creek Corridor project is in Polk County between the state-owned Tenoroc Fish Management Area and Lake Hancock. The property lies upstream of Lake Hancock and the upper Peace River and adjoins Saddle Creek Park which is owned by Polk County. The property is part of and provides protection to the floodplain of Saddle Creek, the major tributary to Lake Hancock. The District and Polk County jointly acquired and co-own the project lands, and Polk County is responsible for the management of the property.

Weekiwachee Preserve – The Weekiwachee Preserve project is located in Hernando and Pasco counties and includes several miles of the Weeki Wachee River and extensive areas of hardwood swamps and hammocks. The Weeki Wachee Swamp extends several miles along the coastal portions of Hernando County and represents a regionally important wildlife area. The riverine swamps are environmentally sensitive areas, which play an important role in the river’s conveyance system and in flood and storm abatement. As they approach their outfall at the Gulf of Mexico, the Weeki Wachee and Mud rivers form a complex system of productive estuarine marshes and lowlands. Recreational activities/amenities include approximately six (6) miles of hiking trails and six (6) miles of shared-use hiking and bicycling trails, and fishing. The Preserve is open to vehicular access two Saturdays of every month. Hunting is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission through a wildlife management area agreement. Land management activities at the Preserve conducted by the District directly include natural systems restoration, exotic species control, security, public use and recreational development/maintenance, prescribed burning, road maintenance and mowing. The Weeki Wachee Springs State Park is adjacent and is managed by the Florida Park Service offering boat tours, canoe/kayak launch, interpretive opportunities, and swimming.

Progress of Funding, Staffing and Resource Management

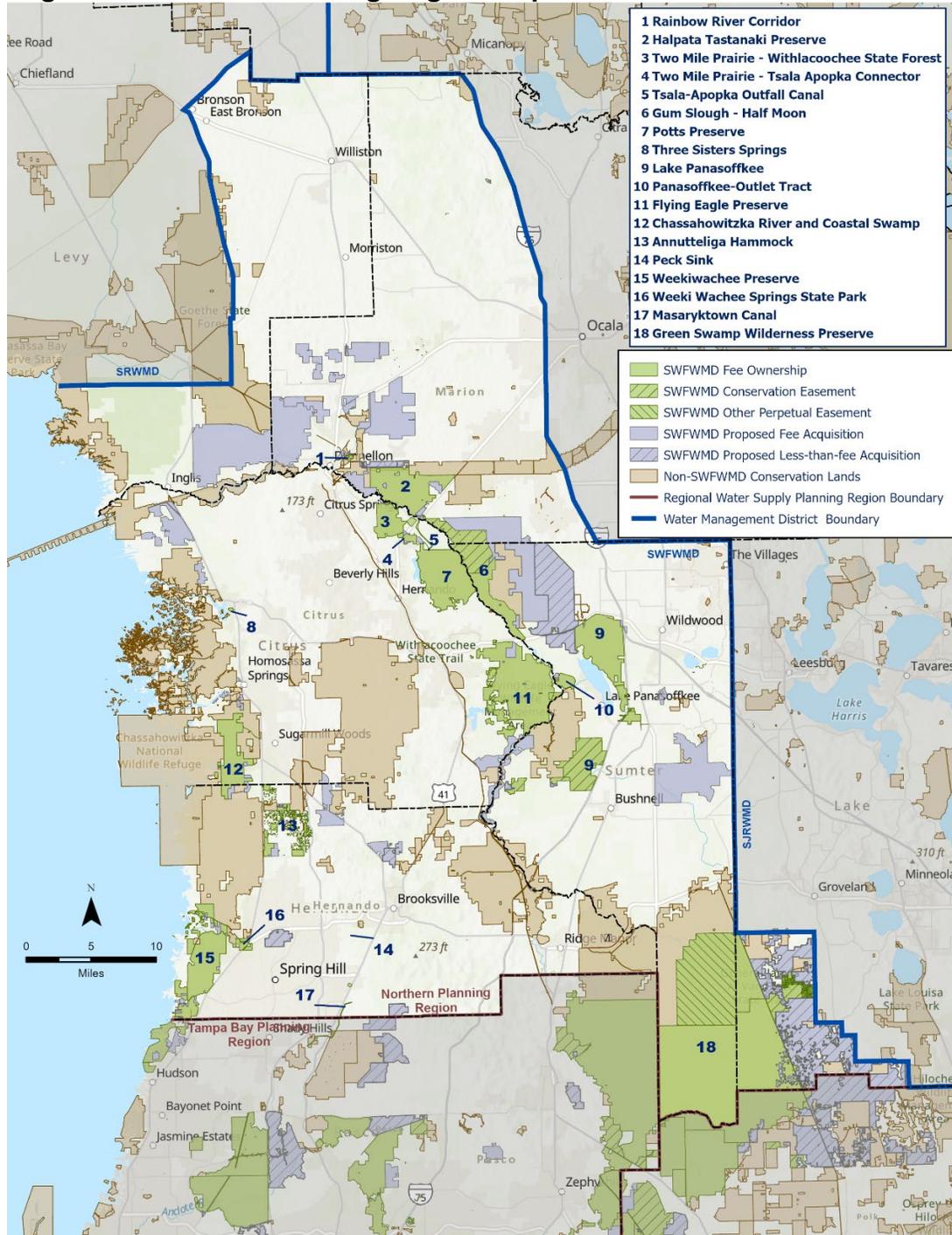
The following table depicts the District’s budget for funding and staffing for resource management and public use.

Table 4. Progress of Funding, Staffing, and Resource Management.

Budget Area	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Budget	FY2024 Budget	FY2025 Budget	FY2026 Budget
FTEs	37	36	34	35	36
Resource Management and Public Use	\$5,379,849	\$5,860,175	\$5,901,567	\$6,121,358	\$6,125,116

Florida Forever Land Acquisition Projects

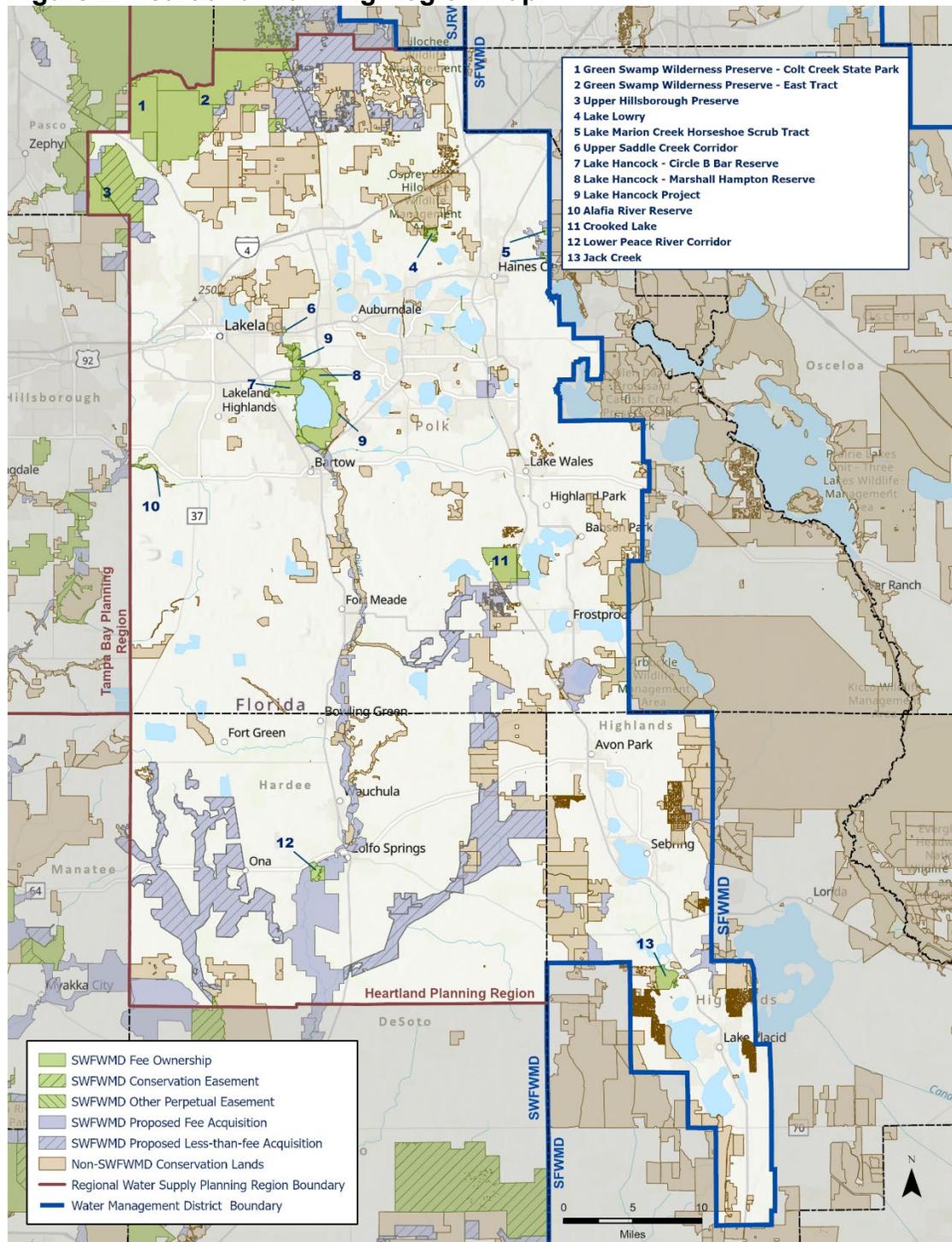
Figure 1. Northern Planning Region Map.



The lands eligible for acquisition within the Northern Planning Region are identified as follows:

- Approximately 78,500 acres identified for potential fee simple acquisition
- Approximately 39,700 acres identified for potential acquisition through less-than-fee techniques

Figure 2. Heartland Planning Region Map.



The lands eligible for acquisition within the Heartland Planning Region are identified as follows:

- Approximately 47,900 acres identified for potential fee simple acquisition
- Approximately 80,700 acres identified for potential acquisition through less-than-fee techniques

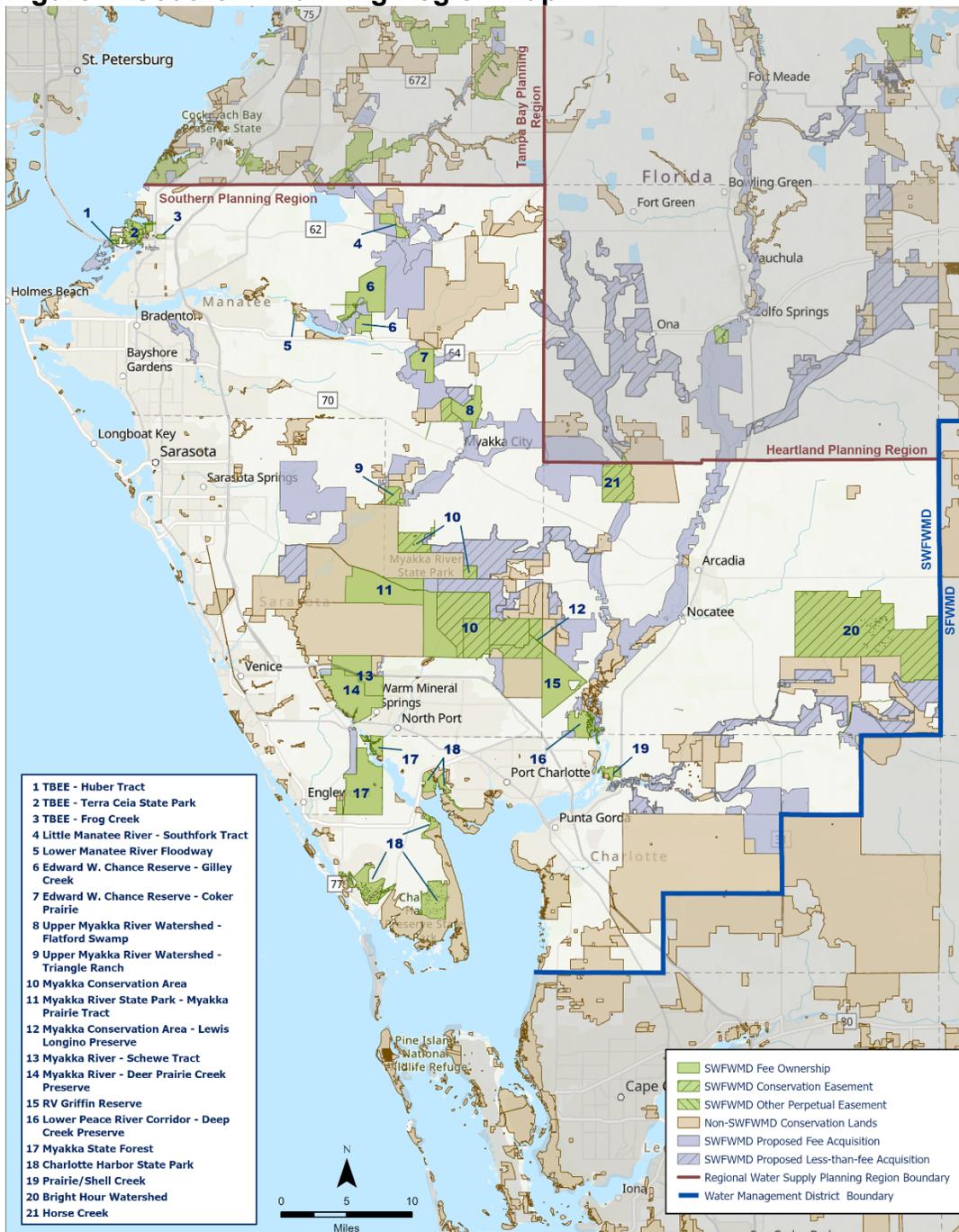
Figure 3. Tampa Bay Planning Region Map.



The lands eligible for acquisition within the Tampa Bay Planning Region are identified as follows:

- Approximately 14,000 acres identified for potential fee simple acquisition
- Approximately 17,600 acres identified for potential acquisition through less-than-fee techniques

Figure 4. Southern Planning Region Map.



The lands eligible for acquisition within the Southern Planning Region are identified as follows:

- Approximately 99,600 acres identified for potential fee simple acquisition
- Approximately 43,600 acres identified for potential acquisition through less-than-fee techniques

Base maps provided by Esri, CGIAR, USGS, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Consolidated **Annual**
Report
March 1, 2026

2025
Mitigation
Donation
Annual Report



Southwest Florida
Water Management District



An Equal Opportunity Employer

Southwest Florida Water Management District

2379 Broad Street, Brooksville, Florida 34604-6899

(352) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476 (FL only)

WaterMatters.org

Bartow Office
170 Century Boulevard
Bartow, Florida 33830-7700
(863) 534-1448 or
1-800-492-7862 (FL only)

Sarasota Office
78 Sarasota Center Boulevard
Sarasota, Florida 34240-9770
(941) 377-3722 or
1-800-320-3503 (FL only)

Tampa Office
7601 U.S. 301 North
Tampa, Florida 33637-6759
(813) 985-7481 or
1-800-836-0797 (FL only)

- John R. Mitten**
Chair, Hernando, Marion
- Jack Bispham**
Vice Chair, Manatee
- Ashley Bell Barnett**
Secretary, Polk
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Treasurer, Polk
- Kelly S. Rice**
Former Chair, Citrus, Lake, Levy, Sumter
- Michelle Williamson**
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Pinellas
- Josh Gamblin**
DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands
- James Holton**
Pinellas
- Dustin Rowland**
Pasco
- Robert Stern**
Hillsborough
- Jim Turner**
Charlotte, Sarasota
- Nancy Watkins**
Hillsborough, Pinellas
- Brian J. Armstrong, P.G.**
Executive Director

January 9, 2026

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor of Florida
Plaza Level 05, The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Subject: Annual Report on Cash Payments as Mitigation

Dear Governor DeSantis:

Pursuant to Section 373.414(1)(b)2., Florida Statutes, each water management district is required to report annually to the Executive Office of the Governor "all cash donations accepted under subparagraph 1 during the preceding calendar year for wetland mitigation purposes."

Please be advised that during the reporting period, the Southwest Florida Water Management District did not receive any cash payments as mitigation, in accordance with Section 373.414(1)(b), Florida Statutes.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Armstrong, P.G.
Executive Director

Cc: Secretary Alexis A. Lambert, DEP



2026–2030 Strategic Plan

Board Approved: Feb. 24, 2026

Message from the Chair

As our great state continues its rapid advancement, it is increasingly incumbent upon our District that careful and farsighted planning is required to steward the waters of Florida. For the welfare of both current and future residents, the Southwest Florida Water Management District's (District) annual Strategic Plan provides clear direction of the work before us to secure the faithful pursuit of the District's mission over the next five years.

That mission — to protect water resources, minimize flood risks, and ensure the public's water needs are met — forms the foundation of our four core mission goals: Water Supply, Water Quality, Natural Systems, and Flood Protection. To advance these aims, the District has organized its efforts into 12 Strategic Initiatives, which guide our programs and projects.

Among the most pressing of our challenges is the securing of adequate water supplies for a growing population. To meet this necessity, the Alternative Water Supplies Strategic Initiative emphasizes close partnerships with regional authorities to develop new and dependable sources of water. In accordance with this vision, the Governing Board has directed more than \$600 million in cooperative funding toward major regional water supply authorities to build the capacity required for the future. The prudent use of potable reuse — long studied and advanced by the District through pilot projects and research — also stands as a safe and promising means of strengthening our water supply.

Yet our concerns do not end with supply alone. The District has committed substantial resources to Flood Protection and the associated Strategic Initiatives. The widespread flooding of the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season reminded us, with unmistakable force, of the importance of our aging water control structures and the costs associated with their rehabilitation. These high costs to taxpayers, though formidable, must be faced with clear judgment and steady purpose through both our Strategic Plan and our Long-term Funding Plan.



John Mitten
Chair

I take particular encouragement from the District's leadership in the Floodplain Management Initiative, wherein new real-time simulation and forecasting projects — developed cooperatively and guided by innovation — promise to improve our ability to predict rainfall and storm surge impacts. With such tools in hand, the District and local governments will be better prepared to warn the public of approaching danger and thereby lessen the hardships that storms too often bring.

Because the needs of our waters vary across the expanse of the District, the Strategic Plan also divides its work into four planning regions — Northern, Tampa Bay, Southern, and Heartland — so that priorities may be set with precision and measurable objectives defined. In the Northern Planning Region, for example, an important objective is the protection of our five first-magnitude springs through projects established in the Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Program. Across the Tampa Bay, Heartland, and Southern planning regions, the District continues to advance the Recovery Strategy for the Southern Water Use Caution Area with steady progress.

To accomplish these Strategic Initiatives and Regional Priorities, the District must excel in its 10 Core Business Processes, as

described in this Strategic Plan. As Chair of the Governing Board, I believe the District's greatest strength is its devoted and skillful staff. Core Business Processes identify the tools, information, and support required for our staff of professionals to exercise sound scientific judgment and provide exemplary service to all who rely on the District.

This year we have added a new Core Business Process: Resiliency. By resiliency, we mean the capacity to recover from hardship and adapt to adverse conditions that may lie ahead. The District has long woven this principle into its work, and its formal inclusion in the Strategic Plan reflects what has been true in practice for many years.

Even as costs rise for the goods and services essential to our mission, the District has continued to live within its means, seeking always to reduce waste, improve effectiveness, and safeguard public trust. Our staff have secured state and federal funding to lessen the burden on local taxpayers, and I am especially grateful to the Governor and the Legislature for the generous grant support received this year for Resiliency and Alternative Water Supply projects.

Guided by a capable workforce and grounded in sound science, the Strategic Plan stands as our map and measure — declaring who we are, what we undertake, and by what means we will achieve it. Though challenges remain before us — population growth, stronger storms, and rising seas — we are Florida. We possess the people, the partnerships, and the purpose necessary to meet them with confidence and resolve. With a strong reliance on God's help, I pray that this next year will be another strong contribution by the District to the future of our Free State of Florida.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Mitten'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

John Mitten
Governing Board Chair

Governing Board

The Governing Board establishes policies for the District. Board members are unpaid citizen volunteers appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Florida Senate.



John Mitten
Chair
Hernando, Marion



Jack Bispham
Vice Chair
Manatee



Ashley Bell Barnett
Secretary
Polk



John Hall
Treasurer
Polk



Kelly S. Rice
Former Chair
Citrus, Lake, Levy, Sumter



Michelle Williamson
Former Chair
Hillsborough



Brian Aungst Jr.
Pinellas



Joshua Gamblin
DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands



James Holton
Pinellas



Dustin Rowland
Pasco



Robert Stern
Hillsborough



James Turner
Charlotte, Sarasota



Nancy Watkins
Hillsborough, Pinellas

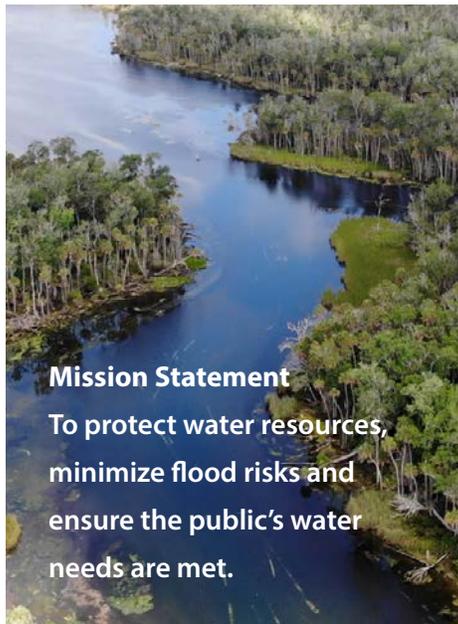
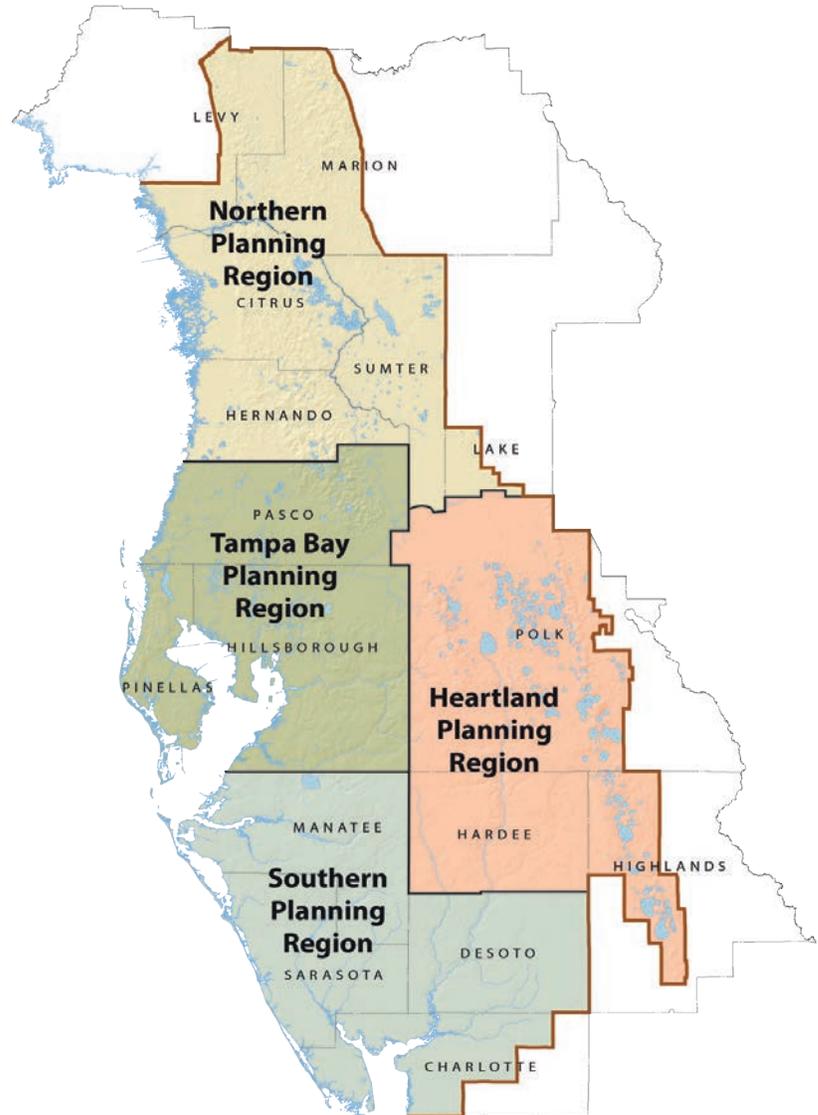
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Overview

The Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) is a science-based organization responsible for managing and protecting water resources in west-central Florida. The District's job is to ensure there are adequate water supplies to meet the needs of current and future users while protecting and restoring water and related natural resources. (See Mission Statement.)

The District encompasses all or part of 16 counties, from Levy County in the north to Charlotte County in the south. It extends from the Gulf of America east to the highlands of central Florida. The District contains 97 local governments spread over approximately 10,000 square miles, with an estimated 6 million permanent residents in 2025. This figure does not include seasonal residents and tourists. For planning purposes, the District is divided into four regions: Northern, Tampa Bay, Heartland and Southern. (See District Planning Regions map.)



Mission Statement

To protect water resources, minimize flood risks and ensure the public's water needs are met.



GOVERNING BOARD

A 13-member Governing Board establishes policies and sets the budget for the District. Appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, Governing Board members are unpaid volunteers representing varied backgrounds and interests. Board members, who must live in the District, serve four-year terms.

BUDGET

The District's primary funding source is ad valorem taxes, although revenues are also derived from state and federal appropriations, permit fees, interest earnings and other sources. The taxing capabilities of the District are established by the Legislature within the limits set by the Florida Constitution. The limit for the District is one mill, or one dollar per thousand dollars of assessed value. The Governing Board millage rate for fiscal year 2026 (FY2026) is 0.1831 mill. More information about budgeting is included in this document's Core Business Processes section.



CORE MISSION

Florida Statutes (F.S.), primarily Chapter 373, authorize the District to direct a range of initiatives, programs and actions. These responsibilities can be grouped under four general areas, which form the District's core mission: water supply, water quality, natural systems and flood protection. The District has established a goal for each of these areas of responsibility:



Water Supply Goal:

Ensure an adequate supply of water to provide for all existing and future reasonable and beneficial uses while protecting and maintaining water resources and related natural systems.



Water Quality Goal:

Protect and improve water quality to sustain the water resources, environment, economy and quality of life.



Natural Systems Goal:

Preserve, protect and restore natural systems to support their natural hydrologic and ecological functions.



Flood Protection Goal:

Minimize flood damage to protect people, property, infrastructure and investment.

Strategic Initiatives

The District is implementing a wide array of programs and projects to meet these four goals. These activities are grouped under 12 Strategic Initiatives:

- Regional Water Supply Planning
- Alternative Water Supplies
- Reclaimed Water
- Water Conservation
- Water Quality Assessment and Planning
- Water Quality Maintenance and Improvement
- Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels (MFLs) Establishment and Monitoring
- Conservation, Restoration and Management
- Floodplain Management
- Programs, Projects and Regulations
- Flood Protection Facilities
- Emergency Flood Response

Regional Priorities

While the Strategic Initiatives identify activities implemented throughout the District, the water resource needs vary from one planning region to another. The top water resource priorities for each region, along with measurable objectives, are identified in the Regional Priorities section of this document.

Core Business Processes

In addition to adhering to its adopted values, the District must excel in 10 core business processes to successfully achieve its Strategic Initiatives:

- Cybersecurity
- Engagement
- Financial Sustainability
- Innovative Projects
- Knowledge Management
- Land Management
- Regulation
- Resiliency
- Structure Operations
- Water Resources Planning and Monitoring

Water Supply

1. Regional Water Supply Planning

Goal Statement: *Identify, communicate and promote consensus on the strategies and resources necessary to meet future reasonable and beneficial water supply needs.*

The District's regional water supply planning effort provides the framework for future water supply management decisions and is a statutory requirement where current water sources are not adequate to supply existing and future uses while sustaining natural resources (F.S., 373.709(1)). This is a collaborative, transparent effort involving local governments, utilities, the agricultural community, business representatives, environmental organizations and other stakeholders.

STRATEGIES

- Develop accurate and reliable demand projections
- Identify sufficient regional water supply sources to meet projected demands
- Encourage the development and use of regional water supply authorities to plan and coordinate water supply solutions
- Incorporate adaptive management processes in water supply planning
- Coordinate with other water management districts on water supply and regulation approaches
- Proactively coordinate with water supply utilities
- Demonstrate the District's financial commitment to assist in the development of regional water supply needs

2. Alternative Water Supplies

Goal Statement: *Increase development of alternative sources of water to ensure groundwater and surface water sustainability.*

Alternative water supply (AWS) refers to any nontraditional source of water that reduces the region's dependency on fresh groundwater. Since 1988, the District has helped to develop more than 400 million gallons per day (mgd) of alternative water supplies, including reuse and water conservation benefits and new potable water sources.

STRATEGIES

- Develop alternative water supply sources that include surface water capture, desalination and brackish groundwater systems
- Continue to promote partnerships with agriculture through District programs such as the Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) Program
- Partner with regional entities to provide alternative water supplies
- Continue to leverage District funds to facilitate the development of alternative water supplies
- Continue to support research and development of aquifer storage and recovery technology
- Promote conjunctive use of surface and groundwater resources through regulation and funding incentives



More than 207 mgd of reclaimed water was beneficially reused in the District in FY2024.

3. Reclaimed Water

Goal Statement: *Maximize beneficial use of reclaimed water to offset potable water supplies and restore water levels and natural systems.*

Reclaimed water is wastewater that has received at least secondary treatment and disinfection and is used for beneficial purposes, such as irrigation, manufacturing processes or power generation. By offsetting demand for groundwater and surface water, this alternative water supply reduces stress on environmental systems, provides economic benefits by delaying costly system expansions and reduces the need to discharge wastewater effluent to surface waters. More than 207 mgd of reclaimed water was beneficially reused in the District in FY2024, accounting for more than 50% of total available wastewater flows. The District's Governing Board

has identified potable reuse as a priority for the District to achieve its goal of 75% reuse of available wastewater by 2040.

STRATEGIES

- Increase availability by increasing storage capacity
- Increase availability by promoting interconnects between reclaimed water utilities
- Maximize efficient and beneficial use of reclaimed water
- Improve efficiency through measures such as metering and volume-based pricing
- Continue to support reclaimed water research, monitoring and public education
- Partner with cooperators for the development of potable reuse projects, with priority for regional entities
- Promote the beneficial use of reclaimed water and the offset of traditional water supplies through the existing regulatory framework
- Promote the use of reclaimed water for aquifer recharge and environmental enhancement projects
- Promote active public engagement on potable reuse through outreach and education programs and One Water Florida

4. Water Conservation

Goal Statement: *Enhance efficiencies in all water-use sectors to ensure beneficial use.*

Water conservation is achieved through education, financial incentives and various regulatory and non-regulatory programs. Per capita water usage in the District regularly ranks as the lowest in the state.

STRATEGIES

- Promote water conservation through public engagement programs
- Support research and implementation of water conservation techniques and practices
- Promote water-conserving rate structures
- Utilize financial incentives to further encourage effective water conservation practices through the Water Incentives Supporting Efficiency (WISE) program, Florida Water StarSM and the Conservation Education Program
- Utilize regulatory programs to establish effective water conservation practices
- Continue to promote partnerships with agriculture through District programs such as the FARMS Program

Water Quality

1. Assessment and Planning

Goal Statement: *Collect and analyze data to determine local and regional water quality status and trends to support resource management decisions and restoration initiatives.*

Those who manage Florida's water resources must have access to accurate and timely information to support good management decisions. The District's water quality monitoring programs and networks help provide this information

STRATEGIES

- Continue to develop and maintain long-term water quality monitoring networks to collect, analyze and distribute accurate water quality information
 - Coastal Groundwater Quality, Inland Water Quality and Water Use Permit Monitoring Networks
 - Springs and Aquifer Nutrient Monitoring Networks
 - Surface Water Quality Monitoring Networks
- Continue to support the District's internal data governance process
- Continue to promote partnerships through District water quality programs
- Assess the utilization of new technologies to improve accuracy and availability of water quality data

2. Maintenance and Improvement

Goal Statement: *Develop and implement programs, projects and regulations to maintain and improve water quality.*

The District develops and implements projects, programs and regulations to maintain and improve water quality consistent with the Governor's Executive Order 19-12, which instructs the water management districts to review budgets and prioritize available funding to focus on projects that will help address harmful algal blooms and maximize nutrient reductions. Examples of these efforts include partnerships for best management practices (BMPs) implementation such as the FARMS Program, focused on the agriculture community, and the Watershed Management Program (WMP), addressing watershed improvements; and the Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) and Springs initiatives programs that implement nutrient removal and other water quality improvement projects.



Through the FARMS Program and others, the District maintains partnerships for the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) to help improve water quality.

The District also acquires and manages land for water resources conservation/protection purposes through its land resources program and regulates stormwater management through the Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) process. Additionally, data and information are shared with counties, cities and the state for projects to improve water quality.

STRATEGIES

- Continue to support, review and track Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and Basin Management Action Plans (BMAP) processes for District priority water bodies
- Promote Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles and other behaviors that protect water quality

- Participate in the development and implementation of the statewide stormwater management criteria to enhance the District's ERP program
- Use regulatory programs to promote water quality protection and improvement
- Continue to promote partnerships through District water quality programs such as the SWIM and FARMS programs and the Quality of Water Improvement Program
- Support the implementation of prioritized septic and package plant retrofit projects within the Northern Planning Region to reduce nutrient concentrations in springs priority focus areas
- Support local government efforts to improve District priority water bodies



The District develops and implements projects and programs, such as the SWIM Program, to maintain and improve water quality. Pictured here is the Boyd Hill SWIM Restoration project in St. Petersburg.

Natural Systems

1. Minimum Flows and Levels Establishment and Monitoring

Goal Statement: Establish and monitor MFLs, and where necessary, develop and implement recovery/prevention strategies to recover water bodies and prevent significant harm.

Minimum flows and levels (MFLs) identify the limit or water level at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area. Rivers, streams and springs require minimum flows, while minimum levels are set for lakes, wetlands and aquifers. MFLs are used for permitting and planning decisions concerning how much water may be safely withdrawn from or near a water body.

Through FY2025, the District has established MFLs for 207 water bodies. The District's process for establishing MFLs includes an annual update of water bodies prioritized for MFLs development, extensive data collection, analysis and reporting, public review, independent scientific peer review and rule adoption. The District routinely assesses potential water supply/resource concerns and evaluates water use permit applications to ensure violations of established MFLs do not occur. In addition, water bodies with established MFLs are monitored and assessed annually to determine the need for strategies to recover or prevent flows or levels from falling below established MFLs. All necessary recovery or prevention strategies are included in the District's Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP).

As of 2025, 95% of the established MFLs were being met. To address water bodies where MFLs are not being achieved, the District is implementing recovery strategies for the lower Hillsborough River and the Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA). In addition, the District has successfully implemented recovery strategies for the Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area (NTBWUCA) and the lower Alafia River, as well as determined the NTBWUCA and the Dover/Plant City Water Use Caution Area (DPCWUCA) recovery strategies are no longer necessary.

STRATEGIES

- Update the MFLs priority list and schedule annually
- Establish MFLs through:
 - Data collection
 - Data analysis and reporting
 - Independent scientific peer review and public review
 - Governing Board approval and rule adoption
- Continue to incorporate MFLs in District water use permit application review processes and compliance monitoring
- Monitor and report hydrologic conditions to support status assessments for water bodies with established MFLs
- Continue to review and refine scientific methods used for establishing MFLs
- Develop, adopt and implement MFLs recovery and prevention strategies
- Incorporate MFLs recovery and prevention strategies into the RWSP development process

2. Conservation, Restoration and Management

Goal Statement: Restoration and management of natural ecosystems for the benefit of water and water-related resources.

The Conservation, Restoration and Management Strategic Initiative preserves, protects and restores natural systems to support natural hydrologic and ecologic functions. The major components of this initiative include land acquisition and management, ecosystem monitoring and restoration, education and regulation. To date, more than 43,000 acres of habitat have been restored through District programs and partnerships with state and local governments.

Acquisition and management of land are critical to the District's conservation and restoration objectives. Once acquired, altered land is restored, if necessary, and managed to maintain ecological and hydrological functions. The District monitors its lands to ensure continued compliance with its mission and initiatives.

Restoration initiatives, such as the SWIM Program, are overseen by the District to restore natural systems associated with priority water bodies.

The District also regularly tracks land and water resource alterations through its aerial land use/land cover, wetland and seagrass mapping efforts. Through reviews such as

local government plan amendments and large-scale development proposals, Florida Coastal Management applications and related activities, staff can offer feedback to better link land and water resources. In addition, the District's ERP program helps protect water resources.

STRATEGIES

- Evaluate acquisition opportunities, while placing priority on water resource benefits
- Promote innovative restoration projects and partnerships
- Regulate to avoid impacts or minimize and mitigate unavoidable impacts
- Partner to continue wetland, lake and river monitoring and analysis
- Provide technical assistance to state, regional and local governments for linking land and water issues and concerns
- Apply adaptive land management strategies to maintain and enhance District conservation lands
- Effectively and efficiently manage District conservation lands with a focus of keeping natural systems intact and functioning, or enhance altered natural systems where appropriate



Many types of wildlife call District conservation lands home.

Flood Protection

The District experienced flooding across all four planning regions in August, September and October of 2024 associated with hurricanes Debby, Helene and Milton. Therefore, the District is prioritizing projects that will identify flood risk and minimize impacts from flooding as a regional priority in all of the four planning regions.

1. Floodplain Management

Goal Statement: Collect and analyze data to determine floodplain information, flood protection status and trends to support floodplain management decisions and initiatives.

The Watershed Management Program (WMP) identifies, prioritizes and addresses flood-related water resource issues within a watershed. Information developed through the WMP is used by local governments, the District and state and federal governments in regulatory and advisory floodplain management programs.

STRATEGIES

- Implement the WMP
- Continue to promote partnerships at the local, state and federal level
- Increase public awareness of floodplains and flood risk
- Provide system-based data to support the operation of District flood control and water conservation structures
- Document water levels after flood events

2. Programs, Projects and Regulations

Goal Statement: Develop and implement programs, projects and regulations to maintain and improve flood protection to minimize flood damage while preserving the water resource.

The District's ERP program uses WMP information and regulations to protect floodplain and historic basin storage and ensure that new development does not increase flood levels or the rate of stormwater runoff onto neighboring properties.

Strategic property acquisition allows land to fulfill natural functions of storing and accommodating excess water and reduces the risk of flood damage by preserving floodplains.

The District's WMP identifies flood risk and efficient alternatives to reduce the risk of flood damages. The District encourages implementation of selected intermediate and regional system improvement projects to reduce flood risk and to maximize opportunities to provide water quality improvements. Implementation of local system improvements is primarily the responsibility of the local government.

STRATEGIES

- Implement the ERP program using WMP floodplain information to maintain current levels of flood protection
- Identify floodplain management and flood protection value associated with land acquisition opportunities
- Support local government efforts to reduce the risk of flood damage by improving intermediate and regional flood protection systems
- Operate and maintain District flood control and water conservation structures, canals, dams, levees and associated facilities
- Develop, implement and maintain an asset management program for District flood control and water conservation structures and associated facilities

3. Flood Protection Facilities

Goal Statement: Operation, Maintenance and Capital Improvements of the District's dams, canals and water control structures to minimize flood damage while preserving the water resource and contributing to water supply.

The District operates, maintains and performs capital improvements on three earthen dams, five major canal systems and 84 water control structures in support of the Flood Protection Facilities Strategic Initiative.

The District monitors water resources and operates its water control structures 365 days a year. The maintenance of dams, canals and water control structures is an ongoing effort and aligns with federal standards where necessary. A Capital Improvement Plan has been completed for the District's water control structures. The District is implementing high-priority improvements identified in the District's risk-based plan. In FY2024, the District started construction on its first capital project resulting from the plan at the Lake Tarpon Outfall Canal Structure 551, which included concrete repair and the addition of a cathodic protection system at this coastal structure. This work was completed in FY2025. In FY2025, another concrete repair and the addition of cathodic protection systems started construction at the S-160 structure on the Tampa Bypass Canal. Additional capital improvement projects are in design, which include standardization of the controls for the District's 43 remotely operated structures, converting structures that do not need continuous operation into fixed crest weir structures and the replacement of flood gates and their associated lift system based on the

age and condition. These projects will further improve preventative maintenance, life cycle management and capital improvement planning for the water control structures.

STRATEGIES

- Operate and maintain the District's 84 water control structures to maximize the flood protection benefits
- Monitor and maintain the District's dams and canals
- Implement and maintain the asset management program for the District's 84 water control structures
- Conduct long-term, risk-based capital planning
- Implement prudent capital projects to minimize the likelihood of failure of the District's water control structures

4. Emergency Flood Response

Goal Statement: Provide effective and efficient assistance to state and local governments and the public to minimize flood damage during and after major storm events, including operation of District flood control and water conservation structures.

Through its emergency flood response initiative, the District prepares for, responds to, recovers from and mitigates the impacts of critical flooding incidents. To ensure adequate preparation, the District has developed an emergency operations program and maintains a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), which provides guidelines for pre-incident preparation, post-incident response and recovery, deployment and annual exercises. The District's Emergency Operations Center and emergency response staff are critical for incident response. All water management districts are members of the State Emergency Response Team and serve as support agencies to the state. The District also provides emergency assistance to local governments and the public. The District's Hydrologic Data Section provides data to internal and external customers to assist with situation assessments and decision making.

STRATEGIES

- Continue to promote an effective and efficient incident management system
- Train staff in National Incident Management System / Incident Command System structure
- Exercise the District's CEMP, high hazard structure Emergency Action Plans and Flood Event Guidelines
- Provide emergency assistance to the state, local governments and other agencies

Regional Priorities and Objectives

Northern Planning Region - Springs

PRIORITY:

Improve the Chassahowitzka River, Crystal River/Kings Bay, Homosassa River, Rainbow River, Weeki Wachee River and associated springs

OBJECTIVES:

- Implement water quality and natural systems projects identified in the SWIM plans for the five first-magnitude spring systems
- Assist with septic to sewer conversions and package plant retrofits within the five first-magnitude springsheds
- Monitor status and trends associated with targets in each SWIM plan to assess the ecological condition of the spring systems
- Continue support of the Springs Coast Steering Committee (SCSC)
- Implement MFLs to protect spring flow through monitoring and reporting hydrologic conditions and through their consideration in water use permit reviews and water supply planning

HIGHLIGHT:

The water resources in the District include more than 200 documented springs, and the rivers, bays and estuaries that are fed by them. The five largest spring groups within the District are concentrated in the Northern Planning Region along the Springs Coast. These five first-magnitude (with flow rates of 100 cubic feet per second or greater) spring groups form the headwaters of the Chassahowitzka River, Crystal River/Kings Bay, Homosassa River, Rainbow River and Weeki Wachee River. All five systems are listed as a District SWIM priority water body, and by the state as Outstanding Florida Waterways and Outstanding Florida Springs. In addition, the District has established MFLs to help protect each of these systems.

The Crystal River/Kings Bay, Homosassa, Chassahowitzka and Weeki Wachee rivers flow into a region of the Gulf of America known as the Springs Coast. The estuaries and nearshore coastal waters of the Springs Coast contain more than 500,000 mapped acres of seagrass habitats making it one of the largest expanses of seagrass in the world. Along with seagrass, the nearshore coastal waters of the Springs Coast include many species of attached algae, sponges, corals and hard bottom habitat supporting numerous ecologically and economically important species such as bay scallop, grouper, tarpon and manatee. The District's seagrass mapping program has been the single most relied upon metric for tracking the overall health

of our Springs Coast estuaries. Springs Coast seagrass mapping occurs every four years using a combination of aerial imagery and intensive field surveys.

The rivers, bays and springs of this region have experienced ecological changes caused by both natural and human impacts. Issues facing these coastal resources include sea-level rise, reduced water clarity and changes in the aquatic vegetation and nutrient enrichment. In addition, spring flow is highly dependent upon seasonal rainfall patterns. The District has established, and continues to evaluate MFLs for its first-magnitude springs and other water bodies in the region to prevent significant harm that could occur because of water withdrawals.

In 2014, the District, together with local, regional and state partners, formed the SCSC. The committee's mission is to build consensus and partnerships to improve and manage each of the five first-magnitude spring systems through effective development and implementation of SWIM plans. All first-magnitude spring groups now have approved SWIM plans.

Each SWIM plan is a living document with adaptive management at its core. These plans identify management actions, projects that address the issues facing each system and specific quantifiable objectives and indicators to assess overall progress and help guide the SCSC. In 2017, the District's Governing Board prioritized combining District funds with state and local funds for projects that would convert septic systems to central sewer to benefit springs. The Board also identified the need to protect the District's investment by ensuring controls are in place to prevent additional



The District works to improve spring systems, like the Chassahowitzka River, in its Northern Planning Region.

pollution from new septic systems. In addition to these management plan development and implementation activities, the FARMS Program continues to work with agricultural producers to implement BMPs to reduce groundwater use and nutrient loading in springsheds.

Quantifiable objectives and indicators are established for each first-magnitude spring system. The SCSC provided support and input on updates to the quantifiable objectives and including indicators. These updates were approved by the Governing Board in 2024.

Chassahowitzka River Spring Group

- Water clarity
- Nitrate concentration
- Minimum flows
- Coverage of desirable submerged aquatic vegetation
- Coverage of invasive aquatic vegetation

Crystal River/Kings Bay Spring Group

- Water clarity
- Nitrate concentration
- Phosphorus concentration
- Chlorophyll concentration
- Minimum flows
- Coverage of desirable submerged aquatic vegetation
- Coverage of invasive aquatic vegetation
- No net loss of shoreline in natural condition
- Enhancement of disturbed shoreline

Homosassa River Spring Group

- Water clarity
- Nitrate concentration
- Minimum flows
- Coverage of desirable benthic habitat
- Coverage of invasive aquatic vegetation
- No net loss of shoreline in natural condition

Rainbow River Spring Group

- Water clarity
- Nitrate concentration
- Minimum flows
- Coverage of desirable submerged aquatic vegetation
- Coverage of invasive aquatic vegetation

Weeki Wachee River Spring Group

- Water clarity
- Nitrate concentration
- Minimum flows
- Coverage of desirable submerged aquatic vegetation
- Coverage of invasive aquatic vegetation

Regional Priorities and Objectives

Northern Planning Region – Water Supply

PRIORITY:

Ensure long-term sustainable water supply

OBJECTIVES:

- Increase water conservation
 - Achieve and maintain 150-gallon daily compliance per capita with all public supply utilities
 - Achieve and maintain a reduction in 2016-2020 regional average unadjusted gross per capita per day (153 gpcd) water use by 3.9% to 147 gpcd by 2030, which represents a water savings of 3.64 mgd
 - Achieve 75% utilization of all wastewater flows and a 75% resource benefit by 2040 and assist in the implementation of potable reuse
 - As of 2024, the Northern Planning Region had 26.9 mgd of wastewater flow and 15.3 mgd of reuse for a utilization rate of approximately 57%
- Increase the use of reclaimed water for potable, recharge and environmental enhancement projects
- Continue to coordinate with the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority on regional water supply planning and development

HIGHLIGHT:

The District's most recent RWSP was completed in 2025 and assesses water demands, as well as sources and projects to meet those demands, for the Northern Planning Region through 2045.

Public supply use, which accounts for about 50% of the water use in the Northern Planning Region, has significant potential for water savings. In 2024, there were six utilities in the Northern Planning Region with compliance per capita figures higher than 150 gpcd. The District's goals are to ensure that all utilities fall below the maximum compliance per capita usage and to further reduce the regional average per capita in accordance with the RWSP. The District's plan to assist public supply utilities is to minimize the need for additional groundwater supplies by maximizing the use of available reclaimed water and implementing comprehensive water conservation measures and best management practices.

The District promotes regional approaches to water supply planning and development. The benefits of regional systems include economies of scale, better ability to manage environmental impacts, improved system reliability, operational flexibility and emergency backup capability. Larger regional systems are also able to take advantage of conjunctive use, wherein both groundwater and alternative sources are available and can be managed to mimic natural hydrologic cycles.

In the Northern Planning Region, the District is coordinating with the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority to promote regional water supply planning and development. This most recently includes cooperatively funding regional water conservation efforts and an update to the Authority's Master Water Supply Plan.



The use of reclaimed water helps to ensure long-term sustainable water supply.

Regional Priorities and Objectives

Tampa Bay Planning Region – Lower Hillsborough River MFLs Recovery and MFL Monitoring

PRIORITY:

Implement the Lower Hillsborough River MFLs Recovery Strategy and monitor other MFLs

OBJECTIVES:

■ Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area

- Complete annual assessments and the third required five-year evaluation of results achieved from implementation of the MFLs recovery strategy adopted for the Lower Hillsborough River
- Achieve 75% utilization of all wastewater flows and a 75% resource benefit by 2040 and assist in the implementation of potable reuse
 - As of 2024, the Tampa Bay Region had 234.95 mgd of wastewater flow and 122.6 mgd of reuse for a utilization rate of approximately 52%
- Increase the use of reclaimed water for potable, recharge and environmental enhancement

- Achieve and maintain a reduction in 2016-2020 regional average unadjusted gross per capita (93 gpcd) water use by 2.89% to 90 gpcd by 2030, which represents a savings of 10.93 mgd
- Continue to assist Tampa Bay Water in the development of alternative water supply projects, including transmission and water conservation
- Maintain regulatory programs associated with the NTBWUCA
- Continue to monitor the environmental conditions through annual assessments of established MFLs

■ Dover/Plant City Water Use Caution Area

- Maintain achievement of the DPCWUCA area minimum aquifer level for the upper Floridan aquifer by continuing to implement cold protection permitting procedures, assessing their status annually and promoting FARMS projects that reduce cold protection groundwater uses

- Continue to monitor the aquifer system through annual assessment of the established DPCWUCA minimum aquifer level

■ Southern Water Use Caution Area

- Achieve 40 mgd offset in groundwater withdrawals in the SWUCA by 2025
- Achieve the SWUCA saltwater intrusion minimum aquifer level (SWIMAL) for the upper Floridan aquifer to slow the rate of saltwater intrusion in the Most Impacted Area (MIA)
- Ensure that there are sufficient water supplies for all existing and projected reasonable-beneficial uses
- Continue to monitor recovery of environmental conditions in the SWUCA through annual assessments of MFLs and five-year recovery status reviews

HIGHLIGHT:

The District sets MFLs on priority water bodies. An MFL is the limit or water level at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area. A recovery or prevention strategy must be implemented if the existing flow or level of a water body is below or projected to fall below an applicable minimum flow or level within 20 years.

Additionally, the District can designate a water use caution area (WUCA) when the Governing Board determines that regional action is necessary to address cumulative water withdrawals, which are causing or may cause adverse impacts to the water and related natural resources or the public interest. WUCA rules enhance the protection and recovery of water resources. Three WUCAs, the NTBWUCA, DPCWUCA and SWUCA, have been identified for portions of the Tampa Bay Planning Region.

The **NTBWUCA**, which encompasses all of Pinellas and Pasco counties, and those portions of Hillsborough County north of Highway 60, was established to address adverse impacts caused by ground and surface water withdrawals. The first phase of the District's recovery strategy for restoring water resources within the NTBWUCA called for reduced pumping from Tampa Bay Water's regional

wellfields and providing financial incentives for construction of alternative water supply projects. To date, these efforts have produced more than 140 mgd of new alternative water sources and allowed groundwater withdrawals to be reduced by more than 60 mgd. In addition, Tampa Bay Water has a regional water conservation program called Tampa Bay Water Wise. This program offers a variety of incentives for water conservation activities with the long-term goal of conserving 3.8 mgd.

In 2010, the District determined that more information was needed to fully evaluate the effects of the reductions on MFLs recovery and initiated a second phase of the NTBWUCA recovery strategy through adoption of a comprehensive plan that would sunset in 2020. The plan included continued monitoring and evaluation of environmental mitigation for withdrawal impacts and continued water conservation activities by Tampa Bay Water's member governments.

Comprehensive recovery assessments completed by Tampa



Regional Priorities and Objectives

Bay Water and the District in 2020, as well as MFL status assessments completed by the District in 2020 and 2021, identified substantial recovery of hydrologic and ecologic conditions associated with strategy implementation and rainfall conditions. Collectively these evaluations indicated that as of 2021, 120 of the 121 established MFLs in the NTBWUCA were being achieved, with the exception being MFLs established for the Lower Hillsborough River. Based on these findings, the District's Governing Board repealed the comprehensive recovery plan for the NTBWUCA in 2021 and re-adopted the Hillsborough River Recovery Strategy for continued implementation.

Corrective operational protocols for achieving minimum flows in the river have been identified and are being implemented to ensure future compliance. The recovery strategy for the Lower Hillsborough River addresses the augmentation of the river with water from a variety of sources, including Sulphur Springs, Blue Sink, the Tampa Bypass Canal and Morris Bridge Sink. The Lower Hillsborough River met the MFL for the first time in 2023 and has continued to achieve it. An update on the status of the Hillsborough River Recovery Strategy is provided to the Governing Board annually. In addition, two comprehensive five-year recovery assessments have been completed and a third five-year assessment was completed in 2025.

The **DPCWUCA** extends over an approximate 260-square-mile area in northeast Hillsborough County and eastern Polk County and overlaps with portions of the NTBWUCA and the SWUCA. The DPCWUCA was established in 2011 to address impacts from groundwater pumping for cold protection. To protect crops from freeze events, common management practice for many farmers with agricultural commodities, including strawberries, blueberries, citrus and nurseries, involves pumping groundwater for cold protection when air temperatures drop to near freezing. Substantial groundwater use during these times lowers groundwater levels and can impact residential wells and contribute to sinkhole development. During a historic 11-day freeze event in January 2010, numerous residential wells in the Dover/Plant City area were impacted, and sinkholes were reported. As a result, the District developed and adopted a minimum aquifer level and recovery strategy for the DPCWUCA in 2011 to significantly reduce and monitor groundwater pumping during future freeze events that may cause impacts to existing legal users.

The objectives of the DPCWUCA Recovery Strategy were, by 2020, to have reduced groundwater pumped for cold protection by 20% relative to that pumped during the 2010 weather event and to achieve the minimum aquifer level. Recovery mechanisms identified in the strategy include non-regulatory and regulatory approaches. Non-regulatory mechanisms associated with the strategy include cost-share assistance through the FARMS Program to incentivize the implementation of BMPs to offset groundwater withdrawals for cold protection. The strategy's regulatory measures addressed groundwater withdrawal impacts, alternative water supplies, frost/freeze protection methods and resource recovery. These rules along with the non-regulatory mechanisms were intended to promote continued recovery of the minimum aquifer level.

An assessment completed in 2020 indicated the 2010 weather event that precipitated adoption of the DPCWUCA minimum aquifer level and recovery strategy may be expected about once every 570 years. In addition, use of updated modeling and evaluation of declining historic and projected agricultural land use and water use indicated the minimum aquifer level was being achieved and the recovery strategy was not needed. Based on these findings, the District repealed the DPCWUCA recovery strategy in 2022 but continues to implement the DPCWUCA rules and associated projects, and will annually assess the status of the currently met minimum aquifer level.

The **SWUCA** extends more than 5,100 miles in eight District counties and includes the southern portion of Hillsborough County within the Tampa Bay Planning Region. Depressed aquifer levels in the SWUCA have resulted in saltwater intrusion along the coast, contributed to reduced flows in the Upper Peace River and lowered lake levels in areas of Polk and Highlands counties. Groundwater withdrawals have been identified as the primary cause of the depressed aquifer levels throughout the groundwater basin, with drawdowns in some areas exceeding 50 feet.

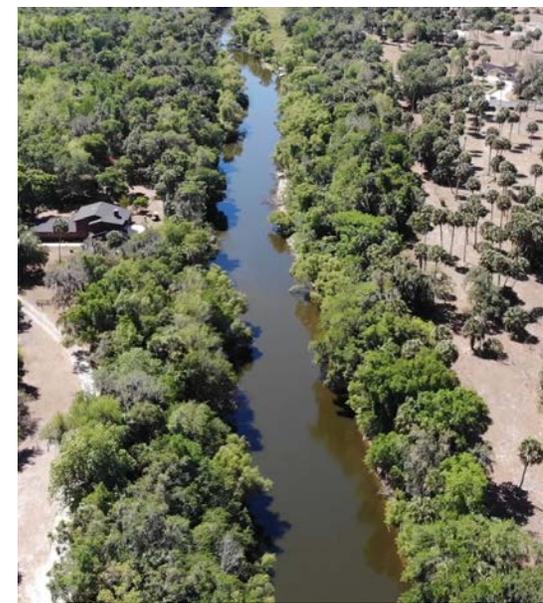
The District adopted the SWUCA Recovery Strategy in 2006 to recover MFLs that were concurrently established with the strategy. The major goals for the recovery strategy are reducing the rate of saltwater intrusion in the MIA, restoring minimum flows in the Upper Peace River and restoring minimum levels within the lakes in the Ridge area, which extends roughly 90 miles along the center of the state in Polk and Highlands counties. A status

assessment completed in 2023 indicated that, for the first time, the SWUCA SWIMAL was being met. Through FY2025, the District has adopted MFLs for 50 priority water bodies in the SWUCA and approximately 84% of these MFLs are being met.

Within the Tampa Bay Planning Region, the District is helping to fund the Hillsborough County South Hillsborough Aquifer Recharge Project (SHARP). This project's goal is to expand the use of reclaimed water to recharge non-potable portions of the upper Floridan aquifer to improve aquifer water levels in the MIA of the SWUCA and to slow the rate of saltwater intrusion.

Primary elements of the SWUCA Recovery Strategy for this region include:

- Updating the RWSP to identify how to address increasing water needs while minimizing impacts to the water resources and related natural systems
 - The District approved a plan update in 2025, with the next update scheduled for completion in 2030
 - Providing financial incentives for water conservation, creation of alternative supplies and regional interconnections
 - Monitoring and reporting
-



Restoring minimum flows in the Upper Peace River is a major goal of the SWUCA Recovery Strategy.

Regional Priorities and Objectives

Tampa Bay Planning Region – Improve Water Bodies

PRIORITY:

Improve Tampa Bay and lakes Seminole, Tarpon and Thonotosassa

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop and implement natural system projects that restore critical shoreline, coastal uplands and intertidal systems and freshwater wetlands
- Develop and implement water quality projects to reduce nutrient loading
- Update the Lake Tarpon and Lake Thonotosassa SWIM plans

HIGHLIGHT:

Tampa Bay is designated as an “Estuary of National Significance” and a District SWIM priority water body. The 400-square-mile bay is Florida’s largest open-water estuary. Its 2,200-square-mile watershed contains more than two million residents.

Three main challenges exist in the Tampa Bay watershed. Coastal uplands and wetlands have been altered and lost. Nonnative animal and plant species have spread, and water quality has been degraded from pollutants and nutrient loading.

The District completed the update of the Tampa Bay SWIM Plan and was approved by the Governing Board Oct. 24, 2023. The District worked closely with the Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP), local governments and other stakeholders to complete this latest update. The Tampa Bay SWIM Plan draws heavily on the TBEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), the Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium Reasonable Assurance Plan and other relevant documents. The Tampa Bay SWIM Plan does not duplicate the TBEP’s CCMP, rather it uses the CCMP as a reference to identify those elements that align with SWIM’s core missions of water quality, hydrologic restoration and natural systems.

For nearly 40 years, the District’s seagrass mapping program has been the most relied upon metric for tracking the overall health of our estuaries. In Tampa Bay, seagrass habitat is mapped every two years using a combination of aerial imagery and intensive field surveys. From 1988 to 2016, seagrass habitat expanded throughout Tampa Bay, reaching a record 41,655 mapped acres in 2016. The TBEP established

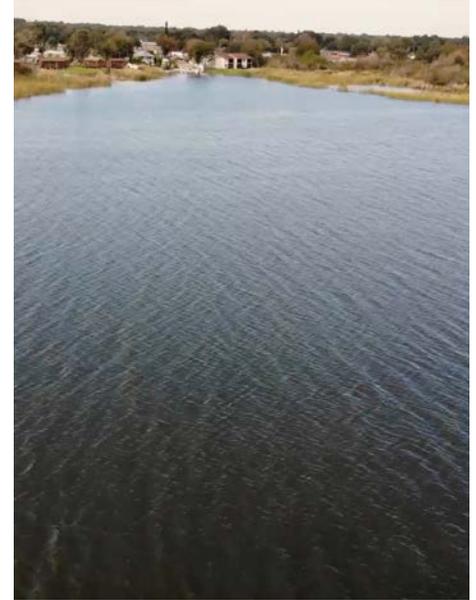
a recovery goal of 40,000 acres of seagrass habitat. This target is based on seagrass acreage estimates from 1950s aerial photography and identified in the Habitat Master Plan (2020 Update). In 2014, the District mapped 40,295 acres of seagrass in Tampa Bay, exceeding TBEP’s target for the first time since mapping began in 1988. In 2016 and again in 2018, total seagrass acreage in Tampa Bay exceeded 40,000 mapped acres. In 2020 and 2022, however, the bay experienced back-to-back seagrass losses with 34,297 and 30,137 mapped acres, respectively. In 2024, Tampa Bay saw modest gains in seagrass coverage with an increase of 1,407 acres (5%) compared to the coverage in 2022. The next seagrass mapping results based on imagery collected over the winter of 2025-2026 will be released in early 2027.

Habitat restoration continues to be a focus in Tampa Bay and the District’s SWIM Program together with many cooperators and partners have restored more than 7,000 acres of coastal habitat. Additionally, the District is committed to improving water quality, completing projects that have treated more than 130 square miles of contributing Tampa Bay watershed.

Lake Seminole is a 684-acre freshwater lake in west-central Pinellas County that was created in the 1940s by the impoundment of an arm of Long Bayou, a brackish water segment of Boca Ciega Bay. The lake’s watershed encompasses approximately 3,500 acres, of which almost 90% is developed. Water quality concerns in Lake Seminole began in the 1960s, as urbanization of the watershed increased and worsened in the 1980s and 90s.



Habitat restoration continues to be a focus in Tampa Bay through projects like the Boyd Hill SWIM Restoration Project.



Lake Seminole is a 684-acre freshwater lake in west-central Pinellas County.

In 2004, Pinellas County adopted the Lake Seminole Watershed Management Plan to identify and implement projects to reduce nutrient concentrations in the lake and to meet targeted water quality goals. In 2006, Lake Seminole was included in the DEP’s draft verified list of impaired waters for nutrients. Pinellas County developed a Reasonable Assurance Plan (RAP) in 2007, to set forth actions to reduce nutrient loading to Lake Seminole and restore the lake’s water quality. RAP updates were submitted to the DEP in 2011, 2014 and 2019 outlining the progress made towards the goals set forth in the original RAP. Lake Seminole RAP water quality goals are expressed as annual means for chlorophyll-a (Chl-a) and the Trophic State Index (TSI), a composite measurement used in evaluating the level of enrichment to a waterbody. Completed projects identified in the Lake Seminole RAP include retrofitting stormwater outflows from five of the highest nutrient loading sub-basins and removing nutrient rich sediments from the lake. In 2017, the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners approved funding, matched with District funding, to dredge nutrient-rich sediment from the lake. Dredging of this sediment is complete and improvements have been noticed but full documentation is expected to be analyzed in the next Lake Seminole Reasonable Assurance Update.

Regional Priorities and Objectives

Lake Tarpon extends more than 2,532 acres, making it the largest freshwater lake in the Tampa Bay area. The lake is designated as an Outstanding Florida Water, a fish management area and a District SWIM priority water body. Overall, Lake Tarpon can be described as a water body with excellent sport fishing and healthy submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) habitat.

Despite its healthy status, the lake is currently listed by DEP as being impaired for chlorophyll-a (a measure of phytoplankton abundance) based on exceedance of the state's Numeric Nutrient Criteria (NNC). The lake is currently, and has been, in compliance with water quality standards for both total nitrogen (TN) and total phosphorus (TP), creating a disconnect between chlorophyll-a and nutrient concentrations. In recent years, Pinellas County and the District have co-funded technical projects to examine this disconnect.

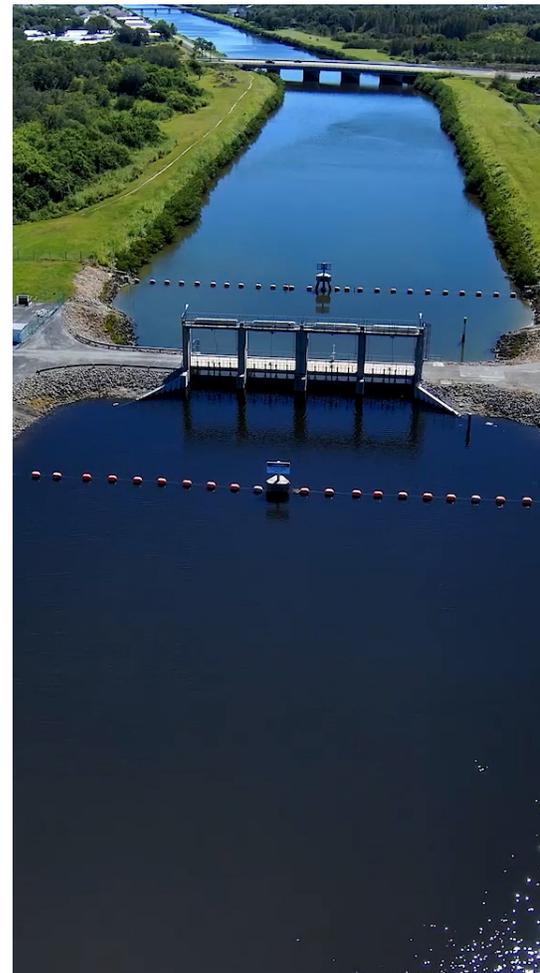
The Lake Tarpon Water Quality Management Plan was completed in 2017. One of the findings of this report was that chlorophyll-a concentrations were a function of residence time and lake levels and not nutrient loading. The plan also found that healthy plant communities in the lake coincided with periods of improved chlorophyll-a concentrations. Pinellas County submitted a petition to DEP for development of Type III Site Specific Alternative Criteria (SSAC) for Nutrients. In January 2024, DEP published a draft report proposing Type III nutrient SSAC that were developed using data from a period when the lake supported a healthy plant community while accounting for fluctuation in chlorophyll-a above DEP's generally applicable criterion.

The findings of these studies have been considered during the update to the Lake Tarpon SWIM Plan. The District has coordinated closely with DEP and Pinellas County regarding the SSAC to ensure that the goals and management strategies in the SWIM plan update are not in conflict with the SSAC. Additionally, during development of the SWIM Plan update, two technical stakeholders' workshops were held to ensure coordination with agencies and local governments that manage water resources in the Lake Tarpon watershed. The District completed the update of the Lake Tarpon SWIM Plan, and it was approved by the Governing Board in July 2025.

Lake Thonotosassa, the largest natural lake in Hillsborough County with a surface area of greater than 800 acres, is popular for recreational use as it is one of the few natural lakes in the area with public access. The lake discharges into the Hillsborough River, which is used for the City of Tampa's municipal water supply, and the lake is designated as a District SWIM priority water body.

Challenges exist in the Lake Thonotosassa watershed. Nutrient loadings from the watershed have caused extreme nutrient enrichment resulting in algal blooms within the lake. Habitat quality and species diversity have declined. Nonnative plant species are more abundant, while availability of desirable sport fish has decreased.

The District completed a nutrient source tracking project with Hillsborough County to identify nutrient sources in the watershed. Areas with high nutrient loadings were prioritized for projects, such as stormwater improvement projects, maintenance/control of exotic plants, enhancement of wetland and aquatic habitats and public education and awareness of stormwater pollution prevention. As part of this implementation, the District's FARMS and SWIM programs are coordinating with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to work with agriculture operations in the watershed to implement BMPs. During 2018 and 2019, the District participated in DEP's development of a nutrient TMDL for Lake Thonotosassa, which was adopted by DEP in July 2019.



S-551 structure at Lake Tarpon.



Flint Creek structure at Lake Thonotosassa.

Regional Priorities and Objectives

Heartland Planning Region – SWUCA Recovery

PRIORITY:

Implement the SWUCA Recovery Strategy

OBJECTIVES:

- Achieve 40 mgd of offsets in groundwater withdrawals in the SWUCA by 2025
- Achieve the SWUCA SWIMAL for the upper Floridan aquifer to slow the rate of saltwater intrusion in the MIA
- Assist in recovering the minimum flows for the Upper Peace River through implementation of the Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification project
- Recover minimum levels for Polk County and Highlands County lakes by 2025
- Ensure a sustainable water supply
 - Achieve and maintain daily 150-gallon compliance per capita with all public supply utilities
 - Achieve and maintain a reduction in 2016-2020 regional average unadjusted gross per capita (110 gpcd) water use by 2.61% to 107 gpcd by 2030. This represents a water savings of 3.08 mgd
 - Continue to assist Polk Regional Water Cooperative (PRWC) in the development of alternative water supply projects, including brackish groundwater and water conservation
 - Increase percentage of total water use supplied by alternative sources
 - Maximize the water conservation potential for the region
 - Maximize regional interconnects among public supply utilities
 - Complete the next updates for the District and Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI) RWSPs by 2030
 - Achieve 75% utilization of all wastewater flows and a 75% resource benefit by 2040 and assist in the implementation of potable reuse
 - As of 2024, the Heartland Planning Region had 45.7 mgd of wastewater flow and 22.8 mgd of reuse for a utilization rate of approximately 50%

HIGHLIGHT:

Most of the District's Heartland Planning Region falls within the eight-county SWUCA, which encompasses approximately 5,100 square miles. In the SWUCA, depressed aquifer levels have caused saltwater intrusion along the coast, contributed to reduced flows in the Upper Peace River and lowered lake levels in portions of Polk and Highlands counties.

Groundwater withdrawals were identified as the primary cause of the depressed aquifer levels throughout the groundwater basin, with drawdowns in some areas exceeding 50 feet.

Through FY2025, the District has adopted MFLs for 50 priority water bodies in the SWUCA and approximately 84% of these MFLs are being met. An MFL is the limit or water level at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area. The District adopted the SWUCA Recovery Strategy to achieve MFLs that are not being met by reducing the rate of saltwater intrusion in the MIA, restoring flows to the Upper Peace River and increasing water levels at lakes in the Ridge area, which extends roughly 90 miles along the center of the state in Polk and Highlands counties.

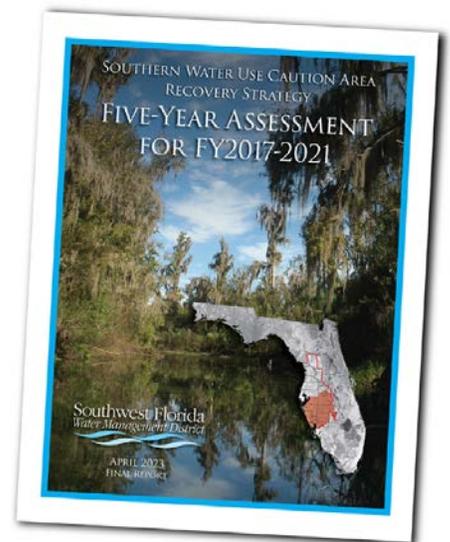
Primary SWUCA Recovery Strategy elements for this region include:

- Updating the RWSP to identify how to address growing regional water needs while minimizing impacts to water resources and related natural systems
 - The District approved a plan update in 2025, with the next update scheduled for completion in 2030
- Providing financial and regulatory incentives for conservation, construction of alternative supplies and regional interconnections
- Monitoring and reporting

As described in the most recent SWUCA Recovery Strategy five-year assessment, the District has been successful in multiple efforts

associated with its SWUCA goals. Partnering with the Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority (PRMRWSA), the District has assisted in developing a sustainable water supply to meet the needs of a four-county region within the SWUCA. The District has also assisted with the creation of the PRWC and is helping to fund its evaluation and development of AWS projects, including water conservation. The FARMS Program and other water conservation efforts have reduced upper Floridan groundwater withdrawals in the SWUCA, which has helped to increase groundwater levels in the MIA.

The SWIMAL elevation established for the upper Floridan aquifer in the MIA must be met or exceeded for five consecutive years for recovery. This requirement was met in 2023, leading to the



Flows are being restored on the Peace River, seen here near Bartow.

Regional Priorities and Objectives

SWIMAL being achieved for the past three years. This accomplishment represents an important step towards slowing the rate of saltwater intrusion in the region.

The District's Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification Project became fully operational in 2014, and a reservation was established in 2020 for water stored in Lake Hancock and released to lower Saddle Creek to help recover minimum flows in the Upper Peace River. Implementation of the project and the reservation supported achievement of MFLs established for all three upper river sites each year since 2020. Recovery in the Upper Peace River has also led to improvements in low-flow conditions in the lower portion of the river. Ridge lake water levels have increased several feet since the 1990s, but some lake MFLs in the SWUCA continue to not be met. Reevaluation of these MFLs using new, updated lake-level methods and peer-reviewed wetland criteria will support future assessment of recovery needs.

While the southern two-thirds of Polk County is included in the SWUCA, all of Polk County is part of the designated CFWI Planning Area. The CFWI Planning Area includes all of Polk, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties and the southern portion of Lake County. The boundaries of the St. Johns River, South Florida and Southwest Florida water management districts meet in the planning area.

The District is collaborating with the other water management districts, the state and local governments and utilities to identify a sustainable water supply for the CFWI Planning Area. Key successes in meeting the water resource challenges of the area have included refinement of a shared groundwater model to determine regional resource availability and the publication of the third CFWI RWSP in 2025. Ongoing efforts include assessment of water resource data collection needs, implementation of new CFWI Planning Area consumptive use permitting rules and development of the 2030 RWSP.

Within the CFWI, the need for 30 mgd of AWS sources in the Polk County area was identified. The District assisted in the establishment of the PRWC in 2017 as a collaborative entity to address water supply needs among its member governments and is currently coordinating with the PRWC on development of AWS projects and

maximizing water conservation efforts to meet projected 2045 water supply demands. These efforts include implementation of a long-term demand management plan and District investigation of the lower Floridan aquifer as a potential alternative water supply source. From FY2015 through FY2023, the Governing Board allocated \$65 million to the Polk Partnership Fund for implementation of selected projects. The Partnership Fund helped to seed development of new alternative water supply projects and encouraged member participation. The PRWC is developing both the Southeast and West Polk Lower Floridan Aquifer Wellfield projects. Third-party reviews of the preliminary designs were evaluated in 2022 and approved by the District for funding assistance with final design and construction phases. Construction of the Southeast Wellfield Facility and the Southeast Regional Transmission have commenced. A deep injection test well is being drilled at the West Polk Wellfield facility site. Water conservation efforts and demand management plans will help extend the resources developed through these AWS projects.



New alternative water supply projects, like the PRWC Southeast Wellfield, will help meet the region's water needs.

Regional Priorities and Objectives

Heartland Planning Region – Improve Water Bodies

PRIORITY:

Improve Winter Haven Chain of Lakes and Ridge Lakes

OBJECTIVE:

- Implement plans and projects for water quality and natural systems improvement

HIGHLIGHT:

The **Winter Haven Chain of Lakes** is a system of 19 interconnected lakes in Polk County within a combined 32-square-mile watershed. Designated as a District SWIM priority water body, the chain includes two major groups, with five lakes in the northern chain and 14 in the southern chain. A series of constructed canals connect the lakes and enhance recreational access throughout the chain.

Two main challenges exist in the Winter Haven Chain of Lakes watershed: nutrient loading from urban runoff and the loss of natural systems. The District is working with local governments through its cooperative funding program to reduce nutrient loadings by improving stormwater management and to restore natural systems, which can also improve water quality and provide additional environmental benefits.

Success will be measured by water quality improvements, including those associated with reductions in non-point source loading of nutrients and areal increases in restored natural systems. Additionally, lakes with sufficient water quality data will be evaluated using Florida's numeric nutrient criteria.

Water quality improvement projects have been implemented for eight lakes in the chain (Conine, Howard, May, Lulu, Hartridge, Jessie, Cannon and Mariana). In addition, more than 30 low impact development (LID) best management projects have been installed within the downtown area of the City of Winter Haven.

Approximately 130 lakes lie within the **Ridge Lakes** area, which extends roughly 90 miles along the center of the state in Polk and Highlands counties. The high number of deep sinkhole basin lakes makes this region uniquely different from the other lake regions in the District and throughout the state.

Declining water quality, due to nutrient loading from the watershed, remains a challenge for lakes in the Ridge Lakes area. Common water quality impacts include stormwater runoff, wastewater effluent, residential fertilizer applications, agricultural runoff, shoreline habitat degradation and hydrologic alterations. Through the District's Ridge Lakes Restoration Initiative, emphasis has been placed on protective lake management strategies. Stormwater treatment has been a high priority, as well as enhancement and restoration of natural systems and additional flood protection.

The District-led Ridge Lakes Plan update was completed in 2019. The project's purpose was to propose lake-specific action plans and conceptual designs for prioritized lakes. In addition, a general action plan was also developed for the non-prioritized lakes to provide a path forward to further efforts in the Ridge Lakes. Data needs are identified for lakes without sufficient water quality information. Of the 136 lakes studied, 17 are impaired or potentially impaired for one or more nutrients, 23 are not impaired and more than 94 lakes do not have enough water quality data to determine impairments. Improved monitoring plans were recommended for the 94 lakes with insufficient data. Conceptual designs for water quality improvement projects were prepared for 12 prioritized lakes. The plan will be used to work with local governments to develop projects and programs aimed at water quality improvements.



A Great Blue Heron.



The Winter Haven Chain of Lakes is a system of 19 interconnected lakes in Polk County.

Regional Priorities and Objectives

Southern Planning Region – SWUCA Recovery

PRIORITY:

Implement the SWUCA Recovery Strategy

OBJECTIVES:

- Achieve 40 mgd of offset in groundwater withdrawals in the SWUCA by 2025
- Achieve the SWUCA SWIMAL for the upper Floridan aquifer to slow the rate of saltwater intrusion in the MIA
- Ensure a sustainable water supply
 - Achieve and maintain 150-gallon daily compliance per capita with all public supply utilities
 - Continue to assist the PRMRWSA in the development of alternative water supply projects, including transmission and surface water
- Achieve and maintain a reduction in 2016-2020 regional average unadjusted gross per capita (84 gpcd) water use by 2.8% to 82 gpcd by 2030, a water savings of 2.83 mgd
 - Maximize water conservation
 - Maximize public supply interconnects
 - Achieve 75% utilization of all wastewater flows and a 75% resource benefit by 2040; assist in the implementation of potable reuse as part of this effort
 - As of 2024, the Southern Planning Region had 77.8 mgd of wastewater flow and 48.2 mgd of reuse for a utilization rate of approximately 62%
 - Develop ASR options for potable and reclaimed water supply
 - Increase the percentage of total water use supplied by alternative sources
 - Continue assessing the viability of using excess runoff in Flatford Swamp for improving groundwater levels in the MIA

HIGHLIGHT:

The entire Southern Planning Region of the District falls within the eight-county SWUCA. Within the approximate 5,100-square-mile SWUCA, depressed aquifer levels have caused saltwater intrusion along the coast, contributed to reduced flows in the Upper Peace River and lowered lake levels in areas of Polk and Highlands counties. Groundwater withdrawals are the primary cause of the depressed aquifer levels throughout the region, with drawdowns in some areas exceeding 50 feet.

Through FY2025, the District has adopted MFLs for 50 water bodies in the SWUCA and approximately 84% of these MFLs are being met. An MFL is the limit or water level at which

further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area. The District adopted the SWUCA Recovery Strategy in 2006 to address MFLs not being met by reducing the rate of saltwater intrusion in the MIA, restoring flows to the Upper Peace River and increasing water levels at lakes in the Ridge area, which extends roughly 90 miles along the center of the state in Polk and Highlands counties.

Primary SWUCA Recovery Strategy elements for this region include:

- Updating the RWSP to identify how to address growing regional water needs while minimizing impacts to the water resources and related natural systems
 - The District approved a plan update in 2025, with the next update underway and scheduled for completion in 2030
- Providing financial incentives for water conservation, development of alternative supplies and regional interconnections
- Monitoring and reporting

The District has been successful in multiple efforts associated with its SWUCA goals, as noted in the recently completed five-year assessment of the ongoing SWUCA Recovery Strategy. Partnering with the PRMRWSA, the District has assisted in developing a sustainable water supply to meet the needs of a four-county region within the SWUCA. The District has also assisted with the creation of the PRWC and is helping to fund its evaluation and development of AWS, including water conservation. The FARMS Program and other water conservation efforts have reduced upper Floridan groundwater withdrawals in the SWUCA, which in turn has helped to increase groundwater levels in the MIA.

Since the 1970s, the Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP) has prevented waste and contamination of water resources (both groundwater and surface water) by reimbursing landowners for plugging abandoned or improperly constructed artesian wells. The program focuses on the southern portion of the District where the upper Floridan aquifer (UFA) is under artesian conditions, creating the potential for mineralized groundwater to migrate upward and contaminate shallower aquifers or surface waters. The program reimburses approximately 200 well-pluggings per year, with more than 7,800 well-pluggings reimbursed since its inception.



The District's Flatford Swamp Aquifer Recharge project continues to show promise.

Compliance with the SWIMAL elevation represents an important milestone for meeting the recovery strategy goal of slowing saltwater intrusion in the region. Based on groundwater modeling, the District's Flatford Swamp Aquifer Recharge project continues to show promise in its potential to help support SWIMAL recovery, as well to slow saltwater intrusion by recharging the Floridan aquifer system near the MIA. The test recharge well, monitoring wells and surface water facilities have all been completed and operational testing of the system is underway.

The District's Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification project helps meet the minimum flows in the Upper Peace River. Implementation of the project supported achievement of MFLs established for all three upper river sites each year since 2020. Ridge lake water levels have increased several feet since the 1990s, but some lake MFLs in the SWUCA continue to not be met. Reevaluation of these MFLs using updated lake-level methods and new, peer reviewed wetland criteria will support future assessment of recovery needs.

Regional Priorities and Objectives

Southern Planning Region – Improve Water Bodies

PRIORITY:

Improve Charlotte Harbor, Sarasota Bay, Shell/Prairie/Joshua Creeks

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop plans and implement projects for water quality improvement
- Develop plans and implement projects to restore natural systems

HIGHLIGHT:

Charlotte Harbor is Florida's second largest open water estuary at 270 square miles. Generally considered one of the most productive estuarine ecosystems in southwest Florida, the harbor is designated an "Estuary of National Significance" and a SWIM priority water body.

Challenges for the 4,400-square-mile Charlotte Harbor watershed include alteration and loss of wetlands, an increase in nonnative plant species, water quality degradation from point and non-point source pollutants and seagrass loss.

The District's seagrass mapping program has been the most relied upon metric for tracking the overall health of our estuaries, including Charlotte Harbor and Lemon Bay. Seagrass habitat is mapped every two years using a combination of aerial imagery and intensive field surveys. Since the Charlotte Harbor SWIM Plan update in November 2020, the area has experienced record seagrass loss coupled with significant increases in filamentous macroalgae. The success indicator for this system is to restore seagrass coverage for Charlotte Harbor proper and Lemon Bay, including Dona and Roberts bays, to 2016 levels (23,503 acres). As of 2022, total mapped seagrass acreage was 17,392 acres. This represents a continued sharp decline since 2018 and the lowest acreage reported since the District began mapping seagrass habitat in 1988. The next scheduled seagrass mapping cycle will be in 2026.

The District participates with other government agencies through the Coastal and Heartland National Estuary Partnership to update and implement the comprehensive conservation and management plan and implement water quality and hydrologic alteration improvement projects to restore coastal upland, wetland and intertidal habitats.

As of 2024, the District and its cooperators have completed 30 natural systems projects,



which have restored more than 5,300 acres of coastal habitats for Charlotte Harbor. The District and its partners have completed 13 water quality projects treating approximately 155 square miles of contributing area for the watershed.

Sarasota Bay is designated as an "Estuary of National Significance" and a SWIM priority water body. Like Charlotte Harbor, challenges to this 150-square-mile watershed include changes to coastal uplands, loss of wetlands, increases in nonnative plant species and water quality degradation from point and non-point source pollutants and more recently significant losses in seagrass habitat.

Beginning in 2018, Sarasota Bay, which includes the estuaries of Palma Sola Bay, Sarasota Bay Proper, Roberts Bay, Little

Sarasota Bay and Blackburn Bay, experienced significant seagrass losses reaching a 15-year low in 2022. Thanks to improved water quality conditions, Sarasota Bay seagrass coverage increased by 19% between 2022 and 2024. No bay segment reported seagrass loss in 2024, and the greatest gain (1,833 acres) was in Sarasota Bay Proper where seagrass coverage expanded by 24% between 2022 and 2024. The next seagrass mapping cycle is in 2026.

The District is working with other government agencies on Sarasota Bay initiatives.



The District and its partners continue working to improve Sarasota Bay.

Regional Priorities and Objectives

These include assisting with the update to the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program's comprehensive conservation and management plan, implementation of water quality improvement projects and restoration of coastal upland, wetland and intertidal habitats. As of 2024, the District and its partners have completed 14 projects to provide water quality treatment for approximately 71 square miles of watershed contributing to Sarasota Bay. Additionally, nearly 40 completed projects restoring more than 950 acres of coastal habitats have been completed in Sarasota Bay.

Shell, Prairie and Joshua Creek (SPJC)

watersheds are in the southern region of the Peace River Basin. Combined, the SPJC watersheds comprise a surface area of 487 square miles, or approximately 20% of the Peace River Basin.

The City of Punta Gorda obtains its potable water supply from the Shell Creek in-stream reservoir. Prairie and Shell creeks (and associated tributaries) are designated as Class I waters, which means they are designated for use as potable water supplies.

Groundwater withdrawals for agricultural irrigation created mineralized water quality issues in the SPJC watersheds. The FARMS Program was created in 2003 with the goal of improving the watersheds' water quality. Through BMP implementation, the FARMS Program has partnered with producers to reduce groundwater use and capture runoff in tailwater recovery ponds and reuse the water for irrigation. This reduces the amount of mineralized groundwater used within the watershed and results in downstream water quality benefits.

A key success indicator is the reduction of total dissolved solids (TDS) in these surface waters. Through the implementation of FARMS Program projects and other initiatives, water quality concentrations for chloride, specific conductance and TDS measured at key surface water reference sites in the SPJC watersheds have significantly improved. Additionally, these FARMS Program projects have reduced approximately 24.7 mgd of groundwater use, which contributes to SWUCA recovery.



The FARMS Program was originally created to benefit the Shell, Prairie and Joshua Creek watersheds.



Prairie Creek is located in the southern region of the Peace River Basin.



Equipment installed as part of a FARMS project in the watershed.

Core Business Processes

Managing and protecting the water resources of a 16-county area requires a highly skilled, motivated workforce with the right tools, support and good information to make informed decisions and provide high-quality service to the residents of the District. All the various functions of this workforce have been evaluated and categorized into 10 core business processes. To successfully achieve our Strategic Initiatives and Regional Priorities, the District must excel in each of these.

CYBERSECURITY

As the region's knowledge leader for water resources information, an effective cybersecurity program is vital to protect the trust in and reliability of that information. As the world has become more digitally connected, so has the District and the role of cybersecurity in support of the District's mission and vision. Cybersecurity is an essential component in providing protection of sensitive and critical data, ensuring business continuity, safeguarding the value, integrity and trust of its water resource data, protecting against danger to public health, safety and welfare, meeting statutory and regulatory requirements and defending against evolving cyber threats.

Maintaining security over valuable information and mission critical systems has become a considerable challenge as the cyber-threat landscape has continued to evolve. While the release of common vulnerabilities and exposures has increased by 500% over the last 10 years, updating and upgrading security of every device connected to the District's resources is an ongoing activity that's required as a key element to safeguarding the District's Information Technology (IT) assets.



Programs like the Florida Water StarSM help the District sustain Florida's water resources.

As new technologies emerge, they must be evaluated not only for their benefits or how they may or may not increase productivity and improve functionality for District staff and systems, but they must also be evaluated against the risk of introducing them into the District's technology environment. In other words, cybersecurity spans the breadth and width of the organization and is essential in every aspect of how the District conducts daily activities. The investment made by the District in cybersecurity is essential to mitigating risks and ensuring the long-term success and resilience of the District.

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement is a key to retaining a highly skilled and motivated workforce, the cornerstone of any successful organization. Keeping staff informed and involved promotes good morale and increases productivity. Additionally, engagement extends beyond internal staff.

To manage water resources effectively over a large region, engaging external publics, including citizens, media, elected officials, advisory committees and other stakeholders is also critical. Outreach and education engage these various groups to foster behaviors, secure funding and assist in developing laws that conserve, protect and sustain Florida's water and related natural resources. Also, the District collaborates with stakeholders and advisory committees to help meet those goals through its planning and outreach processes. Input from stakeholders and advisory committees is used by the Governing Board to make water resource decisions.

Engagement helps to communicate those shared interests, forging relationships that support collaboration to benefit the region's water and related resources, economic stability and quality of life.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The District's primary funding source is ad valorem taxes, which vary from year to year. In addition to paying for its operating costs, the District provides financial incentives through partnerships with public and private entities on projects that protect and restore the water resources of the region, such as promoting water

conservation, developing alternative water supplies, enhancing natural systems and water quality and promoting flood management activities. The District operates on a pay-as-you-go basis that allows it to make more funding available for projects.

INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

The District initiates and supports creative, collaborative projects to produce measurable benefits to the environment, water resources and the regional community. The projects address the core mission goals for water supply, flood protection, water quality and natural systems.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

As an information-based organization, high-quality data are critical to making informed decisions that protect and enhance water resources. Knowledge Management is the practice of systematically and actively collecting, managing, sharing and leveraging an organization's data, information and processes.

As the region's knowledge leader for water resources information, the District collects a variety of regulatory, scientific and socio-economic and business data to support its Strategic Initiatives. While the focus of Knowledge Management activities is on meeting and supporting these initiatives, it is recognized that many public and private stakeholders also rely on this information to meet their business needs. Since FY2016, an emphasis has been placed on building awareness and expanding a culture of Knowledge Management throughout all business units within the agency, as well as improving the documentation, organization, review and storage of key business practices and related supporting documentation (governing documents). During FY2026, the District will continue efforts to organize governing documents to facilitate knowledge sharing, ensure the alignment of division/bureau practices with the Governing Board policies and executive director procedures and allow for timely retrieval and review of existing governing documents. The focus also will cover streamlined processes for maintenance of updated documents.

Core Business Processes

Information technology and water resource data collection activities at the District are managed by a governance procedure, with oversight by a governance committee that includes members of the District's Executive Team. The information technology and data governance process monitors, informs and controls the efficient and effective use of information technology and data collection to ensure these initiatives and associated resource expenditures are in alignment with the strategic direction and priorities of the District. The focus for the future will be on expanding governance processes across all business practices at the District to further supplement the District's Knowledge Management initiatives.

The District promotes consistency of data collection activities by coordinating with local, regional and state entities through participation on statewide, regional councils and interagency workgroups. The District is also working with the other water management districts and state agencies to implement common replacement standards for equipment; to develop common standards for sharing financial, geospatial, scientific and permit information and to establish frameworks for joint development of software applications.

LAND MANAGEMENT

Per Section 373.1391, Florida Statutes (F.S.), lands titled to the governing boards shall be managed and maintained to the extent practicable, in such a way as to ensure a balance between public access, general public recreational purposes and restoration and protection of their natural state and condition. Land Management is responsible for maintaining District lands. In its 10,000-square-mile region, the District owns an interest in approximately 461,000 acres of land that provide various water resource benefits. These lands are managed to restore and sustain natural systems, store flood waters, recharge the aquifer and improve water quality. District conservation lands are managed following an adaptive management strategy based on science to achieve land management goals. Land Management staff focus restoration efforts on imperiled natural communities where appropriate. Of the lands owned in fee by the District, 99% are available for public recreation. District lands are evaluated periodically to ensure that District areas of responsibility are achieved. Surplus is considered when lands are not necessary for statutory requirements, or that do not benefit the District's areas of responsibility.

In addition, effective July 1, 2022, section 373.036(2)(e), F.S., requires the District to develop a list of critical wetlands to be acquired using funds from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund (Critical Wetland List). The statute requires the Critical Wetland List to be included in the District's Strategic Plan. In developing the Critical Wetland List, the District must consider the ecological value of the wetland, the effect of the wetland on water quality and flood mitigation, the ecosystem restoration value of the wetland and the inherent susceptibility of the wetland to development due to its geographic location or natural aesthetics. Before adopting or amending the Critical Wetland List, the District must notify the current property owners and allow them to request their property be removed.

The District does not plan to acquire conservation lands using funds from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund in FY2026. Therefore, the District has not developed a list of critical wetlands as described in section 373.036(2)(e), F.S. However, the District's Florida Forever Workplan identifies conservation lands and lands necessary for water resource development projects or waterbody restoration projects that meet eligibility criteria for acquisition. If the District determines that funds from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund are necessary to acquire lands, the Strategic Plan will be updated to include the list described in section 373.036(2)(e), F.S.

REGULATION

Regulation involves multiple permit activities that promote a fair allocation of the water resources, protect wetlands, enforce well construction standards and ensure that new activities do not increase the risk of flooding or degrade water quality. The permitting process also ensures operational performance monitoring of permitted systems to protect the region's citizens and water resources.

The District is committed to protecting its water resources and related natural systems while also providing quality service to the regulated community. The District's Regulation Division is structured to eliminate duplication, increase efficiency and consistency and reduce costs. Centralizing the permitting review process in the District's Tampa office ensures that permit applicants throughout the District are treated consistently. Improved online permitting services make it easier and more convenient to submit a permit application and access permit data.

The District also continues to work with the other water management districts and the DEP to achieve statewide permitting consistency wherever possible while allowing for regional water resource differences.

RESILIENCY

Resiliency is embedded throughout the District's mission, areas of responsibility and core operations. The District is focused on protecting valuable fresh groundwater supplies and changes in water demand through the development of alternative water supplies. The District also supports local governments and partners in reducing flood risks through collaborative planning, data collection and analysis and the implementation of watershed management plans. One of the District's resiliency priorities is to implement our Structures Capital Improvement Plan to prepare for high rainfall events and sea level rise.

STRUCTURE OPERATIONS

Structure Operations maintains and operates 84 water control structures. Most of these structures are conservation structures that are operated to maintain water levels and provide limited flood relief. The larger flood control structures, like those associated with the Tampa Bypass Canal System, are capable of quickly moving large quantities of water and are operated to maximize flood protection. Structure S-160 on the Tampa Bypass Canal is the largest state-owned flood control structure in Florida.

WATER RESOURCES PLANNING AND MONITORING

Water Resources Planning and Monitoring encompasses surface water and groundwater resource evaluations and other comprehensive planning efforts in partnership with local, state, regional, federal and other stakeholders. These responsibilities include identifying, collecting, analyzing and disseminating relevant and accurate data and mapping products and providing technical assistance.

Examples include the SWUCA Recovery Strategy Five-Year Assessment, MFLs studies, Regional Water Supply Planning, Strategic Plan update, watershed management plans, Consolidated Annual Report and reviews of proposed comprehensive plan amendments and large-scale development.



Southwest Florida
Water Management District



VISAV 11-2025

The Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) does not discriminate on the basis of disability. This nondiscrimination policy involves every aspect of the District's functions, including access to and participation in the District's programs, services and activities. Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation, or who would like information as to the existence and location of accessible services, activities, and facilities, as provided for in the Americans with Disabilities Act, should contact the Human Resources Office Chief, at 2379 Broad St., Brooksville, FL 34604-6899; telephone (352) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476 (FL only); or email ADACoordinator@WaterMatters.org. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the agency using the Florida Relay Service, 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) or 1-800-955-8770 (Voice). If requested, appropriate auxiliary aids and services will be provided at any public meeting, forum, or event of the District. In the event of a complaint, please follow the grievance procedure located at WaterMatters.org/ADA.

Strategic Plan Annual Work Plan Report

Section 373.036(2)(e)4, Florida Statutes (F.S.), indicates the water management districts may substitute an Annual Work Plan Report, included as an addendum to the annual Strategic Plan, for the statutorily required District Water Management Plan. The Annual Work Plan Report must detail the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the previous fiscal year, addressing success indicators, deliverables and milestones. The Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) has decided to submit an annual Strategic Plan and Annual Work Plan Report in lieu of the District Water Management Plan. The Annual Work Plan also satisfies the requirements of Section 189.0694(1) & (2), Florida Statutes that requires goals and objectives and reporting on the meeting of these goals and objectives.

The Annual Work Plan Report is intended to fulfill the statutory requirement by identifying the regional priorities and objectives in the Strategic Plan, and providing a discussion of the milestones, success indicators and deliverables achieved in FY2025 as they relate to the specific programs that implement the plan.

Northern Planning Region Priorities and Objectives

Priority: Improve the Chassahowitzka River, Crystal River/Kings Bay, Homosassa River, Rainbow River, Weeki Wachee River and associated springs

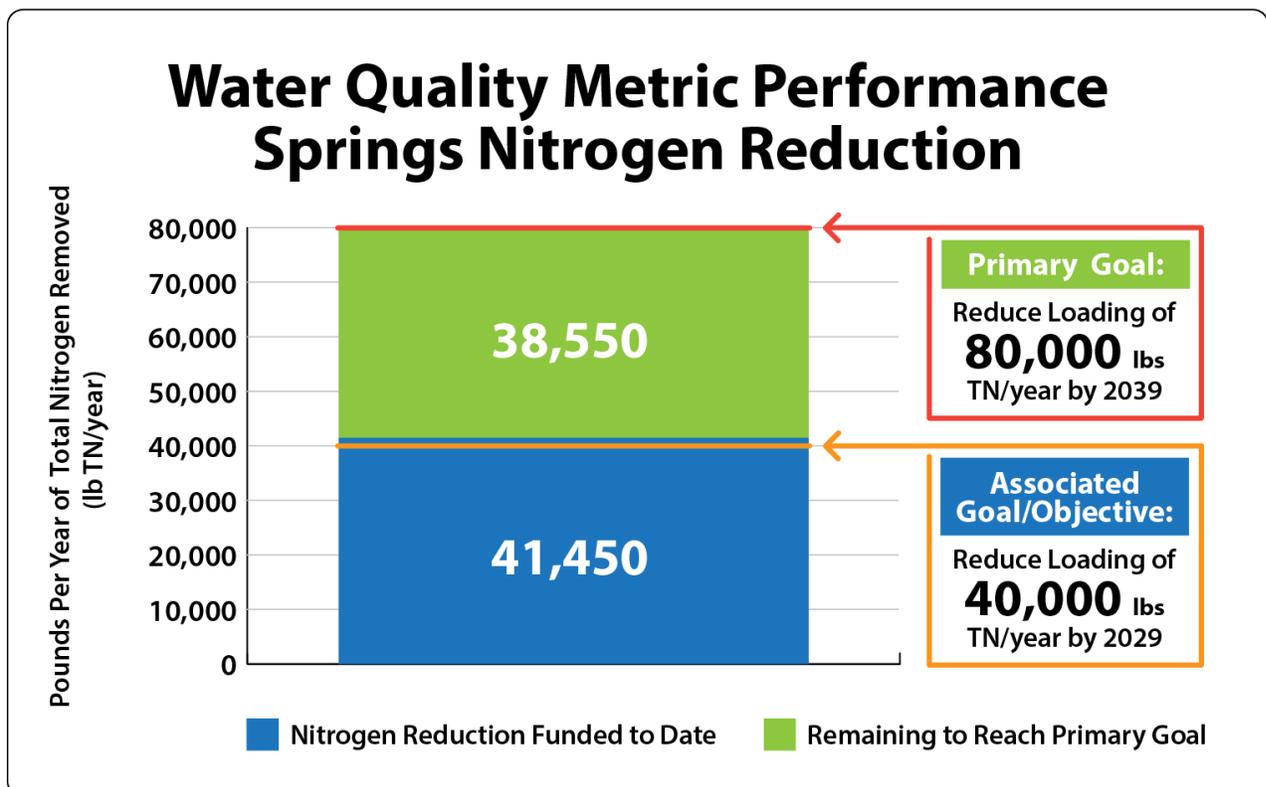
Objective: Implement water quality and natural systems projects identified in the five Surface Water Improvement and Management plans for the five first-magnitude spring systems

Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) plans have been approved for all five first-magnitude springs including Rainbow, Homosassa, Chassahowitzka and Weeki Wachee rivers and Crystal River/Kings Bay. These plans identify and implement specific management actions and projects (i.e., programs, initiatives and Cooperative Funding Initiative (CFI)) to address major issues facing the systems. Each SWIM plan is a living document with adaptive management at its core. The SWIM plans include numeric targets called quantifiable objectives and in 2023 refinements to the plan were approved updating long-term trend indicators along with quantifiable objectives. Together, these long-term trends and objectives are used to develop and prioritize management actions and projects, thus promoting effective and efficient resource management. If the objectives are achieved, the expected result is a healthy spring ecosystem.

The District implements data collection, investigations and habitat restoration and water quality improvement projects to support the SWIM plans in the five springsheds. In FY2024, summer and winter mapping and evaluation of submerged aquatic vegetation was completed in the Weeki Wachee, Chassahowitzka, Homosassa, Rainbow River and Kings Bay systems (project number WS01). Construction is complete for a stormwater retrofit within the Weeki Wachee springshed (project number WW05). The District also completed the Weeki Wachee Channel Restoration project (project number WW04) which removed sediments from a 1.5-mile segment of the river impacted by excessive sedimentation. The project will improve habitat for fisheries and manatee passage, as well as improve water quality by removing sediment sources in the river. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) contributed funding to the project. Based on a

recently completed study in Rainbow River, additional work was completed in Chassahowitzka and Homosassa to investigate a correlation between iron concentrations and filamentous algae growth. Nine Mini-Facilitating Agricultural Resource Management Systems (FARMS) projects were approved in fiscal year 2025 (FY2025) for the Northern Planning Region with all ten in the coastal springs systems, resulting in an estimated 27,979 gallons per day (gpd) reduction in groundwater use.

In addition, the District’s Governing Board approved a water quality metric in February 2020 to measure the District’s success in assisting state and local governments by funding projects that achieve a nitrogen reduction within the District’s five first-magnitude springs basin management action plans (BMAPs) boundaries. This metric has a start date of June 2018 and includes a primary goal to reduce nitrogen loading to the springs through District-funded projects by 80,000 pounds per year (lbs/year) of total nitrogen (TN) by FY2039. The metric also includes an associated goal/objective to reduce nitrogen loading through District-funded projects by 40,000 lbs/year of TN by FY2029. District staff evaluated performance by compiling and analyzing data from projects completed or funded after June 2018 through FY2024. The evaluation revealed that 12 District-funded projects within the five first-magnitude springs BMAPs boundaries are expected to reduce nitrogen loading by 41,450 lbs/year of TN. This achieves approximately 104 percent of the 2029 associated goal/objective and 52 percent of the 2039 primary goal. (See graphic for illustration.) The District will continue to prioritize funding for projects that reduce nitrogen loading and protect the District’s first-magnitude springs.



Objective: Assist with septic to sewer conversion within the five first-magnitude springsheds

Converting properties on septic systems to centralized sewer by constructing line connections has been identified to improve the water quality of Florida springs. In an August 2017 workshop, the District's Governing Board prioritized combining District funds with state and local funds for projects that would connect domestic septic systems to central sewer to benefit springs. The Board also identified the need to protect the District's investment by ensuring controls are in place to prevent additional pollution from new conventional septic systems and to ensure the new infrastructure is utilized.

During FY2025, one septic to sewer project was under construction, Cambridge Greens. Old Homosassa West and Old Homosassa East septic to sewer conversion projects are expected to start construction during FY2026. For FY2025, no new septic to sewer construction projects were included in the District's budget through the CFI program.

Objective: Monitor status and trends associated with targets in each SWIM plan to assess the health of the spring systems

Each of the SWIM plans for the five first-magnitude spring systems on the Springs Coast have identified quantifiable objectives and long-term trend indicators for the three focus areas of water quality, water quantity and natural systems. The District closely monitors the water quality and the submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) to track the status and trends in the various quantifiable objectives. Beyond the quantifiable objectives, District status and trend monitoring is part of a holistic approach for evaluating the overall ecological health of the five first-magnitude spring systems. Data collection and analysis for these systems have been ongoing since the mid-1990s and form the foundation upon which science-based decisions are made.

The District has a comprehensive array of water quality monitoring activities including groundwater monitoring wells in the springsheds, individual spring vents and surface water stations in associated rivers and nearshore coastal waters. Through the District's joint funding agreement with the United States Geological Survey (USGS), stage, discharge, velocity and select water chemistry analytes are also collected. In addition, the District has been monitoring vegetation in these systems, with mapping conducted twice a year to capture seasonal variation. Leveraging years of experience by District scientists, the monitoring information is analyzed and reported on an annual basis and placed in the context of long-term trends. This information is presented to the Springs Coast Management Committee (SCMC), Springs Coast Steering Committee (SCSC) and several community and volunteer organizations.

In 2007, the District began mapping seagrass along the Springs Coast. This region has one of the largest and most diverse seagrass ecosystems in the world covering an area of over 900 square miles from Waccasassa Bay south to Anclote Key and extending approximately 25 miles offshore. Seagrasses are often mixed with other ecologically important organisms like sponges, corals and attached algae, forming a mosaic of diverse and biologically productive habitats. While seagrasses help maintain good water quality, they are also sensitive to increased nutrient pollution and other stressors like red tide and hurricanes. For this reason, the District maps seagrasses along the Springs Coast every four years. The most recent Springs Coast seagrass map was completed in 2024 with 583,198 seagrass acres mapped. This was slightly less than the 586,512 acres mapped in 2020 but represents less than a one percent change.

Objective: Continue support of the Springs Coast Steering Committee (SCSC)

The SCSC meets on a quarterly basis and is supported by the SCMC and Technical Working Group. The initial focus of these groups was to create SWIM plans for each of the five first-magnitude springs in the District. These SWIM plans were finalized between 2015 and 2017, and

in 2020, with additional years of collected data, the SCSC began a reevaluation of the quantifiable objectives for all five spring systems. The SCSC recommended refinements to the existing SWIM plans and the District's Governing Board approved the final SWIM plans in June 2024.

An additional focus for the SCSC and SCMC has involved soliciting and evaluating projects which will benefit the water quality, water quantity or natural systems of springs within the District. The committees annually evaluate State springs funding project applications submitted by city, county and other local stakeholders using DEP guidelines. In 2025, four projects were evaluated and submitted to DEP for a fiscal year funding request of \$16,945,927. One project was selected for funding, and a total of \$15,633,757 was awarded to new and ongoing projects within the District boundaries.

Objective: Implement Minimum Flows and Levels to protect spring flow through monitoring and reporting hydrologic conditions and through their consideration in water use permit reviews and water supply planning

Minimum flows have been established for 10 springs or spring groups within the District, including all five of the District's Outstanding Florida Springs (i.e., the first-magnitude Chassahowitzka, Homosassa, Kings Bay, Rainbow and Weeki Wachee Spring groups). Ongoing hydrologic and hydrogeologic data collection, annual status assessments, evaluations completed on a five-year basis as part of the District's regional water supply planning process, consideration of spring minimum flows during water use permit review processes, and as-needed reevaluations of spring and other minimum flows and minimum water levels (MFLs) ensure the successful protection of spring flows.

Priority: Ensure Long-Term Sustainable Water Supply

Objective: Increase conservation

The District utilizes per capita water use to help ensure a sustainable water supply in the future and to measure progress in measuring conservation. Specifically, the goals are to achieve and maintain 150 gallons per day compliance per capita with all public supply utilities and to reduce the 2011 to 2015 Northern regional average unadjusted gross per capita (156 gpcd) by 5.6 percent by 2025. The District has been making progress toward meeting these per capita objectives. In 2011, there were 14 utilities with compliance per capita above 150 gpcd in the Northern Planning Region. Based on 2024 data, six utilities were over 150 gpcd in the Northern Planning Region. The regional average unadjusted gross per capita has decreased by approximately 1.9% to 153 gpcd in 2024.

The District has been active in promoting conservation in the Northern Planning Region. During FY2025 the District's Water Incentives Supporting Efficiency (WISE) program funded two projects in the Northern Planning Region. These projects are estimated to conserve a total of 10,826 gpd and have a District investment of \$28,770. During FY2025, CFI funded conservation projects with the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (WRWSA) and Bay Laurel Community Development District were actively being implemented. Additionally, the District operates a leak detection program to help public supply water utilities locate water leaks in utility water distribution systems. Four leak detection surveys were conducted in FY2025 in the Northern Planning Region.

The District partnered with one University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension office located within our Northern Planning Region in FY2024 through the Conservation Education Program (CEP) to develop, implement and fund conservation education projects to help reduce residential water use. CEP projects are fully funded by the District at a total program

investment of \$20,000. The District also oversees the Florida Water StarSM (FWS) program, a water conservation certification program for new and existing residential homes and commercial construction. In FY2025, there was a total of 732 residential properties that achieved FWS certification in the Northern Planning Region, with a total estimated water savings of approximately 35,356,332 gallons per year. Additional conservation outreach efforts in the Northern Planning Region in FY2025 included ongoing community-wide outreach programs and awareness campaigns, such as the Water 101 campaign, the provision of free publications and water-conserving items and school district funding support (\$60,400 in FY2025 for the latter).

Objective: Increase the use of reclaimed water for potable, recharge and environmental enhancement projects

The Strategic Plan identifies the objective of 75 percent reclaimed water utilization by 2040. As of 2024, with District assistance, this region has achieved almost 51 percent utilization, with approximately 14 million gallons per day (mgd) in reclaimed water flow derived from the roughly 27 mgd, of total wastewater produced. The regional water supply planning process updates these targets as needed.

Objective: Continue to coordinate with the WRWSA on regional water supply planning and development

The District maintains an ongoing partnership with the WRWSA to promote regional water supply planning and development. In cooperation with the District, the WRWSA completed the most recent update to its Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP) in 2019. Coordination on the next RWSP update was initiated in 2023 and is currently ongoing. In addition, an ongoing water conservation partnership with the WRWSA currently includes phase eight of the Regional Irrigation System Audit program, which addresses outdoor water conservation.

Tampa Bay Planning Region Priorities and Objectives

Priority: Implement the Lower Hillsborough River MFLs and Recovery Strategy and monitor other MFLs

Objective: Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area

The District established the Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area (NTBWUCA) in 1989 to address adverse impacts to water resources from water withdrawals. The first phase of a recovery strategy for the NTBWUCA was approved by the District in 1999. Among other things, it included the establishment of MFLs, reductions in groundwater withdrawals and the development of alternative water sources. The “Comprehensive Environmental Resource Recovery Plan for the NTBWUCA,” which was adopted in 2010, served as the second phase of the NTBWUCA recovery for implementation through 2020.

Under the Comprehensive Plan, Tampa Bay Water (TBW) developed and implemented a “Permit Recovery Assessment Plan.” Results from this assessment plan and an independent evaluation completed by District staff were presented to the Governing Board in February 2021, with both indicating implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and the preceding first phase of the recovery strategy had been successful in achieving recovery of hydrologic and ecological conditions in the area. Based on these findings, the Governing Board removed the Comprehensive Plan from the District’s Recovery and Prevention Strategies for Minimum Flows and Levels rules in 2021 and also removed references to the plan in the District’s Consumptive Use of Water rules. A final Recovery Assessment Plan was submitted to the District by TBW in 2021 and the Consolidated Permit for water withdrawals issued to TBW by the District was renewed in January 2022.

The District’s 2025 MFLs status assessment, which was based on hydrologic data collected through 2024, indicated 119 of 121 MFLs within the NTBWUCA are being met, including those established for 69 lakes, 34 wetlands, 7 aquifer sites, 3 freshwater river segments, 2 springs and 4 estuaries. Within the NTBWUCA, only the MFLs adopted for Lake Dan and Mound Lake are not being met. These two lakes have been added to the 2025 MFL Priority List and Schedule for reevaluation in 2028.

As part of the rulemaking to remove the Comprehensive Plan for the NTBWUCA from District rules, the Governing Board re-adopted the lower Hillsborough River Recovery Strategy rule. Implementation of the recovery strategy for the river calls for the augmentation of flows downstream of the Hillsborough River Reservoir using a variety of sources and projects. For strategy implementation, the District has independently and cooperatively worked with the City of Tampa on the diversion of water from the Tampa Bypass Canal through the reservoir to the lower river and completed permitting and pre-withdrawals monitoring associated with use of Morris Bridge Sink as a recovery source. The District has also supported City of Tampa projects involving diversions from Sulphur Springs and Blue Sink to the base of the dam for river recovery. Currently the District is supporting the City’s investigations of the feasibility of routing excess flows from Curiosity Creek to Sulphur Springs to improve flows and salinity conditions in the spring run and river.

An update on the status of the lower Hillsborough River Recovery Strategy is provided annually to the Governing Board. In addition, the District has completed the second of three planned five-year recovery strategy assessments for the river. This assessment, completed in 2020,

documented hydrologic and other environmental improvements associated with the ongoing implementation of recovery strategy projects. In FY2025, the District continued data collection and stakeholder outreach efforts associated with the third recovery strategy assessment, in anticipation of its completion in 2025.

The District also continues to encourage water reuse which helps with the achievement of MFLs through groundwater use reduction. The Strategic Plan identifies the objective of 75 percent reclaimed water utilization by 2040. As of 2024, this region has achieved 52 percent utilization, with approximately 123 mgd in reclaimed water flow derived from the 235 mgd of total wastewater produced. The regional water supply planning process updates these targets as needed.

Objective: Dover/Plant City Water Use Caution Area

The Dover/Plant City Water Use Caution Area (DPCWUCA), a Minimum Aquifer Level Protection Zone for the area, a Minimum Aquifer Level (MAL) and a recovery strategy were established in 2011 to address impacts from groundwater pumping for cold protection activities associated with agricultural water use. During a historic, 11-day freeze event in January 2010, the District received 750 dry well complaints and approximately 140 sinkhole complaints were reported in the area. To address the situation, the District developed and adopted a comprehensive management plan to reduce and monitor groundwater pumping during future cold protection events.

A preliminary status assessment completed in 2020 indicated that the MAL was being met. However, the recovery strategy requirement of 20 percent reduction in groundwater withdrawal quantities used for cold protection by January 2020 had not been achieved. In accordance with the recovery strategy, a reassessment of the DPCWUCA Recovery Strategy was therefore completed. Trend evaluations indicated that demands for cold protection are decreasing and are expected to continue decreasing. Additionally, temperature history for the area indicates the return interval for a cold event of similar magnitude to the 2010 event is approximately once in 570 years. Given the decreasing demand for cold projection withdrawals and the rarity of the January 2010 event, staff concluded that the objective to reduce cold protection use by 20 percent based on that event was impractical and unreasonable. As part of the reassessment, staff also evaluated and refined the approach used for assessing the status of the MAL.

Based on the determination that the MAL is being achieved and the recommendation to eliminate the objective to reduce the January 2010 cold protection quantities by 20 percent, the Governing Board approved the initiation of rulemaking in 2020 to repeal the DPCWUCA Recovery Strategy. The recovery strategy was ultimately removed from District rules in 2022, while the DPCWUCA and protective measures continue to remain in place due to the area's cold protection water uses and unique geology that has the potential to lead to sinkhole formation and dry wells. In addition, current water use permitting criteria continue to be used, and status and trends are evaluated annually.

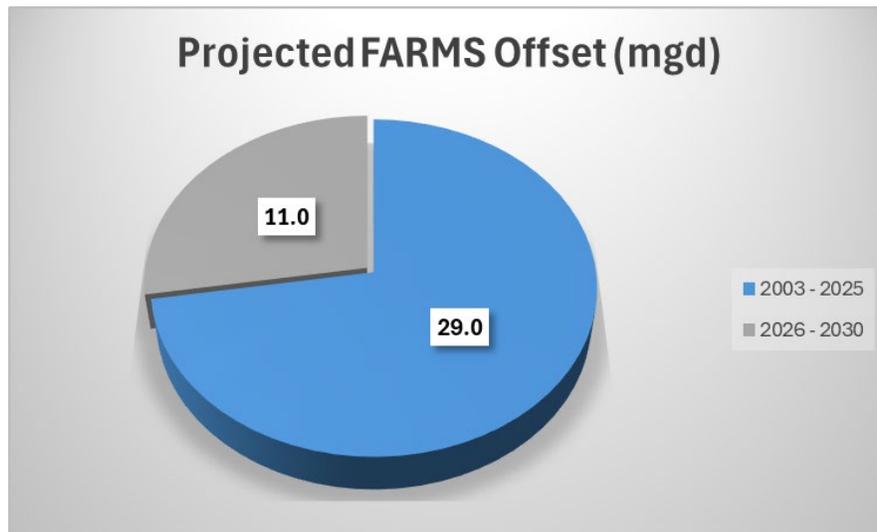
The installation of automatic meter (AMR) devices is a critical component of the regulatory program for the DPCWUCA and is slated to continue. Metering is critical for an empirical evaluation of pumping reduction, as opposed to only a review of permitted quantities. At the time of rule development, there were approximately 626 unmetered agricultural withdrawal points in the DPCWUCA that required flow meters. At the start of the DPCWUCA AMR installation program in 2013, there were 961 agricultural withdrawal points that required AMR devices. At the completion of phase one of the program, 541 withdrawals were equipped with flow meters, and 852 sites were equipped with AMR devices. At completion of the flow meter reimbursement program on December 31, 2018, 541 flow meters were successfully installed. As of January 9,

2026, approximately 770 withdrawals are equipped with AMR devices. The increase in AMR devices on withdrawal sites is due to water use permit modifications and issuance. Also, a decrease in AMR devices is due to AMR removals of devices no longer required by water use permit conditions.

In addition, in FY2025, seven Mini-FARMS projects were approved in the DPCWUCA Priority area, resulting in an estimated 31,676 gpd reduction in groundwater use for daily supplemental irrigation.

Objective: Southern Water Use Caution Area

The District has a target of offsetting 40 mgd in groundwater withdrawals in the Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA) by 2025. The District has offset approximately 29 mgd of groundwater in the SWUCA through FARMS projects that are operational, under construction and/or have contracts pending. In FY2025, 39 Mini-FARMS projects and nine FARMS projects were approved in the SWUCA, resulting in an estimated 764,720 gpd reduction in groundwater use. The table below depicts current offsets and future FARMS targets for the period to 2030. The projection through 2030 has been capped at the 40 mgd target.



Source: District FARMS staff, 2025

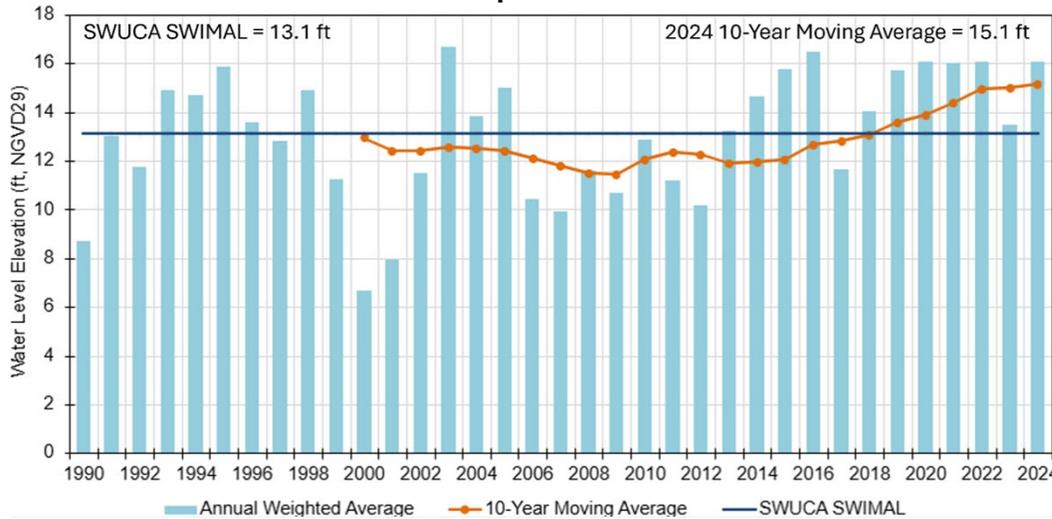
The two primary factors influencing water levels and flows in the SWUCA are rainfall and groundwater withdrawals. During the past decade (2015-2024), the average rainfall was 52.6 inch/year. On an annual average basis, the rainfall was below and above the long-term average in the SWUCA for 3 and 7 years, respectively. Variations in rainfall directly affect surface water body levels and flows and can affect upper Floridan aquifer water levels both directly and indirectly. Indirect effects of low rainfall on groundwater levels are associated with higher groundwater withdrawal requirements for activities such as agricultural and landscape irrigation during periods of lower rainfall. Estimated groundwater withdrawals (including metered withdrawals) in the SWUCA have declined substantially from the higher rates that occurred from the mid-1970s through the early 2000s. By 2023, the 10-year moving average withdrawal rate in the SWUCA was 498 mgd, a value last observed prior to the mid-1970s.

The Governing Board is provided with an annual update on the progress of recovery. In addition, three five-year assessments for the SWUCA recovery effort have been completed, with the most recent assessment completed in 2023 for the FY2017-FY2021 period. These assessments address the four major goals of the SWUCA Recovery Strategy, which are aligned with the regional objectives included in the District’s Strategic Plan.

The water supply goal for the SWUCA Recovery Strategy is to ensure sufficient water supplies. Contributing to this goal, the District’s RWSP and the Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI) RWSP were updated in 2025. The District also continues to assist the Polk Regional Water Cooperative (PRWC) with development of regional water sources, including the final design and construction of two lower Floridan Aquifer (LFA) wellfields with treatment facilities, and a regional transmission system. In addition, the District is assisting with two additional phases of the Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority’s (PRMRWSA) regional integrated loop system. See discussions for the Heartland and Southern planning regions for additional information on the PRWC and PRMRWSA.

The status of the saltwater intrusion minimum aquifer level (SWIMAL) for the Most Impacted Area (MIA) of the SWUCA serves as an important indicator of recovery progress due to the regional nature of the aquifer and implications for requests for new groundwater withdrawals. One of the goals for this effort is the recovery of the SWIMAL by 2025. A status assessment completed in 2025 indicated that the SWUCA SWIMAL is continuing to be met. This success is based on the 13.1 ft upper Floridan aquifer elevation associated with the SWIMAL being equaled or exceeded since 2018.

Groundwater Levels in the Most Impacted Area of the SWUC and the SWUCA SWIMAL



Source: District Environmental Flows and Levels staff, 2025

The goal of achieving all established minimum lake levels in the SWUCA continues to be a challenge, but substantial progress is being made. Based on the 2025 MFLs status assessment, which used hydrologic data collected through 2024, minimum levels were met at 25 of the 32 (78%) SWUCA lakes with MFLs. In addition, MFLs for 9 of 10 freshwater river segments, 1 of 1 spring group, and 6 of 6 estuaries within the SWUCA are currently met.

Priority: Improve Tampa Bay and lakes Seminole, Tarpon and Thonotosassa

Objective: Develop and implement natural system projects that restore critical shoreline, coastal uplands and freshwater wetlands

The District's Tampa Bay water quality priorities include those for Lake Seminole and three SWIM water bodies: Lake Tarpon, Lake Thonotosassa and Tampa Bay. The District is continuing to work with local governments on projects to assess these water bodies and identify and implement projects to improve their water quality and habitats. Specific projects and associated FY2025 milestones are discussed below.

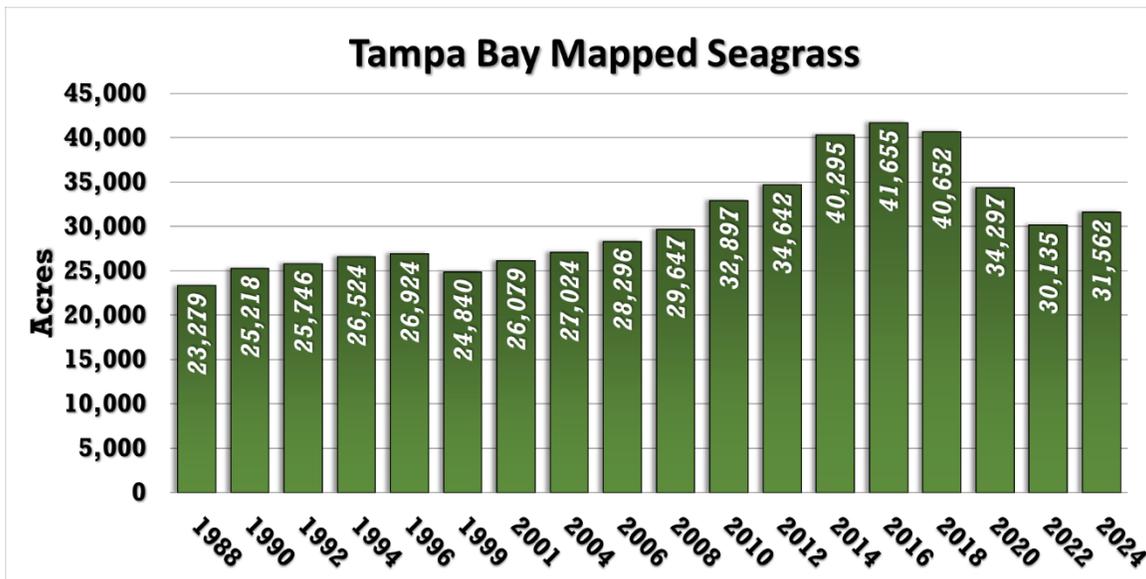
Lake Seminole: A major concern for Lake Seminole is nutrients. The District cooperatively funded a project with Pinellas County for the design, permitting and implementation of four water quality treatment systems to improve the quality of runoff entering Lake Seminole. The objective is to remove 2,055 lbs. of nitrogen per year. In FY2014, the District completed two of these projects, which removed 623 lbs. of nitrogen per year. Another Lake Seminole project was completed in a previous fiscal year, bringing the total removal rate to 1,397 lbs. per year. Construction of the last sub-basin Best Management Practices (BMPs) was completed and operational in FY2018. In addition to these stormwater projects, Pinellas County selected a contractor to complete the cooperatively funded Lake Seminole Sediment Removal project anticipated to remove approximately 900,000 lbs. of total nitrogen from the lake. Site preparation for dredging began in 2019 and dredge removal of 930,000 cubic yards was completed in October 2020. The contractor has completed dewatering activities in the dredged material management area and reclamation of the site.

Lake Tarpon: In 2024, the District continued to work with a consultant to assist with the update to the Lake Tarpon SWIM Plan. The District, in coordination with Pinellas County, previously held two technical stakeholder workshops to coordinate the update with the activities of other agencies and local governments that manage water resources in the Lake Tarpon watershed. In early 2021, Pinellas County submitted a petition to DEP to propose Site Specific Alternative Criteria (SSAC) in place of the state-wide Numeric Nutrient Criteria DEP adopted for the Lake. The District coordinated with DEP and the County to ensure that the SWIM plan update is consistent with both the approach, and the final SSAC. In 2024, DEP accepted Pinellas County's application for the proposed SSAC and the District completed the Lake Tarpon SWIM Plan update in FY2025.

Lake Thonotosassa: As a result of the recommendation in the FY2017 Nutrient Source Tracking project, the District's FARMS program continues to work with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to enroll farmers in the Best Management Practices (BMP) program and provide education and outreach regarding Lake Thonotosassa water quality. Additionally, the SWIM program continues to evaluate nutrient reduction projects such as stormwater improvement, enhancement of wetland and aquatic habitats and maintenance/control of exotic plants along with public education and awareness of stormwater pollution prevention.

Tampa Bay: Since the 1980s, Tampa Bay has shown significant water quality improvements, resulting in a significant increase in seagrass acreage. In addition to their ecological and economic importance, seagrass habitats are also excellent indicators of the bay's overall health due to their sensitivity to water quality. Given the strategic importance of seagrass habitat to a healthy bay, the District has, since 1988, been using aerial photography to map seagrasses. Today the District is a recognized leader in aerial seagrass mapping. The District's seagrass

maps have been used as one of the primary indicators of estuarine health since 1988. The maps are also a critical tool used by the District’s local, state, and federal partners, and the private sector, to help guide resource management decisions. The District maps seagrass from Tampa Bay to Charlotte Harbor every two years. Seagrass acreage generally increased from 1988 until 2016 when a record 41,655 acres were mapped, surpassing the 1950 estimated acreage of 40,400 acres. Beginning in 2018, the bay saw back-to-back seagrass losses. The sharpest decline occurred between 2018 and 2020 with a loss of more than 6,000 acres of seagrass or 16% of the total acreage. Most of this loss occurred in Old Tampa Bay which saw a decrease of about 4,000 acres. Along with this loss, Old Tampa Bay saw a major increase in macroalgae. Between 2020 and 2022, Tampa Bay saw an additional 12% loss of seagrass. Although the cause of seagrass loss is complex, the aftermath of the 2017-2018 Red Tide event, the worst red tide on record according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), was likely a factor, especially in areas like Hillsborough Bay. The seagrass loss in Old Tampa Bay has been linked to persistent and acute phytoplankton algae blooms. In 2024, Tampa Bay saw modest gains with an overall increase of 5% (1,407 acres). Old Tampa Bay was the only bay segment to report a loss (8%) between 2022 and 2024. All other bay segments reported either gains or no change. In 2024, Lower Tampa Bay saw a record 8,036 acres of seagrass. The most mapped seagrass since 1988. Boca Ciega Bay saw near record seagrass coverage, only 17 acres less than the record of 9,070 acres set in 2016. The next mapping cycle is scheduled for 2026. The flight window for aerial image acquisition goes from mid-December to mid-March. Image post-processing, photointerpretation, and field verification will be ongoing through calendar year 2026 with an expected release date of early 2027.



Source: District SWIM staff, 2025

The District’s SWIM program continues its restoration work for Tampa Bay. Construction for the Balm Boyette Habitat Restoration, Palm River Restoration – Phase II East McKay Bay, Boyd Hill Nature Preserve Restoration and Weedon Island Tidal Marsh Restoration projects have been completed and are now in a plant-maintenance phase, as applicable. In addition, the District had several ongoing restoration projects in FY2025 in Tampa Bay, some co-funded with cooperators, including the Frog Creek Upland Restoration project, Kracker Avenue Restoration project, Gully Branch Upland Restoration, Roosevelt Creek Channel 5 Improvements as well as ongoing design for restoration sectors of the Little Manatee River Corridor, preliminary data collection to support design efforts on two additional restoration sectors of the Little Manatee River Corridor and ongoing design and permitting for McIntosh Park Integrated Water Master Plan.

Construction was completed for three stormwater retrofit projects and another one is ongoing. Additionally, the District is co-funding a nutrient source tracking project with Pinellas County.

The District invested in and worked with the Tampa Bay Estuary Program to complete the Habitat Restoration Master Plan Update in August 2020. This document will continue to be used by the District for evaluating habitat restoration priorities in Tampa Bay.

Objective: Develop and implement water quality projects to reduce nutrient loading

Lake Seminole is a 684-acre freshwater lake in west-central Pinellas County that was created in the 1940s by the impoundment of an arm of Long Bayou, a brackish water segment of Boca Ciega Bay. The lake's watershed encompasses approximately 3,500 acres, of which almost 90 percent is developed. Water quality concerns in Lake Seminole began in the 1960s, as urbanization of the watershed increased and worsened in the 1980s and 90s.

In 2004, Pinellas County adopted the Lake Seminole Watershed Management Plan to identify and implement projects to reduce nutrient concentrations in the lake and to meet targeted water quality goals. In 2006, Lake Seminole was included in the DEP draft verified list of impaired waters for nutrients. Pinellas County developed a Reasonable Assurance Plan (RAP) in 2007, to set forth actions to reduce nutrient loading to Lake Seminole and restore the lake's water quality. RAP updates were submitted to the DEP in 2011, 2014 and 2019 outlining the progress made towards the goals set forth in the original RAP. Lake Seminole RAP water quality goals are expressed as annual means for chlorophyll-a (Chl-a) and the Trophic State Index (TSI), a composite measurement used in evaluating the level of enrichment to a waterbody. Completed projects identified in the Lake Seminole RAP include retrofitting stormwater outflows from five of the highest nutrient loading sub-basins and removing nutrient-rich sediments from the lake. In 2017, the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners approved funding, matched with District funding, to dredge nutrient-rich sediment from the lake. Dredging of this sediment is complete and improvements have been noticed but full documentation is expected to be analyzed in the next Lake Seminole Reasonable Assurance Update.

Objective: Update the Tampa Bay, Lake Tarpon and Lake Thonotosassa SWIM plans

Tampa Bay: The update to the Tampa Bay SWIM Plan was approved by the District's Governing Board in early FY2024. This update was the result of staff coordinating with many of the District's partners including the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, DEP, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI), local governments, and Federal Agencies including the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) and NOAA. District coordination occurred with technical stakeholders over a series of three meetings, discussions at two meetings of the Tampa Bay Estuary Technical Advisory Committee, presentation to the District's Environmental Advisory Committee, and a public workshop. Water quality and natural systems goals are included in the plan.

Lake Tarpon: In 2025, the District completed an update to the Lake Tarpon SWIM Plan. The District, in coordination with Pinellas County, previously held two technical stakeholder workshops to coordinate the update with the activities of other agencies and local governments that manage water resources in the Lake Tarpon watershed. In early 2021, Pinellas County submitted a petition to DEP to propose Site Specific Alternative Criteria (SSAC) in place of the state-wide Numeric Nutrient Criteria DEP adopted for the Lake. The District coordinated with the DEP and the County to ensure that the SWIM plan update is consistent with both the approach, and the final SSAC. In 2024, DEP accepted Pinellas County's application for proposed SSAC and the District plans to move forward with the public meeting for the draft SWIM plan in early 2025 followed by presentation to the Governing Board for approval. This update will follow the process identified in Chapter 373.451, F.S., for development of SWIM plans.

Lake Thonotosassa: In FY2019, the DEP developed and adopted a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for Lake Thonotosassa. The District will continue to coordinate with DEP regarding the TMDL prior to the next Lake Thonotosassa SWIM Plan update, which is underway.

Priority: Implement Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA) Recovery Strategy

Objective: Achieve 40 mgd of offsets in groundwater withdrawals in the SWUCA by 2025

See Tampa Bay Planning Region Priorities and Objectives for a discussion on this objective.

Objective: Achieve the SWUCA Saltwater Intrusion Minimum Aquifer Level (SWIMAL) for the upper Floridan aquifer to slow the rate of saltwater intrusion in the Most Impacted Area (MIA)

As noted for the Southern Water Use Caution Area Recovery Strategy objective of the Tampa Bay Planning Region Priorities and Objectives, the SWUCA SWIMAL continues to be met. This success is based on the 13.1 ft upper Floridan aquifer elevation associated with the SWIMAL being equaled or exceeded for five consecutive years, from 2019 through 2023.

In addition, the 2025 MFLs status assessment, which was based on hydrologic data collected through 2024, indicated that MFLs for 9 of 10 freshwater river segments, 1 of 1 spring group, 6 of 6 estuaries, and 25 of 32 lakes within the SWUCA are currently met.

Objective: Assist in recovering the minimum flows for the Upper Peace River through implementation of the Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification Project

The District's Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification project became fully operational in 2014. Following an approximate one-year period during which inflows were stored in the lake, releases through the P-11 structure at the lake outlet to lower Saddle Creek were initiated in late-2015 to help achieve minimum flows in the Upper Peace River. In 2020, the District established a reservation for the water stored in Lake Hancock and released it to lower Saddle Creek to support river recovery efforts.

Based on the 2025 MFL status assessment, minimum flows for all three segments of the Upper Peace River are being met. Annual assessments of MFLs status will continue and, in addition, the District will continue monitoring the effectiveness of the Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification project through 2025, prior to evaluating other projects that may be needed for river recovery.

Objective: Recover minimum levels for Polk County and Highlands County lakes by 2025

Based on the 2025 MFLs status assessment, minimum levels are being met at 15 of 19 lakes within Polk County with adopted levels and at 9 of 12 Highlands County lakes with adopted levels.

Objective: Ensure a sustainable water supply

The District utilizes per capita water use information to help ensure a sustainable water supply in the future and to measure progress in conservation. Specifically, the goals are to achieve and maintain 150 gallons per day compliance per capita with all public supply utilities and to reduce the 2011 Heartland regional average unadjusted gross per capita (111 gpcd) by 4.3 percent by 2025. The District has been providing assistance on these per capita objectives in the Heartland Planning Region. In 2011, there were three utilities in the Heartland Planning Region with compliance per capita above 150 gpcd. Based on 2024 data, three utilities in the Heartland Planning Region had a per capita above 150 gpcd. The region's average unadjusted gross per capita has decreased by approximately 2.7 percent to 108 gpcd in 2024. The District continues to support the region through a combination of regulatory, economic, incentive-based and outreach measures, as well as technical assistance, to assist in meeting the per capita objectives.

The WISE program funded two conservation projects in the Heartland Planning Region in FY2025. The estimated water savings for those projects is 34,821 gpd and the District funding is \$40,000. During FY2025, a CFI funded conservation project with Polk County was actively being implemented. District staff have also had great success working with local governments and utilities to incorporate Florida Water Star (FWS) certification or criteria into their local building codes through ordinance or mandate. As of October 2025, there are 17 local governments and one water utility requiring FWS standards in the District, with 15 of the 17 local governments in the District's Heartland Planning Region. Currently, the FWS ordinances represent more than 69,000 homes at build-out, saving approximately 3.2 billion gallons of water each year.

The District's investigation of the LFA in Polk County was completed in 2023. This project assessed the LFA's viability as an alternative water supply (AWS) and sought to gain a better understanding of its characteristics and quality in Polk County. The District's LFA investigation near Crooked Lake was completed in 2022. The final reporting for the Frostproof and Lake Wales investigations has also been completed.

The District updated its RWSP and approved the 2025 CFWI RWSP in late 2025. The two plans provide consistent direction regarding water supply needs and availability in the CFWI Planning Area. The CFWI Planning Area covers five counties, including Polk and Southern Lake counties in the District, as well as Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties. The 2025 CFWI RWSP details how to best meet the regional water supply needs for the region to 2045. As part of this planning effort, the CFWI working groups identified potential AWS, reclaimed water, and conservation project options. A number of AWS projects and conservation initiatives identified in the CFWI RWSP are currently being implemented. In FY2025, one FARMS project and 3 Mini-FARMS projects were approved in the CFWI which reduces agricultural groundwater use. The next updates to the District's RWSP and the CFWI RWSP are expected to be completed by 2030.

The Strategic Plan identifies the objective of 75 percent reclaimed water utilization by 2040. As of 2024, this region is achieving almost 50 percent utilization, with approximately 23 mgd in reclaimed water flow derived from the roughly 46 mgd of total wastewater produced. The regional water supply planning process updates these targets as needed.

The PRWC was created in 2017 through an inter-local agreement to promote regional cooperation in the development of new AWS. A comprehensive water supply assessment initially identified the need to develop up to 30 mgd of AWS to meet demands while preventing significant harm to wetlands, waterbodies, and existing water resources. Two AWS projects with the potential to collectively provide 22.5 mgd of supply are being developed by the PRWC: the Southeast Wellfield

and the West Polk Wellfield. The PRWC Regional Transmission Southeast Project will distribute new AWS to participating local governments. In FY2025, the District provided cooperative funding and technical guidance to the PRWC for the Southeast and West Polk LFA brackish wellfield projects, an additional test production well project to support the West Polk wellfield final design, and the regional transmission system to deliver the new water supplies to municipalities.

Through FY2023, \$65 million was allocated for the Polk Partnership Fund to develop selected PRWC AWS projects. In FY2024, the Fund contributed approximately \$30.5 million towards these projects. The Southeast Test Well #3 project and PRWC Demand Management Implementation program concluded in 2024. Construction activities have commenced on the Southeast Wellfield and Southeast Regional Transmission projects, with the West Polk Wellfield project under final design. Initial construction phases for the two-wellfield projects are anticipated to provide a combined 10.0 mgd initial capacity for PRWC members by 2030 with expansion flexibility to address future demands.

The PRWC also previously completed feasibility assessments and design concepts for the potential development of AWS from Peace Creek and the Upper Peace River in 2022. The District is currently reevaluating the MFL for the Upper Peace River, which may constrain the surface water availability. The PRWC may further evaluate these sources once the MFL is updated.

Priority: Improve Winter Haven Chain of Lakes and Ridge Lakes

Objective: Implement plans and projects for water quality and natural systems improvement

The Winter Haven Chain of Lakes is a SWIM priority water body comprised of 19 interconnected lakes located within and around the City of Winter Haven in north-central Polk County. The Chain consists of two “chains” of lakes – the Southern and Northern Chains. The watershed of the Chain of Lakes includes portions of the cities of Winter Haven, Lake Alfred, and Auburndale. Water quality in the Chain of Lakes varies from lake to lake and between the northern and southern chains. In 2010, a study (Winter Haven Chain of Lakes Water Quality Management Plan, PBS&J) was completed that characterized water quality and prioritized restoration projects to address water quality issues in the Chain of Lakes. It was found that most of the lakes in the Chain are impaired for nutrients. Stormwater treatment projects have been implemented for eight lakes (Conine, Howard, May, Lulu, Hartridge, Jessie, Cannon and Mariana) in the Chain to reduce nutrient loads to the lakes. The District continues to partner with local governments to implement projects to improve water quality. A study identifying additional nutrient reduction opportunities for Lake Lulu is complete. Also complete is the low impact design BMPs to treat stormwater runoff in the Winter Haven Ridge area.

An assessment of Ridge Lakes was completed in 2003 for the development of management strategies. Assessments were performed for 105 lakes (i.e., 61 in Highlands County, 44 in Polk County) and updated in FY2019. Initial studies identified 26 lakes as threatened by the direct discharge of untreated stormwater. Of these 26 lakes, 11 were selected for additional analysis and implementation activities based on a variety of factors (cost, land ownership, feasibility, etc.). Since that time, projects have been completed for lakes Isis, Tulane, Clinch, Verona, Clay, Menzie, Lulu and Wales. A project for Lake June-in-Winter Catfish Creek is ongoing.

The District also continues to partner with local governments to implement projects to improve water quality within the Peace Creek watershed. Completed projects include the Lake Gwyn East Surface Water Restoration project with Polk County that restored approximately 60 acres of freshwater

wetlands to treat 378 acres of stormwater runoff. This project is complementary to the previous cooperatively funded Lake Gwyn West Surface Water Restoration project which was completed in FY2016.

The District initiated a project to prepare and update the implementation plan for the Ridge Lakes Restoration Initiative in FY2017. The primary objective of this project is to create a planning document to identify additional projects in the Ridge Lakes watershed for water quality improvements and restoration of natural systems. The project was completed in FY2019. The plan was provided to stakeholders to guide future projects and priorities. Utilizing this plan to guide and set priorities, the District continues to partner with local governments to implement projects to improve water quality.

For example, in FY2018, the District, in cooperation with Highlands County, began a watershed study to determine pollutant sources and loading in the Lake June-In-Winter watershed. The study, which was completed in FY2020, included the development of a prioritized list of BMPs and natural system restoration projects to improve water quality. From this study, a water quality improvement project in Lake June-in-Winter Catfish Creek was submitted and approved for funding through the District's Cooperative Funding Initiative for FY2022 and is ongoing.

The District is co-funding feasibility studies to identify opportunities to improve water quality, provide flood protection and restore natural systems with Polk County with the Ridge to Rivers and the Upper Peace River feasibility studies. The Upper Peace River study was completed in FY25 and the Ridge to Rivers study is ongoing.

Southern Planning Region Priorities and Objectives

Priority: Implement Southern Water Use Caution Area Recovery Strategy

Objective: Achieve 40 mgd of offsets in groundwater withdrawals in the SWUCA by 2025

See the Tampa Bay Regional Priorities and Objectives for a discussion on this objective.

Objective: Achieve the SWUCA SWIMAL for the upper Floridan aquifer to slow the rate of saltwater intrusion in the Most Impacted Area

As noted in the Tampa Bay Region and Heartland Region Priorities and Objectives sections of this work plan, the 2024 MFLs status assessment indicated the SWUCA SWIMAL was, for the first time since its establishment, being met. Achieving the SWIMAL is the first step in meeting the SWUCA Recovery Strategy's goal of stabilizing regional groundwater level declines so that the long-term management effort can slow the rate of saltwater intrusion in the MIA.

To develop improved estimates of the rate of saltwater movement in the region, the District is continuing to refine its coastal monitoring network by strategically adding wells to collect data in areas of greatest groundwater quality change. This additional information, along with ongoing development of a saltwater intrusion model (i.e., a solute transport groundwater model) will improve the District's ability to distinguish between local variability and regional saltwater intrusion and contribute to a future reevaluation of the SWUCA SWIMAL.

The 2025 MFLs status assessment also indicated that MFLs for 9 of 10 freshwater river segments, 1 of 1 spring group, 6 of 6 estuaries and 25 of 32 lakes within the SWUCA are also currently met.

Objective: Ensure a sustainable water supply

The District utilizes per capita water use information to help ensure a sustainable water supply in the future and to measure progress in conservation. Specifically, the goal is to achieve and maintain 150 gallons per capita per day compliance with all public supply utilities and to reduce the 2011 to 2015 Southern Planning Region average unadjusted gross per capita (84 gpcd) by 5.2 percent by 2025. The region has one utility above 150 gpcd, and the regional average unadjusted gross per capita has increased by approximately 3.6 percent to 87 gpcd in 2024. The District continues to support the region through a combination of regulatory, economic, incentive-based and outreach measures, as well as technical assistance, to assist in meeting the per capita objectives.

The WISE program funded five conservation projects in the Southern Planning Region in FY2025. The estimated water savings is 92,760 gpd and the District funding is \$57,240. Two CFI funded conservation projects are actively being implemented in FY2025 with Manatee County and City of Venice.

The Strategic Plan identifies the objective of 75 percent reclaimed water utilization by 2040. As of 2024, with District assistance, this region has achieved 62 percent utilization, with approximately 48 mgd in reclaimed water flow derived from almost 78 mgd of total wastewater produced. The regional water supply planning process updates this target as needed.

The District continues to explore aquifer storage and recharge options and partnership opportunities in the SWUCA. Both surface water and reclaimed water sources exist in sufficient quantity for recharge and aquifer storage and recovery to provide recovery benefit. Preliminary stakeholder feedback on this issue indicates that utilities will be looking for ways to provide a benefit to their customers. The District continues to fund aquifer recharge feasibility and pilot-testing projects. One example is the cooperatively funded Southern Hillsborough Aquifer Recharge Program, which includes several recharge wells that have been in operation since 2016 and additional planned wells that will use reclaimed water to recharge non-potable portions of the upper Floridan aquifer to improve aquifer water level conditions in the MIA of the SWUCA. Potential benefits include providing a saltwater intrusion barrier that may allow some limited new groundwater available for public supply use in south Hillsborough County to meet growing demand in the region.

The District is also working to develop AWS in the SWUCA. Alternative supply is an important tool in meeting recovery goals, specifically to offset projected increases in public supply groundwater demand. The SWUCA recovery strategy identified more than 50 mgd of potential AWS projects.

In the MIA, the District completed construction of a test recharge well and associated monitoring wells at Flatford Swamp in 2019. Construction of the associated surface facilities began in FY2020. The start-up and initial testing of the recharge well and surface facilities were completed, and the operational testing of the system is underway. The purpose of the project is to determine the feasibility of recharging the upper Floridan aquifer with excess surface water from the Myakka River that drains into Flatford Swamp. Preliminary modeling of aquifer recharge shows that this project, if completely constructed, could increase aquifer levels in the MIA and contribute to achieving the SWIMAL.

In FY2024, the District provided additional funding for the PRMRWSA's regional transmission system Phases 2B and 3C as well as their Reservoir No. 3. During FY2024, the PRMRWSA commenced construction on both Phase 2B and Phase 3C pipelines after the Governing Board's approval of Third-Party Review results and continued with final design on their Reservoir No. 3 project. The PRMRWSA also commenced design of its surface water treatment plant expansion with a 24 mgd max day capacity to meet their reliability and supply goals for growing customer demands by 2028. These projects will provide additional capabilities for pumping, storage, and delivery of alternative water supplies throughout its four-county region, thereby reducing the member utilities' reliance on traditional groundwater sources in the SWUCA.

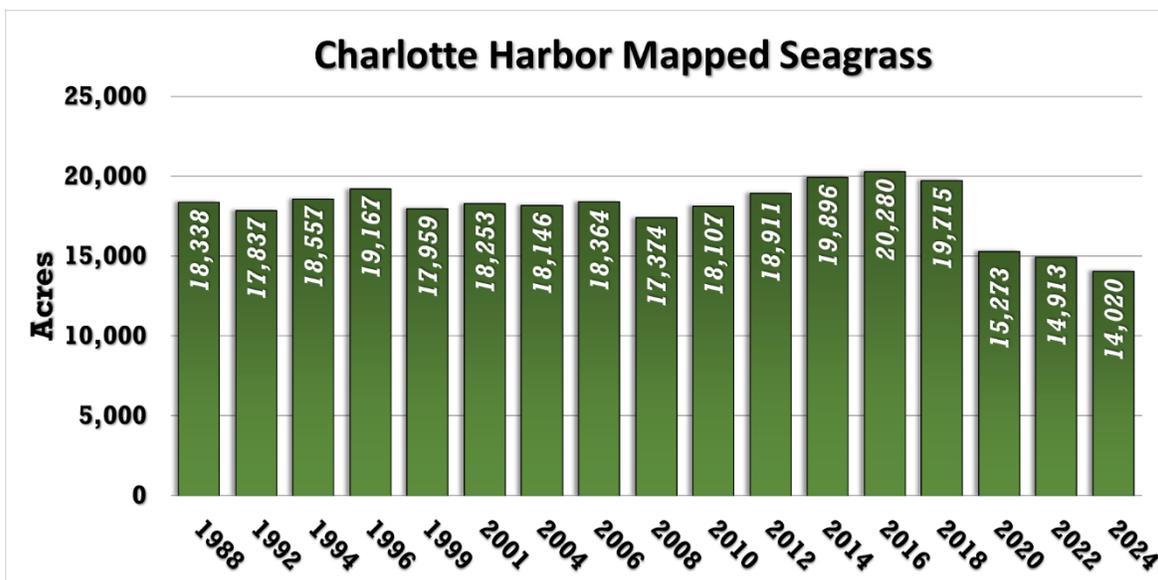
Priority: Improve Charlotte Harbor, Sarasota Bay, Shell/Prairie/Joshua Creeks

Objective: Develop plans and implement projects for water quality improvement and to restore natural systems

The District continues to work with local governments on projects to assess the conditions of these water bodies and to identify and implement projects to improve water quality and habitat.

Charlotte Harbor: Charlotte Harbor was added to the District SWIM priority water body list during the first update in 1988. In 1993, in accordance with Section 373.453, F.S., the Governing Board adopted the first Charlotte Harbor SWIM Plan. In November 2020, the Governing Board approved the most recent update to the Charlotte Harbor SWIM Plan.

The District is a recognized leader in aerial seagrass mapping. The District's seagrass maps have been used as one of the primary indicators of estuarine health since 1988. The maps are also a critical tool used by the District's local, state, and federal partners, and the private sector, to help guide resource management decisions. In Charlotte Harbor, seagrass acreage steadily increased from 2008 until 2016 when seagrass reached a record 20,280 mapped acres. Beginning in 2018, seagrass acreage in Charlotte Harbor began to decline. The greatest loss occurred between 2018 and 2020 with a loss of almost 4,500 acres, or 23%. Much of this loss was concentrated along eastern Charlotte Harbor, an area known as the East Wall which saw a 50% reduction in seagrass coverage. Coincident with these historic seagrass losses was a major expansion of filamentous macroalgae. Although the cause of seagrass loss is complex, the aftermath of the 2017-2018 Red Tide event, the worst red tide on record according to NOAA, was likely a major factor. By 2020, seagrass extent in Charlotte Harbor was at the lowest levels since the District began mapping seagrasses in 1988. Losses continued in both 2022 and 2024 though at much slower rates. The next mapping cycle is scheduled for 2026. The flight window for aerial image acquisition goes from mid-December to mid-March. Image post-processing, photointerpretation, and field verification will be ongoing through calendar year 2026 with an expected release date of early 2027.

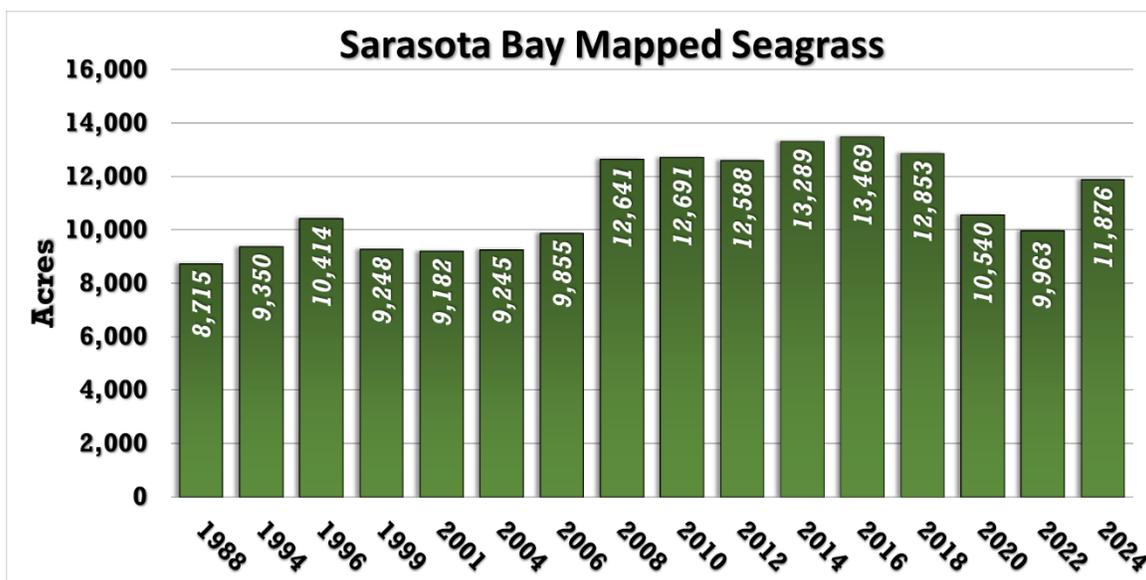


Source: District SWIM staff, 2025

The Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative (CHFI) is a multi-agency initiative led by the South Florida Water Management District to restore flows, promote sheet flow enhancement, and restore wetland hydroperiods in Babcock Webb and Yucca Pens Wildlife Management Area (WMA); and improve the timing and magnitude of flows to tidal creeks west of Yucca Pens WMA. During 2022, District funded data collection contributed to the development of a baseline hydrologic model and scenarios to determine hydrologic benefits of remedying artificial drainage from the Yucca Pens WMA as well as storing and routing excess water from Babcock Web.

The Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network (CCHMN) is an ongoing project to monitor water quality and establish long-term water quality monitoring stations in Charlotte Harbor and the estuarine areas of the Peace and Myakka Rivers. It is a collaborative effort that began in 2000, between the District, Charlotte County, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Beginning in FY26, the District will take the lead on this data collection effort. This data provides the basis for habitat restoration planning and management and water quality improvement projects.

Sarasota Bay: The District is a recognized leader in aerial seagrass mapping. The District’s seagrass maps have been used as one of the primary indicators of estuarine health since 1988. The maps are also a critical tool used by the District’s local, state, and federal partners, and the private sector, to help guide resource management decisions. For Sarasota Bay, seagrass extent reached record high levels in 2016, followed by back-to-back losses between 2018 and 2022. The sharpest decline occurred between 2018 and 2020 which saw an 18% (2,313 acres) loss of seagrass. In 2022, the bay lost an additional 6% reaching a 15-year low of 9,962 acres. The cause of these losses is complex and involves several factors including nutrient runoff, and the aftermath of the 2017-2018 red tide event, one of the worst on record for this area according to NOAA. In 2024, seagrass in Sarasota Bay increased by 1,912 acres, a gain of 19%. Much of this increase occurred in the same areas that reported seagrass losses over the previous three mapping cycles. This recovery has been attributed to improving water quality conditions in Sarasota Bay and an overall reduction in the amount of macroalgae. The next mapping cycle is scheduled for 2026. The flight window for aerial image acquisition goes from mid-December 2025 to mid-March 2026. Image post-processing, photointerpretation, and field verification will be ongoing through calendar year 2026 with an expected release date of early 2027.



Source: District SWIM staff, 2025

Shell/Prairie and Joshua Creeks: The intent of the Shell, Prairie and Joshua Creeks Reasonable Assurance Plan (SPJCRAP), adopted on February 7, 2012, pursuant to a DEP order, was to improve water quality within these watersheds with explicit emphasis on TMDL impaired sub-basins.

Specifically, the goal was to consistently meet Class I surface-water quality criteria in Florida’s Surface Water Quality Standards rules (F.A.C. 62-302.530) for chloride, specific conductance and total dissolved solids (TDS). The target date for achieving reductions in the identified water quality parameters was 2014.

In April 2016, the District, along with the Shell, Prairie and Joshua Creek Stakeholders Group (SPJCSG), submitted the final performance monitoring report required under the SPJCRAP to DEP. This report documented water quality improvements resulting from regulatory and resource management actions specified in the plan. The DEP delisted Prairie Creek as impaired for TDS and specific conductance based on the findings in the final monitoring report and a request by the

District and the SPJCSG. The final monitoring report also suggested that surface waters within WBIDs 2040 and 2041 naturally exceed DEP Class I drinking water standards. Management actions will continue to be implemented in the Shell Creek watershed to address both water quality and quantity issues. DEP did not delist the two WBIDs in Shell Creek (2040 and 2041) as impaired, but the DEP has categorized them as a low priority for TMDL development, due in part to the continuing management actions that will be taken by the stakeholders. In FY2025, one FARMS projects were approved in the SPJC Priority area, resulting in an estimated 25,000 gpd reduction in groundwater use which reduces the TDS from reaching receiving water bodies.

The District's SWIM program continues restoration activities for Charlotte Harbor and Sarasota Bay.

In FY2025, design and permitting was completed for the Cape Haze Ecosystem Restoration project. This project will create and enhance estuarine and freshwater wetlands and adjacent uplands on approximately 410 coastal acres within the Charlotte Harbor watershed. This is a continuation of the conceptual plan created under the Coral Creek Restoration project with two previous phases already completed.

The District uses its local government comprehensive plan amendment review program to communicate development strategies and practices for achieving greater water quality protection. This tool has assisted with the implementation of many District efforts. Examples of strategies communicated include the retention of native vegetation and preference for central sewer use when water bodies are at risk; incorporation of open spaces in flood prone areas; and use of clustering in more appropriate development areas. Most plan review feedback is provided for consideration and voluntary implementation. The District's review and feedback also helps with satisfying provisions in Chapters 373 and 163, F.S., which require technical assistance for the development of comprehensive plan amendments.

In addition, the District uses its CFI program to help fund BMP implementation. The funding of BMPs is used extensively for watershed management, SWIM and springs initiatives. The District, in cooperation with Sarasota County, funded and completed water quality improvements and urban upland and channel shoreline restoration in Hudson Bayou which contributes to improvements in Sarasota Bay. Also, through CFI, the City of Bradenton Beach completed stormwater retrofits in the area of Avenue C that will contribute to improvements to Sarasota Bay.

