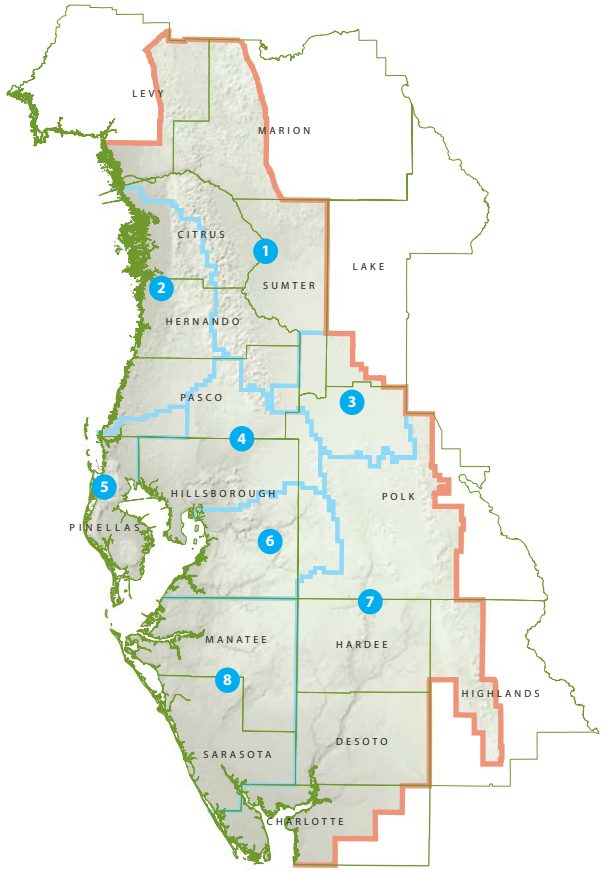

The Southwest Florida Water Management District is divided into eight basins, which are based primarily on watershed or geographic boundaries. Seven of the District's basins are administered by local Basin Boards, while an eighth — encompassing the Green Swamp — is managed directly by the District Governing Board because of its hydrologic significance.

District boundary

Basins

1. *Withlacoochee River Basin*
2. *Coastal Rivers Basin*
3. *Green Swamp Basin*
4. *Hillsborough River Basin*
5. *Pinellas-Anclote River Basin*
6. *Alafia River Basin*
7. *Peace River Basin*
8. *Manasota Basin*

Contact Information

To schedule an appointment to have your irrigation system evaluated or for more information about the MIL, contact:

Guillermo Alverio
U.S. Department of Agriculture –
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Wauchula Service Center
316 N. 7th Avenue
Wauchula, FL 33873-2606
(863) 773-4764, ext. 3

Jeff Whealton
Southwest Florida Water Management District
170 Century Boulevard
Bartow, FL 33830-7700
1-800-492-7862 (FL only)
or (863) 534-1448, ext. 6119

Southwest Florida Water Management District
WATERMATTERS.ORG · 1-800-423-1476

VISAY 05-16

Mobile Irrigation Lab

Assisting the agricultural community with water conservation and water quality improvements

Mobile Irrigation Lab

Every year, growers are facing greater restrictions, new regulations and increasing costs of water use. With the growing demand to produce more crops with fewer resources, efficient water application is essential for sustainable agricultural operations.

The Mobile Irrigation Lab (MIL) program, a joint effort between the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District), the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA–NRCS) and the agricultural community, was developed to help growers conserve water by evaluating their irrigation systems relative to their operations. The MIL is a free and confidential service to the agricultural community. Any farming or nursery operation in the District may schedule a free evaluation to learn more about their irrigation system and how to reduce water use and related operating costs.

Benefits of Using the Mobile Irrigation Lab

The MIL benefits the grower almost immediately by decreasing the amount of fuel, fertilizer and water needed for the production of the crop. Depending on the site, a five percent improvement in irrigation efficiency could represent about 30,000 gallons of water savings per acre per year on a typical citrus operation. The District also benefits by increasing water savings and improving water quality in the regions where the MIL is implemented.

The Mobile Irrigation Lab Process

1. Grower contacts the MIL and schedules an appointment for an irrigation system evaluation.
2. Qualified MIL technician performs a site visit at the grower's property. The technician meets with the agricultural producers and anyone else who operates the system to discuss the current practices as well as observe and measure the system in operation.
3. Information collected by the technician is analyzed to identify potential issues with the system design, operation and maintenance.
4. Confidential report is produced to provide:
   - Evaluation results, which include issues and recommendations
   - Map with irrigation system and pressures at key points
   - Photos
   - Irrigation management plan specific to each site
   - Scheduling guides — recommended times and frequencies
   - Soil map and available water capacity for the site

The irrigation schedule included in the report offers a general guide to determine when and how much to irrigate based on system efficiency, crop requirements and soil characteristics. If needed, the technician can return for further data collection and review with the grower how to install free soil moisture sensor devices as well as how to calibrate and maintain the devices. If needed, the technician assists the local USDA–NRCS office in the redesign of the system.

In addition, the MIL offers assistance with information on soil characteristics and how to manage your irrigation system without conducting a formal evaluation.