

## Bay County in good shape for water



Deer Point reservoir provides drinking water for Bay County.

*News Herald file*

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PANAMA CITY — Bay County’s water supply is in good shape, experts said at a forum on Monday at Gulf Coast State College.

Florida Department of Environment Protection policy director Tom Beck said Bay County has plenty of available drinking water because of Deer Point reservoir.

And even though a survey presented at the forum reported concerns with reclaimed and stormwater projects, Northwest Florida Water Management District Resource Planning Program Manager Paul Thorpe said Lynn Haven and Panama City Beach are good examples for using reclaimed water for irrigation and landscaping.

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“It’s a huge opportunity at any rate,” Thorpe said of reclaimed water in Bay County. “It’s a great opportunity to approach long-term water and be proactive and environmentally aware.”

Bay County supplies Tyndall Air Force Base with reclaimed water through the Advanced Wastewater Treatment group.

County Utilities Services Director Paul Lackemacher said the county is looking to increase capacity at the North Bay Plant, which has the equipment to process reclaimed water, specifically with a main along State 79 paid for with a \$1 million grant from the state. Lackemacher said the county has received some interest from Gulf Power for reclaimed water.