# Northwest Florida Water Management District

Consolidated Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2023-2024
Publication Number: AR-24

*Cypress Spring*

**Northwest Florida Water Management District**

# Consolidated Annual Report

March 1, 2024

# NORTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## GOVERNING BOARD



## DISTRICT OFFICES

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# Executive Summary

This Consolidated Annual Report fulfills the requirement of section 373.036(7), Florida Statutes (F.S.), that the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD, or District) annually prepare and submit a report on the management of water resources to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR). Chairs of legislative committees with substantive or fiscal jurisdiction over water management districts and the governing boards of counties having jurisdiction or deriving funds for operations in the District also receive copies. The report is available to the public online at https://nwfwater.com/data-publications/reports-plans/consolidated-annual-reports/.

The March 1, 2024, NWFWMD Consolidated Annual Report includes all elements required by section 373.036(7)(b), F.S, as well as one optional chapter on the District's Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program. Contents of the report are:

1. Strategic Water Management Plan Annual Work Plan Report
2. Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels (MFL) Annual Priority List and Schedule
3. Annual Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan
4. Alternative Water Supplies Annual Report
5. FY 2023-2024 Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program
6. Florida Forever Work Plan Annual Report
7. Mitigation Donation Annual Report
8. Water Projects in the Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program
9. Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Program Annual Report

The chapters that follow provide the status and record of accomplishments of District programs over the previous fiscal year (FY 2022-23) that contribute to the implementation and success of the District's mission and responsibilities.

*The **mission** of the Northwest Florida Water Management District is to implement the provisions of Chapter 373, Water Resources, Florida Statutes (F.S.), in a manner that best ensures the continued welfare of the residents and water resources of northwest Florida.*

*The District works with state and federal agencies and local governments to achieve its mission through four interrelated **areas of responsibility**: water supply, water quality, flood protection, and natural system protection.*

Fiscal year 2022-23 accomplishments prioritized water quality projects with continuation and implementation of restoration and protection projects for Wakulla and Jackson Blue springs and springs associated with the St. Marks River Rise, Chipola River, Econfina Creek, and Holmes Creek. Additional projects funded by the District provided for water quality and aquatic habitat protection and restoration in Apalachicola Bay, St. George Sound, St. Joseph Bay, St. Andrew Bay, and Choctawhatchee Bay. The District also prioritized support for alternative water supply and water resource development projects including reclaimed water projects in Santa Rosa and Okaloosa; and continued technical assistance for water use efficiency in Jackson County. Additionally, the District continued hydrologic and water quality monitoring and continued development of minimum flow and minimum water level technical assessments for Jackson Blue Spring and spring groups associated with Econfina Creek. The District also continued floodplain risk mapping assistance for several northwest Florida communities, continued management of District lands and recreation sites, and continued progress toward recovery from hurricane-related damages.

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# Consolidated Annual Report
# Chapter 1

## Strategic Water Management Plan
## Annual Work Plan Report

# Strategic Water Management Plan (SWMP) Annual Work Plan Report

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# Chapter 1. Strategic Water Management Plan (SWMP) Annual Work Plan Report

## Overview

The mission of the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD or District) is to implement the provisions of Chapter 373, Water Resources, Florida Statutes (F.S.), in a manner that best ensures the continued welfare of the residents and water resources of northwest Florida. The District works to achieve its mission through four interrelated areas of responsibility: water supply, water quality, flood protection and floodplain management, and natural system protection. Water management plans developed pursuant to section 373.036(2), F.S., guide implementation of the District's mission and responsibilities.

The District's Governing Board annually approves a Strategic Water Management Plan (SWMP) for a five-year planning horizon. This element of the Consolidated Annual Report is the annual work plan report on the implementation of the SWMP for the previous fiscal year (section 373.036(2)(e)4). The FY 2022-23 SWMP was approved November 10, 2022. Listed below are the SWMP strategic priorities consistent with the priorities supported by the District's adopted FY 2022-23 budget. Addressed in this annual work plan report for each strategic priority are, at a minimum, success indicators, deliverables, and milestones.

### Strategic Priorities for Fiscal Years 2023-2027

**Water Quality**

- **Spring Protection and Restoration:** Continue implementation of septic-to-sewer and other priority projects to improve water quality in Wakulla and Jackson Blue springs. Develop additional projects to address protection and restoration of priority springs in northwest Florida.
- **Agricultural Best Management Practices:** Implement projects in cooperation with agricultural producers, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to conserve water, reduce nutrients, and to restore and protect water quality in the Jackson Blue Spring and Chipola River contribution areas.
- **Water Quality Improvement Projects:** Complete current water quality improvement projects for St. Joseph Bay and Apalachicola Bay.

**Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels (MFLs)**

- **Priority MFLs:** Continue data collection and modeling in support of technical assessments for two Outstanding Florida Springs, Jackson Blue Spring and the Gainer Spring Group; two second magnitude springs, the Sylvan Spring Group and the Williford Spring Group; and the Floridan aquifer in coastal Bay County.

**Water Supply**

- **Alternative Water Supply Development**: Support implementation of cooperative alternative water supply development projects. Complete priority reclaimed water projects in Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Bay counties, and identify and develop future cooperative projects to meet long-term needs across northwest Florida.

- **Water Supply Development Assistance**: Assist underserved communities across Northwest Florida in the implementation of traditional water supply development and water conservation projects.
- **Water Supply Planning:** Complete updated projections of water demands together with a comprehensive assessment of water supplies by 2023. Develop regional water supply plans for regions identified by the water supply assessment.

**Flood Protection and Floodplain Management**

- **FEMA Risk Map Program:** Continue implementation of the Risk MAP program as a Cooperating Technical Partner with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- **Flood Protection Technical Assistance**: Continue to develop tools, data, and projects to respond to sea level rise, climate effects, to assist communities, and to enhance resilience of both communities and natural systems.

**Watershed Protection and Restoration**

- **Hurricane Michael Recovery and Reforestation:** Complete debris removal, reforestation, and facility repairs within the Econfina and Chipola water management areas.
- **Cooperative Projects:** Continue to develop cooperative projects and initiatives to further protect and restore coastal and inland waters, wetlands, and associated functions and public benefits.

## Summary of Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Accomplishments

Fiscal year 2022-23 accomplishments include implementation of spring restoration and protection, stormwater retrofit, and water supply development projects; monitoring of springs water quality and flows; continued development of MFL technical assessments; floodplain risk mapping; completion of the 2023 Water Supply Assessment Update; and continued efforts to recover from damages caused by Hurricane Michael.

## 1.1 Water Quality

### Strategic Priority and Success Indicators

The goal of the water quality strategic priority is to protect and restore water quality across northwest Florida, with emphasis on springs, the health and productivity of coastal and inland waterbodies, cooperative projects, and water quality and flows for the Apalachicola River and Bay. Additional emphasis on integrated efforts to protect watershed functions and long-term resiliency. Success indicators are:

(1) Project accomplishment (percent complete);
(2) Area restored (acres);
(3) Pollutant load reduction (pounds per year);
(4) Trends in nitrate concentrations;
(5) Trends in spring flows;
(6) Established minimum flows for Outstanding Florida Springs and other priority springs.

### Current Activities and Accomplishments

Recently completed and current activities have been focused on protecting and, where necessary, restoring water quality as essential for ensuring the health and productivity of northwest Florida's waterbodies and watersheds. Efforts focused on water quality are integrated with broad-based efforts to protect and restore watershed resources, including floodplains, wetlands, and aquatic and riparian habitats. The District supports and implements cooperative stormwater retrofit, septic-to-sewer, and other water quality improvement projects, as well as spring and streambank restoration, wetland mitigation, environmental resource permitting, land management, and hydrologic data services. Specific activities include:

- Helping producers implement agricultural best management practices (BMPs) for water conservation and water quality improvement within the Jackson Blue Spring basin;
- Assisting Jackson and Wakulla counties and municipalities with septic-to-sewer retrofits within the contribution areas of Jackson Blue and Wakulla springs;
- Planning and design for habitat restoration at Horn Spring in Leon County and public access improvements and spring bank restoration at Econfina Blue Spring Group on Econfina Creek and at Cypress Spring on Holmes Creek;
- Acquiring land to protect Wakulla Spring, Jackson Blue Spring, Cypress Spring, the Gainer Spring Group, and nearby springs on Econfina Creek;
- Assisting the city of Carrabelle with septic-to-sewer retrofits for water quality improvements to Carrabelle Beach and St. George Sound;
- Stormwater retrofit project for the city of Port St. Joe to improve water quality and flood protection;
- Continued assessment of St. Joseph Bay, East Bay, and the Intracoastal Waterway to evaluate freshwater flows and water quality and to develop management recommendations;
- Monitoring and resource assessments for major spring systems Districtwide.

## Evaluation of Indicators

### (1) Project accomplishment (percent completion on schedule)

The District had ongoing projects in FY 2022-23 that contributed to water quality protection or improvement. Nineteen projects within six major watersheds and nine counties were active during the fiscal year.

Table 1.1 lists projects by major watershed from west to east. Projects listed are current through December 2023. A map of the seven major watersheds within the District is in Section 1.5: Watershed Restoration and Protection. Those listed as "Continuing" under Percent Complete represent projects or programs with continuing implementation and no established end date.

**Table 1.1 Water Quality Projects**

| Project | Description (Cooperators) | Total District Cost (or as noted) | Status | Percent Complete |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pensacola Bay Watershed** | | | | |
| War Horse Project | Provide nine sewer connections and water service to the veterans' War Horse Project of the Gulf Coast (Pace Water System) | $21,000 | Planning | 10% |
| **Choctawhatchee River and Bay Watershed** | | | | |
| Cypress Spring Land Acquisition and Restoration | 303.55-acre conservation easement, with shoreline restoration and site enhancement at Cypress Spring; Cypress Spring and Holmes Creek springs groundwater contribution areas (BlueTriton) | $1,600,000 | Conservation easement acquisition complete; design in progress | 50% |
| Live Oak Point Living Shoreline | Construct a 4,695 LF breakwater and accompanying salt marsh planting at Live Oak Point peninsula | $518,914 | In progress | 70% |
| Choctawhatchee Basin Restoration Program | Shoreline restoration and education and outreach for Choctawhatchee Bay (Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance) | $50,000 (annual cost) | In progress | Continuing |
| **St. Andrew Bay Watershed** | | | | |
| Grand Lagoon Septic to Sewer Project | Convert residential subdivision near Grand Lagoon from septic to sewer to improve water quality (Panama City Beach) | $71,975 | In progress | 50% |
| Port St. Joe Stormwater Improvements | Construct stormwater retrofit and develop a stormwater master plan (city of Port St. Joe, DEP, TIG) | $775,000 | In progress | 10% |
| **St. Andrew Bay and Apalachicola River and Bay Watersheds** | | | | |
| St. Joseph Bay Assessment | Water flow and quality monitoring in the Gulf County Canal, Intracoastal Waterway, and Lake Wimico (USGS) | $1,603,990 | Data collection | Continuing |

| Project | Description (Cooperators) | Total District Cost (or as noted) | Status | Percent Complete |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Apalachicola River and Bay Watershed** | | | | |
| Mobile Irrigation Laboratory (MIL) | Technical assistance to producers, primarily within the Jackson Blue Spring contribution area to improve irrigation efficiency (FDACS; Jackson SWCD) | $71,125 (annual cost) | All funds expended and projects complete for FY 2022-23 | 100% |
| Jackson Blue Spring and Chipola River Springs Agricultural BMP Cost Share Program | Financial assistance to producers in the Jackson Blue Spring contribution area to implement irrigation efficiency and water quality BMPs (Producers, FDACS, NRCS) | $8,668,375 | Years 1-5 complete, Years 6-7 in progress, and Years 8-9 in planning | Continuing |
| Sod-based Crop Rotation Project | Continuation of cost-share program to help agricultural producers improve water quality and reduce water use in and around Jackson Blue Spring (Producers, FDACS, NRCS) | $1,146,500 | In progress | Continuing |
| Jackson County Septic to Sewer Retrofit – Indian Springs Phases I-II | Convert residential subdivision in Jackson Blue Spring area from septic to sewer to reduce nitrogen loading (Jackson County and city of Marianna) | $12,017,332 | Construction | 40% |
| Jackson County Septic to Sewer Retrofit – Blue Spring Road | Convert county park and residential subdivision in Jackson Blue Spring area from septic to sewer (Jackson County and city of Marianna) | $5,428,677 | Construction | 43% |
| Jackson County Septic to Sewer Retrofit – Tara Estates | Convert residential subdivision adjacent to Chipola River from septic to sewer to reduce nitrogen loading (Jackson County, city of Mariana) | $2,622,770 | Construction | 10% |
| Lighthouse Estates Septic to Sewer Retrofit | Convert residential subdivision near Carrabelle Beach and St. George Sound from septic to sewer to improve water quality (city of Carrabelle) | $3,684,238 | Construction | 40% |
| **Ochlockonee River and Bay Watershed** | | | | |
| EPA Farmer to Farmer Grant - Algae Harvesting and Biomass Reuse Agricultural Demonstration Project | Employment of a dissolved air flotation system to demonstrate capture and reuse of nutrients from an agricultural operation (EPA, Producer, IFAS) | $959,754 | In progress | 33% |
| **St. Marks River and Apalachee Bay Watershed** | | | | |
| Septic Connection to Existing Sewer in the Wakulla BMAP | Convert residential subdivision in Wakulla Spring area from septic to sewer to reduce nitrogen loading (city of Tallahassee) | $1,081,000 | Construction | 62% |
| Wakulla County Septic to Sewer Retrofit – Magnolia Gardens Phases I-III | Convert residential subdivision in Wakulla Spring area from septic to sewer to reduce nitrogen loading. Wakulla County (DEP, Wakulla County) | $8,261,811 | Construction | 75% |

| Project | Description (Cooperators) | Total District Cost (or as noted) | Status | Percent Complete |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wakulla County Septic to Sewer Retrofit – Wakulla Gardens Phases I-IV | Convert residential subdivision in Wakulla Spring area from septic to sewer to reduce nitrogen loading (DEP, Wakulla County) | $15,992,415 | Construction | 60% |
| Horn Spring Restoration | Restoration improvements at second magnitude spring (DEP) | $500,000 | Construction | 15% |

**(2) Area restored (Acres)**

The Live Oak Point living shorelines project will restore littoral salt marsh encompassing 2.24 acres and 4,695 linear feet. This will enhance an additional 8.42 acres of littoral habitat. As of Sept. 30, 2023, 3,440 LF of breakwater was in place, and emergent vegetation planting had begun. The Choctawhatchee Basin Restoration program, implemented by the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance with funding assistance from the District and other public and private sources, completed an estimated 2.11 acres of restoration.

**(3) Pollutant load reduction (Pounds per year)**

As of September 2023, estimates of pollutant load reduction attributed to the Jackson Blue Spring Agricultural BMP Cost Share Program, septic-to-sewer projects, and stormwater retrofit projects are summarized in the table below.

**Table 1.2 Pollutant Load Reduction**

| Project | Pollutant Load Reduction (lbs/yr TN) |
|---|---|
| **Apalachicola River and Bay Watershed** | |
| Jackson Blue Spring Agricultural BMP Cost Share Program | 352,600* |
| Sod-based Crop Rotation Project | TBD |
| Jackson County Septic to Sewer Retrofit – Indian Springs Phases I-II | 824 |
| Jackson County Septic to Sewer Retrofit – Blue Spring Road | 0 |
| Jackson County Septic to Sewer Retrofit – Tara Estates | 0 |
| Lighthouse Estates Septic to Sewer Retrofit | 0 |
| **St. Marks River and Apalachee Bay Watershed** | |
| Septic Connection to Existing Sewer in the Wakulla BMAP | 401 |
| Wakulla County Septic to Sewer Retrofit – Magnolia Gardens Phases I-III | 2,768 |
| Wakulla County Septic to Sewer Retrofit – Wakulla Gardens Phases I-IV | 3,033 |

*Yearly pollutant load reduction average 2014 – 2023

### (4) and (5) Trends in nitrate concentrations and spring flows

Spring flow and nitrate concentration data are available for Gainer Springs, Jackson Blue Spring, St. Marks River Rise, and Wakulla Spring.[1] Current information is summarized in Table 1.3. The table indicates apparent trends based on examination of changes in flows and concentrations over time. It should be noted trends are based on visual examination of data and may not be statistically significant. Trends in spring flows and nitrate/nitrite concentrations are presented in Figures 1.1 – 1.4. Additional and updated information on major springs in northwest Florida is available at www.nwfwater.com/water-resources/springs/.

**Table 1.3 Trends in Spring Flows and Nitrate/Nitrite Concentrations Indicator**

| Spring/Spring System | Average Flow[1] (cfs)/Trend | Nitrate Concentration (mg/L)[2] |
|---|---|---|
| Gainer Spring Group[3] | 168/Increasing | 0.20/Stable with Recent Decline |
| Jackson Blue Spring[3] | 105/Variable[4] | 3.73/Increasing |
| St. Marks River Rise | 420/Stable | 0.03 – 0.31/Variable[5] |
| Wakulla Spring | 588/Increasing | 0.37/Decreasing |

[1] Periods of record (flow): Gainer Spring Group, 2002-2023; Jackson Blue Spring, 2002-2023; St. Marks River Rise, 1999-2023; Wakulla Spring, 2004-2023.
[2] Periods of record (water quality): Gainer Spring Group, 2002-2023; Jackson Blue Spring, 2002-2023; St. Marks Rise, 2001-2023; Wakulla Spring, 1997-2023. Value presented is the most recent five-year median.
[3] Discharge measurements include only manual measurements.
[4] Spring flow from Jackson Blue Spring is influenced by the operation of the dam used to maintain water levels in Merritt's Mill Pond.
[5] Water quality under the influence of surface water drainage.

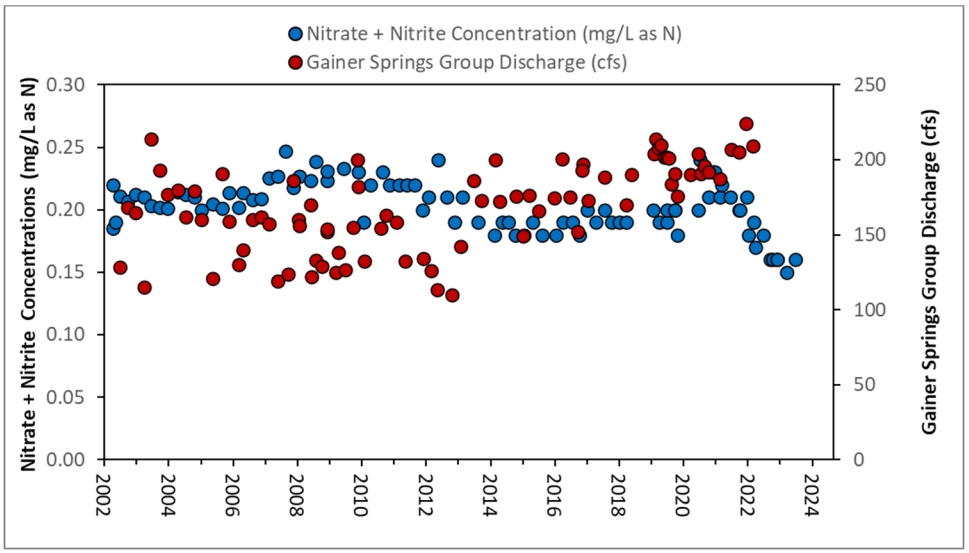


**Figure 1.1 Nitrate and Nitrite Concentration and Discharge: Gainer Spring Group (2002-2023)**

[1] Values are measured and reported as nitrate + nitrite. Nitrite ($NO_2$) is converted into nitrate ($NO_3$) in the environment.

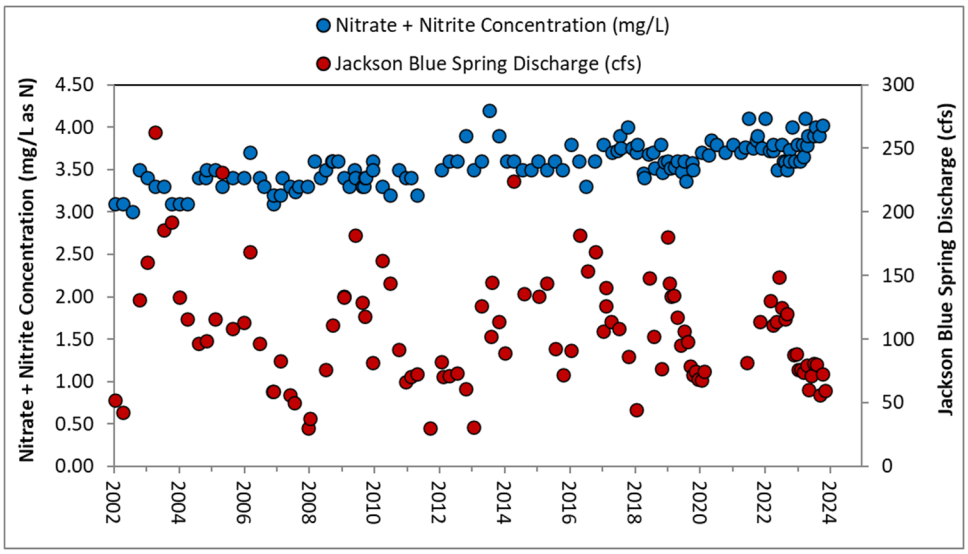


**Figure 1.2 Nitrate and Nitrite Concentration and Discharge: Jackson Blue Spring (2002-2023)**

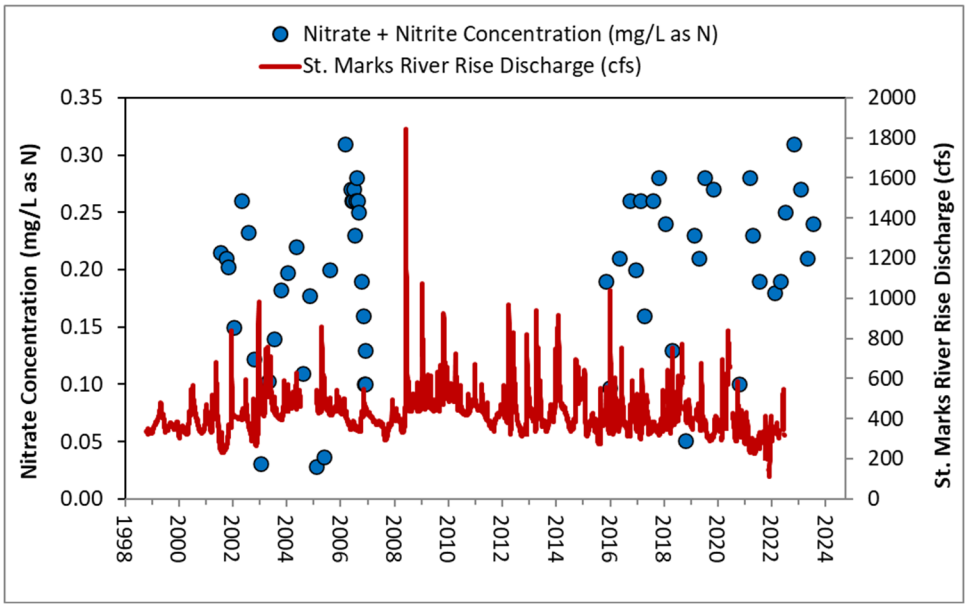


**Figure 1.3 Nitrate and Nitrite Concentration and Discharge: St. Marks River Rise (1999-2023)**

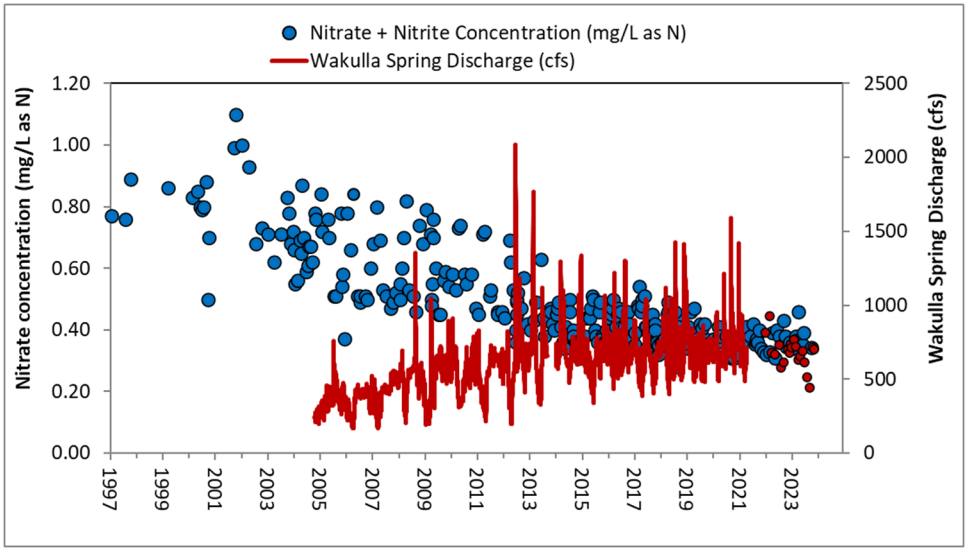


**Figure 1.4 Nitrate and Nitrite Concentration and Discharge: Wakulla Spring (1997-2023)**

**(6) Established minimum flows for Outstanding Florida Springs and other priority springs**

Section 373.802, F.S., defines Outstanding Florida Springs (OFS) as all historic first magnitude springs, including their associated spring runs, not including submarine springs and river rises. Section 373.042, F.S. requires the District to establish minimum flows for such springs by July 1, 2026. Within northwest Florida, OFSs include Wakulla Spring, Jackson Blue Spring, and the Gainer Springs Group. The MFL for Wakulla Spring was adopted May 18, 2021. Those for the Gainer Spring Group and Jackson Blue Spring are scheduled for adoption in 2025 and 2026, respectively. Additional information may be found in Section 1.2 and tables 1.4 and 1.6.

## Milestones and Deliverables

Table 1.3 shows the status of milestones and deliverables for water quality. Projects listed as "Continuing" are ongoing projects or programs with no established end date. The previously cited Advanced Septic Systems Pilot Project is ongoing and being completed by Leon County in cooperation with DEP.

**Table 1.4 Water Quality Milestones and Deliverables**

| Milestone | Target Date | Status |
|---|---|---|
| (1) Farmer to Farmer Algae Abatement Demonstration | 2024 | In progress |
| (2) City of Tallahassee Septic Connections within Wakulla BMAP | 2024 | In progress |
| (3) St. Joseph Bay Assessment | Continuing | Continuing |
| (4) Lighthouse Estates Septic to Sewer, Phases I and II | 2024 | In progress |
| (5) Port St. Joe Stormwater Improvements | 2024 | In progress |
| (6) Magnolia Gardens Septic to Sewer Project Phase III | 2023 | Complete |
| (7) Wakulla Gardens Septic to Sewer Project, Phases III & IV | 2025 | In progress |
| (8) Blue Spring Road, Indian Springs, and Tara Estates Sewer Extensions | 2025 | In progress |
| (9) Agricultural BMPs and MIL in the Jackson Blue Spring Basin | Continuing | Continuing |
| (10) Establishment of Minimum Flows | Continuing | Continuing |

| Deliverable | Status |
|---|---|
| (1) Mobile Irrigation Lab evaluation reports | Receiving quarterly reports and evaluation summaries, water savings calculations, and lists of public outreach and education events attended by mobile irrigation lab staff. |
| (2) Water quality data | Water quality data collected by DEP and NWFWMD and available from WIN, STORET, or NWFWMD water quality databases. |
| (3) Spring discharge data | Select water quality, level and flow data is available for direct download from the NWFWMD Hydrologic Web Portal: www.nwfwater.com/Data-Publications/Hydrologic-Data/Active-Stations-Map |
| (4) Project completion reports | Project completion reports are developed for each project upon completion. |

## 1.2 Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels

### Strategic Priority and Success Indicators

The goal of the Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels (MFLs) strategic priority is to develop and implement science-based MFLs that protect water resources and associated natural systems. Success indicators are:

(1) MFL technical assessment accomplishment (percent complete per the approved schedule);
(2) Waterbodies meeting their adopted MFLs (number and percentage).

### Current Activities and Accomplishments

Progress is continuing in the District's efforts to develop MFLs in northwest Florida. The NWFWMD FY 2023-24 MFL priority list includes two first magnitude springs (Gainer Spring Group and Jackson Blue Spring), three second magnitude springs (Williford Spring Group, Sylvan Spring Group, and Morrison Spring), one coastal aquifer system (Floridan Aquifer Coastal Region III, Bay County), and one river system (Shoal River). Additional waterbodies will be scheduled in future years. The list represents an ambitious yet achievable MFL program, which is being implemented in an efficient and technically sound manner.

*FY 2022-23 Accomplishments*

During FY 2022-23, District staff worked concurrently on two MFL waterbodies: Jackson Blue Spring and multiple, combined springs located along Econfina Creek including the Gainer Spring Group, Sylvan Spring Group, and Williford Spring Group. Surface water model construction for the Gainer Spring Group, Sylvan Spring Group, and Williford Spring Group was largely completed during FY 2022-23. Groundwater model construction was largely completed during FY 2022-23 for the Jackson Blue Spring MFL and progress continued for the associated surface water model construction. Data collection and monitoring efforts continued for established MFLs, including St. Marks River Rise, Wakulla Spring, and Sally Ward Spring.

*Activities Planned for FY 2023-24*

During FY 2023-24, hydrologic monitoring for the Jackson Blue Spring MFL evaluation will continue. Surface water models are being developed and calibrated and are scheduled to be completed during FY 2023-24. The North Central District Groundwater model will be completed in the first quarter of FY 2023-24 with model calibration scheduled shortly thereafter. Once calibrated, the model will be used to assess pumping impacts on Jackson Blue Spring flows. These efforts are scheduled to be completed during FY 2023-24.

Post-hurricane hydrologic data collection will continue for the Gainer Spring Group, Williford Spring Group, and Sylvan Spring Group in FY 2023-24. Surface water modeling of Econfina Creek is scheduled to be completed during the first quarter of FY 2023-24. After reviewing groundwater withdrawals in the area, it was determined a groundwater model and additional wells were not needed.

### Evaluation of Indicators

The status and percent complete of MFL technical assessments are described in Table 1., and the status of the District's adopted MFLs is addressed in Table 1.6.

### (1) MFL technical assessment accomplishment

**Table 1.5 MFL Technical Assessment Status**

| MFL Waterbody | Target Date for Rule Adoption | MFL Status | Percent Complete |
|---|---|---|---|
| St. Marks River Rise | 2019 | Minimum flow adopted as part of Chapter 40A-8, F.A.C., Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels | 100% |
| Wakulla Spring | 2021 | Minimum flow adopted as part of Chapter 40A-8, F.A.C., Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels | 100% |
| Sally Ward Spring | 2021 | Minimum flow adopted as part of Chapter 40A-8, F.A.C., Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels | 100% |
| Floridan Aquifer, Coastal Region II | 2021 | MFL rule determined to not be needed at this time | 100% |
| Jackson Blue Spring | 2025 | Under development | 50% |
| Gainer Spring Group | 2025 | Under development | 70% |
| Williford Spring Group | 2025 | Under development | 70% |
| Sylvan Spring Group | 2025 | Under development | 70% |
| Floridan Aquifer, Coastal Bay Co. | 2027 | Scheduled for completion 2026-2027 | 0% |
| Morrison Spring | 2031 | Scheduled for completion in 2030-2031 | 0% |
| Shoal River | 2033 | Scheduled for completion in 2032-2033 | 0% |

**(2) Waterbodies meeting their adopted MFLs (number and percentage)**

**Table 1.6 Adopted MFL Status**

| MFL Waterbody | Date of Rule Adoption | MFL Status | Number and Percentage Meeting MFLs |
|---|---|---|---|
| St. Marks River Rise | June 12, 2019 | Meeting | (1/1) 100% |
| Wakulla and Sally Ward Spring System | May 18, 2021 | Meeting | (1/1) 100% |

## Milestones and Deliverables

Deliverables and milestones for the MFL strategic priority include completed technical assessments according to the approved schedule. Target dates and status are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.7 MFL Milestones and Deliverables**

| Milestone | Target Dates | Status |
|---|---|---|
| Technical Assessment for Wakulla Spring and Sally Ward Spring | 2021 | Complete |
| Technical Assessment for Coastal Floridan Aquifer in Region II | 2021 | Complete (2022) |
| Technical Assessments for Jackson Blue Spring and the Gainer, Sylvan, and Williford Spring Groups | 2024 | In progress |
| **Deliverable** | **Status** | |
| Complete MFL technical assessments and rule adoption according to the approved 2023 MFL Priority List and Schedule | All technical assessments currently on schedule | |

The Department-approved MFL Priority List and schedule can be found in Chapter 2 of the Consolidated Annual Report and online at: https://nwfwater.com/water-resources/minimum-flows-minimum-water-levels/.

## 1.3 Water Supply

### Strategic Priority and Success Indicators

The goal of the water supply strategic priority is to plan and facilitate sustainable water supplies for future reasonable and beneficial uses, with emphasis on development of alternative water supply sources, including reclaimed water, water conservation, and integrated projects contributing to water quality and resiliency. Success indicators are:

(1) Water supply made available (volume in million gallons per day [mgd] and trend);
(2) Public water supply demands met (volume [mgd] and percentage);
(3) Public supply per capita water use (gallons per capita per day [gpcd] and trend);
(4) Project accomplishment (percent complete).

### Current Activities and Accomplishments

The District continues supporting alternative water supply (AWS) development in priority areas of greatest need. Reuse of reclaimed water projects are ongoing in Bay, Escambia, Okaloosa, and Santa Rosa counties. More information on these projects is included in Table 1.9. The District also developed a grant program in accordance with DEP guidance to solicit AWS development project applications for statewide funding assistance.

Districtwide water use is estimated annually, reported in Annual Water Use Reports. Reported agricultural water use is provided to the FDACS Florida Statewide Agricultural Irrigation Demand (FSAID) project annually. Reported and estimated water use is provided to USGS every five years with the most recent collaboration with 2020 water use data.

The 2023 Water Supply Assessment has been completed and was approved in December 2023. The Governing Board recommended the continuation of the Region II Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP) for Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties. The initial phases of the 2024 Region II RWSP began in the fall of 2023.

The District continues water conservation analysis and interdistrict water conservation coordination. Also, data are compiled annually on wastewater systems that provide reclaimed water as a potential alternative water supply source and a draft Reuse Summary Report was completed.

Water resource modeling, hydrogeologic evaluations, monitor well construction, aquifer performance testing, groundwater and transient flow models, and MFL technical assessments are all programmatic components of water resource development and provide technical tools for WSA resource assessments. See section 1.4 for more information and for current MFL activities and accomplishments.

The District's ongoing water use and well permitting programs are important supporting efforts to facilitate adequate and sustainable water supplies. Conditions of water use permit compliance include water conservation requirements, and reuse evaluations are required in specific areas of resource concern. Technical assistance is available for applicants interested in aquifer storage and recovery. Also, well permitting includes abandoned well plugging to protect water sources.

## Evaluation of Indicators

### (1) Water supply made available

Sufficient water for existing and future reasonable-beneficial uses can come from traditional and non-traditional (alternative) water sources and may be made available for public supply or for other water use categories. Methods of quantification vary according to reporting requirements and are refined as information becomes available.

Public water supply demands met are based on permitted allocations that will not cause harm to water resources and are consistent with the public interest pursuant to Chapter 40A-2, F.A.C., and section 373.223, F.S. Current permitted allocations are compared to the most recent WSA demand projections over a 20-year planning horizon (Table 1.8). Chapter 4 of the Consolidated Annual Report outlines the water development associated with projects funded in whole or in part with the Water Protection and Sustainability Program (WPSP) Trust Fund. The anticipated water from completed WPSP projects is a combination of facility capacities, engineering estimates, permitted allocations, and water resource technical assessments. The District's water supply development (WSD) grant program has supported 70 projects across northwest Florida that include potable water distribution system improvements, replacing aging infrastructure, evaluating and developing AWS projects, and addressing local drinking water quality issues. As of December 2023, 69 projects have been completed and one is under construction with expected completion in 2025. Completed WSD projects, with quantification of water made available, total about 1.6 mgd in reuse flow and 3.8 million gallons (MG) of reuse storage capacity. The WPSP Trust Fund, District WSD grant funds, and additional AWS funding sources have enabled the District to further support AWS development (Table 1.9). These five projects are expected to make 5.63 mgd in reuse flow available and provide an additional 5.0 MG in reuse storage capacity.

### (2) Public water supply demands met

Metrics submitted to DEP annually track the quantity (mgd) and percentage of public supply increase in demand that has been met Districtwide, which includes areas with and without RWSPs. The data in Table 1.8 is based on the 2018 WSA demand projections and October 2023 metrics.

**Table 1.8 Public Supply Increase in Demand and Future Demands Met**

| Planning Region | 2015-2040 Net demand change (mgd) | Future demand met (mgd) | Percent of net demand change met |
|---|---|---|---|
| Region II | 17.5 | 17.2 | 98.0% |
| Other Regions | 19.3 | 19.2 | 99.8% |
| **Total Districtwide** | **36.8** | **36.4** | **98.9%** |

Region II unmet demands are anticipated to be addressed through water conservation and AWS sources such as reclaimed water, surface water development, and/or aquifer storage and recovery.

### (3) Public Supply Per Capita Water Use

Public supply per capita water use rates are a function of water use (gross and residential), population estimates, and levels of precipitation. The District experienced droughts in 1999-2000, 2006-2007, and 2011. Note that updates for 2022 data were incomplete at the time of this report but will be incorporated in future reports.

**(4) Project accomplishment**

The descriptions, benefits, accomplishments, and outcomes of alternative water supply projects are summarized in Table 1.9, below.

**Table 1.9 Water Supply Projects Accomplishments**

| Program/Project | Project Type* | Brief Description Benefits and Accomplishments | Outcomes | Status / Percent Complete |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AWS Grant Program | WSD | Annual grant program conducted in cooperation with DEP. | Two projects funded in 2022. Third grant cycle in progress. | Continuing |
| Pensacola Beach Reclaimed Water System Expansion | WSD | Design and construction of a 2.5 MG ground storage tank and 1.24 miles of distribution line to expand the Pensacola Beach reclaimed water system. | Construction underway | 50% |
| Okaloosa County/Eglin AFB/Niceville Reclaimed Water Project | WSD | Expanding reclaimed water use in partnership with Okaloosa County, Eglin Air Force Base, and Niceville to provide reuse to offset current and future residential and recreational water use. | 11 miles of reuse main constructed. Eglin AFB and Niceville connected to OCWS | 100% |
| South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative | WSD | Four-phase multi-jurisdictional project to design and construct over 12 miles of reclaimed water transmission mains, WWTP upgrades, RIBs, and reclaimed water storage to offset potable water use and eliminate effluent discharges to Santa Rosa Sound. Upon completion, the project will result in approximately 1.4 mgd of beneficial reuse, 0.5 million gallons of reclaimed water storage, and elimination of wastewater discharges into Santa Rosa Sound. | Funding awarded for all four phases. Engineering in progress. | 15% |
| Pace Water System Ground Storage Tank & Booster Pump Station | WSD | Designing and constructing a 2.0 MG ground storage tank and booster pump station in Santa Rosa County to improve ability to provide reclaimed water. | Design and permitting underway | 15% |
| North Bay Reuse Project | WSD | Construction of approximately 6-miles of reclaimed water line. | Engineering design at 90% | 25% |
| Gretna Ground Storage Tank | WSD | Construction of 300,000 gallon ground storage tank to replace one damaged during Hurricane Michael. | Project fully funded | 15% |
| Paxton Water Meter Replacement | WSD | Installation of new water meters in the City of Paxton | Pilot program underway | 25% |
| Campbellton Water Meter Replacement | WSD | Installation of new water meters in the Town of Campbellton | Project fully funded | 15% |

*Project Types: Water Resource Development (WRD) and Water Supply Development (WSD)

## Milestones and Deliverables

**Table 1.10 Water Supply Milestones and Deliverables**

| Milestone | Target Date | Status |
|---|---|---|
| (1) North Bay Reuse Project | 2024 | In progress |
| (2) Okaloosa County Reuse Extension | 2023 | Complete |
| (3) South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative, Phase I | 2024 | In progress, all phases funded |
| (4) Districtwide Water Supply Assessment | 2023 | Complete |

| Deliverable | Status |
|---|---|
| (1) Water use data | Completed annually |
| (2) Districtwide water supply assessment updates | Update complete |
| (3) RWSP updates | Every 5 years, 2024 Region II RWSP underway |
| (4) Project completion reports | As projects are completed |

## 1.4 Flood Protection and Floodplain Management

### Strategic Priority and Success Indicators

The goal of the flood protection and floodplain management strategic priority is to maintain natural floodplain functions and minimize harm from flooding, with emphasis on long-term resiliency for coastal and inland communities. Success indicators are:

(1) Area of floodplain protected through land acquisition (acres);
(2) Percent of the District with updated DFIRMs meeting FEMA standards and criteria.

### Current Activities and Accomplishments

Long-term activities to maintain natural floodplain functions include land acquisition within most of the major riverine floodplains of northwest Florida and ongoing land management, as well as wetland mitigation for Florida Department of Transportation (DOT). Additionally, the District's environmental resource permitting (ERP) regulatory program seeks to manage surface waters and protect floodplain functions to avoid flood damage to property.

The effects of Hurricane Michael (2018), compounded by Hurricane Sally (2020), continue to affect and exacerbate flooding in portions of the District. In addition to causing immense damage to structures, communities, and forests, fallen trees and vegetative debris smothered numerous streams, rivers, and accompanying floodplains. This caused flooding to persist for months across much of the region, particularly impacting the Econfina Creek, Deer Point Lake, and Chipola River basins. In response, the District conducted and continues to pursue efforts to remove and address debris on District lands, along with other efforts at hurricane recovery. Additionally, the District developed a detailed hydrologic and hydraulic analysis of floodplain alterations affecting Econfina Creek and the Chipola River, with an evaluation of management alternatives. The analysis was provided to the Division of Emergency Management and Department of Environmental Protection to assist in hurricane recovery efforts and future emergency management planning.

From the winter of 2018-19 to 2022, persistent flooding affected residents across a substantial portion of northwest Florida, primarily in Bay, Gulf, and Washington counties. The District developed a technical report to provide an evaluation of the underlying causes and factors driving the flooding that has been experienced. The report is intended to increase understanding and assist in the development of both near-term responses and long-term planning and mitigation. Currently, the District is conducting stream debris assessments for Bear Creek, Bayou George Creek, Lower Econfina Creek, Upper Econfina Creek, Wetappo Creek, Lower Chipola River, and Cedar Creek. Once these assessments are completed, a flood model will be developed to determine priority areas that need debris cleanup.

The District continues to work in cooperation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on the Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (Risk MAP) program. This effort includes collaboration with state and local agencies to deliver detailed data to foster informed risk management decisions and actions that mitigate flood risk through a consistent approach to assessing potential vulnerability and losses. Risk MAP projects for the Lower Ochlockonee River, Apalachicola River, New River, Chipola River, Pensacola Bay, Perdido Bay, Perdido River, Apalachee Bay-St. Marks River, Pea River, lower Choctawhatchee River, Escambia River, and Blackwater River watersheds are ongoing. Projects for the St. Andrew-St. Joseph Bays, Choctawhatchee Bay, and Yellow River watersheds are in the planning stage.

The District continues to provide detailed Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR)-based elevation and surface feature data for properties across northwest Florida. The data provided is more detailed than most previous topographic maps. This provides an important tool for many of the District's water resource management and flood protection functions. Residents and technical experts can also use the data to plan for activities including landscaping, resource protection, flood risk evaluation, and construction. Additionally, the District makes detailed floodplain information available to the public through http://portal.nwfwmdfloodmaps.com.

## Evaluation of Indicators

### (1) Area of floodplain protected through land acquisition (acres)

Areas of floodplain protected through fee or less-than-fee acquisition is currently at 183,383 acres, representing 78% of total District managed area.

### (2) Percent of the District with updated DFIRMs meeting FEMA standards and criteria

One hundred percent of the District had updated digital flood insurance rate maps (DFIRMs) meeting FEMA standards and criteria in 2014. Preliminary DFIRMs for the Apalachee Bay-St. Marks watershed will be completed by the end of FY 2023-24. DFIRMs were effective for the following: Gulf County (March 9, 2021), Okaloosa County (March 9, 2021) and Santa Rosa County (November 19, 2021). Final effective DFIRMs for the remaining coastal counties of Escambia and Bay counties are scheduled to be issued by FY 2023-24.

## Milestones and Deliverables

**Table 1.11 Flood Protection and Floodplain Management Milestones and Deliverables**

| Milestone | Target Date | Status |
|---|---|---|
| (1) Preliminary DFIRMs for the Apalachee Bay-St. Marks, Pea, and Lower Choctawhatchee Watersheds | 2024 | On schedule |
| (2) DFIRM completion incorporating coastal remapping studies for Bay and Escambia counties | 2024 | On schedule |

| Deliverable | Status |
|---|---|
| (1) Risk MAP regulatory and non-regulatory products according to discovery report for each HUC 8 watershed within the District | On schedule |
| (2) Florida Forever Work Plan Annual Report | Annual |

## 1.5 Watershed Protection and Restoration

### Strategic Priority and Success Indicators

The goal of the watershed restoration and protection strategic priority is to protect and restore watershed resources and functions, with emphasis on water quality; wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitats; and compatible public access. Success indicators are:

(1) Area protected through land acquisition (acres);
(2) Area restored (acres);
(3) Balance of released mitigation credits.

### Current Activities and Accomplishments

The District continues to focus on implementation of cooperative stormwater retrofit, water quality, water conservation, and habitat restoration projects. Specific efforts include the following:

- Restoration and land management;
- Land acquisition;
- Hurricane recovery and reforestation;
- Wetland mitigation.

District staff continue to participate in multi-agency project planning and development for Gulf of Mexico restoration and protection. These include activities associated with the federal Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act (RESTORE Act), Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc., Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF), and Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA). Additionally, the District has continued to fund restoration and associated outreach activities conducted by the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance.

In its ongoing upland restoration through reforestation programs, the District completed hand planting of 1,288 acres of longleaf pine habitat and 39 acres of flatwoods habitat in January 2023. Approximately 935,200 longleaf pine tubelings and 30,000 slash pine tubelings were planted within the Econfina Creek, Chipola River, and Wakulla River water management areas (WMA).

In 2023, nuisance shrubs, which impede establishment of native groundcover, were treated with herbicides on 99 acres of restored hydric pine flatwoods at the Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank (SHLMB). Similarly, 55 acres at the Dutex restoration site were also treated with herbicides as part of management of restored hydric pine flatwoods. At the SHLMB, 775 cypress trees were planted in February 2023 to aid restoration of forested wetlands. Prescribed fire, a key restoration and management tool, was conducted on 1,250 acres the SHLMB, and on 460 acres at the Lafayette Creek restoration site. These restoration activities improve wetland functions and offset wetland losses authorized for projects conducted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

## Evaluation of Indicators

### (1) Area protected through land acquisition (acres)

The District has acquired, by fee or less-than-fee, 225,857 acres through FY 2022-23.

### (2) Area restored (acres)

The status of cooperative watershed project implementation and restoration is found in Table 1.12. The table lists projects by major watershed identified by the District's Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program, illustrated in Figure 1.5. Many of the projects are also shared with the water quality strategic priority, as shown previously in Table 1.1.

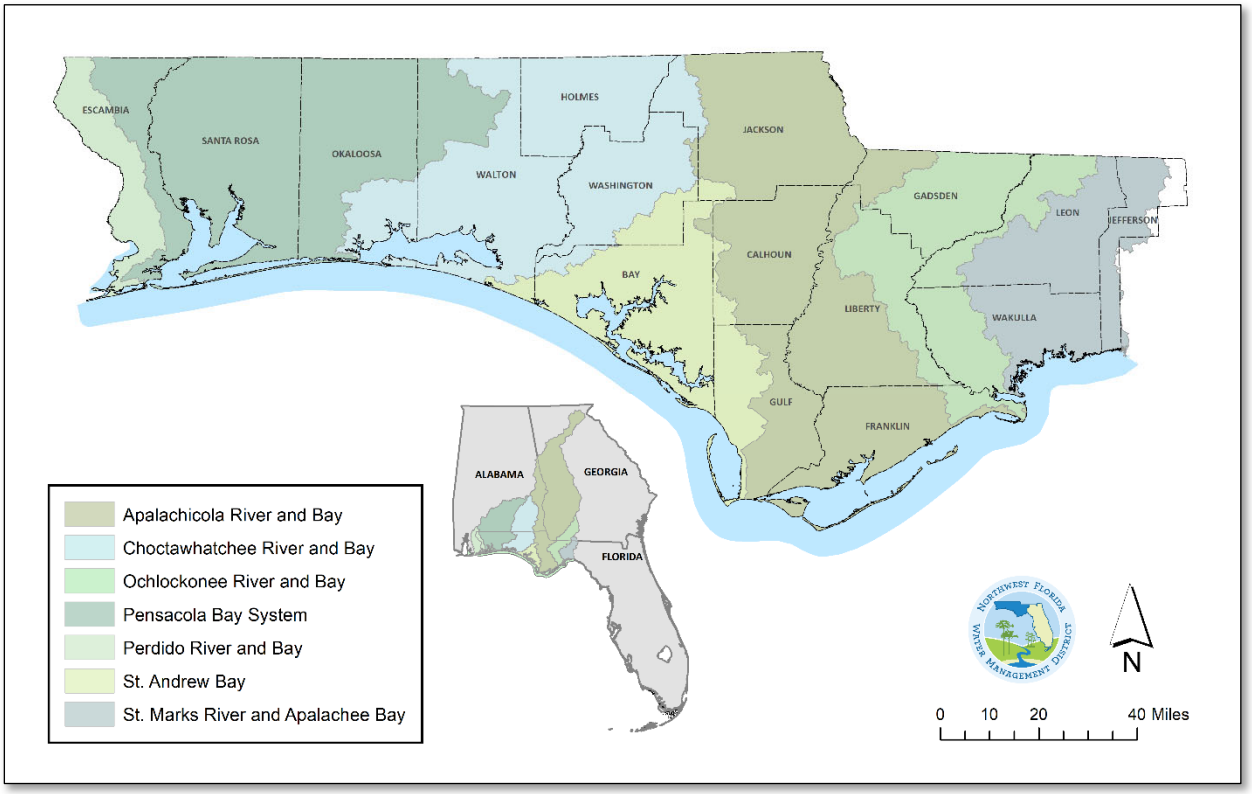


**Figure 1.5 Northwest Florida Watersheds**

**Table 1.12 Watershed Protection and Restoration Cooperative Projects**

| Project | Description/Cooperators | Total District Cost (or as noted) | Restoration or Treatment Area (Acres) | Status | Percent Complete |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Choctawhatchee River and Bay Watershed** | | | | | |
| Choctawhatchee Basin Restoration Program | Shoreline restoration and education and outreach around Choctawhatchee Bay; Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance | $50,000 | 2.11 | All funds expended and project complete for FY 2022-23 | 100% |
| Live Oak Point Living Shoreline | Construct 4,695 LF breakwater with salt marsh planting at Live Oak Point peninsula; 2.42 acres of restoration with 8.42 acres enhancement | $518,914 | 10.86 | Construction in progress; planting initiated | 66% |
| **Apalachicola River and Bay Watershed** | | | | | |
| Jackson Blue Spring and Chipola River Springs Agricultural BMP Cost Share Program | Financial assistance to producers in the Jackson Blue Spring contribution area to implement irrigation efficiency and water quality BMPs. Producers, FDACS, NRCS | $8,668,375 | NA | Years 1-4 complete, Years 5-7 in progress, and Year 8 in planning | Continuing |
| Sod-based Crop Rotation Program | Cost-share program designed to help agricultural producers improve water quality and reduce water use demands in and around Jackson Blue Spring | $1,146,500 | NA | In Progress | N/A – Continuing program |
| Sod-based Crop Rotation Pilot Project | Pilot project within the Jackson Blue Spring basin to complete a four-year rotation cycle to reduce water use and nutrient application rates while increasing crop yields; UF IFAS | $244,732 | NA | Complete | 100% |

**(3) Balance of released mitigation credits**

Wetland mitigation "credit" is a measure of the environmental functional improvement (lift) generated from implementation of wetland mitigation projects. Credits are produced by restoration, enhancement, preservation, or creation activities, and are normally calculated by the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM), as defined in section 373.4137(18), F.S, although other assessment methods, including the Wetland Rapid Assessment Procedure, have also been used. Since the establishment of the District's wetland mitigation program in 1997 to comply with section 373.4137, F.S. (providing mitigation for FDOT projects), and through the end of FY 2022-23, 855.80 credits have been developed and released by permitting authorities. A total of 551.94 credits have been used ("debited") to offset wetland impacts, leaving a Regional Mitigation Plan balance of 303.86 credits at the end of the fiscal year. Over time, the number of mitigation credits developed and used annually through this program has declined as private mitigation banks have come online for parts of northwest Florida allowing the FDOT to use a private mitigation bank first when needed. Additional information may be found at: https://www.nwfwater.com/Water-Resources/Regional-Wetland-Mitigation-Program.

## Milestones and Deliverables

**Table 1.13 Watershed Protection and Restoration Milestones and Deliverables**

| Milestone | Target Date | Status |
|---|---|---|
| (1) Live Oak Point Living Shoreline | 2024 | Under construction |

| Deliverable | Status |
|---|---|
| (1) Annual Regional Wetland Mitigation Plan and Mitigation Monitoring Reports | Annual monitoring for the regional wetland mitigation plan and FDOT mitigation projects was completed in the fall of 2023 with most projects meeting or exceeding success criteria. Remedial actions are planned for sites not meeting success criteria. Monitoring reports were completed in accordance with permit requirements and posted to https://www.nwfwater.com/Water-Resources/Regional-Wetland-Mitigation-Program for public review. |
| (2) Land Management Plan | Ongoing activities include prescribed burns, planting native pine tree species seedlings and native groundcover, erosion control, improving site access, and managing and maintaining public access sites and roads. Land management plans are posted to https://nwfwater.com/lands/land-management/. |
| (3) Florida Forever Work Plan Annual Report | Completed annually |
| (4) Project completion reports | As projects are completed |

# Consolidated Annual Report
# Chapter 2

## Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels
## Annual Priority List and Schedule

# Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels
# Annual Priority List and Schedule

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# Chapter 2. MFLs Annual Priority List and Schedule

## Introduction

Section 373.042, F.S., requires each water management district to develop minimum flows and minimum water levels (MFLs) for specific surface and ground waters within its jurisdiction. The MFL for a given waterbody is the limit at which further withdrawals would significantly harm the water resources or ecology of the area. MFLs are established using best available data and consideration is given to natural seasonal fluctuations; non-consumptive uses; and environmental values associated with coastal, estuarine, riverine, spring, aquatic, and wetlands ecology as specified in Chapter 62-40.473, F.A.C.

The multi-year process of MFL establishment involves identification of priority waterbodies, data collection, technical assessments, peer review, public involvement, rulemaking, and rule adoption. Adopted MFLs are considered when reviewing consumptive use permit applications. A recovery or prevention strategy must be developed for any waterbody where consumptive uses, currently or anticipated within the next 20 years, will result in flows or levels below an adopted MFL.

## MFL Priority List and Schedule

The NWFWMD FY 2023-24 MFL Priority List and Schedule includes two first magnitude springs (Gainer Spring Group and Jackson Blue Spring); three second magnitude springs (Williford Spring Group, Sylvan Spring Group, and Morrison Spring); one coastal aquifer system; and one river system (Shoal River) (Figure 2.1, Table 2.1). The MFL Priority List and Schedule are re-evaluated annually and adjustments are made as appropriate. Additional waterbodies are anticipated to be scheduled in future years (Table 2.2). The waterbodies comprising the priority list continue to represent an ambitious yet achievable MFL program, which is being implemented in an efficient and technically sound manner.

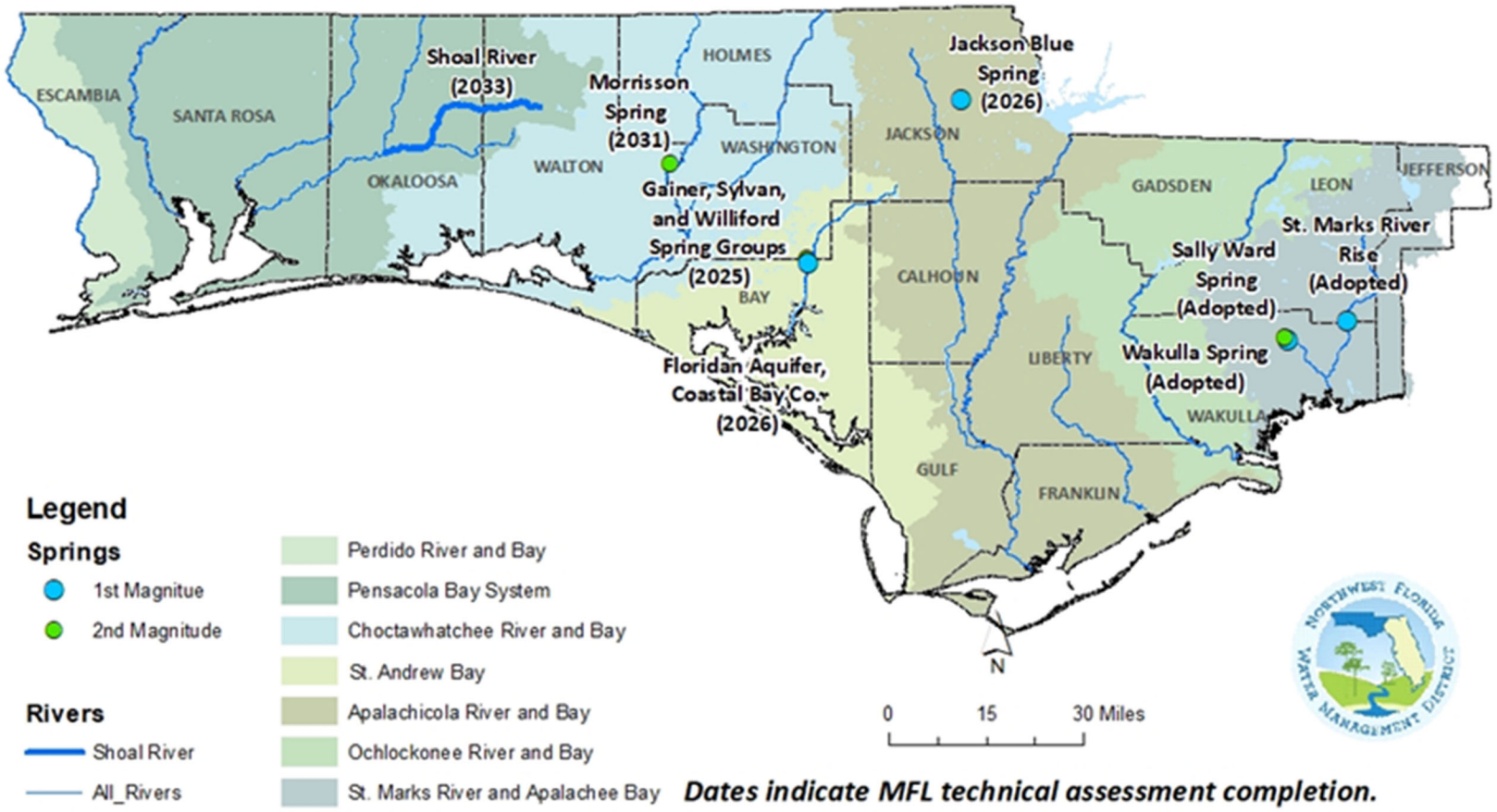


**Figure 2.1 NWFWMD FY 2023-24 MFL Priority Waterbodies**

**Table 2.1 Northwest Florida Water Management District FY 2023-24 Priority List and Schedule**

| New or Re-Evaluation | Waterbody Name or Compliance Point[1] | System Name[2] | Waterbody Type[3] | County(s) | Voluntary Peer Review to be Completed? | Cross-Boundary Impacts from Adjacent WMD? | Latitude[4] | Longitude[4] | Rulemaking Status[5] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **NWFWMD Minimum Flows and Levels to be adopted in 2025** | | | | | | | | | |
| New | Gainer Spring Group | Gainer Spring Group | Spring - 1 | Bay | Yes | No | 30.428594 | -85.548020 | N/A |
| New | Sylvan Spring Group | Sylvan Spring Group | Spring - 2 | Bay | Yes | No | 30.432593 | -85.547897 | N/A |
| New | Williford Spring Group | Williford Spring Group | Spring - 2 | Washington | Yes | No | 30.438556 | -85.547997 | N/A |
| **NWFWMD Minimum Flows and Levels to be adopted in 2026** | | | | | | | | | |
| New | Jackson Blue Spring | Jackson Blue Spring | Spring - 1 | Jackson | Yes | No | 30.790333 | -85.140175 | N/A |
| **NWFWMD Minimum Flows and Levels to be adopted in 2027** | | | | | | | | | |
| New | Coastal Floridan Aquifer | Coastal Floridan Aquifer | Aquifer | Bay | Yes | No | To be determined | To be determined | N/A |
| **NWFWMD Minimum Flows and Levels to be adopted in 2031** | | | | | | | | | |
| New | Morrison Spring | Morrison Spring | Spring - 2 | Walton | Yes | No | 30.657864 | -85.904080 | N/A |
| **NWFWMD Minimum Flows and Levels to be adopted in 2033** | | | | | | | | | |
| New | Shoal River | Shoal River | River | Walton, Okaloosa | Yes | No | 30.753267 | -85.509575 | N/A |

[1]A spring with one vent should be labeled as "Example Spring." A spring with multiple associated vents should be labeled as "Example Springs." Multiple springs grouped together in a system should be labeled as "Example Spring Group." (Please refer to Florida Spring Classification System and Spring Glossary, Special Publication No. 52, for more details.) Include on individual lines, with specific names, if it is known at this time that there will be multiple waterbodies or compliance points (such as springs or multiple river gages) associated with the MFL.

[2]Include a system name if the waterbody (or compliance point) is a part of a larger system (i.e., river and spring waterbodies belong to one overall system, multiple priority springs represent individual MFLs but belong to one system). If not, then the Waterbody Name and System should be the same.

[3]Aquifer, Estuary, Lake, River, River-Estuary, Spring-1, Spring-2, Spring-3, Wetland. Number indicates spring magnitude.

[4]For rivers, use the coordinates for the most upstream gage used to measure flow. For lakes, use the lake's center point. For springs, use the coordinates for the gage used to measure flow unless the gage is not located on the spring/spring run, in which case, use the spring's vent. For aquifers, wetlands, and estuaries, use the coordinates for the wells or gage used to measure the water source's level. Please use Decimal Degrees (DD) formatting.

[5]Rulemaking Status would be the last 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. If formal rulemaking has not yet begun, enter N/A.

**Table 2.2 Waterbodies for Future Years**

| New or Re-Evaluation | Waterbody Name | Waterbody Type** | County(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| New | Sand-and-Gravel Aquifer | Aquifer | Okaloosa, Santa Rosa |
| New | Horn Spring | Spring - 2 | Leon |
| New | Holmes Blue Spring | Spring - 2 | Holmes |
| New | Ponce De Leon Spring | Spring - 2 | Holmes |
| New | Baltzell Spring Group | Spring - 2 | Jackson |
| New | Blue Hole Spring | Spring - 2 | Jackson |
| New | Mullet Spring | Spring - 2 | Washington |
| New | Telogia Creek | River | Gadsden |

**River, Lake, Spring - Magnitude, Wetland, Aquifer.

## Reservations

Regulatory reservations have been established for the Apalachicola and Chipola rivers (Table 2.3).

**Table 2.3 Waterbodies Subject to Regulatory Reservations**

| Waterbody | Counties | Reservations |
|---|---|---|
| Apalachicola River | Calhoun, Gadsden, Gulf, Franklin, Jackson, Liberty | The magnitude, duration, and frequency of observed flows are reserved, essentially in total, all seasons for the protection of fish and wildlife of the Chipola River, Apalachicola River, associated floodplains and Apalachicola Bay (40A-2.223, F.A.C.). |
| Chipola River | Calhoun, Gulf, Jackson | |

# Consolidated Annual Report
# Chapter 3

## Annual Five-Year
## Capital Improvements Plan

# Annual Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan

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# Chapter 3. Annual Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan

## Introduction

The five-year capital improvements plan (CIP) includes projected revenues and expenditures for capital improvements from fiscal years 2023-24 through 2027-28. As directed by section 373.536(6)(a)(3), F.S., the CIP has been prepared in a manner comparable to the fixed capital outlay format set forth in section 216.043, F.S. The format for this plan is drawn from the standard budget reporting format prescribed by the Executive Office of the Governor. Capital improvement projects may be budgeted in either of two standard program categories. Those programs and their activities and sub-activities are represented below:

2.0 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

3.0 Operation and Maintenance of Lands and Works
- 3.1 Land Management
- 3.2 Works
- 3.3 Facilities
- 3.4 Invasive Plant Control
- 3.5 Other Operation and Maintenance Activities

Activities and sub-activities under program 2.0 Acquisition, Restoration and Public Works that may include capital improvement projects are: 2.1 Land Acquisition, 2.2.1 Water Resource Development Projects, 2.2.2 Water Supply Development Assistance, 2.3 Surface Water Projects, 2.5 Facilities Construction and Major Renovations, and 2.6 Other Acquisition and Restoration Activities. The District has applicable capital improvement projects in categories 2.1, 2.3, 2.5, and 2.6.

Activities under program 3.0 Operation and Maintenance of Lands and Works that may include capital improvement projects are: 3.1 Land Management and 3.2 Works. The District does not have any applicable capital improvement projects in these activities.

The CIP includes expenditures for basic construction costs (permits, inspections, site development, etc.) and other project costs (land, survey, existing facility acquisition, professional services, etc.).

This CIP contains only those projects that will be owned and capitalized as fixed assets by the District. The District does not capitalize construction projects having a total project cost of less than $50,000. Therefore, land management activities and small capital projects less than $50,000 may be included in the District's budget but not reported in the CIP.

## Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan

The purpose of the Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan is to project future needs and anticipate future funding requirements to meet those needs. The development and construction of all capital projects are budgeted either under program heading *2.0 Acquisition, Restoration and Public Works* or under program heading *3.0 Operation and Maintenance of Lands and Work*s.

The District's capital improvements projects are categorized according to the following activities:

- Land Acquisition;
- Surface Water Projects;
- Facilities Construction and Major Renovations;
- Land Management.

District plans that also provide information on long-range capital improvements include: the Florida Forever Work Plan, Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program, and Northwest Florida Regional Mitigation Plan.

**Table 3.1 NWFWMD Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan, Fiscal Years 2023-27**

**2.0 ACQUISITION, RESTORATION, AND PUBLIC WORKS**

**2.1 Land Acquisition**

| Revenues ($) | Fiscal Year | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 |
| DEP General Revenue (Springs) | | | | | |
| Land Management Fund (Reserves) | | | | | |
| Land Acquisition Trust Fund (Springs) | 9,989,938 | 9,693,014 | 5,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 |
| Land Acquisition Trust Fund (Land Management) | 191,168 | 191,873 | | | |
| **TOTAL** | **10,181,106** | **9,884,887** | **5,000,000** | **1,000,000** | **1,000,000** |

| Expenditures ($) | Fiscal Year | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 |
| Acquisition of Land | 9,762,552 | 9,466,651 | 4,750,000 | 900,000 | 900,000 |
| Pre-acquisition Costs | 418,554 | 418,236 | 250,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **10,181,106** | **9,884,887** | **5,000,000** | **1,000,000** | **1,000,000** |

**2.3 Surface Water Projects**

| Revenues ($) | Fiscal Year | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 |
| FDOT Mitigation Funds | 2,030,376 | 1,438,936 | 1,300,000 | 900,000 | 900,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **2,030,376** | **1,438,936** | **1,300,000** | **900,000** | **900,000** |

| Expenditures ($) | Fiscal Year | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 |
| FDOT Mitigation | 2,030,376 | 1,438,936 | 1,300,000 | 900,000 | 900,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **2,030,376** | **1,438,936** | **1,300,000** | **900,000** | **900,000** |

| 2.5 Facilities Construction and Major Renovations | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Revenues ($)** | **Fiscal Year** | | | | |
| | **2023-24** | **2024-25** | **2025-26** | **2026-27** | **2027-28** |
| Florida Forever | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Water Management Lands Trust Fund | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cash Carryover | 50,000 | 75,000 | 75,000 | 75,000 | 75,000 |
| Regulatory General Fund | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | **50,000** | **75,000** | **75,000** | **75,000** | **75,000** |

| **Expenditures ($)** | **Fiscal Year** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2023-24** | **2024-25** | **2025-26** | **2026-27** | **2027-28** |
| Construction and Renovations | 50,000 | 75,000 | 75,000 | 75,000 | 75,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **50,000** | **75,000** | **75,000** | **75,000** | **75,000** |

| 2.6 OTHER ACQUISITION AND RESTORATION ACTIVITIES | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Revenues ($)** | **Fiscal Year** | | | | |
| | **2023-24** | **2024-25** | **2025-26** | **2026-27** | **2027-28** |
| Land Acquisition Trust Fund (Springs) | 1,515,743 | 1,421,622 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | **1,515,734** | **1,421,622** | **0** | **0** | **0** |

| **Expenditures ($)** | **Fiscal Year** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2023-24** | **2024-25** | **2025-26** | **2026-27** | **2027-28** |
| Cypress Spring Restoration | 1,515,743 | 1,421,622 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | **1,515,743** | **1,421,622** | **0** | **0** | **0** |

| **TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES ($)** | **13,520,654** | **13,494,694** | **6,350,000** | **1,950,000** | **1,950,000** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

## Project Descriptions

The following pages provide a brief description of each capital improvements plan activity.

## PROGRAM: 2.0 ACQUISITION, RESTORATION, AND PUBLIC WORKS
## ACTIVITY: 2.1 LAND ACQUISITION

**Project Title:** Pre-acquisition costs for land acquisition purchases

**Type:** N/A

**Physical Location:** N/A

**Square Footage/Physical Description:** N/A

**Expected Completion Date:** N/A

**Historical Background/Need for Project:** To preserve and protect the water resources within the District's 16-county boundary.

**Plan Linkages:** Florida Forever Work Plan, Strategic Water Management Plan

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

**Alternative(s):** None

**Basic Construction Costs (includes permits, inspections, communications requirements, utilities outside building, site development, other):** N/A

**Other Project Costs (includes land, survey, existing facility acquisition, professional services, other):** Land acquisition ancillary costs include appraisals, survey, Phase I ESA, baseline report, legal fees, and other professional services and fees associated with the purchase of lands. Specific costs will vary based on individual land acquisition purchases.

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial (includes salaries, benefits, equipment, furniture, expenses):** N/A

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing:** N/A

## PROGRAM: 2.0 ACQUISITION, RESTORATION, AND PUBLIC WORKS
## ACTIVITY: 2.1 LAND ACQUISITION

**Project Title:** Jackson Blue Spring Land Acquisition

**Type:** Unimproved land approximate to a first magnitude spring

**Physical Location:** Jackson Blue Spring basin, Jackson County

**Square Footage/Physical Description:** Acquisition of conservation easements or fee simple purchase of property in Jackson County within the Jackson Blue Spring Basin Management Action Plan area.

**Expected Completion Date:** On or before December 31, 2025

**Historical Background/Need for Project:** The Jackson Blue Spring acquisition project will further the District's mission of protecting the water resources of Jackson Blue Spring through the acquisition of fee simple or conservation easements.

**Plan Linkages:** Florida Forever Work Plan, Strategic Water Management Plan, Apalachicola River and Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan, Jackson Blue Spring and Merritt's Mill Pond Basin Management Action Plan

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

**Alternative(s):** Fee simple acquisition of each project proposed for conservation easement and less than fee simple purchase of a project proposed for fee simple acquisition.

**Basic Construction Costs (includes permits, inspections, communications requirements, utilities outside building, site development, other):** N/A

**Other Project Costs (includes land, survey, existing facility acquisition, professional services, other):** Land acquisition ancillary costs include appraisals, survey, Phase I ESA, baseline report, legal fees, and other professional services and fees associated with the purchase of lands. Specific costs will vary based on individual land acquisition purchases.

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial (includes salaries, benefits, equipment, furniture, expenses):** N/A

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing:** Land management costs associated with fee simple ownership and monitoring costs associated with the purchase of a conservation easement are included in the Division of Asset Management's overall responsibilities.

## PROGRAM: 2.0 ACQUISITION, RESTORATION, AND PUBLIC WORKS
## ACTIVITY: 2.1 LAND ACQUISITION

**Project Title:** Chipola River Land Acquisition

**Type:** Unimproved land within the Chipola River Groundwater Contribution Area

**Physical Location:** Chipola River basin, Jackson and Calhoun counties

**Square Footage/Physical Description:** Acquisition of conservation easements or fee simple purchase of property in Jackson and Calhoun Counties within the Chipola River Groundwater Contribution Area.

**Expected Completion Date:** On or before December 31, 2025

**Historical Background/Need for Project:** The Chipola River land acquisition project will further the District's mission of protecting the water resources of the Chipola River Groundwater Contribution Area through the acquisition of fee simple or conservation easements.

**Plan Linkages:** Florida Forever Work Plan, Strategic Water Management Plan, Apalachicola River and Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan, Jackson Blue Spring and Merritt's Mill Pond Basin Management Action Plan

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

**Alternative(s):** Fee simple acquisition of each project proposed for conservation easement and less than fee simple purchase of a project proposed for fee simple acquisition.

**Basic Construction Costs (includes permits, inspections, communications requirements, utilities outside building, site development, other):** N/A

**Other Project Costs (includes land, survey, existing facility acquisition, professional services, other):** Land acquisition ancillary costs include appraisals, survey, Phase I ESA, baseline report, legal fees, and other professional services and fees associated with the purchase of lands. Specific costs will vary based on individual land acquisition purchases.

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial (includes salaries, benefits, equipment, furniture, expenses):** N/A

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing:** Land management costs associated with fee simple ownership and monitoring costs associated with the purchase of a conservation easement are included in the Division of Asset Management's overall responsibilities.

## PROGRAM: 2.0 ACQUISITION, RESTORATION, AND PUBLIC WORKS
## ACTIVITY: 2.1 LAND ACQUISITION

**Project Title:** Wakulla Spring Land Acquisition

**Type:** Unimproved land approximate to a first magnitude spring

**Physical Location:** Wakulla Spring basin, Leon and Wakulla counties

**Square Footage/Physical Description:** Properties in Leon and Wakulla counties in Priority Focus Area I and II of the Wakulla Springs Basin Action Management Plan area.

**Expected Completion Date:** On or before December 31, 2025

**Historical Background/Need for Project:** The Wakulla Spring acquisition project will further the District's mission of protecting the water resources of Wakulla Spring through the acquisition of fee simple or conservation easements.

**Plan Linkages:** Florida Forever Work Plan, Strategic Water Management Plan, St. Marks River and Apalachee Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan, Upper Wakulla River and Wakulla Springs Basin Management Action Plan

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

**Alternative(s):** Fee simple acquisition of each project proposed for conservation easement and less than fee simple purchase of a project proposed for fee simple acquisition.

**Basic Construction Costs (includes permits, inspections, communications requirements, utilities outside building, site development, other):** N/A

**Other Project Costs (includes land, survey, existing facility acquisition, professional services, other):** Land acquisition ancillary costs include appraisals, survey, Phase I ESA, baseline report, legal fees, and other professional services and fees associated with the purchase of lands. Specific costs will vary based on individual land acquisition purchases.

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial (includes salaries, benefits, equipment, furniture, expenses):** N/A

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing:** Monitoring costs associated with the conservation easement are included in the Division of Asset Management's overall responsibilities. If fee simple ownership is acquired, the District will request land management activities be provided by another agency in the local area.

## PROGRAM: 2.0 ACQUISITION, RESTORATION, AND PUBLIC WORKS
## ACTIVITY: 2.1 LAND ACQUISITION

**Project Title:** Econfina Creek Land Acquisition

**Type:** Unimproved land within the Econfina Creek Groundwater Contribution Area

**Physical Location:** Econfina Creek, Bay and Washington counties

**Square Footage/Physical Description:** Properties in Bay and Washington counties within the Econfina Creek Groundwater Contribution Area.

**Expected Completion Date:** On or before December 31, 2025

**Historical Background/Need for Project:** The Econfina Creek acquisition project will further the District's mission of protecting the water resources of Econfina Creek and Gainer Springs through the acquisition of fee simple or conservation easements.

**Plan Linkages:** Florida Forever Work Plan, Strategic Water Management Plan, St. Andrew Bay Watershed Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan

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

**Alternative(s):** Fee simple acquisition of a project proposed for conservation easement and less than fee simple purchase of a project proposed for fee simple acquisition.

**Basic Construction Costs (includes permits, inspections, communications requirements, utilities outside building, site development, other):** N/A

**Other Project Costs (includes land, survey, existing facility acquisition, professional services, other):** Land acquisition ancillary costs include appraisals, survey, Phase I ESA, baseline report, legal fees, and other professional services and fees associated with the purchase of lands. Specific costs will vary based on individual land acquisition purchases.

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial (includes salaries, benefits, equipment, furniture, expenses):** N/A

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing:** Land management costs associated with fee simple ownership and monitoring costs associated with the purchase of a conservation easement are included in the Division of Asset Management's overall responsibilities.

## PROGRAM: 2.0 ACQUISITION, RESTORATION, AND PUBLIC WORKS
## ACTIVITY: 2.3 SURFACE WATER PROJECTS

**Project Title:** Regional Mitigation for FDOT Wetlands Impacts

**Type:** Wetlands, waterbodies, and buffers that qualify as mitigation for FDOT wetland impacts

**Physical Location:** Various locations; watersheds within the District

**Square Footage/Physical Description:** Land purchases and habitat restoration activities (hydrologic restoration, shrub reduction, planting, prescribed fire, herbicide, etc.), to include construction of various capital restoration structures (e.g., low water crossings and water control structures).

**Expected Completion Date:** Program is ongoing, year-to-year.

**Historical Background/Need for Project:** Section 373.4137, F.S. provides that districts mitigate for FDOT wetland impacts that are not within the service area of a mitigation bank or when credits from a mitigation bank are not deemed appropriate.

**Plan Linkages:** Northwest Florida Regional Mitigation Plan, Florida Forever Work Plan, SWIM plans, Strategic Water Management Plan, Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank Instrument, In-Lieu Fee Mitigation Program Final Instrument

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

**Alternative(s):** Specific projects may be excluded from the mitigation plan, in whole or in part, upon the election of the FDOT, a transportation authority if applicable, or the District.

**Basic Construction Costs (includes permits, inspections, communications requirements, utilities outside building, site development, other):** Variable; multiple projects. Costs are determined by project type (habitat restoration, hydrologic restoration and enhancement, land acquisition, etc.).

**Other Project Costs (includes land, survey, existing facility acquisition, professional services, other):** An amount equal to 15 percent of the total construction and land acquisition costs are typically estimated for engineering design work, surveying, land appraisals, environmental audits, etc.

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial (includes salaries, benefits, equipment, furniture, expenses):** Variable; multiple projects. Costs are determined by project type (habitat restoration, hydrologic restoration and enhancement, land acquisition, etc.).

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing:** Variable; multiple projects. Costs are determined by project type (habitat restoration, hydrologic restoration and enhancement, land acquisition, etc.).

## PROGRAM: 2.0 ACQUISITION, RESTORATION, AND PUBLIC WORKS
## ACTIVITY: 2.5 FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION AND MAJOR RENOVATIONS

**Project Title:** Renovations

**Type:** No renovations scheduled during FY 2023-24.

**Physical Location:** N/A

**Square Footage/Physical Description:** No renovations scheduled during FY 2023-24.

**Expected Completion Date:** N/A

**Historical Background/Need for Project:** No projects scheduled during FY 2023-24.

**Plan Linkages:** Strategic Water Management Plan, District Budget

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

**Alternative(s):** None

**Basic Construction Costs (includes permits, inspections, communications requirements, utilities outside building, site development, other):** $50,000 budgeted for Renovations in FY 2023-24 for unanticipated repairs.

**Other Project Costs (includes land, survey, existing facility acquisition, professional services, other):** N/A

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial (includes salaries, benefits, equipment, furniture, expenses):** N/A

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing:** None

## PROGRAM: 2.0 ACQUISITION, RESTORATION, AND PUBLIC WORKS
## ACTIVITY: 2.6 OTHER ACQUISITION AND RESTORATION ACTIVITIES

**Project Title:** Cypress Spring Restoration and Protection

**Type:** Spring and Shoreline Restoration and Protection

**Physical Location:** Located off Highway 79 on Cypress Springs Road within the Choctawhatchee River Water Management Area

**Square Footage/Physical Description:** Spring and shoreline restoration utilizing structural and non-structural techniques and public access improvements.

**Expected Completion Date:** By December 31, 2025

**Historical Background/Need for Project:** A significant number of recreational users access Cypress Spring by boat, canoe, and kayak from nearby Culpepper Landing and Cotton Landing. Intensive use by the public has adversely impacted the spring's shoreline and aquatic and floodplain habitats. The Cypress Spring Restoration project provides for design and construction of shoreline restoration and access improvements to protect the spring run and Holmes Creek from continued degradation. The project may be expanded to include improved stormwater management and treatment.

**Plan Linkages:** Florida Forever Work Plan, Strategic Water Management Plan, Choctawhatchee River and Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan

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

**Alternative(s):** None

**Basic Construction Costs (includes permits, inspections, communications requirements, utilities outside building, site development, other):** Estimated $1.3 million for permitting, construction, and inspections.

**Other Project Costs (includes land, survey, existing facility acquisition, professional services, other):** Estimated $215,743 for design, engineering, and other professional services.

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Initial (includes salaries, benefits, equipment, furniture, expenses):** None

**Anticipated Additional Operating Costs/Continuing:** $39,809.00

## Appendix

Definitions for programs and activities used in this Five-Year Capital Improvement Program are included below. The definitions follow the water management district standard budget format.

**2.0 Acquisition, Restoration and Public Works**

This program includes the development and construction of all capital projects (except for those contained in Program 3.0), including water resource development projects/water supply development assistance, water control projects, support and administrative facilities construction, cooperative projects, land acquisition (including Save Our Rivers/Preservation 2000/Florida Forever), and the restoration of lands and waterbodies.

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

2.2 Water Source Development: The acquisition of land and facilities for the management and protection of water resources. This activity category includes land acquisition components of "water resource development projects," "water supply development assistance projects," or "other water source development activities."

2.3 Surface Water Projects: Those projects that restore or protect surface water quality, flood protection, or surface-water related resources through the acquisition and improvement of land, construction of public works, and other activities.

2.5 Facilities Construction and Major Renovations: Design, construction, and significant renovation of all District support and administrative facilities.

2.6 Other Acquisition and Restoration Activities: Restoration and protection of springs, spring shorelines, and creek and river shorelines located on District lands while allowing for public access and recreation.

**3.0 Operation and Maintenance of Lands and Works**

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

3.1 Land Management: Maintenance, custodial, public use improvements, and restoration efforts for lands acquired through Save Our Rivers, Preservation 2000, Florida Forever, or other land acquisition programs.

# Consolidated Annual Report
# Chapter 4

## Alternative Water Supplies
## Annual Report

# Alternative Water Supplies Annual Report

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# Chapter 4. Alternative Water Supplies Annual Report

Section 373.707, F.S., directs each water management district to submit an annual report on the disbursal of all budgeted funds for the purpose of alternative water supply (AWS) development. This report describes AWS projects receiving state alternative water supply grant funding, as well as funding from the Water Protection and Sustainability Program (WPSP) Trust Fund, the District's general fund, and cooperators.

The District completed several AWS projects using $21.57 million in WPSP funds from FY 2005-06 through FY 2008-09, leveraging more than $78 million in local contributions. Current AWS projects underway through the end of FY 2022-23 are included in Table 4.1. These projects have received funding from DEP's AWS funding program, the WSD grant program, the District's general fund, and local contributions.

Section 373.707(8)(b), F.S., provides that 10 percent of state revenues dedicated to WPSP be distributed to the District. In 2019, $100,000 was allocated to the District. This funding was committed to the South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative in the District's water supply planning Region II (Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties). An additional $180,000 in WPSP funds was appropriated in FY 2020-21 to provide further support for alternative water supply development.

Notably, the District is providing funding for the South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative, a four-phase project that will develop reclaimed water capacity as an alternative water supply source to meet long-term needs in southern Santa Rosa County and reduce or eliminate a pollutant loading discharge into Santa Rosa Sound. Funding has been awarded through DEP's AWS program in the amount of $10,100,000 through October 2023.

The Okaloosa-Eglin Air Force Base-Niceville Reclaimed Water Project was completed in June 2023. The alternative water supply project constructed 11 miles of reuse main connecting Eglin Air Force Base and the city of Niceville to the Okaloosa County Arbennie Pritchett Water Reclamation Facility.

Additionally, the District and cooperators have contributed funding for agricultural programs that have resulted in water conservation and water quality improvements by improving irrigation efficiency, conserving water, and reducing nutrient loading. These include the agriculture cost share program, sod-based crop rotation cost share program, and mobile irrigation laboratory program. Specific funding and benefits for these programs can be found in Chapter 1.

**Table 4.1 Current Alternative Water Supply Projects (through September 2023)**

| Project | Region | Local Sponsor | Activity | Status | Funding Source[1] | Anticipated Water[2] | NWFWMD Contribution | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| North Bay Wastewater Reuse | III | Bay County | Water reuse | Construction | GF | 1.5 mgd | $500,000 | $7,656,968 |
| Pensacola Beach Reclaimed Water System Expansion | I | Emerald Coast Utilities Authority | Water reuse | Construction | WSD | 0.23 mgd 2.5 MG | $947,000 | $7,972,800 |
| Okaloosa County/Eglin AFB/Niceville Reclaimed Water Project | II | Okaloosa County | Water reuse | Complete | AWS | 2.5 mgd | $2,500,000 | $10,500,000 |
| South Santa Rosa County Reuse Initiative, Phases I-IV | II | Santa Rosa County; Holley-Navarre Water System; Gulf Breeze | Water reuse | Construction | AWS | 1.4 mgd 0.5 MG | $10,100,000 | $32,875,000 |
| Chumuckla Hwy. Ground Storage Tank and Booster Pump Station | II | Pace Water System | Water reuse | Design/ Engineering | AWS | 1.0 mgd 2.0 MG | $1,110,725 | $2,221,450 |
| | | | | | **Totals** | **6.63 mgd 5.0 MG** | **$15,157,725** | **$61,226,218** |

[1]Funding sources include the Water Protection and Sustainability Program, District General Fund, Water Supply Development Grant Program, and DEP's Alternative Water Supply Program

[2]Anticipated water flow (mgd) and/or storage capacity (MG) to be made available at project completion

# Consolidated Annual Report
# Chapter 5

## FY 2023-2024 Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program

# FY 2023-2024 Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program

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# Chapter 5. FY 2023-2024 Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program

## Introduction

Florida's water management districts are required by sections 373.036 and 373.709, Florida Statutes (F.S.), to conduct water supply planning in regions where existing sources of water are determined to be inadequate to supply water for existing and future reasonable-beneficial uses, and to sustain water resources and related natural systems for at least a 20-year planning period. This determination is based on a technical assessment of all sources of water, existing water uses, anticipated future needs, and water conservation efforts. District governing boards re-evaluate the determination at least once every five years.

The District established seven water supply planning regions in 1996 (Figure 5.1). The most recent Districtwide water supply assessment (WSA) was completed in 2018. Consistent with the findings of successive assessments beginning in 1998, the Region II (Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties) RWSP was first approved and has been in implementation since February 2001. The plan was most recently updated in 2019 with a 2020-2040 planning horizon. Additional information is available at: https://nwfwater.com/Water-Resources/Water-Supply-Planning.

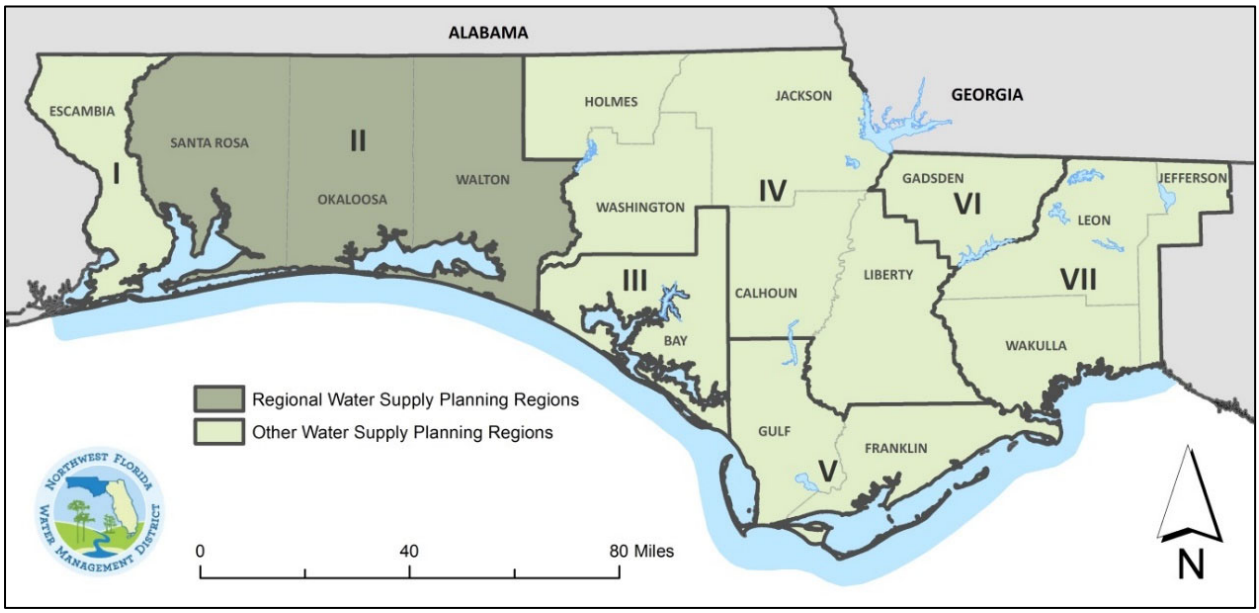


**Figure 5.1 NWFWMD Water Supply Planning Regions**

Districts are required by section 373.536(6)(a)4, F.S., to prepare a Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program (WRDWP, or Work Program) as a part of the annual budget reporting process. Work Programs describe implementation strategies and funding plans over a five-year period for water resource and water supply development, including alternative water supply development, for each approved regional water supply plan (RWSP) developed or revised under section 373.709, F.S.

This Work Program covers fiscal year (FY) 2023-24 through FY 2027-28. It is consistent with the projects and strategies described in the Region II RWSP and the District's final adopted budget.

## Purpose

Pursuant to section 373.536(6)(a)4, F.S., the work program must address all elements of the water resource development component in the approved RWSP and identify water supply projects proposed for District funding and assistance. The annual funding plan identifies anticipated District funding and additional funding needs. The Work Program must also:

- Identify projects that will provide water;
- Explain how each water resource development and water supply development 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 RWSPs in supporting the implementation of minimum flows and minimum water levels (MFLs) and water reservations; and
- Ensure sufficient water is available to 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.

A proposed work program is furnished within 30 days after adoption of the District's final budget and posted on the District website for public review. The final Five-Year WRDWP is incorporated into the District's March 1 Consolidated Annual Report.

## Work Program Summary

The work program presented herein, including the District's implementation strategy and five-year funding plan, has been developed to ensure water is available to meet the water supply needs of existing and future reasonable-beneficial uses for a 1-in-10-year drought event, to maintain the function of natural systems, and to avoid the adverse effects of competition for water supplies. The work program is specifically focused on implementation of the Region II RWSP, with additional description of Districtwide and supporting activities.

The fiscal year 2023-24 work program describes current progress toward implementing water resource development projects included within the Region II RWSP. The work program also describes funded alternative water supply development projects. The work program further includes five-year funding plans for water resource development and water supply development projects, to include the current year budgeted amounts and proposed funding levels for the following years.

For fiscal year 2023-24, $809,390 is budgeted for water resource development within Region II, and $11,346,340 is budgeted for alternative water supply development and water conservation within the region. The work program identifies approximately 2.4 million gallons per day (mgd) of reclaimed water to be made available through currently funded alternative water supply development projects within the region.

# Region II Work Program

The 2019 update to the Region II RWSP was developed following the recommendation of the 2018 Water Supply Assessment. The 2019 Region II RWSP was approved by the District's Governing Board on January 23, 2020. Water use was estimated to be about 70 mgd in 2015, and it is projected to climb 36 percent to approximately 95 mgd by 2040. Public supply and recreational landscape irrigation water uses are expected to remain approximately 85 percent of all Region II water demand throughout the planning horizon (Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1. 2015 Estimated Water Use and 2020-2040 Demand Projections**

| Use Category | Estimates | Future Demand Projections - Average Conditions | | | | | 2015-2040 Change | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 | 2040 | mgd | % |
| Public Supply | 47.48 | 51.65 | 55.28 | 58.78 | 62.00 | 65.00 | 17.52 | 36.9% |
| DSS | 3.96 | 4.33 | 4.67 | 4.63 | 4.58 | 4.44 | 0.49 | 12.3% |
| Agriculture | 2.80 | 3.00 | 3.24 | 3.52 | 3.77 | 3.97 | 1.17 | 41.8% |
| Recreational | 10.79 | 11.83 | 12.75 | 13.55 | 14.29 | 14.92 | 4.13 | 38.3% |
| ICI | 4.71 | 6.07 | 6.32 | 6.55 | 6.55 | 6.55 | 1.84 | 39.0% |
| Power | - | - | - | - | - | - | n/a | n/a |
| **TOTALS*** | **69.73** | **76.88** | **82.25** | **87.03** | **91.19** | **94.88** | **25.14** | **36.1%** |

*Figures expressed in million gallons per day (mgd). Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Public supply is estimated to represent about 67 to 69 percent of the future demand over the planning horizon. In drought conditions, public supply and recreational landscape irrigation together are projected to comprise about 86.5 percent of demand in 2040.

There are currently no adopted MFLs, no recovery or prevention strategies, and no water reservations in Region II.

## Water Resource Development

Water resource development is "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 section 373.016."[1] As indicated in section 373.705, F.S., water resource development is primarily a role of the water management districts, although utilities may provide assistance.

The Region II RWSP includes six water resource development projects encompassing strategies for managing water resources and supporting alternative water supply development (Table 5.2).

[1] Section 373.019(24), F.S.

**Table 5.2. Summary of Region II Water Resource Development Projects**

| Activity | Description | Water (mgd)* |
|---|---|---|
| Surface Water | Resource evaluations to determine minimum flows needed to protect riverine habitats and associated resources. | TBD |
| Reuse | Coordination of reuse of reclaimed water projects and programs. | 10 |
| Conservation | Coordination of water conservation projects and programs. | 6 |
| Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) | Technical support for ASR or aquifer recharge (AR) as a component of IWUPs. | 2 |
| Groundwater Evaluations | Sand-and-gravel aquifer resource evaluations to update alternative water supply assessments. | TBD |
| | Floridan aquifer resource evaluations and Coastal Floridan MFL Technical Assessment to develop and apply groundwater flow and saltwater intrusion models with recovery/prevention strategies as required. | TBD |
| Data Collection and Analysis | Hydrologic and water quality data collection, monitoring, and analyses. | NA |
| | Water use data, analyses, planning, and WSD support. | NA |

*Estimates of water available or potential to be made available.

## Surface Water Development

Surface water investigations and cooperative efforts have focused on the Shoal River as an alternative water supply source for Okaloosa County. This source has the potential to augment potable water supplies in mid-county and coastal areas of Okaloosa County, which will further support water resource sustainability and reduce reliance on Floridan aquifer withdrawals in coastal areas. Okaloosa County has acquired land along the Shoal River and has completed significant planning and analysis toward development of a future water supply source.

District staff developed an MFL Work Plan for the Shoal River and identified preliminary hydrologic data collection needs. In consideration of updated demand projections in Okaloosa County, the schedule for development of an MFL technical assessment for the Shoal River is anticipated to be added back to the 2023 update to the MFL Priority List and Schedule. No additional surface water supply projects are currently under development within the region.

## Reuse of Reclaimed Water

Developing reclaimed water sources is an important strategy for developing alternative sources of supply and meeting future demands in Region II. Reuse feasibility studies are required of water use permittees within the Region II Water Resource Caution Area (WRCA) and are encouraged in other areas. The District continues to work with local and regional partners to identify viable strategies to further develop and extend reclaimed water resources.

Reuse planning is focused on achieving potable offset by providing reclaimed water for such purposes as public access irrigation, toilet flushing, fire protection, and industrial uses. The RWSP identified a potential for up to 10 mgd of reclaimed water to be made available by 2040. Ongoing efforts are focused on project

development in cooperation with local governments and utilities and identification of future opportunities for water reuse and development of integrated water quality and quantity strategies. Cooperative water projects are listed in Table 5.4.

## Water Conservation

Like reuse, water conservation is an essential component of ensuring the long-term sustainability and sufficiency of water supplies within Region II. Enhanced water conservation measures are required of individual water use permittees within the coastal WRCA.

The RWSP identified a potential for up to six mgd in additional water conservation savings that may be achieved by 2040. Among potential strategies are cost-share grants and incentive programs, facility retrofits for improved efficiency and water-loss prevention, conservation rate structures, improved utility data management, and public education and outreach. Conservation rate structures, public education, enhanced data analysis, and water-loss prevention efforts are implemented by utilities in response to resource conditions and regulatory requirements. Water use data and analysis have documented sustained progress in reducing per capita water use rates.

The District will continue to seek funding for conservation grant programs to complement ongoing water conservation measures implemented by utilities and addressed through permit conditions. Additional efforts to support water conservation measures are reflected in the water supply development assistance budget to support grants to help rural communities acquire and install modern water meters to facilitate a reduction in water loss.

## Aquifer Storage and Recovery

Depending on hydrogeologic characteristics, aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) has the potential to store large quantities of water for subsequent use. A few aquifer recharge projects have been permitted in the region for groundwater remediation and restoration. The RWSP estimated approximately 2.0 mgd may be achieved over the 20-year planning horizon through ASR, including an existing ASR system permitted for 1.12 mgd. There are no current ASR projects included in the District's Budget or Five-Year Work Program.

## Groundwater Evaluations

District groundwater evaluation programs include data collection, groundwater and saltwater intrusion modeling, MFL technical assessments, and associated resource assessments.

### *Sand-and-Gravel Aquifer*

The District plans to incorporate sand-and-gravel aquifer resources into larger groundwater models and further evaluate the sustainability of the sand-and-gravel aquifer as an alternative water source. Groundwater levels within the sand-and-gravel aquifer are routinely monitored as part of District's Quarterly Water Level Trend and Continuous Monitoring networks. The District's 2020 MFL Priority List includes the sand-and-gravel aquifer in Okaloosa and Santa Rosa counties as a waterbody to be evaluated and scheduled, if necessary, for future years. Beginning in FY 2024-25, additional efforts are planned to include developing a sand-and-gravel aquifer model along with the Western District Model framework.

### *Floridan Aquifer*

The Floridan aquifer functions as a regional aquifer system across inland and coastal areas. Data collection and groundwater model development to support the Coastal Region II Upper Floridan Aquifer MFL technical assessment began in 2015. A regional groundwater flow model was updated and a sub-regional SEAWAT model was developed to simulate the effects of pumping on aquifer levels. In combination, these models were used to evaluate changes to the rate of saltwater intrusion under 2015 pumping conditions and projected pumping conditions through 2040 as presented in the 2018 Water Supply Assessment. Water quality trend analysis of saline indicators was also performed to identify locations of trends that may suggest movement of the saltwater inland.

The results of the modeling indicate saltwater intrusion continues to pose a significant challenge to Upper Floridan aquifer water supplies along coastal Planning Region II; however, the estimated rate of saltwater intrusion is relatively slow, and the risk to existing water supply wells due to additional groundwater pumping through 2040 is minimal. As a result, and in concert with the ongoing regulatory and planning programs, the District determined establishing minimum aquifer level for the Floridan aquifer in coastal Planning Region II is not necessary at present. The technical assessment was completed in August 2022 and will be reevaluated in future years.

Water quality and water level data collection activities will continue for the Upper Floridan aquifer. The groundwater modeling results were updated as part of the Districtwide Water Supply Assessment update in 2023 and additional updates will occur with the update of the Region II Regional Water Supply Plan to begin in FY 2023-24. Beginning in FY 2024-25, additional efforts are planned to include developing the Western District Model framework together with the sand-and-gravel aquifer model.

## Data Collection and Analysis

### *Hydrologic Data*

Hydrologic data collection, monitoring, and analyses are essential to multiple District functions and programs. In Region II, the District maintains a network of rainfall gauges, streamflow gauges, and monitoring wells. Hydrologic and water quality data collection are enhanced by continued cooperation with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and data provided by water use permittees. Data collected and the evaluation of long-term trends data inform water resource evaluation programs and activities.

As indicated previously, the Coastal Region II Upper Floridan aquifer MFL technical assessment was supported by construction of saltwater interface monitor wells, discrete interval water quality sampling at new and existing wells to determine the position of the saltwater interface, and evaluation of water quality trends in saline indicators. Sand-and-gravel aquifer monitoring wells within Region II provide water level data used for numerical groundwater flow models and to better understand surface water and groundwater interactions. This enhanced data collection and monitoring are scheduled to continue through the five-year work plan period. The increase indicated for FY 2023–24 through FY 2025-26 is associated with contracted services to monitor discharge in stage at the Shoal River and to perform discrete interval water quality sampling to monitor for potential saltwater intrusion.

***Water Use Data and Planning***

Water use data collection and analysis support multiple District and state programs and reporting requirements. Data are analyzed to prepare water use estimates and report metrics annually, with future demand projections generated every five years in conjunction with WSA updates. Annually, individual water use permittees submit water use/pumpage reports detailing water use over the past year. District staff compile and evaluate these reports to assess water use trends and to calculate per capita use statistics.

During FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23, District staff have completed an updated Districtwide water supply assessment. The public comment period closed in October 2023, and the 2023 Water Supply Assessment was presented and approval by the District Governing Board on December 14, 2023. Associated ongoing water supply planning efforts include collaboration with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services on Florida Statewide Agricultural Irrigation Demand annual reports, coordination with the Department of Environmental Protection and other water management districts, and assistance for the Florida Legislature's Office of Economic and Demographic Research.

## Water Resource Development Annual Funding Plan

The proposed annual funding plan to support accomplishment of the District's water resource development priorities, as described above, is provided by Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3. Region II RWSP Water Resource Development Annual Funding Plan**

| Water Resource Development Projects | Budget Activity | FY 22-23 Expenditures | Anticipated Five Year Work Program | | | | | FY 23-24 to FY 27-28 Cost Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | FY 23-24 Budget[1] | FY 24-25 | FY 25-26 | FY 26-27 | FY 27-28 | |
| Surface Water | 1.1.1<br>1.1.2 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| Reuse | 1.1.1<br>2.2.1 | $16,398 | $4,090 | $30,000 | $30,000 | $30,000 | $30,000 | $124,090 |
| Conservation | 1.1.1<br>2.2.1 | $19,403 | $16,530 | $12,000 | $12,000 | $15,000 | $12,000 | $67,530 |
| Aquifer Storage and Recovery | 2.2.1 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| Groundwater Evaluations | 1.1.2<br>2.2.1 | $64,025 | $411,380 | $250,000 | $250,000 | $250,000 | $250,000 | $1,411,380 |
| Data Collection and Analysis | 1.1.1<br>1.2.0 | $176,726 | $377,390 | $170,000 | $170,000 | $110,000 | $110,000 | $937,390 |
| **TOTAL** | | **$276,553** | **$809,390** | **$462,000** | **$462,000** | **$405,000** | **$402,000** | **$2,540,390** |

[1]Based on adopted budget.

Substantial water supply development funding is additionally budgeted to advance the reuse of reclaimed water and water conservation within the region, as described further below and listed in Table 5.4.

## Water Supply Development

Water supply development involves "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." Water supply development encompasses both traditional and alternative water supply development. Alternative water supply sources may include salt water, brackish waters, or surface water captured predominately during wet weather flows, sources made available through the addition of new storage capacity, reuse of reclaimed water, downstream augmentation of water bodies with reclaimed water, stormwater, and any other water supply source designated as nontraditional. As indicated by section 373.705, F.S., water supply development is primarily the role of local governments, regional water supply authorities, and water utilities, although water management districts may provide assistance.

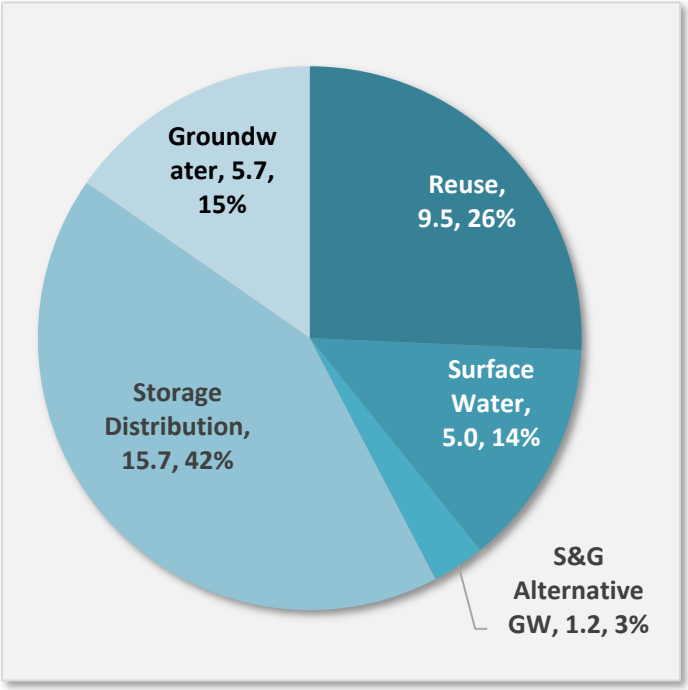


**Figure 5.2. Potential WSD Water Production by Project Type (mgd)**

The 2019 Region II RWSP identified water supply development options that may generate up to 37 mgd of water by 2040 for future needs (Figure 2). About 42 percent or 16 mgd are alternative supplies, including reclaimed water, surface water, and the sand-and-gravel aquifer as an alternative to coastal Floridan aquifer withdrawals.

Storage and distribution project options include water storage tanks, distribution infrastructure improvements, and system interconnections. Water conservation project options include infrastructure replacements and upgrades, advanced metering systems, and public information conservation programs.

Water conservation and AWS projects meet the goals of the RWSP and are therefore preferred options. Traditional groundwater projects may also continue to be an option for inland areas.

The 2019 RWSP includes, within the water supply development component, reuse project options submitted by utilities in all three Region II counties with a combined total potential reuse flow of 9.5 mgd. This is in addition to approximately 9.2 mgd of reclaimed water currently being provided by utilities in the region for public access irrigation. Most of the project options indicate some availability of local matching funds and proposed implementation within the next five to ten years.

State alternative water supply and Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund appropriations have been identified to leverage local and other resources. In FY 2022-23, Okaloosa County completed a 2.5 mgd reclaimed water transmission main connecting the County's Arbennie Pritchett Water Reclamation Facility to the City of Niceville and Eglin AFB

Ongoing projects are summarized below:

- The South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative, a cooperative effort between Santa Rosa County, the Holley-Navarre Water System, the City of Gulf Breeze, and Eglin AFB, will interconnect multiple utilities, improve water reclamation facilities, and expand reclaimed water systems. It will also increase the reclaimed water resource for the region and eliminate wastewater discharge into Santa Rosa Sound. Upon completion, this project is expected to make 1.4 mgd of reclaimed water available.
- Pace Water System Chumuckla Highway Ground Storage Tank and Booster Pump Station Project will provide for construction of a 2.0-million gallon ground storage tank and a booster pump station to deliver reclaimed water to residential customers and a park complex.

Additionally, the District is working with rural communities to identify funding resources that can reduce water loss and better position these communities to meet current and future water supply infrastructure needs. A grant project continues with the city of Paxton to reduce water loss through installation of approximately 350 water meters and appurtenances. Table 5.4 lists currently funded and previously funded major water supply development projects within Region II.

**Table 5.4 Region II Water Supply Development Annual Funding Plan**

| Unique ID | Project Name | Cooperating Entity | Project Type | Project Status | Total Water[1] (mgd) | Prior District Funding | FY 2023-24 Budgeted | FY 2024-25 | FY 2025-26 | FY 2026-27 | FY 2027-28 | Cooperating Entity Match | Project Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NF-00043A | Floridan Aquifer | Varies | Inland Groundwater | Complete | 17.19 | $8,745,149 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $15,578,371 | $24,323,520 |
| NF-00044A | Sand-and-Gravel Aquifer | Varies | Inland Groundwater | Complete | 6.08 | $3,302,647 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $451,947 | $3,754,594 |
| NF-00045A | Shoal River Surface Water | Okaloosa County | Surface Water Storage | On Hold | TBD | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| NF-00046A | Reuse[2] | Varies | Reclaimed Water for Potable Offset | Underway | TBD | $6,061,125 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $6,511,666 | $12,572,791 |
| NWWS-00052A | Okaloosa, Eglin AFB, Niceville Reclaimed Water | Okaloosa County | Reclaimed Water for Potable Offset | Complete | 2.50 | $2,500,000 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $8,000,000 | $10,500,000 |
| NWWS-00053 (A-D) | South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative | Holley-Navarre Water System; Santa Rosa County; City of Gulf Breeze, | Reclaimed Water for Potable Offset | Underway | 1.40 | $0 | $10,100,000[3] | $5.100,000 | $2,000,000 | $2,000,000 | $1,000,000 | $22,775,000 | $32,875,000 |
| | GST and Booster Pump Station | Pace Water System | Reclaimed Water for Potable Offset | Underway | 1.0 | $0 | $1,110,725 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $1,110,725 | $2,221,450 |
| | Water Meter Replacement | City of Paxton | PS Conservation | Underway | TBD | $0 | $135,615[4] | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $135,615 |
| NF-00047A | Storage and Distribution | Varies | Distribution/ Transmission Capacity | Underway | TBD | $6,481,222 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $0 | $21,902,083 | $28,383,305 |

[1] Total water made available or to be made available upon completion.
[2] Past reclaimed water projects funded within Region II.
[3] Includes $5,100,000 funding carried forward and $5,000,000 of additional state and federal alternative water supply funding.
[4] Includes $135,615 in Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund budget carried forward.

# Districtwide and Supporting Initiatives

Implementation of water resource, water supply development, and water quality projects in Region II are complemented by broader regional and Districtwide programs and initiatives. Programs such as these, including in areas where RWSP development is not required, reflect proactive efforts that are protective of resources and advance resource sustainability Districtwide.

## Water Supply Development

The District continues support for water supply development by assisting local governments and utilities with project development and in identifying funding sources and options. Limited additional grant funding may be provided as resources allow. In FY 2022-23, Gulf County completed a $300,000 grant project for upgrades to improve water service on St. Joseph Peninsula. Other ongoing projects include a $50,000 grant to the city of Gretna for construction of a ground storage tank and a $40,000 grant to the town of Campbellton for replacement of approximately 130 water meters to reduce water loss.

## Water Reuse

Helping local governments and utilities across northwest Florida identify opportunities to develop and expand the reuse of reclaimed water remains a District priority. Projects that both offset the use of potable water sources and reduce wastewater discharges have been identified in several regions.

During FY 2022-23, the city of Gretna completed a $44,385 project funded by the WPSTF to install effluent meters integrated within a supervisory control and data acquisition system to allow continuous monitoring of wastewater constituents. The city can continue to meet requirements for providing reclaimed water to a nearby nursery operation.

The District continues a $500,000 grant to assist Bay County in construction of an approximately six-mile reuse transmission main to provide reclaimed water to meet landscape irrigation water needs and reduce effluent discharge from the North Bay Wastewater Treatment Facility.

## Water Conservation

As funding becomes available, the District will extend water conservation cost-share assistance to utilities Districtwide, with emphasis on assisting financially disadvantaged small communities. Among projects considered may be installation of modern water meters to enable rural communities to improve potable water conservation and management. Additional efforts include agricultural water use efficiency measures, as described below.

## Water Resource Evaluations

The District conducts monitoring and assessment activities to assess the status and sustainability of water resources across northwest Florida. The 2023 Districtwide WSA, described above, will include evaluations of the sustainability of water resources through 2045 for all seven regions of the District. Additionally, during FY 2021-22, the District completed a hydrogeologic evaluation in Gulf County to assess the suitability of the intermediate aquifer as a water supply source. The work involved the construction of a test production well and several monitor wells, water quality testing, and completion of an aquifer performance test. The results indicated modest quantities of potable groundwater are available from the intermediate aquifer system near White City.

## Agricultural BMP Cost Share Program

Significant efforts continue to enhance agricultural water use efficiency and support implementation of associated precision agriculture practices, targeted primarily for the Jackson Blue Spring basin of the Apalachicola River watershed. Together with the Northwest Florida Mobile Irrigation Laboratory, these efforts are increasing water use efficiency and reducing nutrient applications within the spring basin.

## Well Abandonment

The District continues its program to properly plug abandoned and contaminated wells through well permitting and a cost-share assistance program. Well abandonments considered for financial assistance typically include financially constrained public water systems, wells located within a WRCA, and wells within areas delineated under Chapter 62-524, F.A.C. (Escambia, Santa Rosa, Jackson, and Leon counties). Other projects not meeting the previously listed criteria can also be considered, as appropriate.

During FY 2022-23, approximately 808 permits were issued to plug abandoned or contaminated wells Districtwide. Approximately 38 percent of those were in Region II. As there were no requests for financial assistance, permits were issued at no cost to the District other than staff time.

## Water Quality

The District's interrelated programs support achievement of statewide goals articulated in the Governor's Executive Orders 19-12 and 23-16 to improve water quality, as well as to further development of alternative water supplies and to enhance coastal resilience. The District's Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program provides a watershed-based planning framework to support water quality protection and improvement throughout northwest Florida. The program engages stakeholder-driven initiatives and complements and supports state water quality restoration efforts, including Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs), the Blue-Green Algae Task Force, nonpoint source management grants, and other cooperative funding programs. Priorities, funding resources, and progress for watershed management and water quality protection and restoration are outlined in Chapter 9 of the District's March 1 Consolidated Annual Report.

## Land Acquisition, Restoration, and Management

Since 1984, the District has protected 226,170 acres across northwest Florida for water resource purposes, either in fee simple or through conservation easements. The District acquires lands for water quality protection, flood protection and floodplain management, water recharge, and natural resource conservation. District lands within the Econfina Creek Recharge Area, purchased for water resource development purposes, serve to protect the quality and quantity of recharge for Deer Point Lake Reservoir, the primary source of water for Bay County.

## Funding Sources and Needs

The state constitutional and statutory millage rate cap for the District is 0.05, significantly less than the ad valorem taxing authority afforded the other four water management districts. The District's FY 2023-24 ad valorem tax millage rate, as set by the Governing Board, is 0.0234. To meet its areas of responsibility, the District must rely on other sources of funding, as available. Funding sources used to support water resource and supply development include:

- State legislative appropriations for alternative water supply;
- Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund (WPSTF);
- Federal funding awarded by the State for alternative water supply;
- Land Acquisition Trust Fund;
- District Fund Balance;
- State legislative appropriations for General Operations;
- Local government match funding;
- Ad valorem.

Since FY 2019-20, the Florida Legislature has made significant resources available for alternative water supply development. The funding is available to help communities develop alternative water supplies and to implement water conservation programs, with priority funding given to regional projects in the areas of the greatest need. The District conducts an annual grant cycle and submits recommended projects to the Governing Board for consideration. Board-approved projects are then forwarded to DEP, which evaluates projects from all five of the water management districts in making final funding awards.

The WPSTF, established by the 2005 Legislature, has enabled the District to provide cost-share assistance for construction of alternative water supply development projects and implementation of priority water resource development projects. In FY 2019-20, limited funding was appropriated to the water management districts for the first time since FY 2009-10. The District received $100,000, which will help support the South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative. An additional $180,000 was appropriated in FY 2020-21, to provide additional support for alternative water supply development and water conservation.

Local government and utility funding participation is especially important for several types of water resource development projects, notably alternative surface water, reuse of reclaimed water, water conservation, and aquifer storage and recovery, as well as for construction of water supply development projects. All projects require substantial local investment once they reach the water supply development stage.

# Appendix: Basin Management Action Plan Projects in Region II

Basin Management Action Plans provide blueprints for achieving pollutant load reductions specified in TMDLs to meet water quality standards. In 2016, the Florida Legislature amended section 373.036, F.S., to require identification of specific projects related to water quality or water quantity within a work program. To support this requirement, information related to BMAP projects or recovery or prevention strategies within regional water supply planning regions are included within the District's Water Resource Development Work Program. Additional information related to water quality projects and MFLs Districtwide is reported in this Consolidated Annual Report.

Within northwest Florida, BMAPs have been adopted for three waterbodies: Bayou Chico (Escambia County), Jackson Blue Spring and Merritt's Mill Pond (Jackson County), and the Upper Wakulla River and Wakulla Springs (with a contribution area in Wakulla, Leon, and Gadsden counties). Additionally, a small portion of Jefferson County within the District is within the contribution area for the Wacissa River and Wacissa Spring Group BMAP.

As none of these BMAPs are within Regional Water Supply Planning Region II, there are no BMAP projects to include in this five-year work plan update. Moreover, there are no adopted MFLs in Region II and henceforth no recovery or prevention strategies to report on in this Work Program.

# Consolidated Annual Report
# Chapter 6

## Florida Forever Water Management District Work Plan Annual Report

# Florida Forever Water Management District Work Plan
# Annual Report

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# Chapter 6. Florida Forever Water Management District Work Plan Annual Report

## Introduction

Section 373.199(7), F.S. requires the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD, or District) to annually update the Florida Forever Five-Year Work Plan. The 23rd annual update of the plan contains information on projects eligible to receive funding under the Florida Forever Act and Land Acquisition Trust Fund and also reports on land management activities; surplus or exchanged lands; and the progress of funding, staffing, and resource management of projects for which the District is responsible. This plan also applies to land acquisition funds deposited into the Land Acquisition Trust Fund pursuant to s.28(a), Art. X of the State Constitution.

## Florida Forever Program

In 1999, the Florida Legislature passed the Florida Forever Act (s. 259.105, F.S.) which has continued the state's long-term commitment to environmental land acquisition, restoration of degraded natural areas, and high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities.

While previous programs focused almost exclusively on the acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands, the Florida Forever program is somewhat different in that it authorizes the use of up to half of the program funding for certain types of capital improvement projects. Eligible uses of these funds include water resource development, stormwater management projects, water body restoration, recreation facilities, public access improvements, and removing invasive plants, among others. The remaining 50 percent must be spent on land acquisition. The table below illustrates actual expenditures for land acquisition using Florida Forever funding.

**Table 6.1 Land Acquisition Expenditures by Water Management Area**

| Water Management Area | Acres | Dollars Expended |
|---|---|---|
| Perdido River | 6,044 | $13,535,865 |
| Escambia River | 697 | $ 1,231,692 |
| Yellow River | 205 | $ 630,046 |
| Choctawhatchee River | 4,269 | $ 6,162,350 |
| Econfina Creek | 3,663 | $ 7,977,220 |
| Apalachicola River | 1,912 | $ 3,981,132 |
| Chipola River | 2,440 | $ 5,922,785 |
| St. Marks River | 830 | $ 1,862,050 |
| Ochlockonee River | 1,529 | $ 1,951,197 |
| **TOTAL** | **21,589** | **$43,254,337** |

Since the inception of the District's land acquisition program, the goal has been to protect the floodplains of our major rivers and creeks. To date, 225,857 acres have been protected for water resource purposes through the land acquisition efforts of the District either in fee simple or through conservation easements.

## Acquisition Planning

The District employs a watershed approach to select and prioritize the water resources and natural systems within the groundwater contribution areas and major river basins of northwest Florida. Primary

among the considerations in this process are how specific floodplain or buffer areas help satisfy the District's water resources and natural system protection objectives; the availability of funds; the seller's willingness; how different areas fit into the District's land management strategy; and the size, accessibility, and overall condition of each property. Recommendations from interest groups, landowners, local governments, agency representatives, and other interested parties are given full consideration in the acquisition process. Existing water management areas (WMAs) include the Perdido River, Escambia River, Blackwater River, Yellow River, Garcon Point, Choctawhatchee River/Holmes Creek, Econfina Creek, Chipola River, and Apalachicola River.

Subject to receiving funding, the District's acquisition efforts this year will focus on the purchase of fee simple or less than fee simple (conservation easements) projects that protect the quality and quantity of water that flows into and out of springs. The District's acquisition efforts will focus on acquiring fee or less than fee simple interest in properties located within the Jackson Blue, Chipola, Econfina, and Wakulla springs and Spring Creek Spring Group groundwater contribution areas.

In developing the annual update, District staff review projects proposed by DEP's Division of State Lands to minimize redundancy and facilitate an efficient and mutually supportive land-acquisition effort.

## Approved Acquisition Areas

The approved acquisition areas listed below are not presented on a priority basis. For each of these waterbodies, it is desirable to acquire both the floodplain and a natural buffer zone to provide further water resource protection.

**Table 6.2 Approved Acquisition Areas**

| Rivers & Creeks Originating In Florida | Rivers and Creeks Originating Outside Florida | Springs | Lakes & Ponds | Other Ecosystems, Basins and Buffers |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wakulla River | Apalachicola River | St. Marks River near Natural Bridge | Lake Jackson | Southwest Escambia County Ecosystem |
| St. Marks River | Lower Apalachicola River Wetland | Spring Lake Spring Group Area | Sand Hill Lakes | Garcon Point Ecosystem |
| Econfina Creek and other Tributaries of Deer Point Lake | Chipola River | Bosel Springs<br>Chipola River Springs<br>Waddell Springs | | West Bay Buffer |
| Lafayette Creek | Choctawhatchee River including Holmes Creek | Cypress Spring | | Sandy Creek Basin |
| | Escambia River | Hays Springs | | Apalachicola Bay and St. Vincent Sound Buffer |
| | Blackwater River including Juniper, Big Coldwater, and Coldwater creeks | Econfina Creek Springs | | |
| | Ochlockonee River and its major tributaries | Jackson Blue Spring | | |
| | Yellow and Shoal rivers | Wakulla Spring | | |
| | Perdido River and Bay | | | |

*Groundwater Recharge Areas*

Such lands may be designated by the District as recharge areas for the Floridan, sand-and-gravel, and other important aquifers and may be acquired in fee simple or less than fee simple.

*Donated Lands*

The District may accept donations of lands within its major acquisition areas if those lands are necessary for water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of land and water resources.

*Exchange Lands*

The District may exchange lands it has acquired under the Florida Forever program for other lands that qualify for acquisition under the program. The District's Governing Board establishes the terms and conditions it considers necessary to equalize values of the exchange properties. In all such exchanges, the District's goal will be to ensure there is a net positive environmental benefit.

*Mitigation Acquisitions*

Under Florida law, unavoidable losses of natural wetlands or wetland functions require "mitigation" through the acquisition or restoration of other nearby wetlands. The District is often the recipient of such lands in the form of donations and also serves as the mitigation agent for the Florida Department of Transportation. Whenever possible, the District attempts to acquire mitigation lands contiguous to its existing ownership, but since wetland type and proximity to the original wetland impact are often paramount, the District will on occasion acquire or manage isolated tracts.

## Surplus Lands

Section 373.089, F.S., allows the Governing Board of the District to sell (surplus) lands or interests or rights in lands to which the District has acquired title or to which it may hereafter acquire title. Any lands, or interests or rights in lands, determined by the Governing Board to be surplus may be sold by the District at any time for the highest price, but in no case shall the selling price be less than the appraised value.

District staff conducted an evaluation of all District lands to determine if there were any parcels appropriate for surplus. The parcels recommended for surplus were small, non-contiguous, isolated tracts. The following tracts were declared surplus by the District's Governing Board in 2013.

**Table 6.3 District Surplus Lands**

| WMA | Acres | County | Acquired Date | Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Econfina Creek | 10.03 | Washington | December 19, 1997 | Under Contract |
| Escambia River | 115 | Escambia | April 26, 1994 | For Sale |

## Note to Landowners

The District's land acquisition process only involves willing sellers and is usually initiated by landowners offering parcels for sale.

This plan includes a number of areas the District has identified for potential purchase. If your property is included in any of our acquisition areas or maps and you do not desire to sell your land to the District, Florida Statutes require the District to remove your property from the acquisition plan at the earliest opportunity. Please contact the Division of Asset Management at (850) 539-5999 at any time if you wish to remove your property from possible purchase consideration. The District will maintain a list of such requests and annually adjust its acquisition plan accordingly.

## Less Than Fee Methods of Land Protection

In less than fee purchases, the District attempts to acquire only those rights in property (i.e., development and land use conversion rights) that are needed to accomplish specific resource protection goals. Such less than fee methods can provide a number of public benefits. First, acquisition funding can be conserved, thereby enabling the protection of more land with limited funds. Also, the property continues in private ownership and thus may remain on local property tax rolls. Moreover, the District does not incur the long-term costs of land management since the property's management and maintenance remains the landowner's responsibility. Not all properties are suitable for less than fee acquisition, but the potential benefits make these kinds of transactions the preferred alternative to the District's typical fee-simple land purchases.

## DEP Florida Forever Priority List

The Florida Forever Priority List can be found at:
https://floridadep.gov/lands/environmental-services/content/florida-forever

## Critical Wetlands

The 2022 Florida Legislature enacted a law that requires water management districts to annually identify properties that may be classified as "critical wetlands" for potential acquisition using Florida's Land Acquisition Trust Fund (LATF). In response, the District conducted a systematic review of properties throughout the Florida Panhandle to identify wetland properties considered critically important to protecting or restoring wetlands and water resource values and functions. Letters were sent to the owners of the identified priority parcels, as required by section 373.036, F.S., and the District consulted with affected local governments. An initial list of critical wetlands was approved by the Governing Board on October 12, 2023. To date, the District has not received any LATF funding to purchase critical wetlands. Additional information may be found in the FY 2023-24 Strategic Water Management Plan (https://nwfwater.com/Data-Publications/Reports-Plans/Water-Management-Plans).

## Florida Forever Goals and Numeric Performance Measures

As outlined in Chapter 18-24, F.A.C., the District is required to report on the goals and measures for lands to be acquired under the Florida Forever program. The following page summarizes the goals and measures applicable to the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

## *Florida Forever Goals and Numeric Performance Measures*

Reported as of October 1, 2023

Rule No. 18-24.0022

(2)(d)1. For proposed acquisitions, see the (Florida Forever) Water Management District Work Plan Annual Report in the Consolidated Annual Report.

(2)(d)2. For proposed acquisitions for water resource development projects, see the (Florida Forever) Water Management District Work Plan Annual Report in the Consolidated Annual Report

(3)(a)2. Refer to (Florida Forever) Capital Improvement Work Plan of the Consolidated Annual Report for funded capital improvements identified in SWIM, stormwater, or restoration plans.

(3)(a)3. NWFWMD lands to be treated for upland invasive, exotic plants = <5,000 acres
The District has not conducted surveys to identify the spatial distribution of invasive exotic plant infestation on District lands. It is known that invasive plant problems exist at varying levels on some District lands, and staff treat with herbicide as needed.

(3)(b) New water to be made available through Florida Forever funding for water resource development -
Major water resource development accomplishment has been provided by additions to Econfina Creek Water Management Area (1992-2009). Additionally, Florida Forever funding has in the past contributed to the construction of a 750,000-gallon reuse storage facility for the City of Freeport to serve a 0.6 MGD reuse water service area (project completed in 2009). Funding for water supply development, including construction of water reuse facilities, is primarily provided through State alternative water supply funding, the Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund, NWFWMD General Fund, and local funding. See the NWFWMD Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program report and Consolidated Annual Report.

(4)(a)1. NWFWMD lands that are in need of and are undergoing restoration, enhancement, or management by the District.

In need of restoration, enhancement, and management = 769 acres
Undergoing restoration or enhancement = 1,250 acres
Restoration completed = 30,986 acres
Restoration maintenance = 30,986 acres

(4)(a)3. Refer to section 3, (Florida Forever) Capital Improvement Work Plan of the Consolidated Annual Report for capital improvements identified in SWIM, stormwater, or restoration plans.

(4)(a)6. NWFWMD lands under upland invasive, exotic plant maintenance control = <10,000 acres

(4)(b) Refer to Water Projects in the Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program of the Consolidated Annual Report for quantity of new water made available through regional water supply plans.

(4)(c) See (Florida Forever) Land Acquisition Work Plan (Table 6.6) of the Consolidated Annual Report for resource-based recreation facilities by type.

## Land Acquisition Projects

The Florida Forever Act, particularly s. 373.199(3) F.S., identifies information that must be included for each Florida Forever Project. Some of the required information is relatively general and applicable to all projects. To reduce the redundancies of this plan, general information is provided separately as part of the District's Five-Year Plan for the Florida Forever Program. Specific land acquisition projects are individually identified and detailed information specific to the project is provided in the following pages.

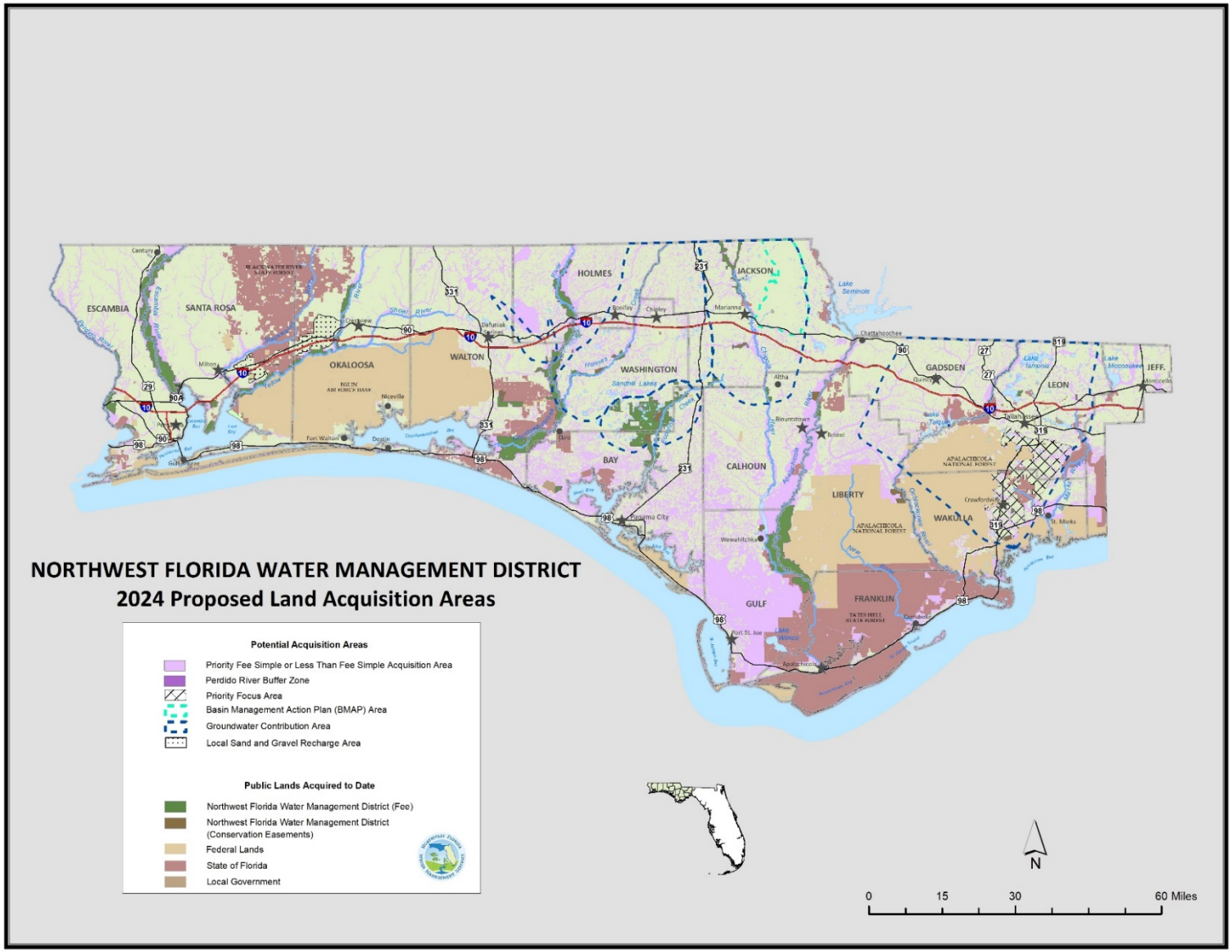


**Figure 6.1 Proposed Land Acquisition Areas, 2024**

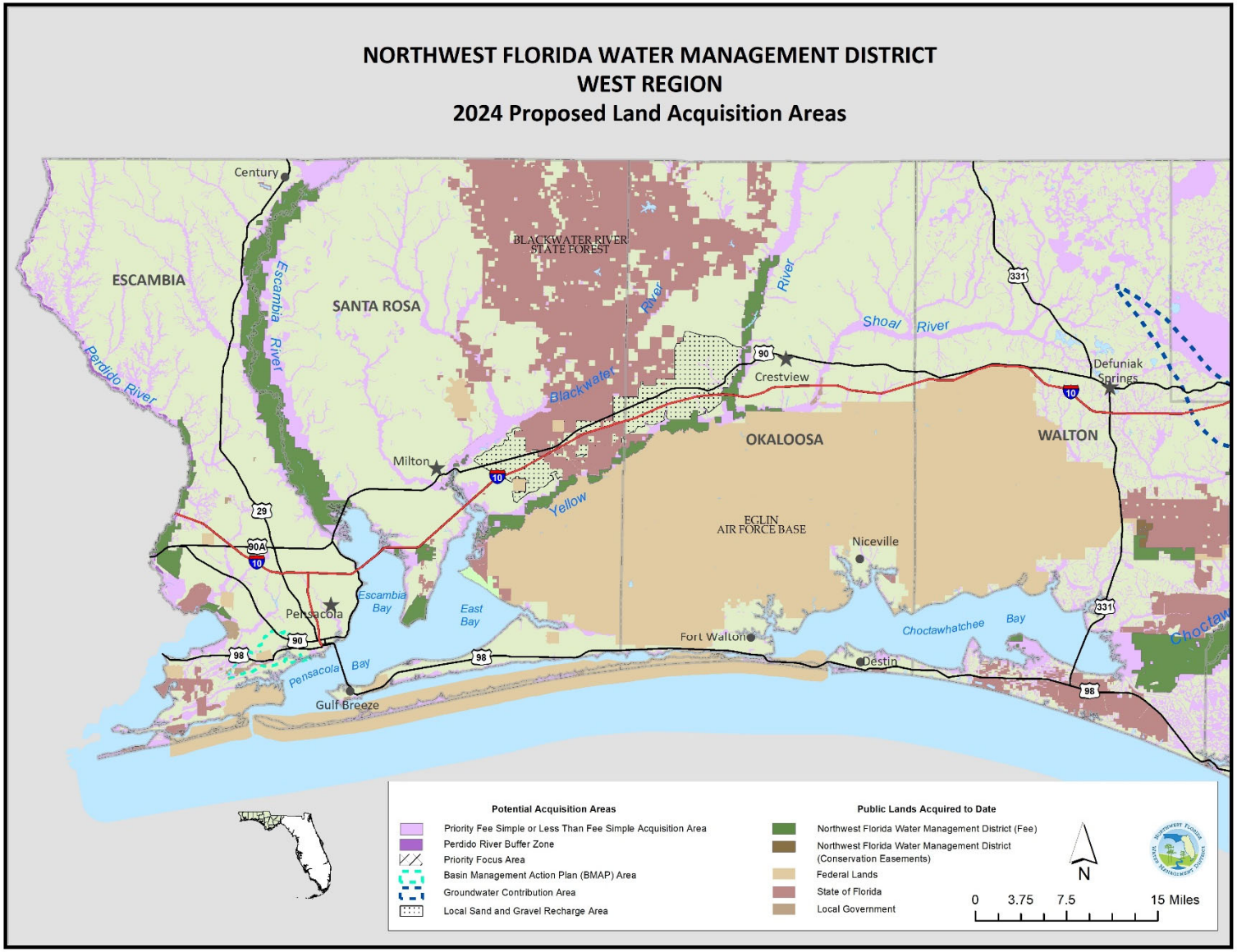


**Figure 6.2 Proposed Land Acquisition Areas, 2024, West Region**

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Perdido River and Bay Basin

The Perdido River serves as the state line, separating Florida from Alabama (see Figure 6.2). The Perdido River has been designated an Outstanding Florida Water and Special Water system, a canoe trail, and a recreation area. The upper part of the river is a shifting sand river system, unique to portions of northwest Florida, south Alabama, southern Mississippi, and eastern Louisiana, while the lower end of the river is characteristic of a blackwater stream. The District owns 6,261 acres in fee simple and four acres in less than fee between the Perdido River and Bay.

The project area is mostly undeveloped and contains a diverse list of species. Acquisition of any floodplain area along the Perdido River, whether in fee or less than fee, will enhance water quality protection efforts for the Perdido Bay system.

Purchases within the Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area will be concentrated on floodplain parcels along the river, around the river mouth, and designated tributaries.

The Perdido Bay is an estuarine system which receives fresh water from the Perdido River. Subsidiary embayments within the Perdido Bay estuary include Tarkiln Bay, Arnica Bay, Wolf Bay, Bayou La Launch, and Bayou St. John. Perdido Key separates Perdido Bay, Tarkiln Bay, Arnica Bay, Bayou La Launch, and Bayou St. John from the Gulf of Mexico. Big Lagoon adjoins Perdido Bay to the east, separating it from Pensacola Bay. Currently, the District owns 810.19 acres along Perdido Bay.

Purchases within the Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area will be concentrated on floodplain parcels adjacent to the bay which can enhance water quality protection.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Southwest Escambia County Ecosystem

Several major estuarine drainages, including Jones Swamp, Bayou Grande, Big Lagoon, and Tarkiln Bay, intersect in southwest Escambia County (see Figure 6.2). These, in turn, comprise portions of the Pensacola and Perdido bay watersheds. The Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Areas border a major urban area containing residential and commercial development.

Protecting the ecological integrity of this area is important to the quality of water resources in the Pensacola and Perdido bay systems. Acquisition will help limit non-point source pollution and untreated stormwater runoff by preventing channelization. Wetlands and upland buffers will also be preserved, and riparian buffer zones will be maintained. Additionally, public access will be improved, and fish, wildlife, and estuarine productivity will be protected.

This acquisition is consistent with a number of major initiatives designed to protect environmental and other public resources in the region. These include water quality treatment systems, acquisition programs for the Jones Swamp Wetland Preserve and the Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie, and efforts to prevent encroachment on NAS Pensacola. Together with nearby state parks, these acquisitions will provide for a major environmental reserve and greenway system within a rapidly urbanizing area.

*Local Sand-and-Gravel Recharge Area*

Designated area has groundwater recharge potential.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Escambia River Basin

Beginning at the confluence of the Conecuh River and Escambia Creek above the Florida-Alabama border and discharging into Escambia Bay, the Escambia River corridor (see Figure 6.2) contains a rich diversity of plant and animal species, as well as many rare fish and waterfowl. The Escambia River basin is broad and well-drained in the upper reaches, and swampy below Molino, Florida. While the overall water quality is considered good, many point and non-point pollution sources empty into the river. Currently, the District owns 35,413 acres in fee and 19 acres in less than fee along the river.

Purchases within the Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area will be concentrated on floodplain parcels around the river mouth and designated tributaries.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Garcon Point Ecosystem

The Priority Fee Simple or Less Than Fee Simple acquisition area contains a portion of the Garcon Point Peninsula, which borders Pensacola, Escambia, East, and Blackwater bays (see Figure 6.2). The project area is largely undeveloped and includes a variety of natural communities that are in good to excellent condition. The entire tract provides considerable protection to the water quality of the surrounding estuary, as well as harboring a number of rare and endangered species.

The emergent estuarine marsh that borders several miles of shoreline within the project is an important source of organic detritus and nutrients and serves as a nursery for many of the species found in Pensacola Bay. These wetlands function as stormwater filtration and a storm buffer area, as well as providing erosion controls to the neighboring uplands. A minimum of 13 endangered or threatened species are known to live in the region including the recently listed federally endangered reticulated flatwoods salamander. The northern wet prairie portion is known to be an outstanding pitcher plant habitat.

Purchases within the Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area will be concentrated on floodplain parcels adjacent to Escambia and East Bays. Currently the District owns 3,245 acres on Garcon Point.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Blackwater River Basin

Originating in the Conecuh National Forest in Alabama, the Blackwater River (see Figure 6.2) has a large portion of its Florida watershed further protected by the Blackwater River State Forest. In all, nearly 50 miles of the river corridor is remote and undeveloped. As a result, the Blackwater River is considered one of Florida's best-preserved waterways. Currently the District owns 381 acres along the Blackwater River immediately north and south of Milton in Santa Rosa County.

The Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area includes considerable floodplain. Purchases within the Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area will be concentrated on these parcels. In addition, purchase of lands north and northwest of Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), along the I-10 corridor, would provide approximately 52,000 acres of land that has the potential for future water resource development to supplement the constrained potable water sources in southern Santa Rosa and Okaloosa counties. Acquisitions in this area are consistent with the District's Regional Water Supply Plan for Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties to protect future supply sources.

*Local Sand-and-Gravel Recharge Area*

In Escambia and Santa Rosa counties, the sand-and-gravel aquifer is the principal source of potable water for public supply. The sand-and-gravel aquifer is unconfined or poorly confined, making it particularly susceptible to contamination by surface land uses. Land acquisition along the I-10 corridor between the Yellow and Blackwater rivers in Santa Rosa County would protect recharge areas that are important for future water supply sources. This area encompasses approximately 52,000 acres.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis prior to acceptance.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over the next five years or more. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Yellow and Shoal River Basin

The Yellow River has its headwaters in Conecuh National Forest in Alabama and forms the northern border of Eglin AFB across much of eastern Santa Rosa and western Okaloosa counties (see Figure 6.2). The proposed acquisitions would bring floodplain of the Yellow River in Florida under public ownership. Included in the project is a segment of the lower Shoal River, the largest tributary to the Yellow River. The Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area will be given to tracts containing considerable floodplain. Currently the District owns 16,553 acres along the Yellow River.

Although the Yellow and Shoal rivers exhibit good overall water quality, both are fed largely by rainwater runoff and are thus susceptible to pollution from land use activities. The Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area would provide water quality protection beginning at the Alabama border. Purchase of lands north and northwest of Eglin AFB, along the I-10 corridor, would provide approximately 52,000 acres of land that has the potential for future water resource development to supplement the strained potable water sources in southern Santa Rosa and Okaloosa counties. Acquisitions in this area are consistent with the District's Regional Water Supply Plan for Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties to protect future supply sources.

*Local Sand-and-Gravel Recharge Area*

The sand-and-gravel Aquifer is unconfined or poorly confined, making it particularly susceptible to contamination by land uses. Land acquisition along the I-10 corridor between the Yellow and Blackwater rivers in Okaloosa County would protect recharge areas that are important for future water supply sources. This area encompasses approximately 52,000 acres.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational and educational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

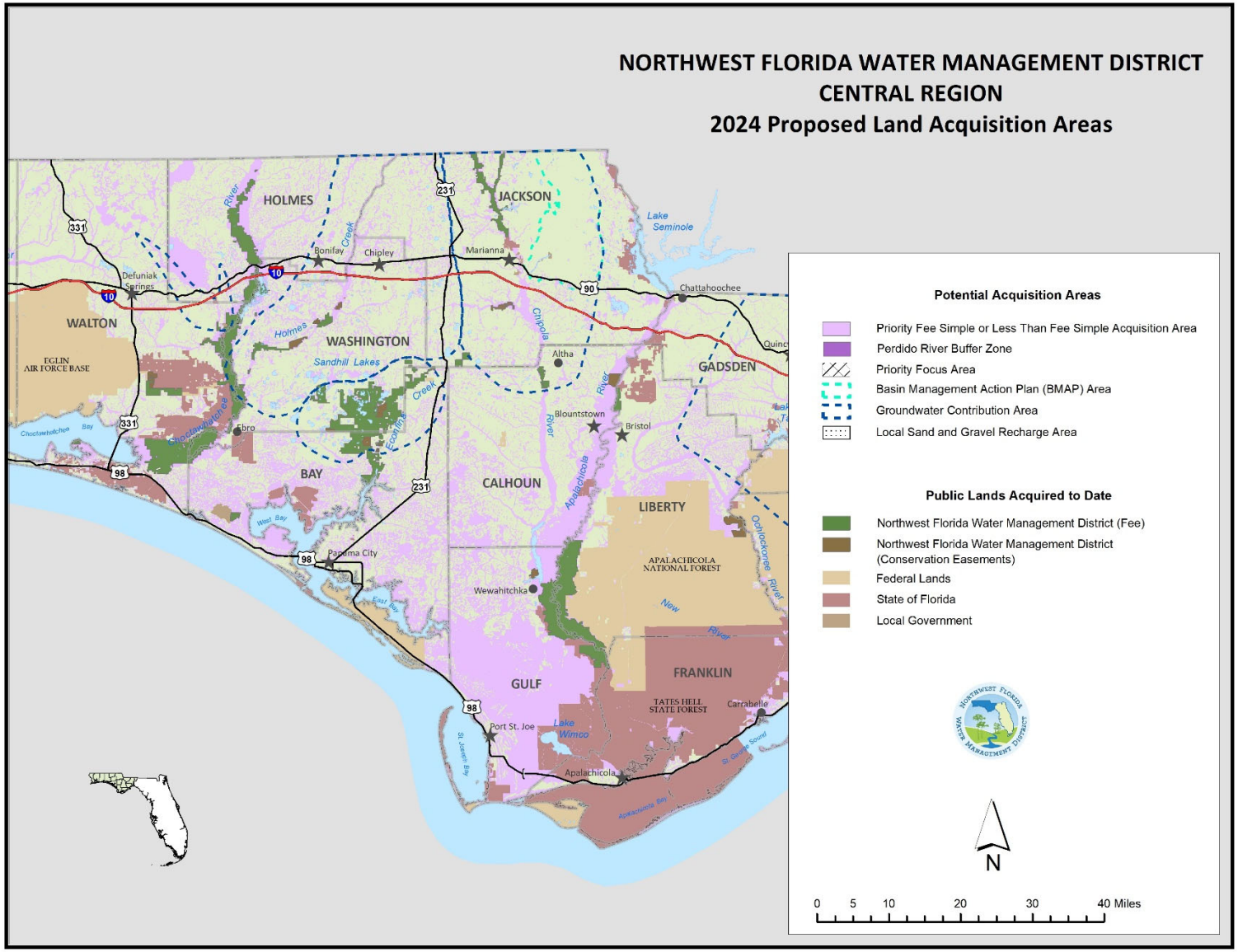


**Figure 6.3 Proposed Land Acquisition Areas, 2024, Central Region**

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Lafayette Creek

Originating in south central Walton County, the Lafayette Creek drainage basin is located northeast of Freeport (see Figure 6.3). The main stem of the creek begins about seven miles east of Freeport and runs due west for about six miles before it turns south and empties into LaGrange Bayou/Choctawhatchee Bay. Purchases with the Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area will protect a portion of Magnolia and Wolf creeks, both of which are significant tributaries to Lafayette Creek, as well as protect many diverse natural communities and habitat types. Currently, the District owns 3,160 acres along the creek, including 420 acres for DOT mitigation purposes.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Choctawhatchee River and Holmes Creek Basin

Originating in Alabama and flowing into Choctawhatchee Bay, the Choctawhatchee River/Holmes Creek basin encompasses the second largest floodplain in the state (see Figure 6.3). Approximately 3,133 square miles of the watershed is in Alabama and 2,052 square miles is in Florida. The river is 170 miles long with about 88 miles in Florida. Although the river basin exhibits localized water quality problems, primarily due to agricultural land use in the upper basin, the overall water quality is considered good. The river basin encompasses 57 springs on Holmes Creek and a variety of habitats including bottomland hardwood forests, marshes, and Tupelo-Cypress swamps.

Due to the river corridor's undeveloped nature, the basin provides habitat for a variety of native wildlife, including several endangered plant and animal species. The river also serves as a breeding and migratory area for both the Alligator Gar and the Gulf Sturgeon. The District currently owns 63,673 acres along the river, creek, and bay in fee and less than fee. Purchases within the Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area will be concentrated on parcels containing floodplain along the river and designated tributaries such as Holmes Creek.

### *Groundwater Contribution Area*

In addition, a portion of the Choctawhatchee River and all of Holmes Creek is captured within the Groundwater Contribution Area. Properties within this contribution area may be considered as a potential acquisition, especially those properties improving the quality or quantity of water for springs.

### *Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

### *Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## West Bay Buffer

West Bay is the westernmost embayment of the St. Andrew Bay estuary (see Figure 6.3). The bay supports notable shellfish and seagrass communities, important fisheries, and other environmental and economic resources. The West Bay watershed is characterized by extensive pine flatwoods, as well as hardwood forests, cypress wetlands, mixed-forested wetlands, freshwater marshes, wet prairie, and other wetlands. Salt marshes, inland forested wetlands, and associated upland communities are especially prominent in several areas, including the Breakfast Point peninsula and other lands adjacent to the Burnt Mill and Crooked Creek tributaries.

Like other estuaries, the bay is vulnerable to impacts associated with intensive residential and commercial development. Potential impacts include the long-term degradation as a result of non-point source pollution, as well as habitat loss and fragmentation. Acquisitions within the Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area would help prevent such degradation by preserving intact and extensive ecosystem of forests, scrub, salt marshes, and freshwater wetlands. Preserving the associated wetland and upland communities in the vicinity of the bay protects water quality by providing a substantial riparian buffer and maintaining the natural hydrology in the vicinity of the bay. The District currently owns approximately 719 acres in the vicinity of the West Bay Buffer.

In addition to providing for public use and water resource protection, this acquisition will be consistent with several ongoing initiatives, including the Bay-Walton Sector Plan. These initiatives also include efforts to restore seagrass communities in the bay and to improve the treatment and management of domestic wastewater.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Econfina Creek

Econfina Creek is the major contributor to Deer Point Lake, which serves as the public water supply for Bay County, including Panama City, Panama City Beach, and neighboring communities (see Figure 6.3). Properties along the creek contain several spring-run streams, which are imperiled biological communities. The slope forest communities that border considerable lengths of the creek contain some of the highest species diversity encountered in Florida. The project area features high rolling sandhill habitat, steephead ravines, and numerous sandhill upland lakes. Much of the sand hills area is of excellent quality, with a nearly intact ground cover of wiregrass and dropseed. At least 18 species of rare or endangered plants inhabit the sand hills area. The District currently owns 44,458 acres in fee and less than fee, including the 2,155-acre Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank. Purchases will be concentrated on parcels within the Groundwater Contribution Area as well as purchases that improve the quality or quantity of water for springs.

*Groundwater Contribution Area*

The upper portion of the acquisition project is a significant groundwater contribution area of the Floridan Aquifer and properties within this contribution area may be considered as a potential acquisition, especially those properties improving the quality and quantity of water for springs. The majority of the acreage purchased by the District and targeted for future purchase is one of the most important groundwater contribution areas for the Floridan Aquifer in northwest Florida. Recharge rates in the area have been estimated at 25 to 40 inches per year, and this recharge drives the spring flows along Econfina Creek, the largest tributary of the Deer Point Lake Reservoir. The reservoir currently provides approximately 50 million gallons per day for residential, commercial, and industrial water uses in Bay County.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Sandy Creek Basin

Sandy Creek is a major tributary of East Bay, the easternmost embayment of the St. Andrew Bay estuary (see Figure 6.3). The creek's basin is characterized by extensive wet pine flatwoods, as well as hardwood forests, salt marshes, cypress wetlands, mixed forested wetlands, freshwater marshes, wet prairie, and other wetlands. Salt and freshwater marshes, inland forested wetlands, and associated upland communities are especially prominent along the creek and its tributaries.

Preservation of the Sandy Creek basin will protect a major tributary basin of East Bay. In doing so, it would preserve water quality and a mosaic of interconnected upland, wetland, stream, and estuarine habitats. Purchases within the Priority Fee Simple and Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area would protect water quality by providing a substantial riparian buffer and maintaining natural hydrology.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

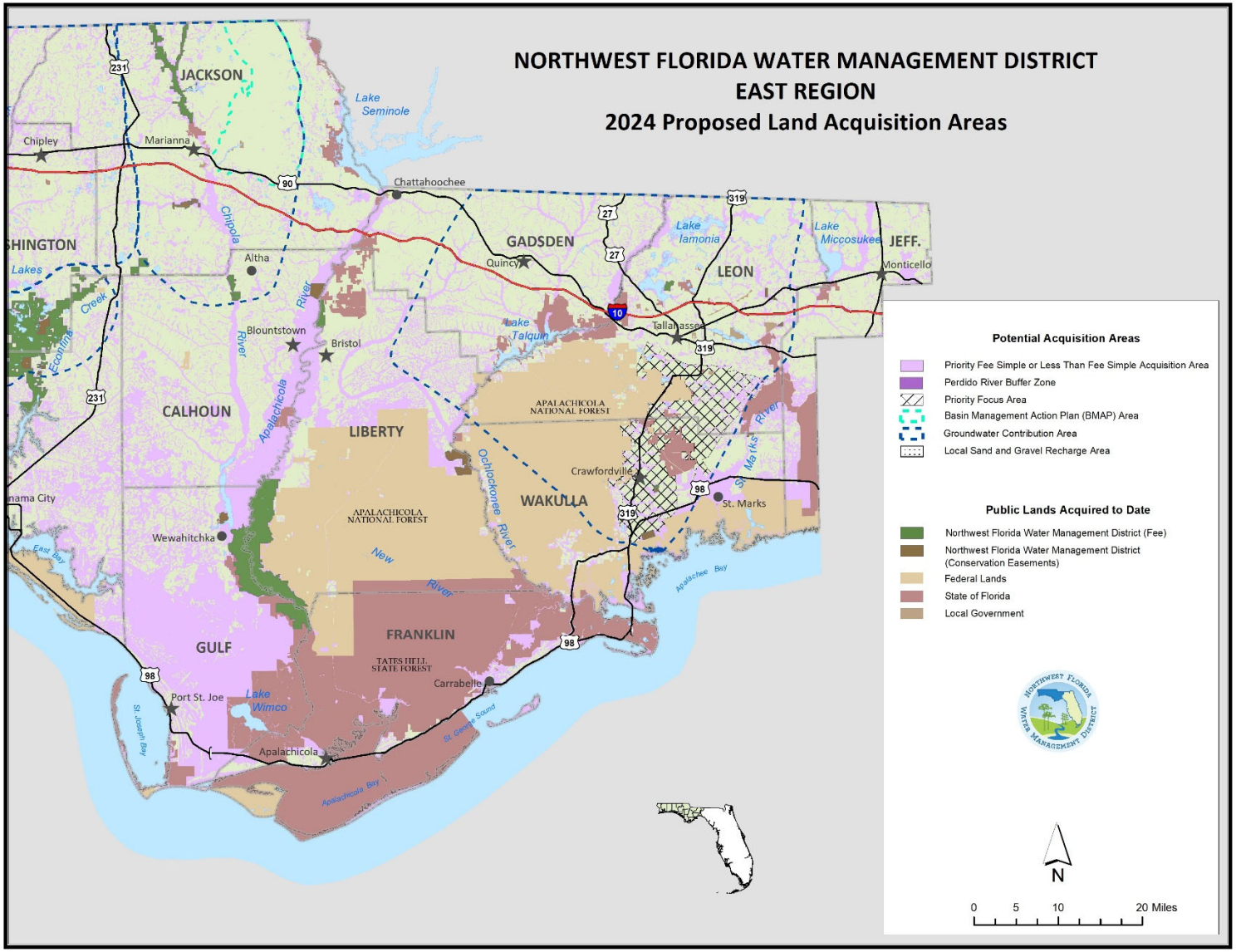


**Figure 6.4 Proposed Land Acquisition Areas, 2024, East Region**

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Chipola River Basin

Areas along the Chipola River have been identified as a Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition Area. The area lies in Calhoun and Jackson counties (see Figure 6.4). Acquisitions along the Chipola River will help protect miles of the riverbank. In 2009, the District acquired 1,377.76 acres in fee along the Middle Chipola River, including the "Look-N-Tremble" rapids. The District now owns a total of 9,094 acres in fee simple and holds a conservation easement on 1,011 acres in the Chipola River Basin.

An additional area is identified for Priority Fee Simple or Less than Fee Simple Acquisition along the Chipola River. Spring Lake Spring Group is located in central Jackson County. Acquisition of land in the Spring Lake Spring Group area with its numerous springs and tributaries which flow into the Chipola River will provide enhanced water resource protection to the area.

*Jackson Blue Spring BMAP and Chipola Springs Groundwater Contribution Area (GWCA)*

The Jackson Blue Spring BMAP Area, east of the Chipola River, and the Chipola Springs GWCA, have been identified for fee simple or less than fee simple acquisition to provide protection to Blue Spring and the groundwater contribution area in Jackson County. Properties within this BMAP or contribution area may be considered as a potential acquisition, especially those properties improving the quality or quantity of water for springs.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Apalachicola Bay and River

Apalachicola Bay has been recognized as a resource of state, federal, and international significance. The bay has extensive fish and shellfish resources, and it supports noteworthy commercial and recreational fisheries and other recreational and economic activities. It has been designated an Outstanding Florida Water, a State Aquatic Preserve, and an International Biosphere Reserve. It includes the Apalachicola Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and the St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge (see Figure 6.4). State and federal agencies, as well as the District, have made extensive investments in acquiring and protecting lands throughout the basin.

Like other northwest Florida estuaries, Apalachicola Bay is vulnerable to impacts associated with development. Such potential impacts include the long-term effects of non-point source pollution and habitat loss and fragmentation. The proposed acquisition would help prevent such degradation by preserving the integrated forest and wetland community bordering St. Vincent Sound and Apalachicola Bay. The acquisition would limit new sources of pollution, prevent habitat loss and fragmentation, and protect the stability and integrity of littoral vegetation. The acquisition would also protect water quality by providing a substantial riparian buffer which would help prevent channelization from new impervious surfaces.

The Apalachicola River begins below Lake Seminole at the confluence of the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers (see Figure 6.4). It has the largest floodplain in the state and is widely regarded as one of the state's most important natural resources. The Apalachicola River supports the highly productive fishery in Apalachicola Bay. The District owns 36,823 acres of river floodplain and holds a conservation easement on 1,550 acres.

Major habitat types along the Apalachicola River include coastal marshes, freshwater marshes, flatwoods, and bottomland hardwood swamp. Water tupelo, Ogeechee tupelo, Bald cypress, Carolina ash, and Swamp tupelo have been identified in the floodplain, as well as numerous species of rare fish. Substantial additional acreage of the Apalachicola system is owned by other public agencies and private conservation organizations. Purchases will be concentrated on parcels within the Priority Fee Simple or Less than fee Simple Acquisition Area.

### *Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

### *Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## Ochlockonee River Basin

The Ochlockonee River originates in the coastal plain of Georgia and traverses parts of five Florida counties (see Figure 6.4). Water quality in the river is lowest when it enters Florida and generally improves as it flows closer to the Gulf of Mexico. The Ochlockonee is primarily fed by rainwater runoff and is therefore susceptible to pollution by land-use activities. Large parts of the watershed are publicly owned, including Joe Budd Wildlife Management Area, Lake Talquin State Forest, and Apalachicola National Forest.

The District's primary focus is to acquire less than fee rights on privately owned floodplain land separating existing federal and state properties. Public ownership of the erosion-prone lands bordering this usually fast-flowing river will reduce water quality degradation. The District presently has 3,675 acres in less than fee holdings in the area.

*Public Access*

All District conservation lands are available for public use. Such uses include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, boating, swimming, and other recreational activities. Access issues are addressed on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

# *FLORIDA FOREVER LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT*

## St. Marks and Wakulla Rivers

The Wakulla River originates at Wakulla Spring and flows south approximately 10 miles to join the St. Marks River at the town of St. Marks in Wakulla County (see Figure 6.4). The St. Marks River starts east of Tallahassee as a narrow stream, widens considerably below Horn Spring, and then disappears underground at Natural Bridge. After reemerging as a much stronger river at St. Marks Spring, it flows 11 miles to its confluence with the Wakulla River. The St. Marks River supports one of the most heavily used inshore saltwater fisheries in north Florida, the viability of which is largely dependent on the quality of freshwater flowing into the estuarine system. Both the Wakulla Springs State Park and the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge are major refuges for numerous biological species. The District presently has 1,500 acres under less than fee acquisition and 131.49 acres in fee simple in the area.

*Wakulla Springs BMAP and Priority Focus Area*

Within the Upper Wakulla River and Wakulla Springs BMAP, the Priority Focus Area, east of the Apalachicola National Forest, has been identified for fee simple or less than fee simple acquisition to provide protection to the groundwater contribution area in Wakulla County. Properties within this contribution area may be considered as a potential acquisition, especially those properties improving the quality or quantity of water for springs.

*Land Acquisition*

Sufficient lands have been identified to allow for a flexible implementation strategy over at least the next five years. The timing of any given acquisition will depend upon such considerations as: availability of funds, Governing Board policy, threats to the resource, availability of willing sellers, tract size, general market conditions, and available staff resources.

## Florida Forever District Work Plan

As required by section 373.199(2), F.S., a District five-year work plan identifies and includes projects that further the goals of the Florida Forever Act (section 259.105, F.S.). These include priorities identified in approved Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) plans, Save Our Rivers land acquisition lists, stormwater management and water resource development projects, springs and water body restoration projects, and other eligible activities that would assist in meeting the goals of Florida Forever.

From 2003 to 2008, the District provided grant funding to local governments for capital improvements that help implement SWIM projects, water resource development projects, and projects included within stormwater master plans. The program awarded more than $23 million for 55 stormwater retrofit, restoration, and reuse projects. These grants leveraged significant additional funding, with more than $52 million in local and other match funding allocated to the approved projects.

No significant appropriations of Florida Forever funds for capital improvements have been made since FY 2008-09. Table 6.4 identifies conceptual projects considered eligible for future Florida Forever capital improvement funding.

**Table 6.4 Projects Currently Eligible for Florida Forever Funding**

| Project | Description | Status | Estimated Cost |
|---|---|---|---|
| Unpaved road sedimentation abatement | Unpaved road stabilization to reduce sedimentation and non-point source pollution; supports water quality improvement and habitat restoration objectives of SWIM plans for all District watersheds | Planning | TBD |
| Spring habitat restoration | Construction activities to restore riparian and aquatic habitats and shorelines associated with northwest Florida springs and to improve compatible public access | Planning | TBD |
| Stormwater retrofit facilities | Construction of cooperative stormwater retrofit projects, improving water quality and flood protection in accordance with approved SWIM plans | Planning | TBD |
| Reclaimed water storage facilities | Construction of reclaimed water storage facilities that contribute to water quality improvement and conservation and protection of water resources | Planning | TBD |
| Hydrologic, wetland, and shoreline restoration | Restoration of shoreline, wetland, and riparian habitats and hydrologic functions to improve water and habitat quality and to enhance public access, consistent with SWIM plans | Planning | TBD |

Project specifics, as noted in section 373.199(2), (3), (4) and (5), F.S., will be provided in the future if projects are able to advance beyond the preliminary planning stage.

Future Florida Forever or special legislative appropriations, and funding from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund, federal grants, local governments, other local matching resources, and potentially other sources

may contribute to the implementation of these projects. Final approval of funding for any project requires District Governing Board approval.

## Implementation of the FY 2022-2023 Work Plan

### Land Acquisition

In 2023, the District purchased eight fee simple tracts for springs protection in Washington County to further protect the Econfina Springs Groundwater Contribution Area.

### Land Management

In October 2018, Hurricane Michael severely impacted District lands and the District's Econfina Field Office. Recovery from Hurricane Michael became the highest priority for the District's land managers in the central and eastern land management regions. Recovery activities included initial damage assessments, securing of facilities and clearing debris for essential access, planning and implementing salvage timber harvests, clearing roads and firelines, clearing and repairing recreation sites, contracting for various hurricane recovery activities, and coordinating with FEMA. In addition to hurricane recovery, the District completed numerous land management activities during Fiscal Year 2022-2023. Management and restoration efforts included prescribed burns, native species planting, and timber harvesting across the District's 211,714 managed acres. In addition, the District maintains and improves public access and recreational amenities such as boat ramps, primitive campsites, and swimming and picnic areas**.** In the pages that follow, Table 6.5 and Table 6.6 provide additional information on specific land restoration activities completed during the year. The Fiscal Year 2023-2024 staffing and management budget by WMA can be found in Table 6.7.

To date, the District has conserved and protected 225,857 acres primarily through fee simple acquisition. These lands help promote wetland and floodplain functions, groundwater recharge, surface and groundwater quality, and fish and wildlife habitat, as well as protect natural systems. All District-owned lands are accessible to the public and are managed to provide public access and resource-based recreation.

District lands include the majority of the Escambia and Choctawhatchee river floodplains, as well as extensive lands along the Perdido, Blackwater, Yellow, Shoal, Apalachicola, and St. Marks/Wakulla rivers; Lafayette, Holmes, and Econfina creeks; and on Perdido Bay, Garcon Point, and Live Oak Point. In addition, the District manages and conducts habitat restoration and maintenance on Yellow River Ranch, Live Oak Point, Ward Creek West, and Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank. The District has acquired the majority of the groundwater recharge area for springs that discharge into Econfina Creek and form a crucial component of the groundwater contribution to Deer Point Lake Reservoir.

### Land Management Accomplishments (FY 2022-23)

- District contractors and in-house staff conducted prescribed burns for wildfire-fuel reduction on approximately 10,118 acres of District lands. In addition, vegetation management (herbicide) and habitat enhancements were conducted on 195 acres.
- 4,650 camping permits were issued at 101 reservation-only sites on District lands.
- 30 special resource area permits were issued on District property.
- Two timber harvests totaling 1,513 acres were active, removing offsite sand pine and thinning loblolly and slash pine.

- More than 4,000 acres of District-owned land were surveyed for invasive exotic plants and control measures were implemented for identified problem areas.
- Hurricane debris removal was completed on 913 acres.

## Restoration

The District accomplishes water resource restoration through several interrelated programs, primarily Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM), Land Management, longleaf reforestation, and mitigation.

Approved NWFWMD plans with substantial restoration components include the following:

- *Apalachicola River and Bay SWIM Plan* (2017)
- *Capital Improvements Plan (Annual)*
- *Choctawhatchee River and Bay SWIM Plan* (2017)
- *Ochlockonee River and Bay SWIM Plan* (2017)
- *Pensacola Bay System SWIM Plan* (2017)
- *Perdido River and Bay SWIM Plan* (2017)
- *St. Andrew Bay Watershed SWIM Plan* (2017)
- *St. Marks River and Apalachee Bay Watershed SWIM Plan* (2017)
- *Tate's Hell State Forest Hydrologic Restoration Plan* (2010)
- *NWFWMD In-Lieu Fee Mitigation Program Final Instrument* (2014)
- *Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank Mitigation Banking Instrument* (2006)
- *East Region Land Management Plan (2019)*
- *West Region Land Management Plan (2020)*
- *Central Region Land Management Plan (2021)*

## Restoration Accomplishments (FY 2022-23)

- The District completed hand planting of 1,799.50 acres of longleaf and slash pine reforestation. These restoration activities improve upland habitat and serve important water resource functions by enhancing water recharge and providing water quality benefits. This work included site preparation and planting of 1,282,842 longleaf and slash pine tubelings within the Choctawhatchee River, Econfina Creek and Chipola River WMA's.
- The District partially completed shoreline habitat and salt marsh restoration at Live Oak Point in Walton County. The project includes establishment of breakwaters and salt marsh vegetation on over 4,600 feet of shoreline on the south shore of Choctawhatchee Bay. Live Oak Point contains the largest salt marsh system (approximately 1,000 acres) in Choctawhatchee Bay. The marsh has been subject to rapid erosion, with recent shoreline retreat averaging 3-4 feet per year.
- The District continued a stabilization and restoration project at Cypress Spring. Improvements include shoreline stabilization and enhancement, boardwalks and steps at entrance and exit points, and recreation amenities to prevent further degradation of the shoreline from recreational use. The project will improve water quality, restore the historical shoreline that has been impacted by erosion, and prevent destruction of habitat resulting from erosion and recreational use on the spring run and Holmes Creek.

**Table 6.5 Restoration, Enhancement, and Maintenance (2023)**

| Water Management Area | Acres Burned | | | | | Acres Planted | | | | | Acres Harvested | | | | Acres Treated |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Total** | Fuel Reduction | Site Preparation | Growing Season | Wiregrass Propagation | **Total** | Upland/Wetland Wiregrass and Toothache Grass | Longleaf Pine | Slash Pine | Hardwood | **Total** | Restoration | Thinning | Habitat Restoration | For Invasive, Non-native or Off-site Species |
| Escambia River | **29** | 29 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 180 |
| Garcon Point | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 75 |
| Blackwater River | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| Yellow River | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 10 |
| Perdido River | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 245 |
| Choctawhatchee River | **4,544** | 2,195 | | 2,349 | | | | | | | **10** | | 10 | | 2,700 |
| Econfina Creek | **4,186** | 3,618 | | 568 | | **1,250** | | 1,250 | | | **1,503** | | | 1,503 | 500 |
| St. Andrews | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 25 |
| Carter Restoration | **1,359** | 589 | | 770 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ward Creek West | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Devils Swamp Restoration | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chipola River | | | | | | **38** | | | 38 | | | | | | 64 |
| Apalachicola River | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 10 |
| Lake Jackson | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 539 |
| St. Marks/Wakulla Rivers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5 |
| **Totals** | **10,118** | **6,431** | | **3,687** | | **1,288** | | **1,250** | **38** | | **1,513** | | **10** | **1,503** | **4,355** |

**Table 6.6 Access and Recreation Management (2023)**

| Water Management Area | Picnic Areas | Day Use Sites | Parking Areas | Reserved Camp Sites | Boat, Canoe/Kayak Landings | Portolet Stations | Horse Trail | Canoe Trail | Hiking Trail | Nature Trail | Bike Trail | Access Road | Camp Site Reservations | General Purpose (boundary signs) | Information Signs on District Lands | Weather Pavilions and Wildlife Viewing Towers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number Maintained | | | | | | Miles Maintained | | | | | | Issued | Signs | | Maintained |
| Escambia River | | 6 | 11 | 12 | 28 | 11 | 11 | | | 1 | 2 | | 27 | 1,329 | 38 | 18 | 20 |
| Garcon Point | | | 2 | 2 | | | | | | 3 | | | 1 | | | | |
| Blackwater River | | 1 | 3 | 3 | | 2 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Yellow River | | | 3 | 3 | | 3 | | | 50 | | | | 36 | | 27 | 5 | |
| Perdido River | | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 15 | 6 | 1 | 10 | 32 | 106 | 33 | 15 | 1 |
| Choctawhatchee River | | 12 | 15 | 15 | 23 | 14 | 10 | | 15 | 11 | | | 55 | 1,277 | | 14 | 11 |
| Econfina Creek (incl. Carter Tract) | | 14 | 22 | 22 | 36 | 14 | 15 | 56 | 22 | 18 | 2 | | 269 | 1,616 | | 28 | 47 |
| Chipola River | | 1 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 2 | | 6 | | | | 11 | 89 | | | 1 |
| Apalachicola River | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | 8 | 233 | | | 13 |
| Lake Jackson | | 1 | 2 | 2 | | | 1 | 7 | | 10 | | 7 | 9 | | | | 2 |
| St. Marks/Wakulla Rivers | | | 1 | 2 | | | 1 | | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | | 30 | 4 | 1 |
| **Totals** | | **40** | **68** | **72** | **101** | **52** | **49** | **69** | **108** | **52** | **9** | **20** | **451** | **4,650** | **128** | **84** | **97** |

**Table 6.7 Projected Funding, Staffing, and Resource Management for FY 2023-24**

| Region | Water Management Area | Acres | Assigned Staff | Total Funding | Funding for Resource Management |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Western | Escambia | 35,413 | | $184,165 | $184,165 |
| | Escambia Conservation Easements | 19 | | $250 | $250 |
| | Garcon Point | 3,245 | | $56,840 | $56,840 |
| | Yellow | 16,553 | | $74,492 | $74,492 |
| | Blackwater | 381 | | $4,596 | $4,596 |
| | Perdido | 6,261 | | $167,450 | $167,450 |
| | Perdido Conservation Easements | 4 | | $250 | $250 |
| | **Western Region Total** | **61,876** | **4** | **$488,043** | **$488,043** |
| Central | Choctawhatchee | 60,820 | | $401,096 | $401,096 |
| | Choctawhatchee/Holmes Conservation Easements | 2,852 | | $250 | $250 |
| | Econfina | 39,580 | | $628,901 | $628,901 |
| | St. Andrew/Econfina Conservation Easements | 2,722 | | $500 | $500 |
| | Ward Creek West | 719 | | $0 | $0 |
| | Carter Restoration | 2,155 | | $50,000 | $50,000 |
| | **Central Region Total** | **108,848** | **7** | **$1,080,747** | **$1,080,747** |
| Eastern | Chipola | 9,094 | | $101,358 | $101,358 |
| | Apalachicola | 36,823 | | $128,480 | $128,480 |
| | Apalachicola/Chipola Conservation Easements | 3,370 | | $250 | $250 |
| | Lake Jackson | 539 | | $16,900 | $16,900 |
| | St. Marks/Wakulla Rivers | 131 | | $8,273 | $8,273 |
| | St. Marks/Wakulla Rivers Conservation Easements | 1,500 | | $250 | $250 |
| | Ochlockonee Conservation Easements | 3,675 | | $250 | $250 |
| | **Eastern Region Total** | **55,132** | **2** | **$255,761** | **$255,761** |
| | **Regional Totals** | **225,856** | **13** | **$1,824,551** | **$1,824,551** |

**Projected Funding, Staffing, and Resource Management for FY 2023-24 (cont.)**

| Other Projects | Acres | Assigned Staff | Total Funding | Funding for Resource Management |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Land Management Administration | | 3 | $2,551,113 | $577,726 |
| IT Initiative | | | $551,019 | $281,222 |
| Land Management Database | | | $89,304 | $87,000 |
| Brunson Landing Tract (owned by FDEP) | 348 | | $8,700 | $8,700 |
| Washington County School Board Donation | | | $279 | $279 |
| Hurricane Michael District Restoration | | | $2,075,392 | $2,000,000 |
| Cypress Spring Recreation Area | | | $39,809 | $39,809 |
| **Grand Total** | **226,204** | **16** | **$7,140,167** | **$4,819,287** |

# Consolidated Annual Report
# Chapter 7

## Mitigation Donation
## Annual Report

# Chapter 7. Mitigation Donation Annual Report

Section 373.414(1)(b)2, F.S., requires the District and DEP to report by March 1 of each year, as part of this report, all cash donations accepted as mitigation for use in duly noticed environmental creation, preservation, enhancement, or restoration projects that offset impacts permitted under Chapter 373, Part IV, F.S., Management and Storage of Surface Waters.

The report is required to include a description of the associated mitigation projects and, except for projects governed as mitigation banks or regional offsite mitigation, must address, as applicable, success criteria, project implementation status and timeframe, monitoring, long-term management, provisions for preservation, and full cost accounting. The report specifically excludes contributions required under section 373.4137, F.S. (regional mitigation for specified transportation impacts). Any cash donations accepted by the District as mitigation during the preceding fiscal year are reported annually.

The District received no cash donations as mitigation in FY 2022-23. The District conducts regional mitigation in support of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in accordance with section 373.4137, F.S.

# Consolidated Annual Report
# Chapter 8

## Water Projects in the Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program

# Water Projects in the Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program

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# Chapter 8. Water Projects in the Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program

Section 373.036, F.S., requires the Consolidated Annual Report to include:

1. Information on all projects related to water quality or water quantity as part of a five-year work program, including:
    a. A list of all specific projects identified to implement a basin management action plan (BMAP), including any projects to connect onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems to central sewerage systems and convert onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems to enhanced nutrient-reducing onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, or a recovery or prevention strategy;
    b. A priority ranking for each listed project for which state funding through the water resource development work program (section 373.536(6), F.S.) is requested, which must be made available to the public for comment at least 30 days before submission of the consolidated annual report;
    c. The estimated cost for each listed project;
    d. The estimated completion date for each listed project;
    e. The source and amount of financial assistance to be made available by the department, a water management district, or other entity for each listed project;
    f. A quantitative estimate of each listed project's benefit to the watershed, waterbody, or water segment in which it is located.

2. A grade for each watershed, water body, or water segment in which a project is located representing the level of impairment and violations of adopted minimum flow or minimum water levels. The grading system must reflect the severity of the impairment of the watershed, water body, or water segment.

## Water Projects Approach

The District's Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program (WRDWP) applies to the only water supply planning region in northwest Florida that has a regional water supply plan: Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties (Region II). The other 13 counties within the District's jurisdiction do not have a regional water supply plan and are therefore not included in the current WRDWP.

Basin Management Action Plans have been adopted for three areas within the District: Bayou Chico in Escambia County; the Upper Wakulla River and Wakulla Springs basin in portions of Wakulla, Leon, and Gadsden counties; and Jackson Blue Spring and Merritt's Mill Pond basin in Jackson County. As none of these BMAPs are within Regional Water Supply Planning Region II, no BMAP projects are included in the WRDWP. Specific projects identified to implement a BMAP are listed in Chapter 9 (Table 9.3).

Section 373.036(7)(b)(9), F.S. requires a grade representing the impacted waterbody level of impairment and violations of adopted MFLs. As the District currently has no adopted MFLs for Regional Water Supply Planning Region II, the water projects listed only include a grade for level of impairment. The grade was provided by DEP and is represented as follows:

- Impaired—High: if the Waterbody ID (WBID) is impaired for one or more parameters other than mercury, and either:
  1. The WBID has a state-adopted total maximum daily load (TMDL), or
  2. The WBID has been prioritized for TMDL development through being included on the 303(d)-long-term vision list (i.e., the water is on the 2022 TMDL workplan list).
- Impaired: if the WBID is impaired for one or more parameters other than mercury.
- Not impaired: if the WBID has no impaired parameters.

WRDWP projects are also required to be ranked if state funding may be requested. As the District relies on state funding for operations and implementation of projects, a ranking is included for projects in Table 8.1 below. The projects are ranked as high, low, or complete. High represents projects that are planned or currently underway, are ongoing efforts, or that represent a priority for the five-year planning timeframe. Projects ranked low are those that have limited activities planned or funding budgeted by the District in the planning timeframe, but that remain applicable activities should funding become available.

## Project Ranking and Waterbody Grade

**Table 8.1 Ranking and Grades for WRDWP Projects in the NWFWMD**

| Project Name | Project Type[1] | Priority Ranking | Waterbody, or water segment | Level of Impairment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Region II (Okaloosa, Santa Rosa and Walton counties)** | | | | |
| Surface Water Sources | WRD | High | Shoal River | Impaired |
| Reuse | WRD | High | Floridan aquifer; sand-and-gravel aquifer | N/A |
| Conservation | WRD | High | Floridan aquifer; sand-and-gravel aquifer | N/A |
| Aquifer Storage and Recovery | WRD | Low | Floridan aquifer; sand-and-gravel aquifer | N/A |
| Groundwater Evaluations | WRD | High | Floridan aquifer; sand-and-gravel aquifer | N/A |
| Data Collection and Analysis | WRD | High | Floridan aquifer; sand-and-gravel aquifer | N/A |

[1] WRD = Water Resource Development; WSD = Water Supply Development; both are defined in sections 373.019 and 373.705, F.S.

## Public Review Period

Florida Statutes require projects within the work plan seeking state funds be available for public comment at least 30 days before being finalized. The District's Fiscal Year 2023-24 Five-Year WRDWP Update was proposed on October 26, 2023. The proposed work plan was submitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Secretary of DEP, chairs of legislative committees with substantive or fiscal jurisdiction over the District, the governing boards of counties within the District's jurisdiction, and posted on the District website for public review. The finalized version incorporating any comments received is included as Chapter 5 of this report. No projects were added or deleted between October 2023 and March 2024.

# Consolidated Annual Report
# Chapter 9

## Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Program Annual Report

# Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Program Annual Report

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# Chapter 9. Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Program Annual Report

## Introduction

Section 373.036(7)(d), F.S., provides that districts may include in the Consolidated Annual Report additional information on the status or management of water resources as deemed appropriate. The NWFWMD has a long-term program to restore and protect watershed resources. The Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program provides the framework for watershed and project planning for the major riverine-estuarine watersheds indicated in Figure 9.1 below.

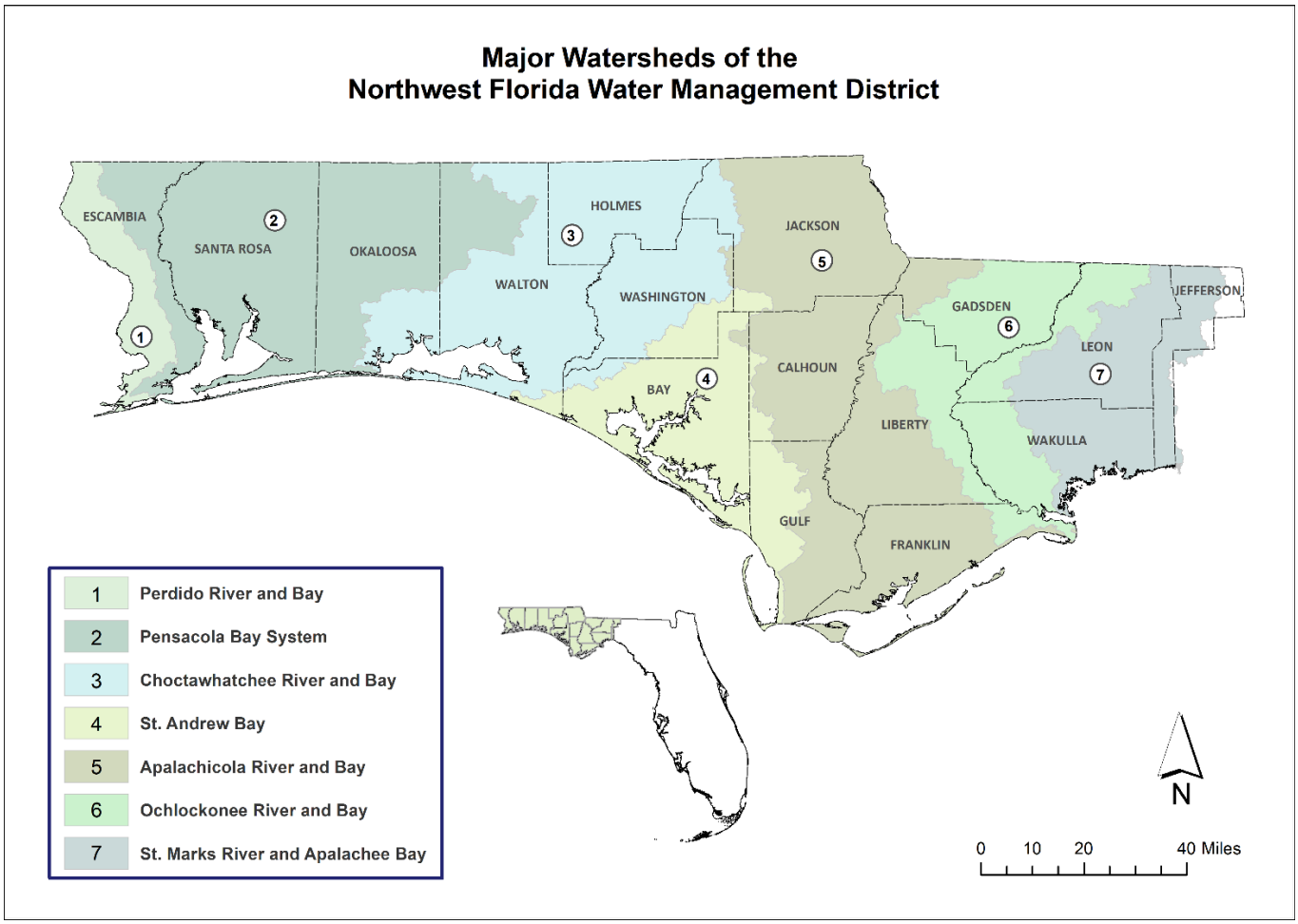


**Figure 9.1 NWFWMD SWIM Priority Watersheds**

## SWIM Priority List

The Northwest Florida Water Management District's SWIM Priority list is provided in Table 9.1. All waterbodies, tributaries, sub-embayments, springs, and contributing basins are considered as being within the listed watersheds as priority waterbodies.

**Table 9.1 NWFWMD SWIM Priority List* (West to East)**

| Watershed |
|---|
| Perdido River and Bay Watershed |
| Pensacola Bay System |
| Choctawhatchee River and Bay Watershed |
| St. Andrew Bay Watershed |
| Apalachicola River and Bay Watershed |
| Ochlockonee River and Bay Watershed |
| St. Marks River and Apalachee Bay Watershed |

* Includes all named waterbodies within each watershed.

Pursuant to section 373.453, F.S., the SWIM priority list must be periodically reviewed and updated as needed. Any updates will be reflected in this section.

## SWIM Plans and Updates

Surface Water Improvement and Management plans are developed to address cumulative anthropogenic impacts to water quality, aquatic habitats, and related public benefits within the District's priority waterbodies. The plans incorporate comprehensive strategies to both restore and protect watershed resources and functions. Implementation is accomplished through a variety of activities, such as retrofitting stormwater management systems to improve water quality and flood protection; restoring wetland and aquatic habitats; evaluating water resources and freshwater needs; protecting springs; and public outreach and education. The SWIM program also supports coordination of state and federal grants and implementation of cooperative capital improvement projects with local governments.

Since the late 1980s, the District has developed SWIM plans for major watersheds. In 2015, the District was awarded grant funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF) to support updates to SWIM plans for each of the District's major watersheds. Seven watershed plans were completed over the course of two years, finishing in November 2017 (Table 9.2). The final plans are available at: https://www.nwfwater.com/Water-Resources/SWIM.

**Table 9.2 NWFWMD SWIM Plans**

| Watershed | Plan Approval Dates |
|---|---|
| Deer Point Lake | 1988 (Superseded) |
| Apalachicola River and Bay | 1996, 2017 |
| Lake Jackson | 1994, 1997 (Superseded) |
| Pensacola Bay System | 1988, 1990, 1997, 2017 |
| St. Andrew Bay Watershed | 2000, 2017 |
| Choctawhatchee River and Bay | 1996, 2002, 2017 |
| St. Marks River/Apalachee Bay | 1997, 2009, 2017 |
| Perdido River and Bay | 2017 |
| Ochlockonee River and Bay | 2017 |

Historically, SWIM plan implementation has integrated and leveraged a variety of funding sources, including SWIM (sections 373.451-373.459, F.S.), the Water Management Lands Trust Fund (former section 373.59, F.S.), the Ecosystem Management and Restoration Trust Fund (former section 403.1651, F.S.), Florida Forever (sections 259.105 and 373.199, F.S.), legislative special appropriations, the Water Protection and Sustainability Program (section 403.890, F.S.), state and federal grants, and funding through local government partnerships. The Land Acquisition Trust Fund (section 375.041, F.S.) has funded spring restoration and protection projects that further SWIM plan objectives. Additionally, Gulf of Mexico restoration funding made available through Deepwater Horizon-related sources in many cases helps to restore and protect watershed resources in a manner consistent with the District's SWIM program. Cumulatively, the overall effort has resulted in significant improvement and protection of water resources Districtwide.

## Current Priorities

The District is continuing a multiyear effort to identify and coordinate projects to protect and restore the major Floridan aquifer spring systems of northwest Florida, with emphasis on implementing Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) for Wakulla and Jackson Blue springs. Spring restoration and protection is carried out through annual grant cycles conducted in cooperation with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), as well as the District's SWIM, MFL, Land Management and Acquisition, Agricultural BMP Cost-Share, Consumptive Use Permitting, and Environmental Resource Permitting programs. Projects include a number of septic-to-sewer projects, continued implementation of agricultural best management practices, land acquisition to protect water quality, and spring bank restoration. In addition to Wakulla Spring and Jackson Blue Spring, ongoing activities are focused on springs associated with Holmes Creek and Econfina Creek.

The District continued work on assessment of St. Joseph Bay and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, including data collection and analysis to evaluate freshwater flows and water quality from the Intracoastal Waterway and its potential effects on St. Joseph Bay. This work will help improve the understanding of environmental and anthropogenic effects on water quality within the interconnected systems. Additionally, the District is providing grant funding, awarded through the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) process and the Florida Trustee Implementation Group (TIG), to the city of Port St. Joe to implement a stormwater retrofit project to reduce nonpoint source pollution and improve flood

protection within the affected basin. The project also provided funding for a new stormwater master plan for the city.

The District is funding Carrabelle's Lighthouse Estates Septic to Sewer project, Phases I and II. The project will provide connection of up to 156 residences to central sewer. It is funded jointly by a grant from NRDA and by a legislative appropriation focused on Apalachicola Bay. The legislative appropriation also funded stormwater treatment improvements for the city of Apalachicola.

For a list of priority SWIM projects underway or in the planning stages, please refer to Chapter 1 (Table 1.1) of this report. Note that there is overlap between the project priorities listed there and within other chapters in this report, particularly for construction projects requiring multiple funding sources to complete. Additional funding sources, including from local governments and state and federal grant sources, may be identified to complement District-provided funding.

Section 373.036(7), F.S., requires the Consolidated Annual Report to list projects identified to implement a Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP). Basin Management Action Plans have been adopted for three areas within the District: Bayou Chico in Escambia County; Jackson Blue Spring and the Merritt's Mill Pond basin in Jackson County; and the Upper Wakulla River and Wakulla Springs basin in portions of Wakulla, Leon, and Gadsden counties. Additionally, a small portion of Jefferson County within the District is within the contribution area for the Wacissa River and Wacissa Spring Group BMAP, although the majority of this BMAP is within the Suwannee River Water Management District. Table 9.3 lists projects identified to implement the referenced BMAPs.

**Table 9.3 Current BMAP Projects in the NWFWMD**

| Cooperator | Project Name | County | Project Type | Five-Year Total Costs | Benefit Description | Water Resource or TMDL Waterbody | Watershed/ Waterbody Grade | Project Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Bayou Chico (Pensacola Basin) BMAP** | | | | | | | | |
| Bayou Chico Association | Bayou Chico Channel Dredging | Escambia | Stormwater | $10,000,000 | Reduced fecal coliform loading | Bayou Chico | Impaired-High | In Progress |
| ECUA | Beach Haven Phase II | Escambia | Wastewater | $3,800,000 | Reduced fecal coliform loading | Bayou Chico | Impaired-High | Planning |
| Escambia County | Bayou Chico Dredging Phase I | Escambia | Stormwater | $1,418,623 | Reduced fecal coliform loading | Bayou Chico | Impaired-High | In Progress |
| Escambia County | Beach Haven Stormwater Phases II | Escambia | Stormwater | $16,000,000 | Reduced fecal coliform loading | Bayou Chico | Impaired-High | In Progress |
| Escambia County | Jones Creek Floodplain Restoration/ Expansion Project | Escambia | Stormwater | $1,500,000 | Reduced fecal coliform loading | Bayou Chico | Impaired-High | In Progress |
| Escambia County | Jones Swamp Wetland Preserve Management Plan Development & Implementation | Escambia | Stormwater | $400,000 | Reduced fecal coliform loading | Bayou Chico | Impaired-High | In Progress |
| ECUA | Navy Boulevard Area Sewer Expansion | Escambia | Wastewater | $6,040,000 | Reduced fecal coliform loading | Bayou Chico | Impaired-High | Planning |
| ECUA | Brownsville Area Sewer Expansion | Escambia | Wastewater | $5,850,000 | Reduced fecal coliform loading | Bayou Chico | Impaired-High | Planning |
| ECUA | Brownsville Area Sewer Expansion | Escambia | Wastewater | $5,510,295 | Reduced fecal coliform loading | Bayou Chico | Impaired-High | Planning |
| ECUA | Lee Street Brownsville Sewer Expansion | Escambia | Wastewater | $5,510,000 | Reduced fecal coliform loading | Bayou Chico | Impaired-High | Planning |

**Current BMAP Projects in the NWFWMD (cont.)**

| Cooperator | Project Name | County | Project Type | Five-Year Total Costs | Benefit Description | Water Resource or TMDL Waterbody | Watershed/ Waterbody Grade | Project Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jackson Blue Spring and Merritt's Mill Pond BMAP** | | | | | | | | |
| Jackson County | Jackson Blue Spring Recreation Area Stormwater Improvement Project Phase II | Jackson | Water Quality | $486,500 | Reduced nutrient loading | Jackson Blue Spring | Impaired-High | In progress |
| Jackson County | Shangri La Spring Projection Project | Jackson | Water Quality | $1,028,116 | Reduced nutrient loading | Jackson Blue Spring | Impaired-High | In progress |
| Jackson County | Shangri La Spring Projection Project | Jackson | Water Quality | $1,028,116 | Reduced nutrient loading | Jackson Blue Spring | Impaired-High | In progress |
| NWFWMD; Jackson County | Indian Springs Sewer Extension Phases 2A - 2D | Jackson | Wastewater | $12,823,512 | Reduced nutrient loading | Jackson Blue Spring | Impaired-High | In progress |
| NWFWMD; Jackson County | Blue Springs Road Sewer Project & Expansion Phase I &II | Jackson | Wastewater | $5,428,677 | Reduced nutrient loading | Jackson Blue Spring | Impaired-High | In progress |
| NWFWMD | Jackson Blue Spring Agricultural BMP Producer Cost-Share Grant Program | Jackson | Water Quality | $10,666,666 | Reduced nutrient loading and water conservation | Jackson Blue Spring | Impaired-High | In progress |
| NWFWMD; Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services | Mobile Irrigation Laboratory | Jackson | Water Quantity | $1,171,813 | Water conservation | Jackson Blue Spring | Impaired-High | Ongoing |
| NWFWMD; UF-IFAS | Sod-Based Crop Rotation | Jackson | Water Quality; Education & Outreach | $1,475,333 | Reduced nutrient loading and water conservation | Jackson Blue Spring | Impaired-High | In progress |

**Current BMAP Projects in the NWFWMD (cont.)**

| Cooperator | Project Name | County | Project Type | Five-Year Total Costs | Benefit Description | Water Resource or TMDL Waterbody | Watershed/ Waterbody Grade | Project Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Upper Wakulla River and Wakulla Springs BMAP** | | | | | | | | |
| City of Tallahassee | Septic Connection to Existing Sewer in the Wakulla BMAP | Leon | Wastewater | $4,018,000 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| City of Tallahassee | Centrate Equalization Tank | Leon | Wastewater | $3,496,552 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| City of Tallahassee | AnitaMOX Nitrogen Sidestream Treatment | Leon | Wastewater | $5,513,793 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Talquin Electric Cooperative, Inc. | Killearn Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility | Leon | Wastewater | $1,550,000 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Leon County | Belair/Annawood Septic to Sewer Project | Leon | Wastewater | $3,944,000 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Leon County | Northeast Lake Munson Septic to Sewer Project | Leon | Wastewater | $15,639,000 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Leon County | Sewering in PSPZ | Leon | Wastewater | $24,500,000 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Leon County | Woodville Sewer System Project Design and Phase I & II Construction | Leon | Wastewater | $21,000,000 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Leon County/ DOH/NWFWMD | Advanced Septic Systems Pilot and Septic System Upgrades Project | Leon | Wastewater | $3,500,000 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Wakulla County | Greiner's Addition Central Sewer Installation | Wakulla | Wastewater | $6,789,429 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | Complete |
| Wakulla County | Magnolia Gardens Sewer Phase III - IV | Wakulla | Wastewater | $8,704,613 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Wakulla County | Edgewood and Golden Gate – Phase I & II | Wakulla | Wastewater | $6,565,144 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Wakulla County | Crawfordville East Sewer – Phase V - VI | Wakulla | Wastewater | $8,236,824 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Wakulla County | Otter Creek WWTP Upgrade and Capacity Expansion | Wakulla | Wastewater | $8,701,730 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |

**Current BMAP Projects in the NWFWMD (cont.)**

| Cooperator | Project Name | County | Project Type | Five-Year Total Costs | Benefit Description | Water Resource or TMDL Waterbody | Watershed/ Waterbody Grade | Project Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Upper Wakulla River and Wakulla Springs BMAP cont.** | | | | | | | | |
| Wakulla County | Lift Station and Force Main Improvements – Phase 1-A, 1-B, 2-A, 2-B | Wakulla | Wastewater | $10,285,290 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Wakulla County | Aquifer Recharge Facilities | Wakulla | Wastewater | $3,518,000 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |
| Wakulla County | Wakulla Gardens Sewer Phase III - VII | Wakulla | Wastewater | $24,933,432 | Reduced nutrient loading | Wakulla Spring | Impaired | In Progress |