Fiscal Year 2025-26 Five-Year
Water Resource Development Work Program

Proposed October 24, 2025

NORTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NORTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

GOVERNING BOARD

DISTRICT OFFICES

Havana (Headquarters)
DeFuniak Springs
Youngstown
Milton

For additional information, write or call:
Northwest Florida Water Management District
81 Water Management Drive
Havana, Florida 32333-4712
(850) 539-5999
www.nwfwater.com

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1 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 existing and anticipated future water sources, existing water uses, projected future needs for a 20-year planning horizon, and water conservation efforts. District governing boards re-evaluate the determination at least once every five years.

The Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD or District) established seven water supply planning regions in 1996 (Figure 1). The most recent Districtwide water supply assessment (WSA) was completed in 2023. Consistent with the findings of successive assessments beginning in 1998, a regional water supply plan (RWSP) for Region II (Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties) was first approved and has been in implementation since February 2001. The most recent RWSP update was in 2024. Additional information is available at: https://nwfwater.com/Water-Resources/Water-Supply-Planning.

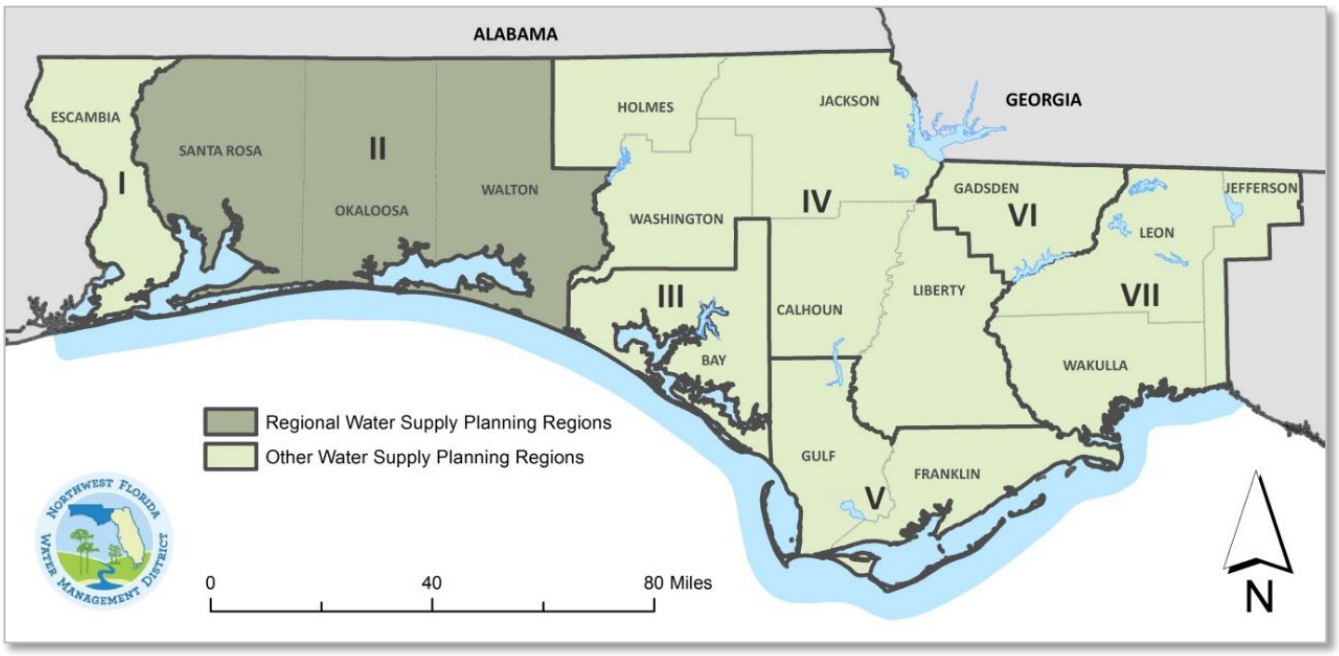

Figure 1. NWFWMD Water Supply Planning Regions

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 part of the annual budget reporting process. Work Programs describe the District's implementation strategy and funding plan for the water supply and water resource development components of RWSPs. A Work Program must be prepared for each approved regional water supply plan pursuant to section 373.709, F.S.

This Work Program for the Region II RWSP covers fiscal year (FY) 2025-26 through FY 2029-30. It is consistent with the projects and strategies described in the Region II RWSP and the District's final adopted budget for FY 2025-26.

1.1 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 to be 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.

1.2 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 2025-26 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 2025-26, $1,681,260 is budgeted for water resource development within Region II, and $3,987,542 is budgeted for alternative water supply development and water conservation within the region. The Work Program identifies approximately 7.4 million gallons per day (mgd) of reclaimed water to be made available through currently funded alternative water supply development projects within the region. For Fiscal Year 2026-27 through Fiscal Year 2029-30, the annual funding averages approximately $2.5 million. Planned activities include engineering feasibility studies for new surface water sources and analyses of potential redistributions of coastal groundwater withdrawals to inland areas to reduce drawdowns in the Upper Floridan aquifer and alleviate saltwater intrusion risks. Capital costs for new surface water supplies are estimated to range from $200 million to $498 million (Table 2) and funding sources have not yet been identified. Additional work planned includes data collection and technical assessments to support the establishment of minimum flows and minimum water levels for the Upper Floridan Aquifer in coastal Region II, the Shoal River, and Morrison Spring.

2 REGION II WORK PROGRAM

The 2024 update to the Region II RWSP was approved by the District's Governing Board in January 2025 and was developed following the recommendation in the 2023 WSA that the RWSP be continued. Water demand projections provided in the 2024 RWSP included newly published agricultural water demand projections provided by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Water use in the region totaled nearly 76 mgd in 2020 and is projected to increase by 40 percent to approximately 107 mgd by 2045 (Table 1). Public supply represents about 70 percent of the total estimated and projected water use. Under a 1-in-10 year drought condition, public supply and recreational landscape irrigation together are projected to comprise about 86 percent of the 2045 demand.

Table 1. 2020 Estimated Water Use and 2025-2045 Demand Projections for Region II

Use Category	Estimates	Future Demand Projections - Average Conditions					2020-2045 Change	
	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	mgd	%
Public Supply	54.17	59.70	64.06	67.88	71.46	74.90	20.73	38.3%
DSS	2.07	1.80	1.74	1.62	1.46	1.27	-0.79	-38.5%
Agriculture	2.92	5.9	6.32	6.87	7.46	8.02	5.11	175.1%
Recreational	12.14	13.30	14.28	15.09	15.82	16.49	4.35	35.8%
ICI	4.69	4.99	5.55	5.87	6.07	6.07	1.38	29.4%
Power	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	n/a
TOTALS*	**75.98**	**85.69**	**91.95**	**97.32**	**102.27**	**106.75**	**30.76**	**40.5%**

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

2.1 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 s. 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 2024 Region II RWSP includes water resource development projects encompassing strategies to support alternative water supply development and promote efficient water use to reduce reliance on the Floridan aquifer and lessen saltwater intrusion risks (Table 2).

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

Table 2. Summary of Region II RWSP Water Resource Development Projects, 2025 through 2045

Project Type	Description	AWS Annual Average Quantity (mgd)[1]	Non-AWS Annual Average Quantity (mgd)[2]	Timeframe	Estimated Capital Costs
Conservation	Conservation projects proposed by utilities through infrastructure improvements, meter upgrades	0.78	N/A	2025 – 2045	$6,630,245
	Passive water savings through water fixture replacements by consumers[3]	4.3	N/A	2025 – 2045	N/A
Reuse	Development or expansion of reclaimed water facilities and infrastructure	11.90	N/A	2025 – 2035	$99,500,000
Shoal River Surface Water Supply	Shoal River water supply source development, treatment, storage, and conveyance infrastructure	5.00	N/A	2035 – 2045	$200,000,000[6]
Choctawhatchee River Surface Water Supply	Choctawhatchee water supply source development, treatment, storage, and conveyance infrastructure	Up to 10 mgd	N/A	TBD	$231,000,000 to $498,000,000
Sand-and-gravel aquifer	Proposed new sand-and-gravel aquifer wells, system interconnections, and replacement wells in Santa Rosa and Okaloosa counties	N/A	3.40	2025 – 2045	$13,900,000
Floridan Aquifer	Proposed new Floridan wells, system interconnections, and replacement wells	N/A	Up to 6.68[7]	2025 – 2045	$47,850,000
Storage	New capacity created through storage tank or pond facilities	7.50	4.10	2025 – 2045	$61,550,625
Transmission/ Distribution[3]	New capacity created through planned transmission mains or distribution infrastructure	See note 4	See note 4	2025 – 2045	$88,115,318
	Total Water Sources	**32[5]**	**Up to 10.08[4]**		**$748,546,188**

[1] Estimates of potential alternative water to be made available.
[2] Proposed water withdrawals from non-AWS traditional sources.
[3] Passive water savings were not utility-proposed projects but are anticipated to result from consumer fixture replacements.
[4] The capacity for traditional and reclaimed water transmission and distribution systems is included under the Project Types listed above. For example, AWS Annual Average Quantity for reuse reflects the anticipated increase in capacity.
[5] Water supply quantity totals do not include storage capacity.
[6] Cost estimates were developed more than 10 years ago and are planned to be updated in FY 2025-2026.
[7] Groundwater development proposed by utilities. Technical analyses will be needed to determine if the quantities are permittable.

Surface Water Evaluations

Surface water investigations and cooperative efforts have historically 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 the 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 this future water supply source. Cost estimates developed more than a decade ago indicated that $200 million will be needed for project implementation. Based on increased costs for construction projects during recent years, the cost will likely be much higher. The District has applied for an Alternative Water Supply Grant for FY 2025-2026 to perform additional feasibility studies to support the implementation of the Region II RWSP. Part of this work will include updating design alternatives and cost estimates for the Shoal River water supply project.

Traditional groundwater sources are also limited within many areas of Walton County. In 2024, the District performed a planning level review of potential surface water sources to meet future needs in Walton County, including the Choctawhatchee River. The Choctawhatchee River is the third largest river in Florida in terms of flow, with a watershed that exceeds 3 million acres and spans portions of Florida and Alabama. The median flow at the USGS station near Bruce, Florida, based on the 1994 to 2024 period of record is 3,830 cubic feet per second (approximately 2,061 million gallons per day (mgd). The Choctawhatchee River is designated as Critical Habitat for Gulf Sturgeon and several listed mussel species occur along the river. Flows from the river support a diverse and productive estuary. Although a specific withdrawal schedule protective of aquatic habitat for this river system remains to be determined, an annual yield of 10 mgd from the Choctawhatchee River would comprise less than 0.5 percent of the median flow. Cost estimates for a 5-to-10 mgd Choctawhatchee River water supply source range from $231 million to $498 million depending on the storage options and transmission routes (Table 2). A regional water supply project of this scale will require partnerships among utilities, as well as considerable state and/or federal funding for successful implementation.

Reuse of Reclaimed Water

Reclaimed water remains an essential alternative water supply source for meeting current and future demands in Region II. 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 water offset by providing reclaimed water for such purposes as public access irrigation, toilet flushing, fire protection, and industrial uses. The 2024 RWSP update identifies the potential for 11.9 mgd of reclaimed water from water supply development projects to be made available by 2045. 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. Such efforts ultimately can result in development of regionally significant water reuse facilities. Among current examples are the South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative and the Pace Water System and City of Niceville reuse projects described below, as well as Okaloosa County's Shoal River Ranch Water Reclamation Facility. Current reclaimed water projects funded in cooperation with the District are listed in Appendix A.

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 water resource caution area (WRCA).

As part of the 2024 Region II RWSP update, the District engaged consultant services to further identify water conservation savings using the Alliance for Water Efficiency's water conservation tracking tool. The 2024 RWSP update identifies a potential for up to approximately 5.1 mgd in additional water conservation savings by 2045 that may be achieved through passive savings and conservation programs implemented by utilities and local governments. Among the 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. Additionally, passive savings are anticipated to occur as consumers replace older plumbing fixtures with newer, low-volume fixtures. Water use data and analysis have demonstrated 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. In FY 24-25, the District applied for water conservation grant funding; the anticipated funds are reflected in the FY 26-27 through FY 29-30 budget estimates. 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 and Managed Aquifer Recharge

Depending on hydrogeologic characteristics, aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) has the potential to store large quantities of water for subsequent use and managed aquifer recharge may enhance groundwater availability. A few small aquifer recharge projects have been permitted in the region for groundwater remediation and restoration activities. The 2024 RWSP update does not include any proposed ASR projects, although ASR could be a component of future surface water development. An existing reclaimed water ASR system permitted for 1.12 mgd remains in service. As part of the 2024 RWSP update, the District initiated work to begin assessing the potential for managed aquifer recharge to enhance the sustainability of the Upper Floridan aquifer. A planning level review suggests hydrogeologic conditions may be suitable for aquifer recharge, though additional feasibility studies are needed. The District has applied to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for Alternative Water Supply grant funding to further assess the feasibility of managed aquifer recharge.

Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels

There are currently no adopted MFLs, recovery or prevention strategies, or water reservations in Region II. However, due to the increasing risk of saltwater intrusion associated with consumptive groundwater withdrawals, the Upper Floridan aquifer in Region II will be added to the MFL Priority List and Schedule in November 2025. The technical assessment is scheduled for completion in 2031, with adoption of minimum aquifer levels planned for 2032. Two additional waterbodies within Region II included on the District's MFL Priority List and Schedule are Morrison Spring, a second-magnitude spring in Walton County, and the Shoal River, which spans central Walton and Okaloosa counties. Rule adoption for these waterbodies is scheduled for 2033 and 2034, respectively.

Groundwater Evaluations

District groundwater evaluation programs include data collection, groundwater and saltwater intrusion modeling, water supply feasibility studies and other 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 availability of water from this alternative water supply source to offset projected Upper Floridan withdrawals along the coast. Groundwater levels within the sand-and-gravel aquifer are routinely monitored as part of the District's quarterly water level and continuous monitoring networks.

Future iterations of the District's MFL Priority List may include the sand-and-gravel aquifer in Okaloosa and Santa Rosa counties as a waterbody to be evaluated and scheduled, if necessary, for future years.

Floridan Aquifer

The Floridan aquifer functions as a regional aquifer system across inland and coastal areas. Designation of Upper Floridan aquifer withdrawals as "coastal" or "inland" facilitates water use and planning evaluations. However, Upper Floridan aquifer withdrawals in inland areas can affect Upper Floridan aquifer water levels near the coast. Data collection for the Region II coastal Upper Floridan MFL technical assessment began in 2015. Groundwater flow and transport models were developed and calibrated in 2019 and 2020 to evaluate the need to establish minimum aquifer levels for the Upper Floridan aquifer in Region II to protect potable supplies from saltwater intrusion. Although the evaluation determined minimum aquifer levels were not needed at that time, subsequent increases in projected water demands identified in the 2024 RWSP update indicate the risk of saltwater intrusion in the Upper Floridan aquifer will continue to increase through 2045. Existing groundwater models are being used to evaluate how the increased risk of saltwater intrusion may be mitigated or even decreased if coastal pumping from the Upper Floridan aquifer were redistributed to inland areas. Proposed model simulations include the systematic and incremental redistribution of projected pumping to existing and/or hypothetical Upper Floridan aquifer wells located away from the coast.

To refine estimates of saltwater intrusion risk, the District is planning to implement the Enhanced Lower Floridan Aquifer Study during FY 2026-2027 and FY 2027-2028. This project will involve construction of a deep Lower Floridan aquifer monitoring well and the collection of data regarding the properties of the Bucatunna Clay confining unit. In addition, existing data are being evaluated to determine the feasibility of conducting aerial and ground-based electromagnetic (EM) surveys to help map the extent of the Bucatunna Clay confining unit transition zone and the position of the freshwater/saltwater interface along the coast. Data collected during this study will be used to refine groundwater flow and transport models. The updated models will be used to support the evaluation of minimum aquifer levels scheduled for completion in 2031.

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 trend data inform water resource evaluation programs and activities.

Sand-and-gravel aquifer and Floridan aquifer monitoring wells within Region II also provide water level data for numerical groundwater flow and solute transport models, which are used to assess resource sustainability and saltwater intrusion risk. Data collection and monitoring will continue through the five-year work plan period. Contracted services to perform discrete interval water quality sampling to monitor for potential saltwater intrusion will continue through FY 2029-30.

Water Use Data and Planning

Water use data collection and analyses are foundational to regional water supply planning, as well as Districtwide assessments of water use and resource sustainability. 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. The projections, together with resource assessments, provide the basis for identifying alternative water supply source development needs within the RWSP.

The most recent WSA was completed in 2023. The next WSA update is scheduled for completion in 2028. 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, other water management districts, and 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 in Table 3.

Table 3. Region II Water Resource Development Annual Funding Plan

Water Resource Development Projects	Budget Activity	FY 24-25 Expenditures *	Anticipated Five Year Work Program					FY 25-26 to FY 29-30 Cost Estimate
			FY 25-26 Budget†	FY 26-27	FY 27-28	FY 28-29	FY 29-30	
Surface Water	1.1.1 1.1.2	$5,787	$163,850	$736,000	$236,000	$236,000	$236,000	$1,607,850
Reuse	1.1.1 2.2.1	$22,755	$290,260	$85,000	$85,000	$85,000	$85,000	$630,260
Conservation	1.1.1 2.2.1	$30,374	$91,280	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$291,280
Aquifer Storage and Recovery	2.2.1	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Groundwater Evaluations	1.1.2 2.2.1	$372,070	$285,560	$2,885,000	$2,635,000	$685,000	$685,000	$7,175,560
Data Collection and Analysis	1.1.1 1.1.2 1.2.0	$627,274	$850,310	$285,000	$285,000	$285,000	$285,000	$1,990,310
TOTAL		$1,058,261	$1,681,260	$4,041,000	$3,291,000	$1,341,000	$1,341,000	$11,695,260

*Preliminary figures. Final expenditures to be provided in the March 1, 2026, Consolidated Annual Report.
†Based on approved adopted budget.

2.2 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."[2] Water supply development encompasses both traditional and alternative water supply development. Alternative water supply sources may include saltwater, brackish waters, surface

[2] Section 373.019(26), F.S.

water captured predominately during wet weather flows, sources made available through the addition of new storage capacity, reuse of reclaimed water, downstream augmentation of waterbodies with reclaimed water, stormwater, and any other water supply source designated as nontraditional for a water supply planning region in the applicable regional water supply plan.[3] 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.

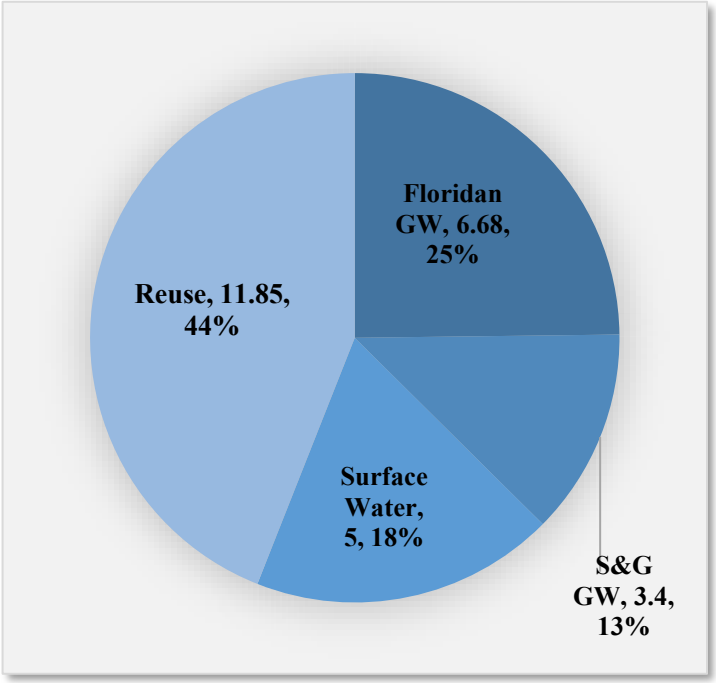

Figure 2. Potential Water Supply Development by Project Source (mgd)

The 2024 Region II RWSP identifies water supply development options that may generate up to 26.93 mgd of water by 2045 for future needs (Figure 2). About 62 percent or roughly 17 mgd are alternative supplies, including reclaimed water, and surface water as an alternative to traditional aquifer withdrawals.

Storage and distribution project options include water storage, distribution infrastructure improvements, and system interconnections. While these projects represent investment into the water distribution system and often increase capacity, they do not create new water supply. Due to this, increases in capacity from these projects are not counted among future potential water supply. Water conservation project options include infrastructure replacements and upgrades, advanced metering systems, and public information conservation programs. Water conservation and alternative water supply 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 2024 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 approximately 11.9 mgd by 2045. This is in addition to approximately 12.8 mgd of reclaimed water currently 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 trust fund (WPSTF) appropriations have been awarded that leverage local and other resources. Ongoing District-supported 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, increasing the reclaimed water resource for the region and eliminating wastewater discharge

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

into Santa Rosa Sound. Upon completion, this project is expected to make 1.4 mgd of reclaimed water available.

- The 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 booster pump station to deliver reclaimed water to residential customers and a park complex.
- In FY 2023-24, the City of Niceville began working on the Reclaimed Water to Deer Moss Creek Subdivision Project in cooperation with the District and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The project will provide 22,500 linear feet of reclaimed watermain, a holding pond, and high service pumps. Reclaimed water from Okaloosa County will be routed through this facility and provided to the Deer Moss Creek subdivision.

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 with the city of Paxton to reduce water loss through installation of approximately 350 water meters and appurtenances was completed in December 2024. A list of water supply development projects submitted by utilities in support of the 2024 RWSP update is included in Appendix A.

3 DISTRICTWIDE AND SUPPORTING INITIATIVES

Implementation of water resource development, 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 Assistance

The District continues support for water supply development by assisting local governments and utilities with project development and 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, a $500,000 grant to Gulf County for construction of a Floridan Aquifer production well, and a $50,000 grant to the town of Campbellton for replacement of approximately 100 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. Reclaimed water from this system is provided to a nearby nursery operation.

During FY 2024-25, the District provided a $80,000 grant to the city of Port St. Joe for a reuse project at the Port St. Joe Water Treatment Plant to reduce wastewater generated by the water treatment plant by redirecting the backwash water back to the head of the plant for treatment (recycle).

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 the installation of modern water meters to enable rural communities to improve potable water conservation and management of water losses. 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,

includes 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 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.

Agriculture 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. As of 2024, the program was expanded to include the Chipola River Springs groundwater contribution area. 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 2024-25, approximately 305 permits were issued to plug abandoned or contaminated wells Districtwide. Approximately 60 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 23-06 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.

Building upon the SWIM program, the District recently implemented the Northwest Florida Watersheds Partnership Program to provide funding for planning, data collection, design, and implementation of projects to enhance water quality, aquatic habitat, and water supply in priority sub-basins. Work plans will be prepared for each priority sub-basin that describe water resource issues and solutions, including proposed projects, estimated costs, and funding needs.

These programs engage stakeholder-driven initiatives and complement and support 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 approximately 226,662 acres across northwest Florida for water resource purposes, either in fee simple or through conservation easements. The District acquires land 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, protect the quality and quantity of recharge for Deer Point Lake Reservoir, the primary source of water for Bay County.

4 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 2025-26 ad valorem tax millage rate, as set by the Governing Board, is 0.0207. 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, and
- 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 greatest need. The District conducts an annual grant cycle and submits recommended projects to the Governing Board for consideration. Board-approved projects are 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 A: WATER SUPPLY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The following table provides a list of Region II water supply development projects. The District has not yet adopted MFLs in Region II and there are no recovery or prevention strategies to report on in this Work Program.

Appendix A. Region II Water Supply Development Projects

Unique ID	Project Name	Cooperating Entity	Project Type	Project Status	Total Water (mgd)	Prior District Funding	FY 2025-26 Budgeted	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	FY 2028-29	FY 2029-30	Cooperating Entity Match	Project Total
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 (AWS Funding Pending Allocation)	Varies	Reclaimed Water for Potable Offset	Underway	TBD	$6,061,125	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$6,511,666	$12,572,791
NWWS-00053 (A-D)	South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative	Holley-Navarre WS; Santa Rosa Co.; Gulf Breeze; Eglin AFB	Reclaimed Water for Potable Offset	Underway	1.4	$2,600,000	$2,500,000	$1,500,000	$1,500,000	$1,000,000	$1,000,000	$22,775,000	$32,875,000
NWWS-00058A	GST and Booster Pump Station	Pace Water System	Reclaimed Water for Potable Offset	Underway	2	$941,450	$169,275	$0	$0	$0	$0	$1,110,725	$2,221,450
NWWS-00059A	Water Meter Replacement	City of Paxton	PS Conser-vation	Complete	TBD	$135,615	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$135,615
NWWS-00060A	Reclaimed Water to Deer Moss Creek Sub - division S/D	City of Niceville	Reclaimed Water for Potable Offset	Underway	4	$1,651,733	$1,318,267	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$2,970,000
Totals						**$11,389,923**	**$3,987,542**	**$1,500,000**	**$1,500,000**	**$1,000,000**	**$1,000,000**	**$29,397,391**	**$50,774,856**

APPENDIX B: BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN PROJECTS

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 will be reported in the District's March 1 Consolidated Annual Report.

Within northwest Florida, BMAPs have been adopted for three waterbodies: Bayou Chico (Escambia County), Jackson Blue Spring and Merritts 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.