



Lake Jackson Sub-Basin Work Plan

Northwest Florida Watersheds Partnership Program

The **Northwest Florida Watersheds Partnership Program (Program)** is a collaborative, multi-party initiative to proactively address critical water resource issues within priority sub-basins of the Northwest Florida Water Management District (District). The program is being implemented in coordination with local and county governments, regional entities, and other interested parties to maximize effectiveness.

Lake Jackson

The Lake Jackson sub-basin encompasses approximately 28,639 acres in Leon County, Florida, including portions of the City of Tallahassee. Together with Carr Lake and Mallard Pond, the lake was designated a Florida Aquatic Preserve in 1973 in recognition of its biological, aesthetic, and recreational values. In addition to Lake Jackson, the sub-basin includes Carr Lake; lakes Hall and Overstreet; and Mallard Pond. The work plan describes the sub-basin's characteristics, critical water resource issues, and strategies and proposed projects that can be implemented to address these issues.

The southern portion of the sub-basin is within the city of Tallahassee, and its northern extent is within unincorporated Leon County. Thirty-three percent of the sub-basin is developed with the remaining 67 percent of the area categorized as undeveloped space such as upland forest, wetlands and water. The 2020 census recorded a population size of 26,863 and the estimate for 2045 is 31,106, an increase of 16 percent.



Current Issues and Challenges

Water quality in Lake Jackson is affected by nonpoint source pollution generated by stormwater runoff and effluent from septic systems with the sub-basin containing more than 4,900 known and likely septic systems. Harmful algal blooms reported in 2025 were clustered in the southern portion of the lake near Fords Arm.

Water quality impairments include:

Lake Jackson (Dissolved oxygen)	Butler Mill Creek (<i>E. coli</i>)
Meginnis Arm Run (Dissolved oxygen)	Lexington Creek (Total phosphorus, <i>E. coli</i>)
Lake Overstreet Drain (<i>E. coli</i>)	Summer Creek (Dissolved oxygen)

Among other challenges affecting the sub-basin, Lake Jackson requires continuing efforts to control invasive aquatic plants such as Cuban bulrush, water hyacinth, Chinese tallow, hydrilla, and alligatorweed. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Aquatic Plant Management Program maintains an active program to manage exotic and invasive plants within the lake.

Strategies and Solutions

The work plan summarizes management strategies to address the water resource challenges affecting Lake Jackson. Each strategy identified addresses multiple issue areas and objectives, reflecting the interrelated nature of water resource attributes and conditions. Recommended strategies include stormwater retrofits, sanitary sewer system improvements, ecosystem restoration, septic tank abatement, and water reuse.



Lake Jackson Phipps Property

Proposed Projects and Funding Needs

Proposed projects to address water resource issues within the Lake Jackson sub-basin are detailed in the work plan. Addressing critical water resource issues will require a multi-year effort. Future projects, in addition to those identified within the work plan, will likely be needed to fully address water resource issues and challenges within the sub-basin. As of January 2026, **four** projects have been proposed, at an estimated total cost and unmet funding need of **\$41.6 million**. Project types include:

- Ecosystem restoration
- Stormwater system improvements
- Septic to sewer projects



Lake Jackson Porter Sink