

NORTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

WATER SHORTAGE WARNING WITHIN THE NORTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Order No. 26-001

The Governing Board of the Northwest Florida Water Management District (District), after considering recommendations of District staff, and being otherwise fully appraised of the matter, issues this Order pursuant to Sections 373.083, 373.175 and 373.246, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 40A-21, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), based on the following Findings of Fact.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The District's Water Shortage Plan (the "Plan"), adopted as Chapter 40A-21, F.A.C., provides that the District will monitor and evaluate the condition of the water resources in the District to determine whether the present or anticipated available water supplies are sufficient to meet demands and whether serious harm to water resources can be expected.
2. The purposes of the Plan are to protect the water resources of the District from serious harm; to assure equitable distribution of available water resources among all water users during times of shortage, consistent with the goals of minimizing adverse economic, social, and health-related impacts; to provide advance knowledge of the means by which water apportionments and reductions will be made during times of shortage; and to promote greater security for water-use permittees.
3. Rule 40A-21.231(2), F.A.C., of the Plan authorizes the Governing Board to issue a water shortage warning calling for voluntary reductions in use.
4. Rule 40A-21.231(2), F.A.C., of the Plan provides the Governing Board the ability to direct staff to coordinate a water shortage warning declaration with local interest groups, affected user classes, and governmental agencies.
5. Section 373.609, Florida Statutes, requires local government officials to assist the District, upon request, in carrying out this Order.
6. As of February 5, 2026, drought conditions encompass the entirety of the District, with surface water conditions throughout the District being below-normal to extremely-below-normal, and groundwater levels continuing to decline.
7. In the event the District continues to experience drought conditions, there is an increased likelihood that localized upconing of saltwater may occur in some wells, and sufficient water resources may not be available to meet water use demands.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Upon careful consideration of these hydrologic and climate conditions, District data, qualitative factors, and staff recommendations, the Governing Board has determined a Water Shortage Warning for the District is necessary and should be so ordered.

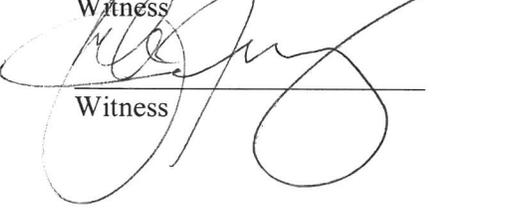
ORDER

THEREFORE, BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW SET FORTH HEREIN, IT IS ORDERED:

1. A Water Shortage Warning is issued for all surface and groundwater sources throughout the District.
2. All users in all classes of use are encouraged to reduce water use and to conserve water to the maximum extent possible.
3. Landscaping irrigation users are encouraged to limit irrigation to the low evaporation periods of the evening and early morning hours.
4. These voluntary measures shall not be construed to limit any activities designated to prevent the spread of fire or to save property from being destroyed by fire.
5. These voluntary measures do not exempt any water user from complying with applicable mandatory water-use restrictions placed on public supply utility customers due to capacity problems with water supply facilities. In such cases, water users are urged to reduce water use in a manner consistent with the specific local restrictions, and to the extent practicable with this Order.
6. This Order shall take effect immediately and remain in effect until rescinded by the Governing Board.

DONE AND ORDERED this 11th day of February 2026.


Witness


Witness


Jerry Pate, Vice Chairman

Northwest Florida Water Management District
81 Water Management Drive
Havana, Florida 32333

Filed this 11 day of February, 2026



Candice Costello, Agency Clerk