

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE

WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS

Northwest Florida Water Management District

RULE NO.: RULE TITLE:

40A-8.021 Definitions

40A-8.061 Minimum Flow for Jackson Blue Spring.

PURPOSE AND EFFECT: The overall purpose is to establish the minimum flow for Jackson Blue Spring to comply with Florida Statutes.

SUMMARY: The rule development will cover amending a rule to include necessary definition(s) and creating a rule setting the minimum flow for Jackson Blue Spring.

SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED REGULATORY COSTS AND LEGISLATIVE RATIFICATION:

The Agency has determined that this will not have an adverse impact on small business or likely increase directly or indirectly regulatory costs in excess of \$200,000 in the aggregate within one year after the implementation of the rule.

A SERC has not been prepared by the Agency.

The Agency has determined that the proposed rule is not expected to require legislative ratification based on the statement of estimated regulatory costs or if no SERC is required, the information expressly relied upon and described herein: Upon review of the proposed changes to the rule, the District has determined that the amendments will not exceed any one of the economic analysis criteria in a SERC as set forth in Section 120.541(2)(a), F.S.

Any person who wishes to provide information regarding a statement of estimated regulatory costs or provide a proposal for a lower cost regulatory alternative must do so in writing within 21 days of this notice.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY: 373.044, 373.113, 373.171, F.S.

LAW IMPLEMENTED: 373.036, 373.042, 373.0421, 373.103 F.S.

IF REQUESTED WITHIN 21 DAYS OF THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE, A HEARING WILL BE SCHEDULED AND ANNOUNCED IN THE FAR.

THE PERSON TO BE CONTACTED REGARDING THE PROPOSED RULE IS: Paul Thurman, Chief, Bureau of Resource Evaluation, Division of Resource Management, Northwest Florida Water Management District, 81 Water Management Drive, Havana, FL 32333, (850)539-5999, Paul.Thurman@nfwwater.com.

THE FULL TEXT OF THE PROPOSED RULE IS:

CHAPTER 40A-8

MINIMUM FLOWS AND MINIMUM WATER LEVELS

40A-8.021 Definitions

(1) through (18) no change.

(19) “Jackson Blue Spring” is the first magnitude spring located in Jackson County at 30 degrees 47 minutes 25.8536 seconds north latitude and -85 degrees 08 minutes 24.3181 seconds west longitude.

(20) “Jackson Blue Spring Median Flow” means the median of Jackson Blue Spring Daily Flow beginning on January 1, 2005, and extending through present or for the most recent 30 years of record, whichever is shorter.

(21) “Jackson Blue Spring Daily Flow” means the average daily flow at Northwest Florida Water Management District Station 005042 (Jackson Blue Spring), or its successor located in Jackson County, Florida.

(22) “Jackson Blue Spring Median Baseline Flow” means the median of Jackson Blue Spring Daily Flow values between January 1, 2005, and December 31, 2024, adjusted to remove the impacts of groundwater withdrawals. Rulemaking Authority 373.044, 373.113 FS. Law Implemented 373.042 FS. History-New 6-12-2019, Amended 5-18-21, Amended

40A-8.061 Minimum Flow for Jackson Blue Spring.

The Governing Board hereby establishes the following minimum flow. The Governing Board finds that the following minimum flow is the limit at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area.

The minimum Jackson Blue Spring Median Flow is 92.2 cubic feet per second. The minimum flow of 92.2 cubic feet per second represents an allowable flow reduction of 10.7%, or 11.1 cubic feet per second, from the Jackson Blue Spring Median Baseline Flow of 103.3 cubic feet per second.

The District will evaluate the minimum flow for Jackson Blue Spring every five years as part of the regional water supply planning process to determine the extent to which the Jackson Blue Spring Median Flow has been reduced due to withdrawals as of the date of each evaluation. Each evaluation will include a review of:

- a. Flow data,
- b. Water withdrawals,

c. Aquifer water levels, and

d. Rainfall data.

Each evaluation is independent from and not a determination of water use permit compliance or environmental resource permit compliance. Permit compliance is a regulatory function that is not within the scope of this subsection.

Rulemaking Authority 373.044, 373.113 FS. Law Implemented 373.042, 373.0421, 373.103 FS. History-New

NAME OF PERSON ORIGINATING PROPOSED RULE: Paul Thurman, Chief Bureau of Water Resource Evaluation, Division of Resource Management.

NAME OF AGENCY HEAD WHO APPROVED THE PROPOSED RULE: Governing Board, Northwest Florida Water Management District

DATE PROPOSED RULE APPROVED BY AGENCY HEAD: January 14, 2026

DATE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE DEVELOPMENT PUBLISHED IN FAR: November 19, 2025