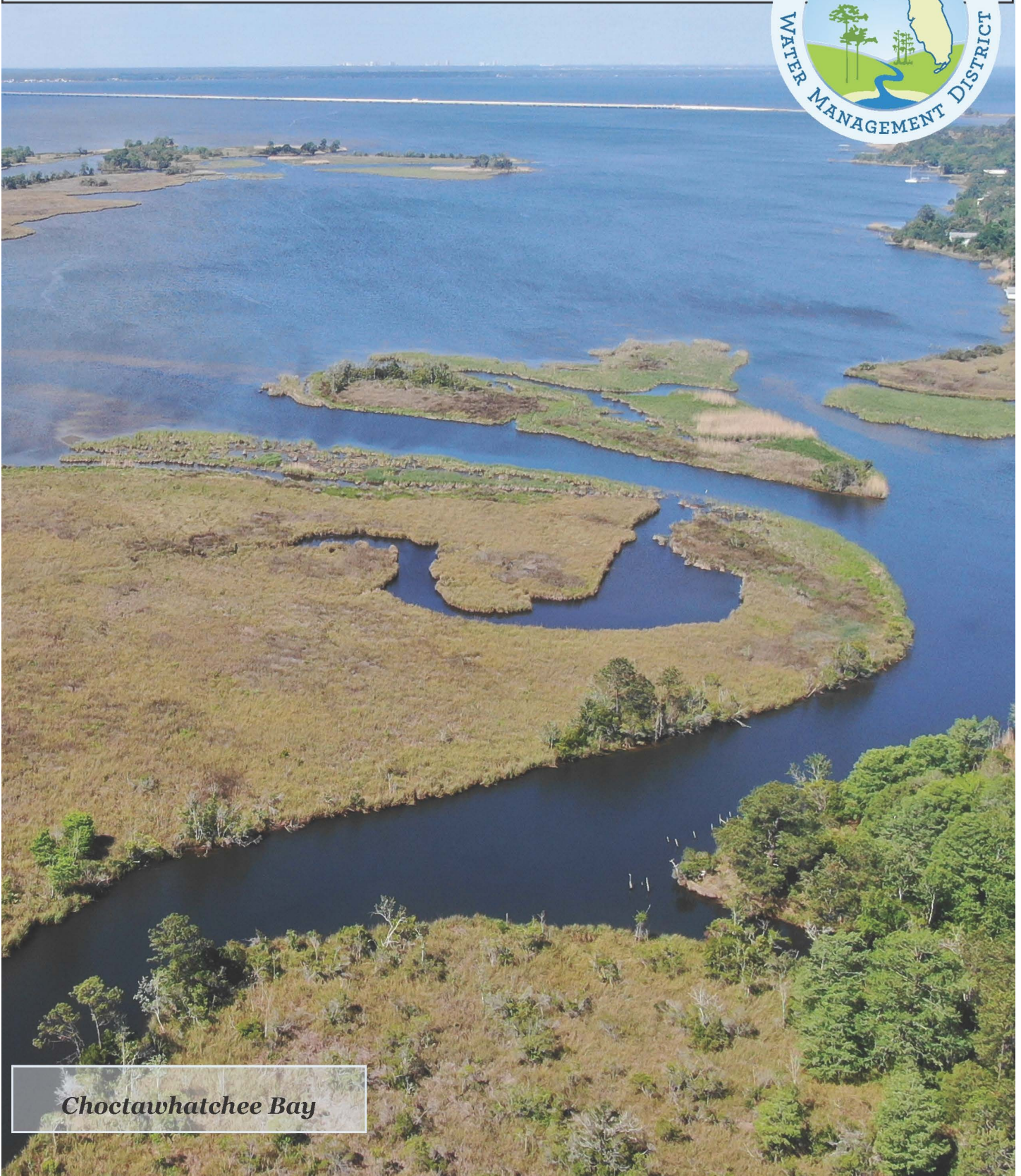


Northwest Florida Water Management District

2026-2027 Strategic Plan

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Choctawhatchee Bay

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S. 373.036, Florida Statutes (F.S.), gives water management districts the option of substituting an annual strategic plan in lieu of the District Water Management Plan. The Strategic Plan describes statutory responsibilities and current priorities of the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD or District) over a five-year planning horizon. The plan is complementary to and implemented through the District's annual budget. The planning horizon for this 2026 Strategic Plan is from Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 to 2030-31.

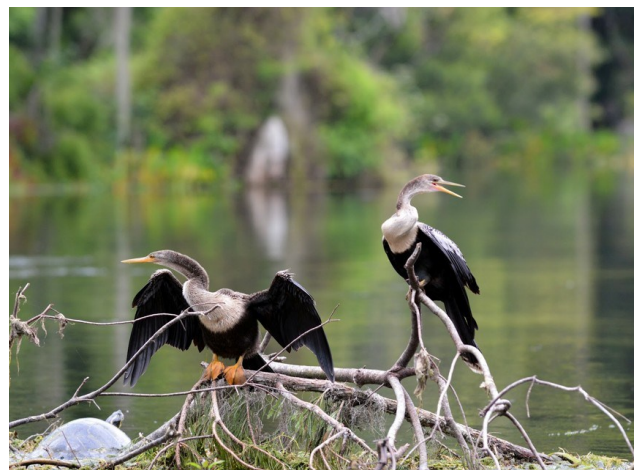
Mission and Responsibilities

The District's mission, as established by the Governing Board, is to implement the provisions of Chapter 373, F.S., in a manner that best ensures the continued welfare of the residents and water resources of northwest Florida. S. 373.036, F.S., sets forth four interrelated areas of responsibility (AORs) for water management districts: **Water Supply**, **Water Quality**, **Flood Protection and Floodplain Management**, and **Natural Systems**.

Areas of Responsibility and Goals	
Water Supply	Ensure the availability of sufficient water for all existing and future reasonable-beneficial uses and natural systems.
Water Quality	Protect and improve the quality of the District's water resources.
Flood Protection and Floodplain Management	Maintain natural floodplain functions and minimize harm from flooding.
Natural Systems	Protect and, where needed, restore natural systems.



Alligator



Anhinga



About the Northwest Florida Water Management District

One of five water management districts created by the Florida Water Resources Act of 1972, the District is charged with managing the water resources of the Florida Panhandle. The District works to protect and manage water resources in a sustainable manner to benefit people and natural resources across its 16-county region. The District's geographic region extends from the St. Marks River watershed in Jefferson County to the Perdido River in Escambia County. A Governing Board, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, provides direction and oversight.

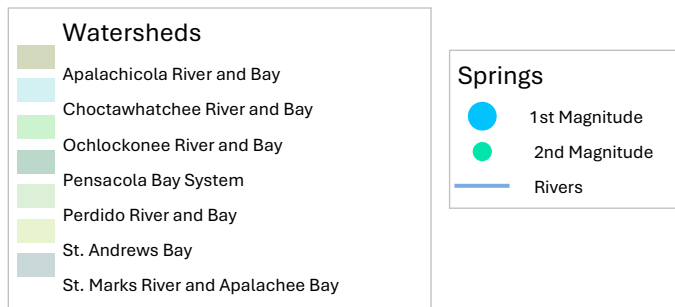
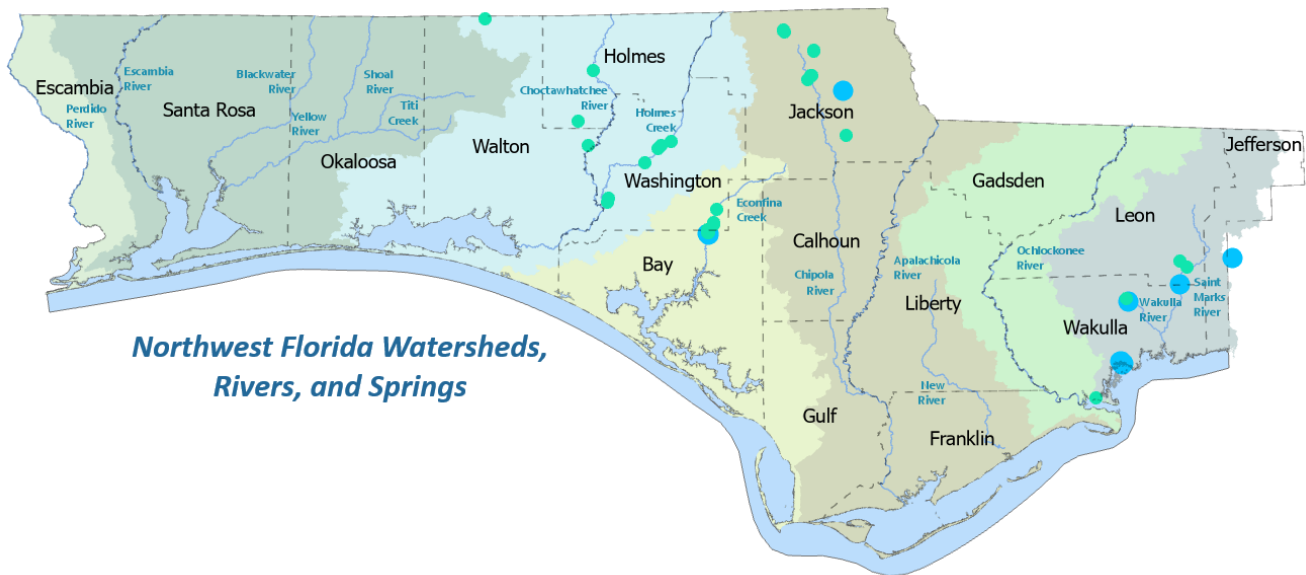


Wakulla River

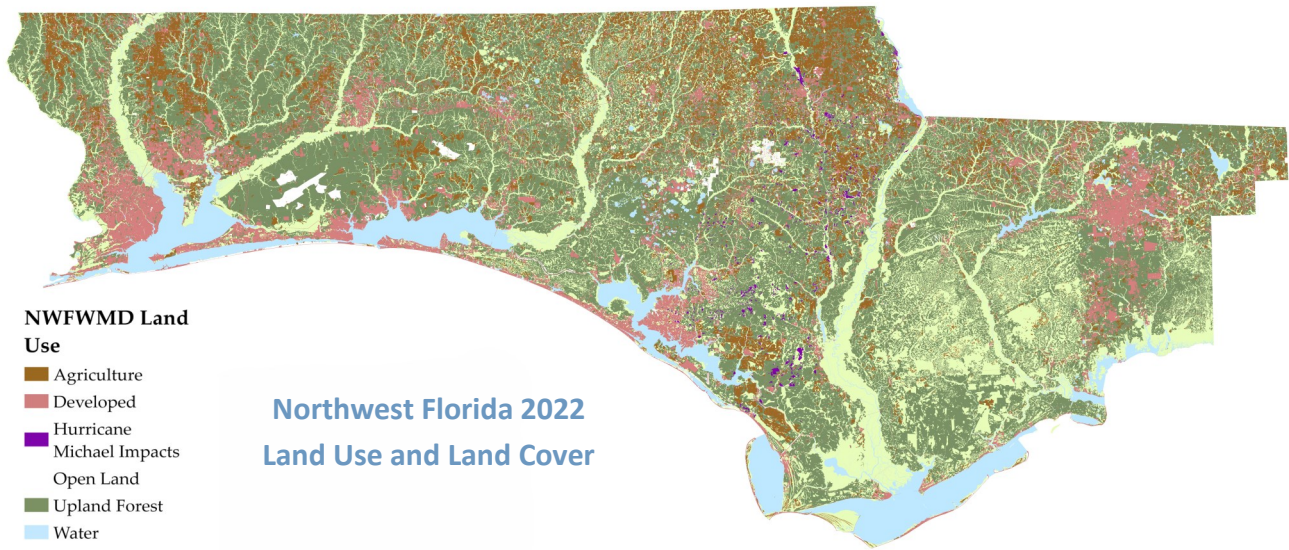


Regional Characteristics

The District contains seven major watersheds, six of which extend into Alabama and Georgia. The Apalachicola, Choctawhatchee, and Escambia rivers are three of Florida's five largest rivers by volume of flow, with the Apalachicola River the state's largest. The District contains more than 250 springs, including three designated Outstanding Florida Springs: Wakulla Spring, Jackson Blue Spring, and the Gainer Spring Group.



The Floridan aquifer is the primary source of water supply across most of northwest Florida, and the sand-and-gravel aquifer is the primary source in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. Bay County relies primarily on surface water from the Deer Point Lake Reservoir. The city of Port St. Joe is served by surface water from the Chipola River via the Gulf County Freshwater Canal.



There are an estimated 1.61 million permanent residents in northwest Florida, with most of the population concentrated within Bay, Escambia, Leon, Okaloosa, and Santa Rosa counties. Agricultural lands are concentrated in the northern portions of the District within Gadsden, Holmes, Jackson, Calhoun, Walton, Santa Rosa, and Escambia counties. Public and private forest lands cover much of the region. Among public lands in northwest Florida are military bases, state and national forests, national wildlife refuges, state parks, and District lands.



Agricultural Lands in Jackson County



Developing a strategic plan requires evaluating the organization's strengths, opportunities, and challenges to enhance and provide insight toward implementation.

STRENGTHS	• Extensive water management lands and other public lands that protect water quality, floodplains, water recharge, and ecosystem health and productivity • Partnerships and collaboration with other public and private organizations with complementary functions and authority • Technical capability, efficiency, and a long-term outlook • Ability to leverage external funding	
	• Potential to acquire floodplain and recharge areas to protect and thereby increase the resilience of water and related resources, as well as affected communities • Potential to develop additional projects to protect and restore sensitive resources, including springs, wetlands, surface waters, aquifers, and aquatic habitats • Potential to develop alternative water supply sources and enhance water conservation • Potential to acquire funding sources to protect and restore the Gulf of America and related natural resources • Potential to acquire and apply new technology, data sources, and methods • Potential for state and federal funding to contribute resources across all areas of responsibilities	OPPORTUNITIES
CHALLENGES	• Increasing demands for potable water for people, businesses, and agriculture • Nonpoint source pollution • Needs for improved and expanded wastewater treatment infrastructure • Long-term risks of saltwater intrusion in aquifers serving coastal communities • Out-of-state water withdrawals contributing to decreased flows, increased coastal salinity, and associated impacts to water supply availability and aquatic ecosystems • Persistent flooding and potentially increased flooding frequency • Sea level rise and uncertainty regarding future climate conditions • Limited real-time hydrologic monitoring stations • Fragmentation of wetlands and other water-related habitats • Infrastructure funding constraints on the part of financially disadvantaged small local governments	

The District consistently leverages strengths and endeavors to capitalize on opportunities through program activities. Challenges are acknowledged in the selection of strategic priorities, related goals, and success indicators, and in the programs and projects chosen for implementation.



Operational Plans

The Strategic Plan is designed as a functional plan to address the District's statutorily defined AORs and guide, at a high level, how the agency will carry out major activities over a five-year planning horizon. Many of these activities are implemented through other plans and programs which directly execute the priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan. Thus, the Strategic Plan reflects an integrated approach to the major water resource challenges facing the District.

Operational Documents		
Plan	Purpose (Primary Statute)	Horizon
Strategic Plan	<i>Establish strategic priorities for at least a future five-year period; Districtwide plan for water supply, flood protection, water quality, and natural systems (s. 373.036, F.S.)</i>	<i>Five years; updated annually</i>
Incorporated within the Strategic Plan:		
Regional Water Supply Plans	Identify water sources, demands, and alternative water supply needs and projects (s. 373.709, F.S.)	20 years; updated every five years
Water Supply Assessment	Estimates and projections of Districtwide water demand and source assessments (s. 373.036, F.S.)	20 years; updated every five years
Florida Forever Land Acquisition Work Plan	Districtwide land acquisition plan (s. 373.199, F.S.)	Five years; updated annually
Florida Forever Capital Improvements Plan	Short-range plan for implementation of approved capital improvement projects (s. 373.199, F.S.)	Five years; updated annually
NWFWMD-FEMA Cooperating Technical Partner Risk MAP Business Plan	Risk MAP, flood mapping and related activities plan for the District (s. 373.036, F.S.)	Five years; updated annually
Regional Mitigation Plan	Districtwide wetland mitigation (s. 373.4137, F.S.; 33 U.S.C. 1344); also incorporates the In-Lieu Fee Program and Instrument and the Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank	Updated annually
Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Plans (multiple)	Watershed protection, management, and restoration (ss. 373.451-459, F.S.)	Updated as needed
Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels (MFLs) Priority List	Priority list for development of MFLs (s. 373.042, F.S.)	Updated annually



Annual Progress Review and Plan Update

In implementing a strategic plan, water management districts are required to include an Annual Work Plan Report as an addendum within the Consolidated Annual Report, released each year by March 1. The Annual Work Plan Report is described in the Monitoring and Reporting section. The Strategic Plan is updated based on these results and in consideration of emerging issues and the District's annual budget.

Financial Resources

The state constitution and statutory millage rate cap for NWFWMD is 0.05, significantly less than the ad valorem taxing authority of the other four water management districts. The District's FY 2026-27 ad valorem tax millage rate, as set by the Governing Board, is proposed to be 0.0201 of a mill. To meet its areas of responsibility, the District must rely on its limited reserve funding, annual legislative appropriations to support operational costs, grants, and other sources of funding, when available. These include:

State Funding – For priorities that include, for example:

- Water quality improvement, including springs restoration and protection and nonpoint source pollution abatement
- Resiliency and adaptation to sea-level rise and flooding
- Acquisition, management, and restoration of District-owned lands
- Alternative water supply development
- Minimum flows and minimum water levels
- Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP)
- Hydrologic and water quality data collection and analysis
- Regional wetland mitigation, including functional wetland restoration and protection
- Hurricane recovery and waterway debris removal

Federal Funding – To augment state and District funding to accomplish priority projects and programs, including:

- Flood hazard and risk mapping, assessments, and planning
- Nonpoint source and other water quality protection

Cooperative Funding – Project funding to leverage state, District, and federal funding, which may include:

- Local governments
- Utilities
- Non-government organizations



Strategic Priorities for Fiscal Years 2027-2031

Watershed Protection and Restoration

Water Quality Improvement and Springs Protection: Work with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), local and regional partners, and other state and federal agencies and stakeholders to identify, secure funding and implement water quality improvement and restoration projects for Wakulla Spring, Jackson Blue Spring, and other impaired watersheds.

Northwest Florida Watersheds Partnerships Program: Leverage collaborative partnerships to proactively address critical water resource issues using an integrated watershed-based approach in priority sub-basins.

Flood Protection and Regional Resilience: Enhance flood protection and regional resilience efforts, including through land acquisition; the Risk MAP program; developing resources, data, and projects to respond to sea level rise and compound flooding; and Environmental Resource Permitting.

Regulatory Services: Continue to implement Environmental Resource Permitting to provide for flood protection, stormwater management, water quality protection, and protection of wetland resources and functions.

Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels

Priority Waterbodies: Continue data collection and modeling for the Shoal River, Morrison Spring (second magnitude), and two Floridan aquifer investigations that address saltwater intrusion risks in coastal Bay County and in coastal planning Region II (Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties); Develop strategies and projects, as needed, for MFL recovery or prevention strategies.

Water Supply

Water Supply Development: Support the development of alternative water supplies and assist underserved communities in implementing traditional water supply development projects. Support water conservation through cost-share grants and partnerships with utilities, education and outreach, and incorporation of potential water savings within regional water supply plans.

Water Supply Planning: Continue Districtwide evaluations of existing and future water demands, with water supply assessments (WSA) of resource sustainability and sufficiency every five years. The next WSA update is planned to be completed by the end of 2028. Continue implementation of the Region II Regional Water Supply Plan, with the next update to be completed in 2029.



Strategic Priorities for Fiscal Years 2027-2031

Water Supply

Water Resource Development: Develop and implement alternative water supply and regional water resource management strategies to proactively ensure the sustainability and resilience of northwest Florida communities, water resources, and natural systems.

Regulatory Services: Continue to regulate ground and surface waters to protect water resources, existing legal users, and public health and welfare.

Each priority is further described below with goals, strategies, success indicators, funding sources, deliverables, and milestones.



Merritts Mill Pond

Watershed Protection and Restoration

As a planning framework, watershed management encompasses all four of the District’s statutory areas of responsibility: Water Quality, Water Supply, Flood Protection, and Natural Systems. The District integrates efforts to improve water quality along with those intended more broadly to protect and restore watershed resources, including floodplains, wetlands, springs, and aquatic and riparian habitats. Priorities include, but are not limited to, urban stormwater retrofit projects, agricultural best management practices, septic-to-sewer and distributed wastewater projects, land acquisition and management, reforestation, streambank restoration, wetland mitigation, hydrologic data collection and analysis, and Environmental Resource Permitting. The District will continue to work closely with public and private stakeholders to develop and implement cooperative projects of regional significance.

✓	Water Supply
✓	Water Quality
✓	Flood Protection
✓	Natural Systems

Water Quality Improvement and Springs Protection

Land Acquisition and Management: The District has acquired more than 226,660 acres of land to protect water quality, habitats, and floodplain functions across northwest Florida’s watersheds. District lands also provide a resource for public access and recreation. Current planned acquisitions are focused on protecting northwest Florida’s springs and spring-fed rivers and streams. Ongoing restoration and management activities include prescribed fire, planting native trees and understory, erosion control, improving site access, and managing and maintaining public access sites and roads.

Agricultural Cost-Share Grant Program (Jackson Blue Spring and Chipola River springs): The District will continue a cost-share program to help producers conserve water and improve water quality within the Jackson Blue Spring and Chipola River springs groundwater contribution areas.

Jackson County Septic-to-Sewer Projects (Jackson Blue Spring): The District will continue to provide grant funding to Jackson County to extend central sewer service to the Indian Springs neighborhood and along Blue Springs Road adjacent to Merritts Mill Pond, all within the Tara Estates neighborhood, all within the Jackson Blue Spring Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) area.

Distributed Wastewater Grant Pilot Program: The District will implement distributed wastewater projects in cooperation with Santa Rosa County to improve water quality in areas not attaining water quality standards.

Cypress Spring Restoration and Management: The District will implement shoreline stabilization and public access improvements at a second magnitude spring in Washington County. A conservation easement has previously been acquired.

Assessment of St. Joseph Bay, East Bay, the Intracoastal Waterway, and Lake Wimico: The District will continue data collection and analysis to evaluate freshwater flows and water quality from the Intracoastal Waterway and Gulf County Canal that flow into St. Joseph Bay. In addition, a hydrodynamic model is being pursued to better understand circulation within St. Joseph Bay.



Apalachicola River and Bay: The District will continue intergovernmental collaboration, technical assistance, water quality improvement projects, and supporting initiatives to restore and protect the Apalachicola River watershed.

Hydrologic Data Services: The District's data collection and management program includes stage, precipitation, flow, and water quality monitoring to serve multiple areas of responsibility and strategic priorities and programs, including MFLs, springs protection, and floodplain management.

Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP): The ERP program provides for review of applications, issuance, compliance, and enforcement of permits authorizing activities in, on, or over wetlands and surface waters, integrating stormwater management and wetland protection therein. Implementation of the program improves and protects multiple watershed and wetland functions including the preservation of water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, flood protection, shoreline stability, and aquifer



Cypress Spring

Northwest Florida Watersheds Partnerships Program

Work Plans for Priority Sub-basins: The Watersheds Partnerships Program, launched in 2025, builds upon prior Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) plans to proactively address critical water resource challenges through an integrated, watershed-based approach. Work plans developed for seven priority sub-basins identify specific projects, estimated costs, and funding needs to address water quality, aquatic habitat restoration, and water supply challenges. The District will collaborate with local, regional, state, and federal partners to secure funding, implement projects, and periodically update work plans to reflect progress.



Flood Protection and Regional Resilience Enhancement

Resilience Planning, Implementation, and

Technical Assistance: The District will continue to work with the Florida Flood Hub, DEP, local governments and regional agencies, and other interested and affected parties to support coordinated efforts to enhance resilience to the impacts of flooding, sea level rise, and changes in rainfall. District efforts will include coordination with the Florida Flood Hub for Applied Research and Innovation to address data and modeling gaps as needed to increase the District's overall capacity to support state, regional, and local efforts.

Stream Debris Assessment and Removal:

Project activities may include removal of debris from streams, shorelines, lakes, and other waterbodies for habitat restoration and post-disaster recovery.

Land Acquisition and Management:

District lands include extensive floodplains along the Apalachicola, Choctawhatchee, Escambia, Yellow, Perdido, Blackwater, and other rivers and streams. Tidal wetlands are also protected on the Pensacola, Perdido, and Choctawhatchee estuaries. Additionally, the Econfina springs groundwater contribution area and Deer Point Lake Reservoir watershed are substantially protected by District lands. These lands maintain floodplain functions and protect natural systems, water quality, groundwater recharge property, and public safety, as well as provide for public access and recreation. Substantial upland acreage owned by the District provides protective buffers.

Flood Hazard Mapping, Assessment, and

Planning: The District continues to work in cooperation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to administer FEMA's Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (Risk MAP) program. This includes collaboration with state and local agencies to deliver detailed data to foster informed risk management decisions through the development of Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs). Preliminary DFIRMs and final effective DFIRMs are issued according to planned milestones.

Flood and Floodplain Data:

The District maintains an online Flood Information Portal parcel-level mapping tool and provides technical expertise and public access to high-resolution Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) elevation data and maps.

Environmental Resource Permitting:

Among the important functions of the ERP program is the protection of property, resources, and residents from potential flood damage through the regulation and management of stormwater and wetlands. Also included in ERP is permitting for dam design, construction, repair, modification, and maintenance.



Pitt Spring Flooding



Other Supporting Programs and Initiatives

Regional Wetland Mitigation

In accordance with s. 373.4137, F.S., the District assists the Florida Department of Transportation in developing wetland mitigation for transportation infrastructure development in areas where private mitigation banks are unable to provide appropriate credits. In the process, wetland resources and functions are protected and restored on a watershed scale. Activities include an In-Lieu Fee Program, the Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank, and individually permitted projects.

Critical Wetlands

S. 373.036, F.S., directs the water management districts, in cooperation with local governments, to identify critical wetlands eligible to be acquired using funds from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund. The four statutory criteria to be considered are (1) ecological value, (2) effects on water quality and flood mitigation, (3) ecosystem restoration value, and (4) susceptibility to development. The section requires water management districts to incorporate the list of critical wetlands within the District Water Management Plan or Annual Strategic Plan.

For FY 2026-27, analyses will be updated to identify specific properties that could be considered critical wetlands, as defined by the statutory criteria. The results of this analysis is provided at <https://nwfwater.com/data-publications/reports-plans/>. Priorities for land acquisition, including critical wetlands, will continue to be incorporated within the Florida Forever Land Acquisition Work Plan, published annually with the District's Consolidated Annual Report.



Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank



Watershed Protection and Restoration Criteria

Success Indicators

- Project accomplishment (percent complete)
- Pollutant load reduction (pounds per year)
- Trends in nitrate concentrations
- Total area and floodplain area protected through land acquisition (acres)
- Area restored (acres)
- Percent of the District with updated DFIRMs meeting FEMA standards and criteria
- Balance of released mitigation credits

Funding Sources

- State Legislative Appropriations
- General Fund Reserves
- Land Acquisition Trust Fund
- State Grant Funding Programs
- FDOT Mitigation Funding
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Natural Resources Damages Act
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Deliverables

- Project completion reports
- Annual Regional Wetland Mitigation Plan and Mitigation Monitoring Reports
- Risk MAP regulatory and non-regulatory products according to discovery report for each HUC-8 watershed within the District
- Land Management Plans
- Florida Forever Work Plan Annual Report

Milestones

- Preliminary DFIRMs for the Lower Choctawhatchee and St. Andrew/St. Joseph Bays watersheds (2027)
- Effective DFIRMs for Chocawhatchee Bay, Lower Ochlockonee and Pea watersheds (2027)
- Live Oak Point Living Shoreline, Phase 2 (2027)
- St. Joseph Bay Assessment Data Collection and Model Development (2028)
- Floridan Aquifer in coastal Bay County Minimum Water Levels Technical Assessment (2027)
- Santa Rosa County Septic to Distributed Wastewater Treatment System pilot project (2028)
- DeFuniak Springs Wastewater Force Main Replacement project (2026)
- Blue Spring Road and Indian Springs Septic to Sewer projects (2029)



Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels

The District's MFL program is a major component of the overall effort to ensure the long-term protection and sustainability of regionally significant water resources. A minimum flow or minimum water level is the limit at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area. The MFL program complements other efforts, including water use permitting, water supply assessments, regional water supply planning, and watershed management. Strategic approaches include data collection, groundwater and surface water modeling, technical assessments, scientific peer review, and rule development.

☒	Water Supply
☒	Water Quality
☐	Flood Protection
☒	Natural Systems

Priority Waterbodies

To date, minimum flows have been adopted by rule for the St. Marks River Rise (2019), the Wakulla and Sally Ward Spring System (2021), and the Middle Econfina Creek including the Gainer, Sylvan, and Williford spring groups (2025) and Jackson Blue Spring (2026).

Technical assessments in progress include:

- The Floridan aquifer in coastal Bay County, scheduled for completion in 2028.
- The Floridan aquifer in coastal Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties, scheduled for completion in 2031 (re-evaluation)

Additionally, hydrologic data is being collected to support MFL technical assessments for the Shoal River and Morrison Spring, a second-magnitude spring in Walton County. The MFL program is implemented according to the MFL priority list and schedule which is updated annually and available online at <https://nwfwater.com/water-resources/minimum-flows-minimum-water-levels/>.

Supporting Initiatives

Hydrologic Modeling: The District will continue to develop and refine regional groundwater flow and transport models, estuarine hydrodynamic models, instream habitat models, and surface water models to support MFLs, water supply planning, and water resource evaluations.

Data Collection: Efforts will continue to conduct discharge measurements, stream channel surveys, surface water levels, groundwater levels, and instream habitat attributes to support MFL technical assessments.

Cooperative Monitoring Activities: The District will continue monitoring groundwater, surface water, and rainfall, continuing cooperative agreements with:

- DEP to monitor water quality in District aquifers, streams, and lakes
- Bay County, Leon County, and the city of Tallahassee to monitor surface water levels and rainfall for reservoir supply, stormwater management, and flood warning
- USGS to collect hydrologic data on the Apalachicola River, Yellow River, Chipola River, Wakulla River, St. Marks River, and the Spring Creek Spring Group



Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels Criteria

Success Indicators

- MFL technical assessment accomplishment (percent complete per the approved schedule)
- Waterbodies meeting their adopted MFLs (number and percentage)
- Trends in spring flows

Funding Sources

- State Legislative Appropriations
- General Fund Reserves

Deliverables

- Complete MFL technical assessments and rule adoption according to the approved MFL Priority List and Schedule
- Spring discharge data

Milestones

- Technical Assessment for the Floridan aquifer in coastal Bay County (2028)



Jackson Blue Spring



Water Supply

The District addresses this strategic priority through water supply and water resource development projects in cooperation with northwest Florida communities, as well as data collection and analyses, resource planning, and regulatory services. Additionally, the District supports local governments in applying for annual alternative water supply development grants through DEP's online grant portal.

☒	Water Supply
☒	Water Quality
☐	Flood Protection
☒	Natural Systems

Water Supply (AWS) Development

South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative: This initiative provides for a comprehensive multi-stakeholder effort on the part of Santa Rosa County, the Holley-Navarre Water System, the city of Gulf Breeze, and Eglin AFB with the goal of eliminating wastewater effluent discharges and increasing the beneficial reuse of reclaimed water in southern portions of the county.

Pace Water System Reuse Storage and Pump Station: Pace Water System will construct a two-million-gallon ground storage tank and a booster pump station. Completion of the project will make approximately 1.0 million gallons per day of public access reclaimed water available.

Deer Moss Creek Subdivision Reuse: The city of Niceville will construct approximately 22,500 linear feet of reclaimed water main to provide reclaimed water to Deer Moss Creek Subdivision.

Planning Region II Alternative Water Supply Studies: The studies in Planning Region II (Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties) focus on evaluating the feasibility of managed aquifer recharge to offset groundwater withdrawal impacts and updating an evaluation of the Shoal River as a future water supply source.

NWFWMD Water Conservation Cost-Share Grant Program: The District will implement a new water conservation cost-share grant program to provide small-scale grants for local governments districtwide to implement water conservation projects with quantifiable water savings.

Water Supply Grant Funding: The District will support local governments in applying for annual alternative water supply development grants through DEP's online grant portal. Additionally, the District may provide grant funding to help local governments and utilities improve water conservation, replace aging infrastructure, improve distribution systems, and address local drinking water quality issues. Among other types of projects, this may include helping rural communities install modern water meters to improve potable water management and conservation.



Water Supply Planning

Water Use Data: The District will continue to collect, analyze, and report on water use data for water supply assessments, regional water supply plans, MFL technical assessments, and for use by partner agencies.

Districtwide Water Supply Assessment (WSA): The District will continue to develop Districtwide evaluations of existing and future water demands, with assessments of resource sustainability and sufficiency every five years. Water supply assessments are updated on a five-year basis and provide technical data and analytical tools for regional water supply planning. The next WSA update is planned to be completed by the end of 2028.

Regional Water Supply Planning: Where existing sources of water are not adequate, regional water supply plans (RWSPs) are developed in cooperation with local governments, utilities, and other regional stakeholders to meet water supply needs and sustain water resources and related natural systems over a 20-year planning period. The Region II (Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties) RWSP has been ongoing since 2000. The most recent plan update was completed in 2024 and it will be updated by the end of 2029.

Water Resource Development

The District will continue to conduct regional-scale projects that support the availability of water supplies to meet long-term water supply needs and the needs of natural systems. Examples include planning for alternative water sources including water reuse and conservation, data collection, modeling and evaluation of surface and groundwater sources, and development and refinement of groundwater and transient flow models. Hydrogeologic evaluations may include well construction and aquifer performance testing to determine groundwater availability.

Regulatory Services

Water Use Permitting: Regulation of ground and surface waters prevents impacts to spring systems, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and ground and surface water resources. Reservations of water have been established by rule for the Apalachicola and Chipola rivers and Chipola Cutoff.

Well Permitting Program: The Wells program reviews, issues, and enforces permits for the construction, repair, modification, and abandonment of wells, and it administers and enforces the licensing of water well contractors. This program protects public health and resource sustainability, while also serving the regulated community.



Water Supply Criteria

Success Indicators

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

Funding Sources

- General Fund Reserves
- State Alternative Water Supply funding
- State legislative appropriations
- Ad valorem

Deliverables

- Water use data
- Districtwide water supply assessment updates
- RWSP updates
- Project completion reports

Milestones

- Pace Water System Reclaimed Water Project (2026)
- Deer Moss Creek Subdivision Reuse Project (2027)
- Planning Region II Alternative Water Supply Studies (2027)
- NWFWMD Water Conservation Cost-Share Grant Program (2028)
- Districtwide Water Supply Assessment Update (2028)
- South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative, Phase I-IV (2031)



Choctawhatchee River and Bay



Annual Work Plan Report

As required by s. 373.036, F.S., the Strategic Plan includes an annual work plan report on the implementation of the plan for the previous fiscal year. This annual report details activities and accomplishments; evaluation of indicators, milestones, and deliverables; and project costs and timelines. The Consolidated Annual Report (CAR), due by March 1 of each year, incorporates this work plan report. The CAR is submitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Director of the Office of Economic and Demographic Research, legislative committees, and the governing board of each of the District's counties.

The evaluation of indicators serves several purposes. Beyond providing an assessment of program implementation, identification and evaluation of indicators helps to further an understanding of resource conditions and to clarify objectives and intended results. Evaluating measures and indicators provides internal and external feedback for ascertaining whether a given project or program is achieving intended results and whether the underlying strategy is appropriate or should be revised.

Additional Periodic Reporting

Each of the state's water management districts completes and submits monitoring data and reports to DEP, the legislature, and other agencies and stakeholders, including:

- Annual metrics on permitting process efficiencies, water supply, natural systems, and mission support
- Environmental Resource Permitting Annual Wetlands Report
- Regional Water Supply Planning Annual Report
- Annual In-Lieu Fee Mitigation Report
- Statewide Water Projects List
- Florida Statewide Annual Report on Total Maximum Daily Loads, BMAPs, MFLs, and Recovery or Prevention Strategies
- Annual Regulatory Plan



Apalachicola River– Apalachicola





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