



WITHLACOOCHEE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY

Board Meeting Package

May 20, 2026
3:30 p.m.

Meeting Location:

Lecanto Government Building
Room 166
3600 W. Sovereign Path
Lecanto, Florida 34461

Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority

Board of Directors

Effective March 2026

Office	Board Members
Chair	The Honorable Don Wiley
Vice Chair	The Honorable Marcos Flores
Treasurer	The Honorable Diana Finegan

Jurisdiction	Board Members
Citrus County	The Honorable Diana Finegan
	The Honorable Jeff Kinnard
Hernando County	The Honorable Ryan Amsler
	The Honorable Jerry Campbell
Marion County	The Honorable Kathy Bryant
	The Honorable Michelle Stone
	The Honorable Carl Zalak
Sumter County	The Honorable Todd Coon
	The Honorable Don Wiley
City of Belleview	The Honorable Ray Dwyer
City of Brooksville	The Honorable Thomas Bronson
City of Inverness	The Honorable Gene Davis
City of Wildwood	The Honorable Marcos Flores

Meeting Dates

The schedule of meetings for the 2025-2026 fiscal year are as follows:

November 12, 2025
January 14, 2026
March 18, 2026

May 20, 2026
July 15, 2026
September 9, 2026



April 11, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: Water Supply Authority Board of Directors and Interested Parties

From: Suzannah J. Folsom, Executive Director

Subject: Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority Board of Directors Meeting

The Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority will hold a regular business meeting on **Wednesday, May 20, 2026, 3:30 p.m., at the Lecanto Government Center Building, Room 166, 3600 Sovereign Path, Lecanto, FL 34461.**

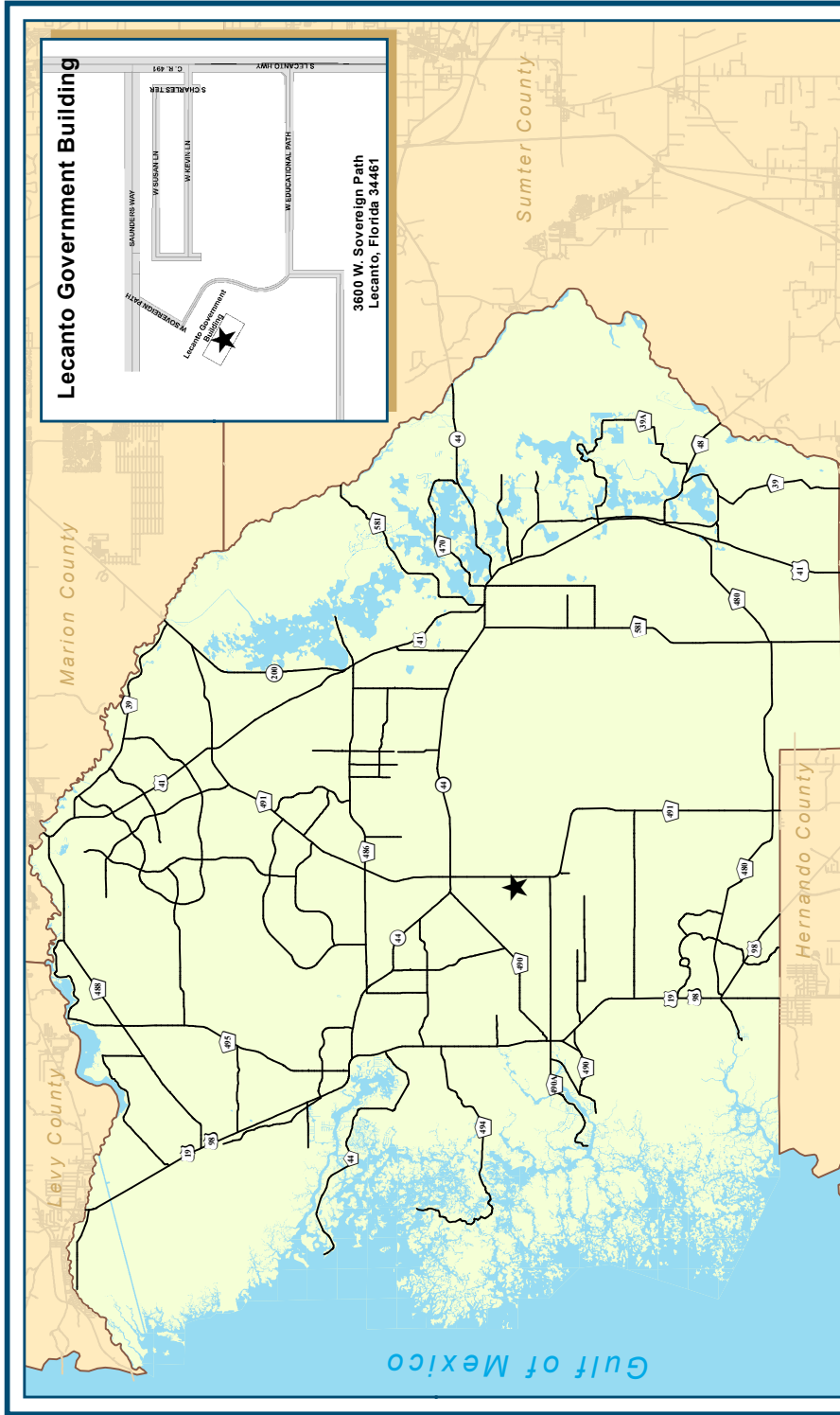
Enclosed for your review are the following items:

- Agenda
- Minutes of March 18, 2026
- Board Package*

Please note that if a party decides to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at the above cited meeting, that party will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose, that party may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes that testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

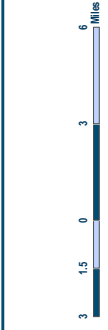
Enclosures

- * Copies of the Board Package are available through the Internet. Log on to www.wrwsa.org.
- On the Authority's Home Page go to the left side of the page and click on "Meetings."
 - On the slide out menu is a button for the current Board Package.
 - Click on the Board Package to download and/or print.



Office of Geographic Information Systems
 Prepared By: K.W. Volk
 Date: January 4, 2012
 Source: Enterprise Geodatabase
 Map Number: BV000029

**Lecanto Government Building
 Locator Map**



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Driving Directions to 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto Government Building

From Brooksville:

- Go North on N. Main St. toward S. Broad St./E. Jefferson St.
- Take the 1st Left onto S. Broad St./W. Jefferson St.
- Turn Right onto US 98/Ponce De Leon Blvd.
- Turn Right onto CR 491 toward Lecanto (about 13.5 miles)
- Turn Left on W. Educational Path (traffic signal)
- Turn right at the Park onto W. Sovereign Path; continue to the right to the Lecanto Government Building

From Ocala

- Go southwest on SR 200 into Citrus County
- Turn Right onto CR 491 (stay on 491 through Beverly Hills, crossing Hwy. 486 and SR 44)
- Turn Right on Saunders Way
- Turn Left onto W. Sovereign Path; follow to Lecanto Government Building

From Bushnell

- In Bushnell, Go West on FL-48W
- Turn Right onto US 41; continue to follow US 41 N
- Continue straight onto FL 44 W/W Main St.; continue straight on SR 44
- Turn Left onto CR 491
- Turn Right onto Saunders Way
- Turn Left onto W. Sovereign Path; follow to Lecanto Government Building

From Wildwood

- Go West on SR 44W; continue on SR 44 through Inverness
- Turn Left onto CR 491
- Turn Right onto Saunders Way
- Turn Left onto W. Sovereign Path; follow to Lecanto Government Building.

LGB



**WIHLACOOCHEE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

A G E N D A

**May 20, 2026 -- 3:30 p.m.
LECANTO GOVERNMENT BUILDING -- ROOM 166
3600 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto, Florida 34461**

At the discretion of the Board, items may be taken out of order to accommodate the needs of the Board and the public.

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1. Call to Order . . . Chair Wiley	
2. Pledge of Allegiance . . . Led by the Board	
3. Roll Call . . . Suzy Folsom, WRWSA Executive Director	
4. Introductions and Announcements . . . Suzy Folsom, WRWSA	
5. Public Comment	
6. Consent Agenda . . . Chair Wiley	
a. Approval of Minutes [draft March 18, 2026]	9
b. Bills to be Paid [April bills included; May bills provided at the meeting]	15
c. As Needed Technical and Engineering Services – Authorization to Issue Work Order	17
d. Staff Travel to the Florida Chamber of Commerce Environmental Permitting Summer School, July 21-24, 2026 [Approve Ms. Folsom, WRWSA Executive Director, to attend this year’s Environmental Permitting Summer School at an estimated cost of \$715.00]	19
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b. Grant Funding Amount and Guidelines	
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13. Executive Director’s Report . . . Suzy Folsom, WRWSA	
a. Water Use Permit Demand Summary	43
b. Water Management Information System Water Use Permit Notifications	45
c. Residential Irrigation Evaluation Programs Update	47
d. Correspondence	49
e. News Articles	57
14. Other Business	
15. Next Meeting . . . July 15, 2026; 3:30 p.m.; Lecanto Government Building, Room 166	
16. Adjournment	

Please note that if a party decides to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at the above cited meeting, that party will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose, that party may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes that testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Item 6.a.

Consent Agenda

**Approval of
Minutes**

D R A F T

**WITHLACOOCHEE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Minutes of the Meeting
March 18, 2026**

TIME: 3:30 p.m.
PLACE: Lecanto Government Building
ADDRESS: 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida 34461

The numbers preceding the items listed below correspond with the published agenda.

1. Call to Order

As the most senior member of Board members present, Chair Wiley called the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (WRWSA) Board of Directors meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – Vice Chair Wiley led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call – Chair Campbell requested each member present introduce themselves. He noted a quorum was present.

BOARD MEMBER PRESENT

Don Wiley, *Chair*, Sumter Co Commissioner
Marcos Flores, *Vice Chair*, Wildwood Councilor
Thomas Bronson, Brooksville City Councilor
Jerry Campbell, Hernando Co Commissioner
Todd Coon, Sumter County Commissioner
Jeff Kinnard, Citrus Co Commissioner

BOARD MEMBER(S) ABSENT

Diana Finegan, *Treasurer*, Citrus Co Commissioner
Ryan Amsler, Hernando County Commissioner
Kathy Bryant, Marion County Commissioner
Gene Davis, Inverness City Councilor
Ray Dwyer, Belleview Commissioner
Michelle Stone, Marion County Commissioner
Carl Zalak, Marion County Commissioner

BOARD ALTERNATE(S) PRESENT

Alys Brockway, Hernando Co Water Res Mgr
Trevor Knight, Marion Co Water Res Liaison

WRWSA STAFF PRESENT

Suzannah J. Folsom, PE, PMP, Executive Dir
James Hartley, General Counsel Assistant
LuAnne Stout, Administrative Asst.

WRWSA STAFF ABSENT

Robert W. Batsel, Jr., General Counsel

OTHERS PRESENT

Bradley Arnold, Sumter County Administrator
Joseph Quinn, SWFWMD Water Supply Project Mgr
David B. Geddis, Jr, Pinellas County Resident
Chuck Hutterli, Too Far Foundation
Ross Justice, Florida United, Sumter Co Resident
Orem May, Lake Panasoffkee Resident
Linda Massi, Sumter County Resident
William Jenkins, Sumter County Resident
Jeremy Scott, Sumterville Resident
Alexandra St. Martin, Webster Resident
Leslie Strickland, Sumterville Resident
Partick Tara, INTERA

4. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda – Mrs. Folsom said there are no additions or deletions to the agenda. She noted that only three counties are represented today so budget items may not be considered for a vote (Item 9).

5. Public Comment – Chair Wiley opened the floor for public comment. The following audience members spoke regarding their concerns about Item 7, Proposed Leachate Injection Well in Sumter County: Alexandra St. Martin, Jeremy Scott, David B. Geddis, Orem May, Leslie Strickland, and Ross Justice.

There being no other members of the audience requesting to address the Board, Chair Wiley closed public comment. Mr. Kinnard thanked the concerned audience members for attending today's meeting. He noted that he is opposed to this proposed project and hopes the Board will take an official position.

At this time, the order of consideration was changed to allow Item 7 to be heard earlier.

7. Proposed Leachate Injection Well in Sumter County

Ms. Suzannah Folsom, WRWSA Executive Director, presented this item. The Sumter County Administrator, Bradley Arnold, reached out to WRWSA in late February to determine if WRWSA would be an interested party related to the proposed landfill leachate injection well at the Heart of Florida Landfill. Class I Injection wells are an approved disposal method of landfill leachate disposal. These wells are permitted through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, first by approving an Class V exploratory well, which cannot be used for injection until confirming that conditions are acceptable and converting the well to a Class I injection well.

Mr. Patrick Tara, representing INTERA engineering firm, provided an education presentation on deep well injections. His presentation included review of the following topics:

- Existing Landfill information
- Leachate Disposal methods
- Injection Well types
- Other Injections wells in WRWSA service area
- Other leachate injection wells in Florida
- Hydrogeology near proposed well

Mr. Tara provided clarifying answers to questions by the audience. He noted information on this proposed project is available on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection website.

Discussion ensued by the Board regarding well injection pressures, wellhead protection zones, potential impacts, the move from septic to treatment facilities, advocating for our best interests, neighbors have a responsibility to protect water resources, and bringing this to the attention of member county commissions.

Board and audience members expressed their appreciation for the educational presentation. This item was provided for the Board's information and no action was required.

Mr. Campbell left the meeting 5:08 p.m. and Ms. Brockway assumed his seat as alternate member.

At this time, the order of consideration returned to the published agenda.

6. Consent Agenda

- a. **Approval of Minutes** [approve November 12, 2025 minutes]
- b. **Bills to be Paid** [ratified December bills; approve January bills provided at the meeting]
- c. **Water Conservation Month** [approve Resolution 2026-02]

Mr. Kinnard moved, seconded by Mr. Flores, to approve Consent Agenda Items 6.a., 6.b. and 6.c., as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Regional Water Supply Plan – Presentation on Draft Comments

Ms. Suzy Folsom, Executive Director, presented the draft report comments received for this project. The Authority entered into a cooperative funding agreement with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) in December 2022 (23CF0004079) for Regional Water Supply Plan Update project. The Authority entered into a contract with Hazen and Sawyer in January 2023 to undertake the project. With the assistance of the SWFWMD, St. Johns River Water Management District, and a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from member governments and public supply utilities in the four-county region, the Plan Update is being coordinated.

A summary of the major comments on the draft report that will be incorporated in the final report and were listed in the Board’s meeting materials. The revised report will be provided for approval at the May Board meeting.

This item was provided for the Board’s information and no action was required.

9. Establishment of Proposed Fiscal Year 2026-27 Per Capita and Grant Funding Budget Components

Ms. Suzy Folsom, Executive Director, presented this item. She noted that, since only three counties commission representatives are in attendance, no action may be taken.

Each year the Authority Board must approve a per capita rate for each of the member counties. The current rate of \$0.19 per capita has been in effect for thirteen years, since the 2009-10 fiscal year. The per capita rate is applied to the latest county population estimates prepared by the Bureau of Economic and Business Research, which prepares the State’s official population estimates.

The Draft Regional Water Supply Plan included Tier 3 Water Conservation as the most cost effective and highest ranked water supply option to meet future water supply needs. WRWSA supports conservation through the Water Supply and Conservation Grant Funding program. The WRWSA per capita assessments fund this program.

The table below lists four options for the FY 2026-27 per capita assessment and corresponding grant funding amount.

Per Capita Assessment					
County	BEBR Population (April 1, 2025)	FY 2026 - 2027 Per Capita Assessment Options			
		\$0.19	\$0.22	\$0.29	\$0.71
		No Change	20-year ramp up	5-year ramp up	Tier 3 Conservation
Citrus	166,500	\$31,635	\$36,630	\$48,285	\$118,215
Hernando	212,849	\$40,441	\$46,827	\$61,726	\$151,123
Marion	433,765	\$82,415	\$95,428	\$125,792	\$307,973
Sumter	162,493	\$30,874	\$35,748	\$47,123	\$115,370
Total	975,607	\$185,365	\$214,633	\$282,926	\$692,681
Grant Funding Amount					
Corresponding Proposed Grant budget		\$185,000	\$210,000	\$280,000	\$690,000

Discussion ensued and the discussion of the members in attendance indicated a preference to have the capita rate to remain at \$0.19.

This item was provided for the Board’s information and no action was required.

10. Legislative Reports

Ms. Folsom, WRWSA Executive Director, presented this item. The 2026 Legislative Regular Session is scheduled to begin on January 13, 2026 and end on March 13, 2026. Staff has gathered updated information on relevant bills that are related to conservation and water supply from SWFWMD, 1000 Friends of Florida, and the Florida Engineering Society’s legislative tracking, and the House and Senate websites.

As of March 9, 2026, only three of the bills that we have been tracking have passed in the House and Senate. Staff will continue to track the status of the bills and present on the final status at the Board Meeting. A summary of the bills that WRWSA has been tracking for this session is provided as an exhibit and included in the Board’s meeting materials.

This item was provided for the Board’s information and no action was required.

11. **Attorney's Report** – Mr. Hartley noted the Water Supply contact was approved October 2016 between Citrus County and WRWSA; provides for operation, maintenance, alteration, replacement and expansion of the Charles A. Black water supply facilities; and automatic renewal subject to County 6-month notice to not renew, or County 12-month notice to cancel.

Discussion ensued by the Board and no action was required.

12. **Executive Director's Report** – Ms. Folsom presented the following items which required no action and highlighted items which had activity since last Board meeting.
- a. **Water Use Permit Demand Summary** – A summary was in the Board's meeting materials.
 - b. **Water Use Permit Activity Report (WMIS Notifications)** – A list of notifications was included in the Board's meeting materials.
 - c. **Residential Irrigation Evaluation Programs Update** – Ms. Folsom noted that Phase 8a (WISE) will transition into Phase 8b.
 - d. **Correspondence** – Item(s) were included in the meeting materials.
 - e. **News Articles** – Article(s) were included in the meeting materials.
 - f. **WRWSA Office Lease/Purchase Options** – Ms. Suzannah Folsom, Executive Director, presented this item. WRWSA has an agreement with Citrus County to lease office space in the Lecanto Government Building. This five-year agreement will expire at the end of September 2026. WRWSA staff has reached out the Citrus County to inquire about renewing the lease. The County is willing to renew the lease; however, they are not sure if it would be for the current space, as many of the departments in the Lecanto Government Building are moving and the final arrangement for spaces in the building will not be available until May.

The current lease is for approximately \$2,047.68 per year for 289 square feet. In addition, the lease provides for utilities, internet access, and meeting rooms when needed. A review of similar office spaces in the area (see exhibit included in the Board's meeting materials) did not yield better options for lease or purchase. WRWSA staff will continue to coordinate the Citrus County on the availability of space in the Lecanto Government Building.

Staff will include the current lease amount in the proposed budget for the FY 2026-27 as a placeholder, and will provide an updated lease agreement for approval prior to the lease expiring in September 2026. This is an information item for the Board and no action is required.

13. **Other Business** – None
14. **Next Meeting Time and Location**
➤ The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. at the Lecanto Government Building, Room 166.
15. **Adjournment** – Chair Wiley adjourned the meeting at 5:56 p.m.

Don Wiley, Chair

Suzannah J. Folsom, Executive Director

Item 6.b.

Consent Agenda

Bills to be Paid

**October bills in the meeting materials;
November bills to be provided at meeting.**

Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority
3600 W. Sovereign Path, Suite 228, Lecanto, Florida 34461

Bills For Payment
4/22/2026

<u>Administrative Invoices</u>	<u>Invoice Number(s)</u>	<u>Invoice Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Suzannah J. Folsom, PE, Executive Director	1480	3/31/2026	\$8,273.25
Rob Batsel, General Counsel	260250	3/31/2026	\$1,339.50
C. LuAnne Stout, Admin Asst (Admin Services)	3-Mar-2026	4/1/2026	\$3,624.00
Don Wiley (Dec Bd Travel)		3/18/2026	\$27.59
Marcos Flores (Dec Bd Travel)		3/18/2026	\$35.16
Purvis Gray & Company (Bookkeeping Services)	23454	3/17/2026	\$3,850.00
Nature Coast Web Design & Marketing (Contract/Monthly)	19769	4/1/2026	\$200.00
Truist Bank Business Card Statement	4/2/2026	4/2/2026	\$559.14
Total Administrative Invoices			\$17,908.64

<u>Water Supply Studies and Facilities</u>	<u>Contract/ Budget</u>	<u>Balance Remaining</u>	<u>Current</u>
2026 General Services Contract	\$20,000.00		
Work Order 2026-01 Applied Sciences	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	
Work Order 2026-02 INTERA	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	
FY25-26 Water Conservation Grants Program	\$180,000.00		
Citrus County	\$47,175.00	\$47,175.00	
Hernando County	\$47,000.00	\$47,000.00	
Marion County	\$18,285.00	\$18,285.00	
Sumter County	\$65,040.00	\$65,040.00	
City of Belleview	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	
Regional Water Supply Plan Update (Q324)	\$350,000.00	\$10,056.60	
SJRWMD Irrigation Audits (East I-75)	\$60,000.00	\$40,224.25	
Phase 8a WISE Irrigation Program	\$36,540.00	\$2,974.60	
Phase 8b WISE Irrigation Program	\$36,540.00	\$31,306.80	\$5,233.20 (1)
FY24-25 Total Project Invoices	\$683,080.00	\$284,562.25	\$5,233.20

Total Bills to be Paid	\$23,141.84
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State Board of Administration	Transfer from SBA2 to SBA1	\$17,908.64
State Board of Administration	Transfer from SBA1 to Truist Bank	\$23,141.84
Truist Bank Deposit	Transferred from SBA1	\$23,141.84

Notes:

(1) Phase 8 (WISE) - Irrigation Audits

Jack Overdorff, ECO Land Design	\$4,733.20	Invoice 939
C. LuAnne Stout, Admin Services	\$500.00	Invoice 3-Mar-Ph8 WISE-2026
	<u>\$5,233.20</u>	

Item 6.c.

As-Needed Technical and Engineering Services – Authorization to Issue Work Order

Ms. Suzannah Folsom, WRWSA Executive Director, will present this item.

Staff recommends issuance of the following Work Order for the General Engineering and Technical Services:

Hazen and Sawyer – The purpose of this Work Order is to provide review of the St. Johns River Water Management District geodatabase and projections. The Work Order amount is \$10,000.

A copy of the proposed Work Order is included as an Exhibit to this item in the Board's meeting materials.

Exhibit. As-Needed Work Order 2026-04 Hazen and Sawyer

Staff Recommendation:

Board authorization for the Executive Director to issue Work Order 2026-04 to Hazen and Sawyer in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 for the period through September 30, 2026; and

**WITHLACOOCHEE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY
GENERAL ENGINEERING SERVICES**

WORK ORDER NO. 2026-04

**Scope of Services
Review SJRWMD CSEC Geodatabase and Projections**

The Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (WRWSA) completed a Regional Water Supply Plan Update every five (5) years, and coordinates with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) on their corresponding regional water supply plans for the SWFWMD Northern Region and the SJRWMD Central Springs/East Coast (CSEC) planning region.

SJRWMD has requested a review of their geodatabase and projections. Hazen and Sawyer (Consultant) has been issued General Engineering Services Contract, and can complete this review for WRWSA.

WRWSA will compensate the Consultant on a Time and Materials basis for an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00.

**Withlacoochee Regional Water
Supply Authority**

Suzannah J. Folsom Date
Executive Director

Hazen and Sawyer

Andre Dieffenthaller Date
Contract Manager

Approved by:

Rob Batsel Date
General Counsel for WRWSA

Item 6.d.

Staff Travel to the Florida Chamber of Commerce Environmental Permitting Summer School, July 21-24, 2026

The Florida Chamber of Commerce holds the annual Environmental Permitting Summer School, which is attended by attorneys, consultants, engineers, state and local government officials, developers, landowners and others with a strong interest in environmental issues in Florida. Program features advanced and current instruction on Florida's environmental, energy and growth management laws, rules and programs. Attendees can also earn continuing education credits.

It is recommended that Suzy Folsom, WRWSA Governmental Executive Director, be authorized to attend this year's event. Estimated costs include only Registration: \$715.00. There are adequate funds budgeted for this purpose.

Staff Recommendation:

Board approval for Suzy Folsom, WRWSA Executive Director, to attend this year's Environmental Permitting Summer School at a cost of \$715.00.

Formal Position on Heart Of Florida Landfill Leachate Injection Well

Ms. Suzannah Folsom, Executive Director, will present this item.

The Heart of Florida Landfill is constructing a deep injection well to dispose of landfill leachate. These wells are permitted through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. At the March 18, 2026 meeting, information on the landfill, leachate, injection well permitting requirements, and hydrogeology was presented by Intera, one of the WRWSA As-Needed Engineering consultants. The meeting was attended by many members of the public that expressed concern over the proposed injection well.

Additional correspondence on the Injection well has been sent including:

- March 30, 2026 Letter from Representative J.J. Grow to FDEP
- March 31, 2026 letter from Citrus County to WRWSA requesting a formal position
- April 2, 2026 letter from Sumter County to FDEP requesting a public education forum.

The WRWSA Board could send a letter with a formal position on the landfill leachate injection well. Items to be discussed:

- Express concern for contamination
- Map showing public supply wells.
- Request that approval not be given for conversion to a Class I well.
- Request water quality monitoring requirements:
 - additional monitoring well locations/depths.
 - Lake Panasoffkee.
 - Withlacoochee River.
- Request access to proposed monitoring well(s) for independent testing.
- Request a reduced term permit.
- Request reduced quantity.
- Request that the landfill obtain a bond for third party utilities affected by contamination that would “survive” transfer or bankruptcy.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff will draft a letter to FDEP for Director Folsom and Chair Wiley to sign.

Item 8

Fiscal Year 2024-25 Financial Audit

Ms. Katheryn Eno, Partner with Purvis Gray & Company, LLP, will present this item.

Purvis Gray and Company has prepared the annual audit of the Authority's financial statements for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2025.

Included as an exhibit in the Board's meeting materials is the Authority's financial position provided to Purvis Gray & Company.

See the following exhibits which are included as separate documents:

- A. Letter from Purvis Gray and Company;
- B. Financial Statements and Independent Auditors' Report for Fiscal Year 2024-25.

Staff Recommendation:

Board approval of the Financial Statements and Independent Auditors' Report for Fiscal Year 2024-25, as presented at the meeting, and submittal of this report to the Auditor General and to the Florida Department of Financial Services.

Item 9a., 9.b., 9.c

Establishment of Proposed Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget Components

Mrs. Suzannah Folsom, Executive Director, will present this item.

The WRWSA Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget has been drafted for review. The per capita assessment and grant funding amounts were discussed at the March 18 Board meeting; however, a quorum was not available for approval. Approval of the per capita assessment and grant funding amounts will be requested, and the corresponding drafted budget and work plan are provided for review.

a. Per Capita Assessment

Each year the WRWSA Board must approve a per capita rate to be paid by each of the member Counties. The current rate of \$0.19 per capita has been in effect for sixteen years, since the 2009-10 fiscal year. The per capita rate is applied to the latest county population estimates prepared by the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), which prepares the State's official population estimates.

The table below lists the FY 2026-27 per capita assessment based on the BEBR population estimates from April 1, 2025, and a \$0.19 per capita rate.

Per Capita Assessment		
County	BEBR Population (April 1, 2025)	FY 2026-2027 Per Capita Annual Assessment per County
Citrus	166,500	\$31,635
Hernando	212,849	\$40,441
Marion	433,765	\$82,415
Sumter	162,493	\$30,874
Total	975,607	\$185,365

b. Grant Funding Program

The WRWSA Water Supply and Conservation Grant Funding Program is administered each year, granting up to 50% reimbursement for water supply development and water conservation activities. Revenues from the per capita assessment are typically utilized for this Program. In FY 2025-26, the budget was \$180,000, and applications received exceeded that amount. We recommend increasing the program amount to \$185,000 for FY 2026-27.

See Exhibit: Announcement of Grant Funding Program

Staff Recommendation for 9.a. and 9.b.:

Board approval of a per capita rate of \$0.19 and grant funding amount of \$185,000.

Item 9a., 9.b., 9.c

c. Draft FY 2026-27 Budget and Work Program

A drafted FY 2026-27 Budget and Work Program are provided for review and comment. These are based on the \$0.19 per capita assessment and a grant funding amount of \$185,000.

See Exhibits:

DRAFT FY 2026-27 Budget

DRAFT FY 2026-27 Work Program

Staff Recommendation for c.:

Review the DRAFT Budget and Work Program and provide comments by July 1, 2026.



May 21, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: Local Governments and Utility Directors in the Withlacoochee Region

From: Suzannah J. Folsom, Executive Director, WRWSA

Subject: WRWSA Funding for Water Supply and Conservation Projects

The Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (WRWSA) will accept applications for its Fiscal Year 2026-27 Local Government Water Supply and Conservation Grants Program starting on May 1, 2026. Applications must be received no later than July 1, 2021. This grants program is sponsored by the WRWSA to fund local water supply and conservation projects on a matching basis.

Applications and instructions are available on the Authority web page at www.wrwsa.org. Applications may be submitted online or in hard copy to be considered by the Board at its July 15, 2025 Board meeting. Awards are scheduled to be made at the September 9, 2026 Board meeting.

If you have any questions about the grants program, please contact me at (352)527-5796. You may also call LuAnne Stout at the Lecanto Office (352)527-5795. If you desire to contact me by FAX, my FAX number is (352)527-5797 and my e-mail address is "sfolsom@wrwsa.org."

cc: WRWSA Board Members

Distribution List via Email:

Bob Titterington, Belleview	Alys Brockway, Hernando Co. Water Conservation
Richard Weeks, Brooksville	Susan Jackson, Inverness
Mike Eastburn, Bushnell	Angel Roussel, Marion County
Diane Lamb, Center Hill	Trevor Knight, Marion County
Ken Cheek, Citrus County	Alison Scott, Town of McIntosh
Debra Burden, Citrus Co. Water Conservation	Public Works, City of Ocala
Milton Hill, City of Coleman	Marjorie Stroup, Town of Reddick
Mia Fink, Crystal River	Bradley Arnold, Sumter County
Mandy Odom, Dunnellon	Keith Vann, City of Webster
Brad Smith, Hernando County	Jason McHugh, Wildwood

WITHLACOOCHEE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY

Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget

Draft May 6, 2026

	4/1/2025 Population Estimate	Comments	Fiscal Year 2026-27	Fiscal Year 2025-26	\$ Change	% Change
Revenues: Administrative						
Assessments:		Official BEBR Population Estimates				
Citrus	166,500	349 person increase	\$31,635	\$31,569	\$66	0.2%
Hernando	212,849	2,272 person increase	\$40,441	\$40,010	\$431	1.1%
Marion	433,765	14,255 person increase	\$82,415	\$79,707	\$2,708	3.4%
Sumter	162,493	5,750 person increase	\$30,874	\$29,782	\$1,092	3.7%
Total Population/Assessments @ 19¢/Capita	975,607		\$185,365	\$181,068	\$4,297	2.4%
Administrative Revenue from Citrus Contract		Based on Citrus County contract and Board direction	\$17,884	\$17,293	\$591	3.4%
Subtotal			\$203,249	\$198,361	\$4,888	2.5%
Carryover Administration Reserve Funds (FYE 25/26 Estimate) (SBA1)		See Attachment 2	\$618,234	\$856,046	-\$237,812	-27.8%
Total Administrative Revenue Available			\$821,483	\$1,054,407	-\$232,924	-22.1%
Revenues: Water Resource Development (WRD) Projects						
SJRWMD Irrigation Audit Program SJRWMD Matching Funds		0% of Total Project Budget	\$7,500	\$0	\$7,500	100.0%
SJRWMD Irrigation Audit Program Cooperator Matching Funds		0% of Total Project Budget	\$11,250	\$0	\$11,250	100.0%
Phase 8 Irrigation Audit Program SWFWMD Matching Funds		0% of Total Project Budget	\$0	\$20,000	-\$20,000	-100.0%
Phase 8 Irrigation Audit Program Cooperator Matching Funds		0% of Total Project Budget	\$0	\$10,000	-\$10,000	-100.0%
Phase 9 Irrigation Audit Program SWFWMD Matching Funds		50% of Total Project Budget	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000	#DIV/0!
Phase 9 Irrigation Audit Program Cooperator Matching Funds		25% of Total Project Budget	\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000	#DIV/0!
Annual Citrus WRD Payments (SBA2)		Based on CAB wellfield monthly average revenues of \$28,000 minus funds allocated to administrative revenue above	\$318,116	\$294,707	\$23,409	7.9%
Subtotal			\$396,866	\$324,707	\$72,159	22.2%
Carryover WRD Reserve Funds (FYE 25/26 Estimate) (SBA2)		See Attachment 2	\$1,967,828	\$1,629,553	\$338,275	20.8%
Total Water Resource Development Revenue Available			\$2,364,694	\$1,954,260	\$410,434	21.0%
Total Revenues Available			\$3,186,177	\$3,008,667	\$177,510	5.9%

WITHLACOOCHEE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY

Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget

Draft May 6, 2026

		Fiscal Year 2026-27	Fiscal Year 2025-26	\$ Change	% Change
Expenditures: General Administration					
Executive Director	3% increase	\$100,488	\$97,560	\$2,928	3.0%
Administrative Assistant	3% increase	\$44,796	\$43,488	\$1,308	3.0%
Legal Services	Based on annual contract:				
Monthly Meetings @ \$235/hr	6 meetings/year, 3 hrs/meeting = 18 hrs	\$4,230	\$4,230	\$0	0.0%
Other Services @ \$235/hr.	4 hrs/month = 60 hrs	\$11,280	\$11,280	\$0	0.0%
Advertising	Based on FY 2023-24 actual	\$600	\$600	\$0	0.0%
Audit	Engagement Letter Email 09/30/25	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0	0.0%
Bookkeeping Services	3x \$1250/qtr per Engagement Letter 08/29/25	\$3,750	\$3,750	\$0	0.0%
Liability Insurance	FY 23/24 actual plus 5%	\$3,280.00	\$3,280	\$0	0.0%
Office Supplies	Based on FY 2023-24 actual	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	0.0%
Postage	Based on FY 2023-24 actual	\$1,000	\$800	\$200	25.0%
Printing and Reproduction	Based on FY 2023-24 actual	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	0.0%
Publications/Software	Based on FY 2023-24 actual	\$150	\$150	\$0	0.0%
Rent (Lecanto Gov't Bldg)	New lease not yet obtained, may change	\$2,500	\$2,048	\$452	22.1%
Registrations/Dues	Based on FY 2023-24 actual	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$0	0.0%
State Fees/Assessments	Based on FY 2023-24 actual	\$175	\$175	\$0	0.0%
Telephone	Based on FY 2023-24 actual	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$0	0.0%
Travel (Board Members & Staff)	Based on FY 2023-24 actual	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	0.0%
Web Page / Computer Maintenance / Software	\$200/mo	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0	0.0%
Contingencies	@ 5% of non-contract admin costs	\$2,100	\$2,100	\$0	0.0%
Subtotal - General Administration Expenditures		\$203,249	\$198,361	\$4,888	2.5%
Fund Balance for Admin. Reserves FYE 26/27	FYE25/26 Admin Funds Bal + FY26/27 Admin Rev's - FY26/27 Admin Exp's	\$618,234	\$856,046	-\$237,812	-27.8%
Expenditures: Water Resource Development Projects					
General Services Contracts	As Needed Eng. & Tech. Firms	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	0.0%
CAB Engineering Analysis	Estimate from As-Needed	\$0	\$42,000	-\$42,000	N/A
Local Government Grant Program	Discussed 3/18/26	\$185,000	\$180,000	\$5,000	2.8%
2024 RWSP Update	0% of Project Budget	\$0	\$0	\$0	#DIV/0!
SJRWMD Irrigation Audit Program Ph2	100% of project Budget	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000	N/A
SWFWMD Phase 9 Irrigation Audit Program	100% of Project Budget	\$80,000	\$0	\$80,000	#DIV/0!
SWFWMD Phase 8 Irrigation Audit Program	0% of Project Budget	\$0	\$40,000	-\$40,000	-100.0%
Subtotal - Water Resource Development Projects		\$345,000	\$312,000	\$33,000	10.6%
Fund Balance for Water Resource Development Reserves FYE 26/27	FYE25/26 WRD Funds Bal + FY26/27 WRD Rev's - FY26/27 WRD Exp's	\$2,019,694	\$1,642,260	\$377,434	23.0%
Total Administration and WRD Expenses		\$548,249	\$510,361	\$37,888	7.4%
Total Administration and WRD Fund Balances at FYE 26/27	See Attachment 2 for detail	\$2,637,928	\$2,498,305	\$139,623	5.6%
Combined FYE 26/27 Expenditures and Fund Balances		\$3,186,177	\$3,008,666	\$177,511	5.9%

ATTACHMENT 1

CALCULATION OF REVENUE FOR 2026-27 AND CALCULATION OF AMOUNT OF FUNDS NEEDED FROM RESERVES

Draft May 6, 2026

Revenue	4/1/2025 Population	
LOCAL ASSESSMENTS @ 19¢ PER CAPITA		
Citrus	166,500	\$31,635
Hernando	212,849	\$40,441
Marion	433,765	\$82,415
Sumter	162,493	\$30,874
Subtotal	975,607	\$185,365
CHARLES A. BLACK WATER SUPPLY FACILITY		
\$28,000 per month * 12 months		\$336,000
Subtotal		\$336,000
MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS FOR STUDIES		
SWFWMD Match for RWSP Update		\$0
SWFWMD Match for Phase 9 Irrigation Audit Program		\$40,000
Local Cooperator Match for Phase 9 Irrigation Audit Program		\$20,000
SWFWMD Match for Phase 8 Irrigation Audit Program		\$0
Local Cooperator Match for Phase 8 Irrigation Audit Program		\$0
SJRWMD Match for Irrigation Phase 2 Evaluation Program		\$7,500
Local Cooperator Match for Irrigation Phase 2 Evaluations		\$11,250
Subtotal		\$78,750
TOTAL REVENUE FOR FY 2026-27		\$600,115
Less: 2026-27 Administration Expense		-\$203,249
Less: 2026-27 WRD Cost		-\$345,000
Funds from WRWSA Reserves (+to, -from)		\$51,866

ATTACHMENT 2

ANALYSIS OF BEGINNING FUND BALANCES FY 2026 - 2027 Draft May 6, 2026

ESTIMATE OF WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT FUND BALANCE AT END OF FY 2025-26

04/14/26 WRDF Balance (SBA2)	\$2,001,944
FY 2025-26 Remaining WRD Fund Revenues	
6 Citrus Co. Payments @ \$26,000/month minus administrative component below	\$147,354
2024 RWSP SWFWMD Revenue	\$48,011
Phase 8 Irrigation Audit Local Cooperator Revenue	\$19,225
Phase 8 Irrigation Audit SWFWMD Revenue	\$38,450
Phase 7 Irrigation Audit Local Cooperator Revenue	\$0
Phase 7 Irrigation Audit SWFWMD Revenue	\$1,981
SJRWMD Pilot Program Revenue Cooperator Revenue	\$0
SJRWMD Pilot Program SJRWMD Revenue	\$0
Revenues Subtotal	\$255,020
Less: FY 2025-26 Remaining Contract Expenditures:	
2025-26 Citrus Water Conservation Program	\$47,175
2025-26 Hernando Water Conservation Program	\$47,000
2025-26 Marion Water Conservation Program	\$18,285
2025-26 Sumter County Water Conservation Program	\$65,040
2025-26 General Services Contracts	\$61,678
2024 RWSP	\$10,058
Phase 7 Irrigation Audit Program	\$0
Phase 8 Irrigation Audit Program	\$39,900
Expenditures Subtotal	\$289,136
Total WRD Funds at end of FY 2025-26	\$1,967,828

ESTIMATE OF ADMINISTRATIVE FUND BALANCE AT END OF FY 2025-26

04/14/2026 Admin Bal (SBA1)	\$618,234
Admin Revenue from CAB WSF	\$8,647
Admin Revenue from Per Capita Contributions	\$90,534
Less remaining FY Admin costs for 6 months	-\$99,181
Total Administrative Funds at end of FY 2025-26	\$618,234

ESTIMATE OF TOTAL FUND BALANCE AT END OF FY 2025-26

Total WRD Funds at end of FY 2025-26	\$1,967,828
Total Administrative Funds at end of FY 2025-26	\$618,234
Total Fund Balance at end of FY 2025-26	\$2,586,062

PROJECTED FUND BALANCES AT END OF FY 2026-27

Total Fund Balances beginning of FY 2025-26:	\$2,586,062
Add: 2025-26 Revenues	\$600,115
Deduct 2025-26 Expenses:	-\$548,249
Projected Fund Balances at end of FY 2026-27:	\$2,637,928

Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority

Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Work Program

1. 2024 Regional Water Supply Plan Update

The 2024 Regional Water Supply Plan update is complete. It included population and demand projections, evaluation of water supply sources, conservation and reuse alternatives, and an evaluation of alternative water supply options. This work was co-funded by SWFWMD, and coordinated with their 2025 Northern Region Regional Water Supply Plan, and SJRWMD 2026 Central Springs/East Coast Regional Water Supply Plan update. WRWSA will continue to track water demands and promote water conservation. WRWSA will also continue to track the MFLs within the region and the progress on setting the MFL's for the Withlacoochee River.

2. Joint Funding of Water Conservation Projects with Member Local Governments

The Authority will continue its grant program to assist local governments in improving water supply and conservation within the region in order to extend the use of groundwater as long as possible. Fresh groundwater is the least expensive source available to meet growing demands, however there is a limit to this source due to environmental impacts and impacts on other existing legal users caused by withdrawals. As the limit to fresh groundwater resources is reached, alternative, more expensive water sources will need to be developed. At the present time, water conservation programs are the most appropriate way for the Authority to help local governments extend the use of lower cost groundwater supplies. The 2026-27 proposed budget includes \$185,000 toward local government water supply and conservation projects. Proposals will be considered from local governments and public supply utilities in the Authority's jurisdiction. The grant program guidelines and application package may be found on the Authority's web page at www.wrwsa.org. The water conservation activities co-funded by this grant program help participating utilities meet and surpass the maximum 150 gallons per person per day that is required by the SWFWMD and to meet the SJRWMD conservation requirements.

3. Regional Residential Irrigation Audit Program to Promote Water Conservation within the Region

These ongoing programs provide an opportunity for residential water utility customers to obtain site-specific evaluations for optimizing the use of water through landscaping techniques and efficient irrigation systems, and to implement recommendations provided by a professionally certified contractor. Contractors used for the site-specific evaluations are professionals certified by the Florida Irrigation Society (FIS) or another recognized certifying agency in the targeted region. The initiative includes program information, water conservation education, reporting and analysis by a consultant. This continuing project targets existing inefficient landscape and irrigation water use and results in significant water savings and can lead to water quality protection through reduced leaching of fertilizers and lawn chemicals. 1457 audits have been conducted as part of SWFWMD Phases 1 to 7. In Phase 4, we began offering enhanced audits that have a more intense implementation of improvements, and have an improved benefit to reduce water usage. An average reduction in total water use of 26% has been achieved for the locations that have been audited.

For Phase 8, the program was shifted from the CFI process to the WISE program for SWFWMD funding. This water conservation initiative helps participating utilities meet and surpass the maximum 150 gallons per person per day that is required by the SWFWMD. Phase 9 will continue in FY 2026-27 in the WISE program.

In Fiscal Year 2023-24 we began a new program cofounded by SJRWMD that included Marion County and the City of Belleview as cooperating utilities. This pilot program targeted 60 enhanced evaluations, however only 35 were completed. We have included budget of \$30,000 to move forward with Phase 2 in FY 2026-27.

4. Continued Cooperation with Citrus County in Operation and Management of the Authority's Charles A. Black Water Supply Facilities

The Authority and Citrus County are parties of a Water Supply Contract governing the operation and maintenance of the CABWSF. The Contract allows for the continued operation of the facilities by Citrus County in a cost-effective manner ensuring a long-term water supply for the County and its customers while also providing for long-term financial stability for the Authority.

WRWSA and Citrus County received a renewed Water Use Permit No. 7121 with an increased capacity of 7,181,900 gallons per day. Citrus County deposits an annual contribution to the Renewal and Replacement Fund of \$270,000 to account for inflation, and additional planned activities, and to maintain a balance the required balance of between \$2,000,000 and \$3,000,000.

In FY 2025-2026 an updated Engineering Analysis will be completed identifying a Renewal and Replacement Annual amount of \$300,000 to begin in October 2027.

5. Participation in Maintenance and Enhancement of the Central Springs Groundwater Model

The Authority will continue to participate in discussions with SJRWMD and SWFWMD on the implementation of the Central Springs Groundwater model. The intent is for both water management districts to utilize this common model for determining the availability of groundwater in the region, particularly in Marion County which is split by the districts' boundaries. The SJRWMD and SWFWMD continue to improve upon the model and seek the engagement of various stakeholders. The model has significant implications for groundwater availability in the region and the Authority's continued participation and coordination with member governments is essential to ensure water supply implications are considered as the model is updated. Results from this model were presented in the WRWSA 2024 Regional Water Supply Plan update.

6. Springs Protection and Restoration

The Authority continues to work with the SWFWMD on its springs coast initiative. The Authority staff continue to actively participate in the Springs Coast Management Committee as the public supply Representative, and monitor activities of the District and the Steering Committee for implications on water supply in the region. WRWSA is also providing a representative on the Technical Advisory Committee via one of our As-Needed Consultants.

7. Program Development and Technical Assistance

- a) Support efforts to further define the hydrogeology of the region. Continue cooperation with the water management districts on the collection of hydrologic data to further refine the Districts' planning and regulatory models. Coordinate on efforts to better define the lower Floridan aquifer and the extent of fresh and brackish groundwater within the aquifer.
- b) Promote the WRWSA Regional Framework through coordination with WRWSA member governments to facilitate regional and sub-regional cooperation on water supply development and reclaimed water projects. Work with the WMDs in defining strategic priorities for the region and how these priorities may influence the ranking criteria for the Districts' Cooperative Funding

Initiatives, including potential District funding for regional and sub-regional traditional and non-traditional water supply development that is consistent with the WRWSA Regional Framework.

- c) Participate in the SWFWMD and SJRWMD minimum flows and levels (MFLs) programs representing the interests of member governments. Provide technical assistance to WRWSA member governments in determining the potential impact to both the environment and potential water supply development based on proposed MFLs.
- d) Coordinate with FDEP, SJRWMD, SWFWMD and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services on policy and rule development. Provide assistance to WRWSA member governments on FDEP and District rule development that may include Water Use Permitting, Environmental Resource Permitting, water conservation and future water supply development, including the statewide consistency initiatives. Monitor water management programs and rule development in other parts of the state, including the Central Florida Water Initiative, for implications to the WRWSA and its member governments.
- e) Monitor and coordinate with the water supply planning and development activities in adjacent communities and regions, including but not limited to Tampa Bay Water, the Central Florida Water Initiative, the Polk Water Cooperative, and Lake and Levy counties for possible implications on water resource availability within the WRWSA region. Provide input to such activities when appropriate.
- f) Track the public supply water usage and compare it to permitted quantities and estimated demands in the Regional Water Supply Plan Update.
- g) Monitor applications for significant water use permits and permit modifications within the region for potential impacts on WRWSA and member government existing and planned water supply facilities and engage in the permitting process where appropriate.
- h) Monitor and report on activities within the WRWSA service area that may be a concern to the water quality or quantity for public supply usage.
- i) State Legislative tracking will be completed each State legislative session. Relevant bills related to utility operations, water quality, water permitting, land use, and pollution will be tracked and reported on in the WRWSA Board Meetings.

Regional Water Supply Plan – Approval of Final Report

Suzy Folsom, will present the draft report comments received for this project.

The Authority entered into a cooperative funding agreement with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) in December 2022 (23CF0004079) for Regional Water Supply Plan Update project. The Authority entered into a contract with Hazen and Sawyer in January 2023 to undertake the project.

Plan Update was coordinated with the assistance of the SWFWMD, St. Johns River Water Management District, and representatives from member governments and public supply utilities in the four-county region.

All of the comments received have been addressed, and the report will be provided for final approval at the meeting.

This project budget is 97% expended. A summary of the billing and SWFWMD reimbursement received to date is provided below. The final billing and project closeout will be completed after the report has been approved.

Project Billing Summary

Hazen and Sawyer Contract Amount	Billed To Date	Remaining	SWFWMD Reimbursement Received
\$350,000.00	\$339,942.40	\$10,057.60	\$126,989.43

Staff Recommendation:

Request approval of the Final Regional Water Supply Plan update.

Legislative Report

Ms. Suzannah Folsom, Executive Director, will present this item.

The 2026 Legislative Regular Session began on January 13, 2026 and ended on March 13, 2026. An additional Special Session from April 28-May 1, 2026 was held on congressional redistricting. An additional Special Session is scheduled from May 12 – 29 for the state budget.

Staff has gathered updated information on relevant bills that are related to conservation and water supply from SWFWMD, 1000 Friends of Florida, and the Florida Engineering Society's legislative tracking, and the House and Senate websites.

As of May 12, 2026, three of the eight bills that we were tracking has been signed by the Governor, two have been signed by the Officers and presented to the Governor, and five passed in the House and Senate. We will continue to track the status of the bills. A summary of the bills that WRWSA has been tracking for this session is provided as an Exhibit to this item.

See Exhibit: Bill Tracking

Presentation: SB 546/HB441 Conservation Lands

Staff Recommendation:

This is an information item for the Board and no action is required.

Bills that have passed

Bill Title	Significance	Bill	Sponsors	Status
Conservation Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires Division of State Lands to publish certain information on its website before Board of Trustees of Internal Improvement Trust Fund meets to review proposed sale of conservation lands; • requires that certain parcels proposed for exchange be appraised in accordance with certain criteria; • removes provisions requiring division to submit certain requests to Acquisition & Restoration Council for review; • removes provisions requiring division to provide certain recommendations to board; • requires division to publish certain information on its website before council meets to review proposed land exchange; • requires division to submit certain requests to council for review & requiring council to provide recommendations to division in certain circumstances; • requires division to provide certain recommendations to board of trustees in certain circumstances; • requires governing board of water management district to publish certain information on its website before meeting to review proposed sale or exchange of certain lands. 	SB 546	Mayfield	Approved by the Governor 4/22/2026
		HB 441	Kendall Tant Benarroch Black Campbell Eskamani Gosset-Seidman Tenrich Weinberger	
Special District Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revising agency agreements that provide state financial assistance to recipients or subrecipients to include certain special districts as an entity to which such agency may provide for the payment of invoices under specified circumstances • revising the definition of “rural community” to include certain special districts 	SB 214	McClain	3/6/2026 Passed
		HB 273	Johnson	3/4/2026 Passed

Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prohibits, beginning on specified date, certain use & sale, purchase, or distribution of aqueous film-forming foam; requires, beginning on specified date, certain entities to submit aqueous film-forming foam inventories & disposal plans to DEP; prohibits, beginning on specified date, possession & use of aqueous film-forming foam; authorizes DEP to administer certain grants or cost share programs; provides penalties & injunctive relief; requires certain public entities disposing of domestic wastewater biosolids and treated effluent to quarterly conduct specified samplings & submit results to DEP; limits purpose such samplings until specified standards are established by EPA & adopted by DEP. 	SB 1230	Harrell Truenow Berman	3/4/2026 Passed
		HB 1019	Conerly Blanco	3/12/2026 Passed
Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prohibits municipality from requiring construction permits from DEP for single family residences as condition of issuing building or plumbing permits; requires such owners & builders to provide certain proof to municipality 	SB 698	Martin	Signed by Officers and Presented to the Governor 4/30/2026
		HB 589	Nix	
Stormwater Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining the terms “compensating stormwater treatment” and “total land area”; requiring compensating stormwater treatment to comply with certain provisions unless certain circumstances exist; explaining the types of mitigation measures for compensating stormwater treatment that the Department of Environmental Protection or a water management district governing board must consider under certain circumstances; authorizing mitigation measures or enhancement credits intended to address certain impacts to be generated by certain entities and sold only to certain environmental resource permit applicants, etc. 	SB 848	Truenow	Approved by the Governor 5/6/2026
		HB 1457	Gonzalez Pittman Overdorf	
Data Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specifying that local governments maintain authority to exercise power and responsibility over comprehensive planning and land development regulations relating to large load customers; requiring public utilities to provide certain minimum tariff and service requirements for large load customers; prohibiting the governing board of a water management district or the Department of Environmental Protection from issuing a permit for the consumptive use of water to a large-scale data center under certain circumstances; requiring the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to contract for a study relating to the construction and operation of large-scale data centers, etc. 	SB 484	Avila	Approved by the Governor 5/7/2026
		HB 1007	Griffits	

Claims and Suits Against the Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These bills increase the statutory liability limits for tort claims against governmental entities. • Raises sovereign immunity caps in multiple phases, reaching as high as \$600,000 per individual claim and \$1.2 million per incident after Oct. 1, 2031. • Empowers local governments to settle claims in excess of these limits without legislative action. • Shortens from three years to 18 months the timeframe for presenting tort claims to an agency and reduces the statute of limitations for negligence suits from four years to two years. 	SB 1366	Brodeur	3/10/2026 Passed
		HB 145	McFarland	3/12/2026 Passed
Utility Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring that a new agreement, or an extension, renewal, or material amendment of an existing agreement, to provide certain utility services at retail be in writing; • requiring that certain public meetings be held as a condition precedent to the effectiveness of a new or extended agreement under which a municipality will provide specified utility services in other municipalities or unincorporated areas; • revising provisions relating to permissible rates, fees, and charges imposed by municipal water and sewer utilities on consumers located outside the municipal boundaries; • requiring municipalities that provide specified utility services to report certain information by a specified date, and annually thereafter, to the Florida Public Service Commission 	SB 1724	Martin	3/13/2026 Passed
		HB 1451	Busatta	3/12/2026 Passed

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Item 12

Attorney's Report

To be provided at the meeting.

Item 13.a.

Executive Director's Report

Water Use Permit Demand Summary

Summary of Recent Water Use Permit Activity in WRWSA Service Area

Updated May 6, 2026

Water Use Permit #	Applicant/Permittee Name	Activity Type	Date	Avg GPD	Peak GPD	Use Type	Status
Citrus County							
9791.012	Sugarmill Woods Water System	Renewal	11/17/2025	3,472,000	4,845,969	Public Supply	In Review
Hernando County							
9461.004	Mirror Lake	Letter Modification	8/18/2025	81,800	410,200	Agricultural	In Review
21309.000	Glen Lakes HOA	New	3/25/2026	7,100,000	8,700,000	Landscape/ Recreation	In Review
8833.009	Seville Development	Renewal	3/30/2026	452,800	795,000	Landscape/ Recreation	Completed 4/8/2026
368.013	Golf and Ocutny Club at the Heathers	Renewal	4/10/2026	59,700	143,700	Landscape/ Recreation	In Review
12310.004	Hernando County High School BBB	Letter Modificaiton	4/17/2026	76,400	220,400	Landscape/ Recreation	Completed 4/20/2026
8833.010	Seville Development	Letter Modificaiton	4/30/2026	452,800	795,000	Landscape/ Recreation	In Review
Marion County - SWFWMD							
20319.005	Wagner 105 & Archer 488 - Sleepy Creek Lands	Ownership Transfer	3/30/2026	887,800	2,387,100	Agricultural	Issued 4/10/2026
Sumter County							
21313.000	Buffalo Hide and Calttle Company LLC - Temporary Dewatering	New	4/13/2026	171,919	616,811	Mining/ Dewatering	In Review
21312.000	Buffalo Hide and Calttle Company LLC	New	4/10/2026	91,900	338,600	Agricultural	Issued 4/30/2026
31305.000	Wahoo RV Park	New	3/10/2026	18,000	21,600	Public Supply	In Review

Item 13.b.

Executive Director's Report

WMIS WUP Notifications

Summary of Major Water Use Permits in WRWSA Service Area

Updated 4/29/2026

Water Use Permit #	Applicant/Permittee Name	Permit Expiration Date	Permitted Average GPD	Actual 12-Month Rolling Average GPD*	Actual 5-Year Rolling Average GPD**	Actual Use / Permit Capacity	WRWSA RWSP Projection for 2026 GPD	2024 RWSP Accuracy for 2026 +/-%
Citrus County								
207.007	City of Crystal River	3/27/2032	919,000	856,359	892,503	93.2%	762,000	-11.0%
419.013	City of Inverness	5/18/2031	1,535,000	1,296,008	1,208,246	84.4%	1,016,000	-21.6%
1118.008	Floral City Water Association, Inc.	2/28/2038	395,000	392,855	377,777	99.5%	342,000	-12.9%
2842.011	Citrus County	8/25/2035	4,780,000	3,972,348	3,218,969	83.1%	3,124,000	-21.4%
4153.015	Rolling Oaks Utilities, Inc.	8/20/2038	1,573,000	1,852,323	1,703,564	117.8%	1,602,000	-13.5%
4406.009	Homosassa Special Water District	8/25/2032	951,000	792,940	810,657	83.4%	792,000	-0.1%
7121.007	Citrus County - Charles A Black	8/22/2043	7,181,900	6,280,168	5,562,942	87.4%	5,446,000	-13.3%
9791.012	Citrus County - Sugarmill Woods	11/17/2025	3,472,000	2,908,327	2,627,319	83.8%	2,434,000	-16.3%
11839.008	Walden Woods	4/23/2039	187,900	169,553	166,322	90.2%	150,000	-11.5%
Hernando County								
5789.015	Hernando County	1/23/2041	24,360,000	22,791,140	21,439,383	93.6%	21,448,000	-5.9%
7627.007	City of Brooksville	8/5/2044	1,709,000	1,540,282	1,429,913	90.1%	1,416,000	-8.1%
Marion County - SWFWMD								
1156.013	Bay Laurel Community Development District	2/23/2041	7,560,900	5,549,322	4,585,696	73.4%	4,820,000	-13.1%
5643.008	Utilities, Inc. of Florida - Golden Hills	2/23/2036	188,400	135,332	132,464	71.8%	150,000	10.8%
6151.015	Marion County Utilities Consolidated WUP	12/13/2042	9,365,800	10,429,473	8,662,354	111.4%	8,844,000	-15.2%
8020.008	Association of Marion Landing Owners	9/9/2040	152,100	130,344	127,801	85.7%	140,000	7.4%
8339.008	FGUA - Dunellon	3/21/2035	1,117,100	1,138,090	1,248,869	101.9%	1,176,000	3.3%
Marion County - SJRWMD								
2993-12	CSWR-Florida Utility Operating Company - South Marion Regional Water System	5/27/2042	231,000	206,583	202,922	89.4%	170,000	-17.7%
2995-8	CSWR-Florida Utility Operating Company - Tradewinds Utilities Inc	2/27/2035	227,000	305,569	162,736	134.6%	100,000	-67.3%
3016-4	Ocala East Villas Inc	8/27/2031	107,000	67,205	81,346	62.8%	100,000	48.8%
3021-5	Rolling Greens Communities *** Florida Governmental Utility Authority - Ocala	9/13/2025	610,000	576,946	***	94.6%	400,000	-30.7%
3043-7	Oaks	1/6/2040	194,000	118,380	136,119	61.0%	130,000	9.8%
3130-6	CSWR-Florida Utility Operating Company - Sunray Estates	8/17/1940	195,000	182,949	163,012	93.8%	150,000	-18.0%
3137-7	City of Belleview	10/11/2036	1,022,000	1,363,205	1,183,917	133.4%	1,054,000	-22.7%
4578-9	Marion County Utilities Consolidated CUP****	9/10/2023	8,812,000	7,362,230	6,697,915	83.5%	7,042,000	-4.3%
50324-10	City of Ocala	8/7/2027	17,540,000	14,797,673	13,330,966	84.4%	13,240,000	-10.5%
Sumter County								
1368.009	Lake Panasoffkee Water Assoc Inc	10/21/2044	410,000	287,049	289,591	70.0%	328,000	14.3%
6519.01	City of Bushnell	3/29/2031	1,366,800	603,468	536,640	44.2%	794,000	31.6%
7185.007	City of Webster	5/23/2043	386,200	115,547	106,070	29.9%	128,000	10.8%
8135.017	City of Wildwood	3/31/2035	4,583,200	4,016,592	2,884,750	87.6%	3,456,000	-14.0%
8193.006	City of Center Hill	11/18/2042	150,000	68,751	70,675	45.8%	86,000	25.1%
13005.012	Village Center Community Development District	1/23/2038	19,345,900	18,738,442	14,346,992	96.9%	19,350,000	3.3%
21031.003	Blue Goose Utility Company	4/7/2054	5,836,600	0	n/a	0.00%	n/a	n/a
20901.002	Gibson Place Utility Company	1/26/2041	3,985,700	1,128,847	n/a	28.3%	712,000	-36.9%
20721.003	South Sumter Utility Company	2/2/2038	2,600,000	1,737,775	1,602,406	66.8%	1,666,000	-4.1%

*12-month Rolling Average for most recent available data

**5-year Rolling Average for most recent available data, n/a when insufficient data

***No data reported Jan 2023-June 2024, Renewal submitted as 3021-8

****Renewal submitted; Permitted GPD represents WUP request

Item 13.c.

Residential Irrigation Evaluation Programs Update

Suzy Folsom, Executive Director, will present this item.

Residential irrigation evaluations are great tools to promote water conservation, and help municipalities meet their per capita water usage goals. This is a progress update on the three residential irrigation evaluation programs that WRWSA is currently ongoing.

Phase 8 Residential Irrigation Evaluation Program – SWFWMD

This program began in May 2025 and will be completed utilizing grant funding from the SWFWMD WISE program. The first application for Phase 8a included 57 evaluations, and 65 evaluations were completed prior to completion. Reimbursement for 8a has been requested, and Phase 8b started in February.

Participating Utility	Total Evaluations To-date		Target # of Evaluations for Phase 8a and 8b	Percent of Target Evaluations Completed
	Core	Enhanced		
Citrus	12	10	20	110%
Hernando	2	63	60	108%
Marion (West of 75)	0	10	20	50%
Villages VCCDD-LSSA	8	0	8	100%
Villages NSCUDD-VWCA	4	0	16	25%
Total	12	53	124	88%

WRWSA is budgeting for a Phase 9 with the SWFWMD and Phase 2 with SJRWMD for FY 2026-27.

Staff Recommendation:

This item is provided for the Board's information and no action is required.

Item 13.d.

Executive Director's Report

Correspondence



Florida House of Representatives

Representative JJ Grow

District 23

District Office:
106 E. Dampier Street
Inverness, FL 34450
(352)560-6075

Health & Human Services Committee
Subcommittees
Criminal Justice
Health Professions & Programs
Information Tech Budget & Policy
State Administration Budget

Tallahassee Office:
The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 717-5023

3-30-2026

Dear Secretary Lambert,

As the State Representative for the citizens of Citrus and Marion County, I write to express my serious concerns regarding the proposed expansion at the Heart of Florida Environmental Landfill to include Class I deep well injection of industrial waste/leachate.

The region where this project is proposed sits within one of the most sensitive hydrogeologic areas in the State of Florida. Our community depends heavily on the Floridan Aquifer system for drinking water, agriculture, and the economic vitality of our region. The karst geology that characterizes this area makes groundwater particularly vulnerable to contamination pathways that are difficult to fully predict or mitigate.

While deep well injection is permitted under state and federal regulations, it remains a practice that requires heightened scrutiny, particularly in areas with complex subsurface geology and strong hydraulic connections between aquifer systems. Residents across Citrus, Marion, Sumter, and surrounding counties have expressed significant concern about the long-term implications of introducing Class I industrial waste streams into this environment.

In addition to the environmental concerns, there are broader issues related to cumulative impacts, long-term monitoring, and the potential risk to drinking water resources that serve both rural communities and growing populations throughout Central Florida. Once contamination of a major aquifer occurs, remediation is extraordinarily difficult and costly, if it is possible at all.

Given these factors, I respectfully urge the Department to proceed with extreme caution in reviewing this proposal. At a minimum, I request that the Department:

- Conduct the most rigorous hydrogeologic review possible, including independent analysis of potential migration pathways.
- Ensure full transparency and robust public engagement throughout the permitting process.
- Carefully evaluate the long-term risk to the Floridan Aquifer and the surrounding watershed.
- Consider whether the unique geologic conditions of this region warrant denial of the proposed Class I injection activity.



Florida House of Representatives

Representative JJ Grow

District 23

Health & Human Services Committee

Subcommittees

Criminal Justice

Health Professions & Programs

Information Tech Budget & Policy

State Administration Budget

Tallahassee Office:

The Capitol

402 South Monroe Street

Tallahassee, FL 32399

(850) 717-5023

District Office:

106 E. Dampier Street

Inverness, FL 34450

(352)560-6075

The protection of Florida's groundwater resources must remain one of our highest priorities. Our aquifers are among the state's most valuable natural assets, and decisions affecting them must err on the side of long-term public safety and environmental stewardship.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns and for your continued commitment to protecting Florida's natural resources and drinking water supplies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J.J. Grow".

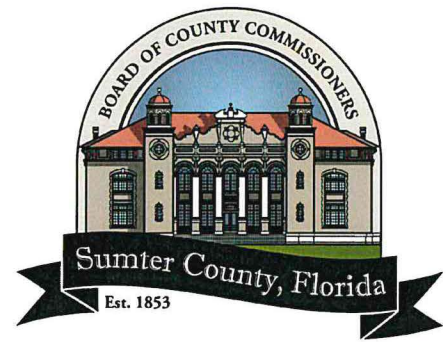
Representative J.J. Grow

Florida House of Representatives

District 23

Board of County Commissioners Sumter County, Florida

7375 Powell Road, Suite 200 • Wildwood, FL 34785 • Phone (352) 689-4400 • FAX: (352) 689-4401
Website: <http://sumtercountyfl.gov>



April 2, 2026

Secretary Alexis A. Lambert
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard M.S. 49
Tallahassee, FL 32399

RE: Heart of Florida Landfill's Planned Treated Leachate Disposal Injection Well Located in the City of Bushnell

Dear Secretary Lambert,

The Sumter County Board of County Commissioners recognizes the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has primacy regarding the issuance of injection well permitting for treated wastewater disposal pursuant to Florida Statutes § 381.0065 and the Florida Administrative Code Chapter 62-528. We recognize also that the law and rules preempt local decisions in the matter of the review, approval, and regulatory oversight of the current exploratory well and its future transition to a treated leachate injection well for the property owner.

There is a lack of independent fact-based information concerning the exploratory well and planned conversion for operation that created an environment of opposition and distrust in local government due to the preemption. Based on this environment, FDEP is the only entity capable of addressing the concerns of the residents and those that govern both the City of Bushnell and Sumter County. We are relying on the competency and dedication of your team to confirm the planned disposal use of treated leachate from this private property will not endanger the public water supply at any point during its operation. The reassurance requested includes an educational session on the rigors of the design, construction, and monitoring as well as the planned intervention in the event of a permit violation of the operational injection well.

We would be happy to host the public education forum for your regulatory team to provide this education and address questions posed by those in attendance.

Debora K. Butterfield, District 1
(352) 689-4400
7375 Powell Road
Wildwood, FL 34785

Andrew Bilardello, District 2
Vice Chairman
(352) 689-4400
7375 Powell Road
Wildwood, FL 34785

Todd Coon, District 3
2nd Vice Chairman
(352) 689-4400
7375 Powell Road
Wildwood, FL 34785

Jeffrey A. Bogue, District 4
(352) 689-4400
7375 Powell Road
Wildwood, FL 34785

Donald Wiley, District 5
Chairman
(352) 689-4400
7375 Powell Road
Wildwood, FL 34785

Bradley S. Arnold,
County Administrator
(352) 689-4400
7375 Powell Road
Wildwood, FL 34785

Erin Munz, Clerk & Auditor
(352) 569-6600
215 East McCollum Avenue
Bushnell, FL 33513

County Attorney
The Hogan Law Firm
Post Office Box 485
Brooksville, Florida 34605

If there is an established standard for the treatment of the leachate required before disposal via the injection well, it would be helpful to understand how it compares to the reuse standards for domestic wastewater treatment plants.

The education obtained thus far includes the attached presentation provided by the consultant of the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority.

We have a facility that can accommodate 400 participants and be live-streamed and can offer the dates of June 2 or June 16, 2026, for this education session so that it is also in advance of the application to convert the exploration injection well to the treated leachate disposal inject well.

We look forward to your timely response.



Donald Wiley, Chairman

cc: Honorable Sumter County Commissioners
Honorable City of Bushnell Mayor and Councilmembers
Mr. Mike Eastburn, City Manager
Ms. Morgan Wilson, Assistant City Manager
Mr. Elijah Vandergriff, Heart of Florida Landfill



Board of County Commissioners Executive Office

110 N. Apopka Ave., New Courthouse, Inverness, Florida 34450
(352) 341-6560 • Fax (352) 341-6584 • Website: www.citrusbocc.com

Our Mission:

To manage growth and foster prosperity by prioritizing protection of environmental assets, development and maintenance of infrastructure, and the health, safety, and well-being of our citizens.

March 31, 2026

Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority
3600 W Sovereign Path, Suite 228, Lecanto, FL 34461

RE: *Request for Formal Position – Heart of Florida V Landfill Leachate Injection Well (Sumter County)*

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners, we respectfully request that the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (WRWSA) consider adopting a formal position regarding the proposed deep injection leachate well associated with the Heart of Florida Landfill in Sumter County.

This proposal raises significant concerns related to groundwater protection, regional water supply, and long-term environmental risk. Given WRWSA's mission and role in safeguarding water resources across member jurisdictions, we believe it is both appropriate and necessary for the Authority to evaluate this issue and take a clear position.

The proposed project introduces significant uncertainty regarding subsurface conditions, specifically karst geology, and the associated potential for contaminant migration. The absence of information on deep groundwater flow patterns in the region, including the direction, rate, and ultimate destination of injected materials, raises serious concerns about the ability to ensure long-term containment of leachate and protection of the regional groundwater supply.

Additionally, landfill leachate differs significantly from conventional wastewater streams and may contain organic contaminants, heavy metals, and other potentially harmful constituents. The potential for long-term environmental impact, particularly in the event of system failure or migration, is a matter of regional concern. The introduction of a potential pollutant source within the broader hydrologic system warrants careful evaluation and coordinated regional response.

Given these considerations, we respectfully request that WRWSA place this item on an upcoming agenda for consideration and adopt a formal position regarding the proposed project, including consideration of opposition based on the concerns outlined above.

We appreciate the Authority's continued leadership in protecting regional water resources and respectfully request that any action taken be communicated to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and other relevant agencies as appropriate.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Diana Finegan
Chairman, Citrus County Board of County Commissioners

Suzannah Folsom

From: Joy Kokjohn <JKokjohn@sjrwmd.com>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2026 5:05 PM
Subject: Central Springs/East Coast (CSEC) draft geodatabase posted for review

CSEC stakeholders,

I am pleased to inform you that updated population and water demand projections for the Central Springs/East Coast (CSEC) planning region have been posted online. The updated projections are the result of feedback provided by CSEC utilities and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). In addition, a draft geodatabase with spatially distributed groundwater withdrawals has been posted for your review. Your review and feedback will ensure that the 2050 projected water demand is distributed in a manner that reflects a realistic future pumping scenario. The final geodatabase will be used to build well files for the groundwater flow models.

Please direct your comments on the draft geodatabase to jkokjohn@sjrwmd.com no later than May 22, 2026. The posted files are available [HERE](#). Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Visit the [CSEC website](#) for more information regarding this water supply planning region.

Regards,

Joy Kokjohn
Regional Water Supply Planning Coordinator
Bureau of Water Supply Planning
St. Johns River Water Management District
P.O. Box 1429 ● Palatka, FL 32178-1429
Office: (386) 329-4223
Mobile: (904) 810-8080
Email: jkokjohn@sjrwmd.com
Website: www.sjrwmd.com
Connect with us: [Newsletter](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Pinterest](#)



www.sjrwmd.com/e

We value your opinion. Please take a few minutes to share your comments on the service you received from the District by clicking this [link](#)

Notices

- Emails to and from the St. Johns River Water Management District are archived and, unless exempt or confidential by law, are subject to being made available to the public upon request. Users should not have an expectation of confidentiality or privacy.
- Individuals lobbying the District must be registered as lobbyists (§112.3261, Florida Statutes). Details, applicability and the registration form are available at <http://www.sjrwmd.com/lobbyist/>

Item 13.e.

Executive Director's Report

News Articles

Sumter County officials fear landfill's potential impact on drinking water

Villages-News

March 25, 2026

By Marv Balousek

Sumter County Attorney Jennifer Rey will send a pre-lawsuit letter this week to Heart of Florida Landfill officials outlining concerns.

The letter may be a precursor to a lawsuit seeking injunctive relief on behalf of residents who have complained for a year about odors from the landfill near Lake Panasoffkee.

Bushnell annexed the property and issued a landfill permit several years ago when Sumter County refused.

Commissioners separately toured the landfill last week with County Administrator Bradley Arnold, who compiled notes about the visits.



The Heart of Florida landfill on County Road 529.

Landfill officials have tried to alleviate odor concerns by abandoning a evaporation process last year, installing methane gas wells and cancelling the contract of Compost USA, which has been located on the property.

A proposed injection well to pump leachate, or landfill runoff, deep underground is a major concern of commissioners and residents.

Under a permit issued by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the landfill is drilling a test well that could become an approved injection well if it meets standards.

The 3,200-foot-deep test well is about two-thirds finished and would be under the base of the Florida aquifer, estimated at 2,000 feet. The aquifer is the primary source of drinking water in central Florida.

The Withlacochee Water Supply Authority, chaired by County Chairman Don Wiley, recently held an information session on injection wells.

Without an injection well, leachate must be trucked to wastewater treatment plants outside the area. In 2023, the landfill processed about 12 million gallons of leachate.

Injection wells are controversial because some have failed. Failure can be caused by construction mistakes, hydrogeology issues or water quality problems reducing transmission due to scaling or bacteria. Mitigation strategies include water quality testing, pretreatment and monitoring wells.

Arnold said the county's concerns should focus on technical issues and ensuring the landfill will comply with state regulations.

"They've got enough skin in the game to make sure they are doing it right," he said.

He said the Florida DEP has refused to attend a town hall meeting on injection wells, but hearings and resident input will be required before a permanent well is approved.

Commissioner Jeffrey Bogue suggested appealing to the governor about a town hall meeting.

"None of us want to drink toxic water," he said.

Southwest Florida declares extreme water shortage

Southwest Florida Water Management District declares an extreme water shortage, prompting stricter water conservation in Wildwood.

By Angel Green

March 30, 2026

WFTV9

WILDWOOD, Fla. — Southwest Florida Water Management District declares a Modified Phase III “Extreme” Water Shortage, leading Wildwood officials to enforce stricter water conservation for residents and businesses.

The updated restrictions are scheduled to take effect April 3 and continue through July 1. Although labeled as an extreme shortage, the city does not intend to introduce a water shortage surcharge for its utility customers.

Residents in The Villages sections of Wildwood get their water from a different utility provider and should contact that organization for information on their specific water policies.

The strictest water restrictions are now in effect across the West Central Florida region.

The Southwest Florida Water Management District announced that Citrus, DeSoto, Hardee, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota, and Sumter counties; portions of Charlotte, Highlands, and Lake counties; the City of Dunnellon and The Villages in Marion County; and the portion of Gasparilla Island in Charlotte County are under Phase III extreme water restrictions starting April 3 and continuing through July 1.

Rainfall deficit

The region has a rainfall deficit of over 13 inches.

As the ground continues to dry out, aquifers, lakes, and river levels are declining, and public water supplies are extremely low for this time of year. We are still going through the peak of the dry season, and aside from the next cold front—which could bring some scattered showers—the forecast calls for dry conditions to persist. The Climate Prediction Center calls for below-average rainfall through April, with a gradual uptick as we move into May, which is typically the start of the rainy season across many regions of Florida.

Keep in mind that your city or county may have additional water restrictions in place, so it is best to check their [websites as well](#). Unless your city or county already has stricter hours in effect, watering hours are limited to 12:01 a.m. to 4:00 a.m. or 8 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. Properties one acre or larger may only water before 4 a.m. and after 8 p.m., unless stricter local rules apply. The restrictions apply to residents on private wells; however, reclaimed water is only subject to voluntary watering hours unless restricted by the local government or utility.

Watering restrictions

Water only on the days specified according to how your address ends:

- 0 or 1 – Monday
- 2 or 3 – Tuesday
- 4 or 5 – Wednesday
- 6 or 7 – Thursday
- 8 or 9 – Friday, along with locations with mixed addresses or where an address cannot be determined (such as common areas associated with a subdivision)

Residents can hand-water plants on any day, but should do so before 8:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m. If you have new plants or a new lawn, they can be watered during the first 30 days. Between days 31 and 60, new lawns and plants can be watered three days per week following this schedule: even-numbered addresses may water on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday, while odd-numbered addresses may water on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.

Modified phase III “extreme” water shortage: restrictions are in effect

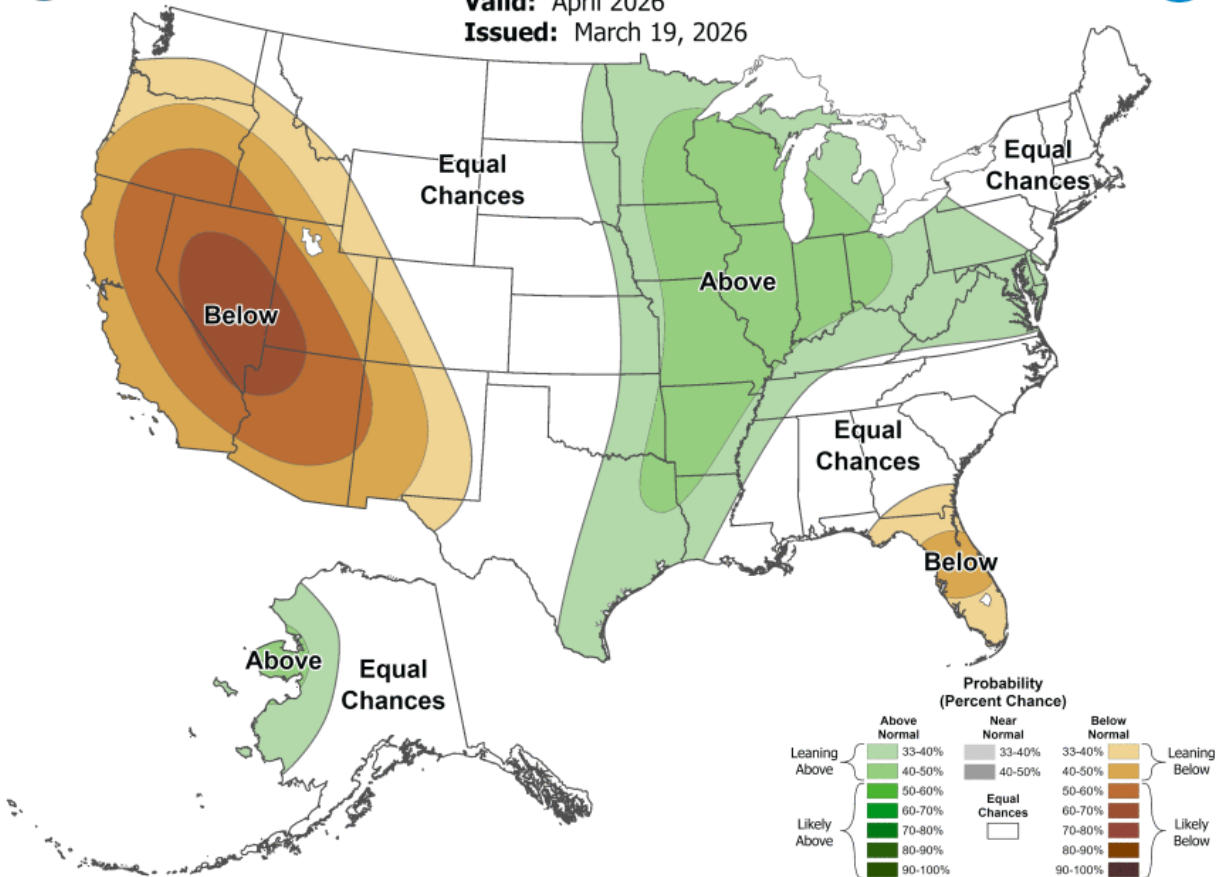
March 29, 2026

WMNF



Monthly Precipitation Outlook

Valid: April 2026
Issued: March 19, 2026



Rainfall outlook for April shows below-average rainfall for Florida.

HOAs or similar community organizations cannot require an increase in water use, such as replacing plants or pressure washing. If you must clean your car at home, you may do so on your assigned watering day using a hose with a shutoff nozzle. Fundraising car washes are prohibited unless the event was scheduled and advertised as of March 24.

Boats can be rinsed off after use. Fountains and other water features may operate only four hours per day. These hours can be set by the owner, but a posted schedule must be followed.

If you are dining out, water will only be served upon request at restaurants.

How are these restrictions enforced?

Water utilities and local enforcement officials will increase enforcement efforts, including responding to citizen complaints and closely monitoring water usage. Citations will be issued without warning 14 days after April 3.



DEEP WATER INJECTION WELL

Bilirakis sounds alarm on well

MICHAEL D. BATES Chronicle Reporter – Paxton Media Group

Apr 9, 2026

Congressman Gus Bilirakis is asking the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to take a closer look at a proposed deep injection well at the Heart of Florida landfill in Sumter County.

Bilirakis said local officials in Citrus County and nearby areas are worried the project could threaten the Floridan Aquifer, the main source of drinking water for communities in the region.

“Potable water resources must be protected with the highest degree of scientific rigor and caution,” Bilirakis wrote.

Bilirakis’ letter comes days after Citrus County commissioners voted to submit a formal letter to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), expressing their opposition to the Sumter project.

Last month, State Rep. JJ Grow also sent a letter to FDEP expressing concerns about the Heart of Florida landfill project.

Bilirakis said Florida’s underground system, made of limestone and called karst, is full of tunnels and channels. That means it’s hard to predict exactly where water or anything placed underground might flow.

“Ensuring that permitting decisions reflect the most current science, robust monitoring protocols, and conservative risk assumptions is critical to safeguarding long-term public health and environmental integrity,” he wrote.

Even though Florida handles the permitting under the Safe Drinking Water Act, Bilirakis said, a federal review is important to make sure national drinking water protections are fully met. He also asked the EPA to provide guidance to the state to ensure safety standards are followed.

“I sincerely appreciate the EPA’s continued commitment to protecting the nation’s drinking water resources and ensuring that environmental decisions are grounded in sound science and transparency,” Bilirakis added.

The proposed injection well has sparked concern among government officials and residents in Sumter and Citrus counties, who fear it could put both drinking water and the health of nearby springs and rivers at risk.

“This is an issue that goes beyond a typical local land-use discussion,” County Commissioner Rebecca Bays said. “It touches on long-term water sustainability, environmental protection and the future of our drinking water supply — all of which are critically important to Citrus County and the broader region.”

'Everything depends on that water': Marion County residents voice frustration over outages

WESH

Apr 15, 2026

Hayley Crombleholme Reporter

MARION COUNTY, Fla. —

People living in a Marion County neighborhood say their area has been dealing with water outages for years. They then have to deal with the consistent boil water advisories that follow.

The neighborhood has a Umatilla address, but it is actually part of Marion County. Located just off of U.S. 42.

That's where Lisa Kelley lives with her family.

"You can't cook, can't do anything. Can't even flush your toilet. Cause everything depends on that water," Kelley said of dealing with the outages.

She and others in this neighborhood said they've been dealing with water outages for years. With some saying recently, it's gotten worse.

"We get notices after they fix the line about a boil notice," Kelley said.

When you enter the neighborhood, you see signs saying boil water advisory in effect. Residents showed WESH 2 the text updates they get about new boil water notices, or letting them know one is still in effect. They went back months.

Marion County told WESH 2 these homes off of US 42 aren't served by county utilities, but by Central States Water Resources.

When you punch in the area's zip code on their website, it shows a current advisory for a planned service interruption from April 8. The reason given is "outside contractor damage."

Both households WESH 2 spoke to filed complaints when they said their water only returned intermittently.

"It's been every day except for today. Today's probably been the first day that it has not went out," Kelley said.

The Kelleys got a response by email. Saying in part that there had been eight precautionary boil water notices issued in their system in the last twelve months and that, "in each case, service was restored the same day".

Madeline Bryant said she got a phone call.

"It was all excuses, and she was like, 'We fixed that,' and I was like, but here we are again, and it's a consistent theme that stuff is not getting done," Bryant said.

Adding to her frustration, she said they got notice that their rates would be going up last December. She showed bill notices in the \$26 range, going up to anywhere from \$47 to \$82.

WESH 2 reached out to Central States Water Resources and got a response Thursday night saying,

"We understand that boil water advisories can be inconvenient, but our priority is always to ensure safe and reliable water resources and service. Boil Water advisories are an important precautionary measure, and we have been communicating with customers over the past several days to advise of status. Customers who have provided their email and phone numbers are alerted directly, so we do encourage customers to always update their contact information with us so they can receive such notifications.

Yesterday we reached out to reassure customers that we've been working in coordination with the contractor to complete the necessary work, which in fact was completed today. Water samples are being taken for testing and a LIFT will be issued and customers notified, as soon as the samples are cleared by the lab (standard protocol).

Again, our priority is always to ensure safe and reliable water resources and service, and sometimes service involves issuing a precautionary boil water advisory when work is undertaken, planned or otherwise. We expect the advisory to be lifted before the end of the week."

The neighbors WESH 2 talked to said they've been through this before and feel it may take more to get the water system where it should be.

"I want them to repair it," Bryant said.

Officials increasingly concerned about landfill's threat to aquifer

by Marv Balousek

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Villages-News.com

Sumter County has asked state environmental officials to attend a public meeting in June on a proposed injection well at the Heart of Florida Landfill near Lake Panasoffkee.

In a letter to Secretary Alexis Lambert of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), County Chairman Don Wiley cited a lack of “independent, fact-based information” about the well.

“We are relying on the competency and dedication of your team to confirm the planned disposal use of treated leachate from this private property will not endanger the public water supply at any point during its operation,” he wrote.

Other counties are joining the effort questioning the safety of the injection well.

A letter to Sumter County from Citrus County Chairman Diana Finegan shared the concerns.

She wrote that concerns about the Florida aquifer “extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries” because her county relies entirely on the aquifer for its drinking water.

The landfill was issued a permit for a test well and drilling is under way. If that well is successful, a permanent well permit could follow.

The well would provide a way to dispose of leachate, or rainwater runoff, that becomes contaminated by flowing over the landfill. Without the well, the leachate is trucked to wastewater treatment plants out of the area.

Florida has other injection wells, but most are along the coast and not near the aquifer.

Commissioner Jeffrey Bogue suggested getting the Southwest Florida Water Management Authority involved in the issue.

County Administrator Bradley Arnold said the state agency regulates surface water and not injection wells.

“Anything we can bring to bear on this issue is greatly appreciated,” said County Chairman Don Wiley.

Commissioner Andrew Bilardello said a list of questions should be compiled for FDEP.

He said he understands the landfill's goal of making a profit "but not at the cost of screwing up the environment."

During the public forum, Debra Arkus of Lake Panasoffkee suggested enlisting counties across the state in the injection well issue.

"You get the whole central region covered, then they're going to start listening," she said.

Leslie Strickland of Sumterville blamed the test injection well for problems with private wells in her area.

She said some wells are drying up and residents experienced vibrations in their homes.

State representative pens letter detailing fears of threat to local drinking water

by Marv Balousek

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State Rep. Samantha Scott, R-52, has weighed in with her concerns about a direct injection well at the Heart of Florida Landfill near Lake Panasoffkee.

In a letter to Richard Lobinske of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), she wrote that the well could endanger Florida's underground aquifer, the area's major source of drinking water.



State Rep. Samantha Scott

Drilling is under way of a test injection well after FDEP granted a permit. If it succeeds, a permit may be issued for a permanent well.

The well would be used to pump leachate, or contaminated rainwater runoff, deep underground instead of trucking it to wastewater treatment plants out of the area.

“There is genuine apprehension among constituents about potential risks associated with this project,” Scott wrote. “Families, farms and businesses rely directly on the Florida Aquifer as their primary source of drinking water. Any threat to this resource carries real and lasting consequences.”

She wrote that a key concern is “limited predictability of deep groundwater flow patterns” and “uncertainty regarding the direction and rate of migration of injected materials.”

The department should evaluate alternative treatment methods that carry less risk, Scott wrote.

“The residents of District 52 expect that decisions impacting our aquifer will be made with the highest level of care, ensuring that future generations are not left with irreversible consequences to Florida’s freshwater resources,” the letter concluded.

Earlier this month in a letter to FDEP Secretary Alexis Lambert, Sumter County commissioners asked state environmental officials to attend a public meeting in June on the proposed injection well. The county also has sought support from other counties that also rely on the aquifer.

Residents have complained about landfill odors for more than a year and they have pressed Sumter County commissioners to help.

Bushnell annexed the landfill property several years ago and issued the permit after Sumter County rejected it.