



**WITHLACOOCHEE  
REGIONAL  
WATER  
SUPPLY  
AUTHORITY**

## **Board Meeting Package**


January 15, 2014  
3:30 p.m.

### **Meeting Location:**

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

## MEMORANDUM

To: Water Supply Authority Board of Directors and Interested Parties

From: Richard S. Owen, Executive Director 

Date: January 2, 2014

Subject: Monthly Meeting of the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority

---

The next meeting of the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority will be on **Wednesday, January 15, 2014, 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 the November 20, 2013 meeting
- 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](http://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 print the Board Package.



## **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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.



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

**LECANTO GOVERNMENT BUILDING  
3600 W. SOVEREIGN PATH, ROOM 166, LECANTO, FLORIDA 34461  
January 15, 2014 @ 3:30 p.m.**

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

- |             |            |  |
|-------------|------------|--|
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#1</b>  | <b>Call to Order</b>   |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#2</b>  | <b>Roll Call</b>   |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#3</b>  | <b>Introductions and Announcements</b>   |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#4</b>  | <b>Approval of Minutes</b>   |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#5</b>  | <b>Public Comment</b>  |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#6</b>  | <b>Election of Officers . . . Governing Board</b>  |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#7</b>  | <b>Regional Water Supply Plan Update . . . Gregg Jones, Cardno ENTRIX</b>  |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#8</b>  | <b>Springs Restoration . . . Veronica Craw, SWFWMD</b>   |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#9</b>  | <b>Executive Director's Report . . . Richard S. Owen, WRWSA</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>a. Bills to be Paid [January bills to be provided in hand-out]</b></li><li><b>b. Status Report on Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Wildwood and Marion County</b></li><li><b>c. Revised and Restated Interlocal Agreement Update</b></li><li><b>d. Correspondence</b></li><li><b>e. News Articles</b></li><li><b>f. Other</b></li></ul> |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#10</b> | <b>Hydrologic Update . . . Lois Sorensen, SWFWMD</b>   |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#11</b> | <b>Legislative Update . . . Diane Salz, Governmental Affairs Consultant</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>a. American Water Works Association Fall Conference</b></li></ul>   |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#12</b> | <b>Attorney's Report . . . Larry Haag, WRWSA Attorney</b>  |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#13</b> | <b>Other Business</b>  |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#14</b> | <b>Next Meeting Time and Location . . . February 19, 2014 3:30 p.m., Lecanto Government Building, Room 166, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto, Florida 34461</b>   |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>#15</b> | <b>Adjournment</b>   |

*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 4.**  
**Minutes**

**WITHLACOOCHEE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
November 20, 2013**

**TIME:** 3:30 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Lecanto Government Building  
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**

Chairman Dennis Damato called the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (WRWSA) meeting to order at 3:37 p.m. and asked for a roll call.

**2. Roll Call**

Mr. Richard Owen, Executive Director, called the roll and a quorum was declared present.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jim Adkins, Hernando County Commissioner  
Al Butler, Sumter County Commissioner  
Dennis Damato, Chairman, Citrus County Commissioner  
Ken Brown, Crystal River City Councilor  
Gary Ernst, Belleview City Councilor  
Joseph Johnston, Brooksville City Councilor  
Stan McClain, Marion County Commissioner  
Dale Swain, Bushnell City Councilor

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Scott Adams, Citrus County Commissioner  
Rebecca Bays, Citrus County Commissioner  
Kathy Bryant, Marion County Commissioner  
Wayne Dukes, Hernando County Commissioner  
Don Hahnfeldt, Sumter County Commissioner  
Nick Nicholson, Hernando County Commissioner  
David Russell, Hernando County Commissioner  
Carl Zalak, Marion County Commissioner

**3. Introductions and Announcements**

Members of the audience introduced themselves. There were no announcements.

**STAFF PRESENT**

Richard Owen, WRWSA Executive Director  
Larry Haag, WRWSA Attorney  
Diane Salz, Governmental Affairs Liaison  
Nancy Smith, WRWSA Administrative Assistant

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Alys Brockway, Hernando County Utilities  
Debra Burden, Citrus County Water Resources  
Gregg Jones, Cardno ENTRIX  
Jay Hoecker, SWFWMD

Chris Zajac, SWFWMD  
Richard Radacky, Brooksville  
Paul Duchesneau, Citrus County Utilities

**4. Approval of Minutes of October 16, 2013, Meeting**

A copy of the minutes was provided in the Board packet for review.

Following consideration, a motion was made by Mr. Adkins to approve the minutes for the October 16, 2013 meeting. Mr. Swain seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**5. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**6. Conservation Program Performance . . . Alys Brockway, Hernando County**

Mr. Owen introduced Alys Brockway who gave a status report on water conservation projects in Hernando County. The County provides water to approximately 85 percent of its residents. Ms. Brockway stated that in 2006, total countywide water use was 9.5 billion gallons; by 2012, the total water use was 6.6 billion gallons. While some of the decline in demand may be attributed to the economy, the utility has also worked on various conservation programs, one day per week watering restrictions and code enforcement activities. She is very pleased with the regional irrigation system evaluation program. Sixty-two residential accounts water saved 9.1 million gallons of water in one year following the irrigation system inspection.

< Stan McClain arrived. >

This item was presented for the Board's information; no action was required.

**7. Regional Water Supply Plan Update . . . Gregg Jones, Cardno ENTRIX**

Mr. Jones reported on progress made in drafting the *Regional Water Supply Plan Update*. He presented preliminary water demands through 2035 for Public Supply systems within each member county. Citrus, Marion and Sumter counties each have some projected deficits in water supply by 2035. The demand areas were compared to the wellfield locations proposed in the current Regional Water Supply Plan and potential changes were recommended for wellfield locations. The next step in the process is to refine the wellfield locations, use modeling to determine impacts to the environment, taking into account the established minimum flows and levels set for local water bodies.

Mr. Owen recommended a change in the timing of *Regional Water Supply Plan Update* drafts. The change does not require action by either the WRWSA Board or the SWFWMD Governing Board. The completion of the original Agreement was delayed for the District to complete language changes. In addition, SWFWMD required the use of the Conserve Florida model for the water conservation portion of the Plan, which has presented some problems. The University of Florida is completing the model and assisting Cardno to estimate water conservation savings. The first draft of the *Plan* will be completed no later than March 31, 2014, with the final plan completed no later than July 1, 2014, to accommodate these delays.

This item was presented for the Board's information; no action was required.



**8. Irrigation Evaluation Program Status update . . . Nancy H. Smith, WRWSA**

Ms. Smith presented status reports on the two regional irrigation system evaluation programs being administered by the Authority under the SWFWMD cooperative funding initiative. The Pilot program will be complete by the end of February 2014, while the second program has completed on-site evaluations in the first six months of the cooperative funding contract. The participating utilities continue to provide contacts for the program.

This item was presented for the Board's information; no action was required.

**9. Executive Director's Report ... Richard S. Owen, Executive Director**

**a. Bills to be Paid – November 2013**

The November 2013 bills were provided in the Board's Packet. Mr. Owen requested the Board approve payment of the November 2013 bills totaling \$50,264.10.

Following consideration, **a motion was made by Mr. Butler to approve payment of the November 2013 bills of \$50,264.10. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ernst and carried unanimously.**

**b. AWWA Florida Section Conference**

Mr. Owen asked that Diane Salz be approved to attend the AWWA Florida Section conference in Orlando in December. The cost should not exceed \$900.00. It is an excellent conference to understand key water issues in the upcoming legislative session.

Following consideration, **a motion was made by Mr. Adkins to authorize Ms. Salz to attend the AWWA Florida Section conference and provide a report to the Authority. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brown and carried unanimously.**

**c. PC Laptop Upgrade**

Mr. Owen recommended that the operating system for the Authority's PC laptop be upgraded and that the QuickBooks program be updated to 2014. The Authority uses the QuickBooks program for its financial data, which is compatible with the program used by the accountant, Purvis Gray & Company. The total cost for the two upgrades should not exceed \$500.00.

Following consideration, **a motion was made by Mr. Johnston to approve. The motion was seconded by Mr. Adkins and carried unanimously.**

**d. News Articles**

News articles were presented in the Board's package. Mr. Owen discussed the proposed use of the Lower Floridan Aquifer to meet water needs and solutions in Polk County. Polk County is also working with the SWFWMD to create a new water supply authority between Polk County and its municipalities. SWFWMD has tentatively agreed to provide \$160 million, available over time, to build the infrastructure associated with the Lower Floridan Aquifer projects if the creation of the water supply authority is successful.

This item was presented for the Board's information; no action was required.

e. **Other**

- **Marion and Citrus County Legislative Delegations.** Mr. Owen attended both delegation meetings and spoke to the groups about the WRWSA and what it does. The purpose was to provide information, not to request specific items.
- **SWFWMD Governing Board Meetings.** Mr. Owen attended the two most recent SWFWMD Governing Board meetings. The Governing Board adopted rule revisions for the consumptive use permitting consistency initiative on November 19, 2013. The St. Johns River Water Management District should be adopting the consumptive use permitting rule changes soon.

A second issue was discussion of the potential regional water supply authority in Polk County. The financial incentive of \$160 million to fund a total of 30 MGD is significant. If the WRWSA can document its needs, this Authority could potentially enter into an agreement with SWFWMD for the long-term funding of other water supply projects. Mr. Owen said that he would be following the Polk County water supply authority and its funding as it develops.

- **Charles A. Black Wellfields.** Mr. Owen told the Board that he and Nancy Smith toured the Charles A Black wellfields with Citrus County Water Resources Director, Ken Cheek, and Operations Manager Gary Loggins. It was very informative and the County is doing a great job of maintaining the facilities.
- **Tampa Bay Water (TBW) 15 Billion Gallon Reservoir.** Mr. Owen participated in a tour of the TBW Reservoir that is undergoing a large-scale renovation, costing approximately \$120 million. Executive staff from TBW and from the Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority participated in the tour along with two staff members from Citrus County. There was a workshop after the tour to discuss issues of common concern. It was a great opportunity and the first time those three organizations have met in such a forum.

10. **Legislative Report . . . Diane Salz, Governmental Affairs Liaison**

Ms. Salz reported on the draft springs legislation discussed at the last Board meeting. This bill has not been filed. Subsequent to the initial release, other drafts have been submitted to the sponsor, Senator David Simmons, as well as other comments and meetings identifying substantial concerns with the proposed legislation. Senate President Gates has established a four-member panel to be in charge of any springs legislation that may move forward in 2014. Senators Wilton Simpson and Charles Dean, from this region, are on this panel. One area of agreement is that there should be funding for springs protection and restoration. Ms. Salz will continue to monitor and report on this issue.

A bill tracking report is included in the Board's packet and will be amended and added to as the session nears. In particular, SB 272, is a bill relating to water and wastewater utilities filed by Sen. Wilton Simpson. This bill addresses water quality and rate structures in private utilities based on a situation in Pasco County, where a rate increase was recently approved by the PSC for a utility that is providing water that is not drinkable. The rates for that utility are twice as high as those of the County's utility. Sen. Simpson is attempting to keep private utility rates comparable to county-owned utilities and to improve water quality standards for private utilities.

This item was presented for the Board's information; no action was required.

**11. Attorney's Report . . . Larry Haag, WRWSA Attorney**

**a. Revised and Restated Interlocal Agreement Update**

Mr. Haag reviewed the status of the revised and restated Interlocal Agreement. Numerous comments have been received from the member counties. The changes are shown in the Board's packet. The changes are relatively minor with one exception. The Agreement provides for an alternate to serve on the Board if a Board member cannot attend the meeting. This alternate was changed from an elected official to allowing each member local government to determine the alternate, whether an elected official or other. Mr. Owen reviewed this portion of the Agreement with the Board and requested discussion or direction from the Board.

Mr. Johnston noted that sentence three in Section V should read, "A County or municipality represented . . ." instead of "A County and municipality . . ." The Board concurred with this change.

The Board members discussed the language provided in Section V, sentence 4 providing for alternates to the Board.

Following consideration, a motion was made by Mr. Johnston to approve the Revised and Restated Interlocal Agreement with the language changed, as follows, for Section V, sentence 4: "Alternates must be appointed by the respective county commission or city council and, if not a member of that county commission or city council, must be a staff member of the respective local government." The motion was seconded by Mr. Adkins and carried unanimously.

Mr. Owen stated that the Interlocal Agreement will be rewritten as directed and a final version of the Agreement will be provided to each County government for approval. Mr. Owen will attend three of the County Board of Commissioners' meetings on December 10 and then the Marion County meeting the following week to respond to any questions. The process should be complete in December.

**12. Other Business**

**Levy County.** Chairman Damato requested an update on whether or not Levy County has decided to participate with the WRWSA as a member. Mr. Owen reported that the Levy County Coordinator told him that the Commission needed more information and deliberation relative to the benefits to the County before making a decision. Members of the Levy County Commission have expressed concerns to both Mr. Damato and Mr. Butler about the membership costs relative to benefits to their county, which has no utilities and is split into two water management districts. Chairman Damato was satisfied that Levy County had been given an opportunity to consider membership with the WRWSA during the time that revisions to the Interlocal Agreement were being made.

Chairman Damato discussed the items removed from the Chassahowitzka during the cleanup of the main spring by the District. Many artifacts were recovered, including evidence of Indian occupation 8,000 - 10,000 years ago.

**13. Next Meeting Time and Location**

The Board agreed to cancel the meeting scheduled for December 18, 2013.

**The next meeting is scheduled for January 15, 2014, 3:30 p.m., at the Lecanto Government Building, Room 166, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Lecanto, Florida 34461.**

**14. Adjournment**

Chairman Damato announced there was no further business or discussion to come before the WRWSA and adjourned the meeting at 5:21 p.m.

---

Dennis Damato, Chairman

---

Richard S. Owen, Executive Director

**Item 6.**  
**Election of Officers**

20

21

22

23

## **Item 6. Election of Officers**

The Board of the WRWSA annually elects its Board officers, including a Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer. The Secretary is the Executive Director who serves in an ex-officio capacity. This election has traditionally occurred in January. The normal practice has been for the current Chair to call the meeting to order and chair the meeting up to the Elections agenda item. Then the Chair opens the floor for nominations for the new Chair. One or more Board member(s) are nominated for the new Chair, nominations are closed and the Chair calls for a vote for the new Chair. Once the new Chair is elected, the gavel is passed and the in-coming Chair continues with the remainder of the meeting agenda, including election of a Vice-Chair and Treasurer in a similar manner, unless these officer positions were included as a slate of officers in the original nomination motion.

Current Board officers include: Dennis Damato, Chair; James Adkins, Vice Chair; and Al Butler, Treasurer. As additional background information, the following is excerpted from the Authority's proposed Revised and Restated Interlocal Agreement:

SECTION VIII. – Officers: The officers of the Governing Board shall be as follows:

1. A Chairman, who shall preside at meetings of the Governing Board; sign, as authorized by the Governing Board, any contracts or other instruments which are deemed to be in the best interest of the Authority; and perform such other duties incident to the office as may be prescribed by the Governing Board.
2. A Vice Chairman, who shall act in the Chairman's absence. The Vice Chairman shall perform such other functions as the Governing Board may from time to time assign.
3. A Treasurer, who shall be entrusted with the receipt, care and disbursement of Authority funds in accordance with fiscal policies and regulations adopted by the Governing Board.
4. If none of the above officers are present at a Board meeting where there is otherwise a quorum, the Authority Board may elect a chairman pro-tem for the duration of the meeting.

**Staff Recommendation:** This item is for information only and no action is required.

**Item 7.**  
**RWSP Update**

**Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority  
Water Supply Plan Update  
Progress Report #9 (November 2013)**

Cardno ENTRIX

3905 Crescent Park Drive  
Riverview, FL 33578  
USA

Phone 813 664 4500  
Toll-free 800 368 7511  
Fax 813 664 0440  
[www.cardno.com](http://www.cardno.com)

[www.cardnoentrix.com](http://www.cardnoentrix.com)

**1) Task 2. Availability of Ground- and Surface Water**

Continued efforts to work with SWFWMD to coordinate the impact modeling of proposed wellfields. SWFWMD delivered their updated and expanded Northern District model in September but significant additional work (listed below) is being completed by Cardno staff prior to use of the model.

- a. Developed the 2010 and 2030 well packages for use in the model.
- b. Re-evaluating the need for and locations of the wellfields proposed in the WRWSA's 2010 Water Supply Plan Update. The re-evaluation is based on the 2035 population and water demand projections that have recently been developed.
  - i. Developed groundwater deficit/surplus maps for the year 2035 based on projected demands for utility service areas vs. permitted groundwater quantities.
  - ii. Met with the Directors and staffs of Hernando, Citrus, and Marion County utilities and presented the deficit/surplus maps to them.
  - iii. Based on feedback received, locations of potential wellfields are being revised.

**2) Task 3. Water Conservation and Reclaimed Water Strategies**

- a. Continued to work with the University of Florida EZ Guide staff to assist in their efforts to complete the EZ Guide modeling for public supply utilities.

**3) Task 4. Water Supply Project Options**

- a. Sub consultant completed a second draft of the update on the feasibility of a seawater desalination project option at the Crystal River Energy site.
- b. Sub consultant completed a draft of the update of the feasibility of surface water supply options for the Withlacoochee River.



**Item 8.**  
**Springs Restoration**

**Item 8. Springs Restoration . . . Veronica Craw, SWFWMD Manager, Springs and Environmental Flows Section**

Ms. Craw provided an update on the Southwest Florida Water Management District's Springs Restoration efforts at the Board's June 2013 meeting. Board members requested Ms. Craw return in the future to provide an update on these activities. Ms. Craw will review recent activities, including the status of State appropriations for springs' protection and restoration activities in the region.

**Staff Recommendation:** This item is for information only and no action is required.

**Item 9.a.**  
**Bills to be Paid**

Bills to be Paid	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	
26	
27	
28	
29	
30	
31	
32	
33	
34	
35	
36	
37	
38	
39	
40	
41	
42	
43	
44	
45	
46	
47	
48	
49	
50	
51	
52	
53	
54	
55	
56	
57	
58	
59	
60	
61	
62	
63	
64	
65	
66	
67	
68	
69	
70	
71	
72	
73	
74	
75	
76	
77	
78	
79	
80	
81	
82	
83	
84	
85	
86	
87	
88	
89	
90	
91	
92	
93	
94	
95	
96	
97	
98	
99	
100	

**Item 9.a. Bills to be Paid**

Included as an exhibit to this item are the December bills which have been paid. Since the December Board meeting was canceled, these bills were paid and staff is seeking Board concurrence. The January bills to be paid will be distributed at the meeting. Staff will summarize both months' bills and payments.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends Board concurrence with the December bills that have been paid and with the January bills to be paid, as shown in the exhibits.

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

Bills For Payment  
12/18/13

<u>Administrative Invoices</u>	<u>Invoice Number</u>	<u>Invoice Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Richard S. Owen, AICP	2013-11	12/1/13	\$ 7,007.87
Citrus County BoCC - Rental	Office Invoice	11/22/13	\$ 2,047.68
Florida Department of State (F.A.R.)	401633	11/19/13	\$ 21.58
James Adkins	Bd. Travel	11/20/13	\$ 19.58
Al Butler	Bd. Travel	11/20/13	\$ 27.59
Gary Ernst	Bd. Travel	11/20/13	\$ 36.49
Joseph Johnston	Bd. Travel	11/20/13	\$ 19.58
Stan McClain	Bd. Travel	11/20/13	\$ 36.49
Dale Swain	Bd. Travel	11/20/13	\$ 27.59
Re-issue check: Randy Mask	Bd. Travel	12/14/11	\$ 34.71
Re-issue check: Carl Zalak	Bd. Travel	6/20/12	\$ 36.49
Re-issue check: Nick Nicholson	Bd. Travel	3/20/13	\$ 19.58
Re-issue check: Joseph Johnston	Bd. Travel	5/15/13	\$ 19.58
Karen Allen (Web Master)	#0045	12/10/13	\$ 75.00
Haag, Haag and Friedrich	28841-28842	12/13/13	\$ 973.24
Diane Salz - Monthly Contract fee	113013	11/30/13	\$ 3,500.00
Diane Salz, Travel	Nov. Travel	11/30/13	\$ 317.77
Nancy Smith, Administrative Assistant	2013-11	12/2/13	\$ 3,190.24
<b>Total Administrative Invoices</b>			<b>\$ 17,411.06</b>

<u>Water Supply Studies and Facilities</u>	<u>Total Contract</u>	<u>Balance Remaining</u>	<u>Current Invoice</u>
General Services Contract	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	
Work Order 13-01. Jones Edmunds	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -
FY13-14 Local Government Water Supply Projects			
Citrus Water Conservation Pgm	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ -
Hernando Water Conservation Pgm	\$ 48,400.00	\$ 48,400.00	\$ -
Marion Water Conservation Pgm	\$ 38,600.00	\$ 38,600.00	\$ -

<u>Carry-over</u>			
Update of Regional Water Supply Plan	\$ 119,980.00	\$ 91,797.90	\$ 7,906.85
General Services, Work Order 12-01. WRA	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 21,300.18	\$ -
FY 12-13 Local Government Water Supply Projects			
FY13 Marion Water Conservation Pgm	\$ 34,900.00	\$ 34,900.00	\$ 8,745.04
Pilot Irrigation Audit Pgm Completion	\$ 6,800.00	\$ 3,400.00	\$ 2,100.00
Phase 2 Irrigation Program	\$ 105,170.00	\$ 102,680.00	\$ 6,980.00
Purvis Gray Rate Analysis (CAB WSF)	\$ 8,588.00	\$ 8,588.00	\$ -
Northern District Model Expansion	\$ 37,500.00	\$ 37,500.00	\$ -

<b>Project Invoice Totals</b>	<b>\$ 550,188.00</b>	<b>\$ 512,416.08</b>	<b>\$ 25,731.89</b>
-------------------------------	----------------------	----------------------	---------------------

<b>TOTAL BILLS TO BE PAID</b>	<b>\$ 43,142.95</b>
-------------------------------	---------------------

State Board of Administration	Transfer from SBA2 to SBA1	\$ 25,731.89
State Board of Administration	Transfer from SBA1 to SunTrust Bank	\$ 43,143.00

**Item 9.b.**  
**Status on MOU**  
**Wildwood & Marion County**

**Item 9.b. Status Report on Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Wildwood and Marion County . . . Richard S. Owen, WRWSA**

Staff has been in negotiations with the City of Wildwood and Marion County for the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for New Water Supply. A draft of the MOU is included as an exhibit to this item. As of the preparation of the Board packet, the draft MOU is still undergoing legal review by the City. Once finalized, the MOU will be brought to the City Council, the County Commission and the WRWSA Board for approval. It is anticipated this approval process will occur during the January – March timeframe.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff is seeking any Board input on the draft MOU, however no action is required at this time.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR NEW WATER SUPPLY  
BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF WILDWOOD, MARION COUNTY AND  
THE WITHLACOOCHEE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is made and entered into by and between the City of Wildwood, a municipal corporation of the state of Florida ("City"), Marion County, a political subdivision of the state of Florida ("County"), and the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority, an independent special district of the State of Florida ("Authority"), collectively the "Parties" for consideration of a regional partnership on a water supply Project.

**WITNESSETH:**

WHEREAS, the Parties recognize the need for adequate, reliable and high-quality drinking water supplies to meet local and regional needs; and

WHEREAS, integrating local and regional supplies provides water system reliability and potential cost-savings benefits for both local and regional partners; and

WHEREAS, the Parties desire to work together to explore opportunities to partner on the Project for mutual benefit; and

WHEREAS, the City has installed two Lower Floridan aquifer wells in the northwest portion of the City's Utility Service Area (the Champagne Farm Wells) and desires for these wells to be used as a regional water supply source to be developed by the Authority for the future benefit of the City and the County; and



WHEREAS, the City has prepared the report entitled Champagne Farm Preliminary Design Report, prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., dated November 2012; and

WHEREAS, the City has conducted a pump test of the wells and demonstrated the wells are capable of producing approximately 10 million gallons per day (mgd), subject to all permitting requirements of government agencies having jurisdiction over the project; and

WHEREAS, the County has expressed an interest in these wells serving as a regional water supply source to help meet the County's future water supply needs; and

WHEREAS, the Authority has expressed an interest in being the responsible Party for developing future regional water supply from these wells for the benefit of the City, the County and potential other local water supply needs within the Authority's jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the Parties understand that furtherance of this Project will require development of a mutually acceptable Agreement between the Parties that will establish, among other obligations, quantities of water to be developed for each recipient, Project ownership, operations, timeframe and financial requirements; and

WHEREAS, the execution of this MOU is not a financial commitment on the part of any Party to design or develop the Project;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing, which shall be deemed an integral part of this MOU and of the mutual covenants contained herein, the Parties intend to pursue the following:

1. DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHAMPAGNE FARM LOWER FLORIDAN  
AQUIFER WELLS AS A POTABLE WATER SUPPLY SOURCE

The purpose of this MOU is to outline the intentions of the Parties to have the Authority assume responsibility for future water supply development from the Champagne Farm lower Floridan aquifer wells. The City and the County have expressed they do not need water supply from the Project at the current time. The City and the County anticipate that the need for water supply from the Project will occur no sooner than approximately ten (10) years from the date of this MOU, or the year 2023. However, nothing in this MOU prevents the Parties from entering into the Agreement and initiating the Project at an earlier or later date, as water supply needs may dictate. The Parties wish to enter into this MOU in an effort to plan for the long-term water supply needs of the City and the County. It is the intent of the Parties that as the need for Project water approaches and becomes more quantified, the Parties will, in anticipation of these needs, enter into an Agreement that further specifies all aspects of the Project, as described in section 3 below. Until the Parties enter into an agreement, the Champagne Farm Lower Floridan aquifer wells will remain the property of the City. Until that time, the City is responsible for maintaining the wells, the wellfield property and any associated existing easements in a manner that will allow for future development of the Project.

2. PROJECT ATTRIBUTES AND PROVISIONS

At a minimum the Project will include the infrastructure necessary to produce water from the two lower Floridan aquifer wells in quantities specified in the future by the City and the County, not to exceed the estimated well capacities or the amount that can be permitted by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). The

Project may entail delivering raw lower Floridan aquifer groundwater to the City and the County, or may include treatment to potable standards and other water quality criteria to be specified at the time of entering into a Project Agreement. The Project may also entail the pipeline, pumping and other infrastructure necessary to deliver the Project water to the City's and the County's utility system points of connection, to be specified at the time of entering into the Agreement.

It is the intent of the Parties that the Authority will own, operate and maintain the Project facilities. Ownership of the facilities will transfer from the City to the Authority at the time the Parties enter into the Agreement. It is anticipated payment from the Authority to the City for the existing Champagne Farm wells and associated land will be in the form of a credit to future water purchases. It will be the responsibility of the Authority to seek all necessary permits for the Project. The City and the County agree to cooperate with the Authority in applying for all necessary permits, including possible modification of the City's Water Use Permit issued by the SWFWMD if, at that time, the City's permit incorporates the Champagne Farm wells. The wells are currently permitted on the City's Water Use Permit for annual average daily withdrawals of 1.64 mgd. For the purpose of this MOU, it is assumed the maximum quantity available for the Project will be approximately equal to the quantity pumped during the City's pump test, or approximately 10 mgd. The Parties recognize that the total quantity of water available from the existing wells cannot be confirmed until an application is submitted to SWFWMD for a Water Use Permit. The City anticipates needing approximately 4.5 mgd from the Project in 10 years and 6 mgd in 20 years. The County anticipates needing

approximately 2 mgd in 10 years and 4 mgd in 20 years. These anticipated quantities are subject to change and further refinement as a part of the Project Agreement to be developed as outlined in section 3 below. The Authority will also seek grant dollars to support the Project, including cooperative funding from the SWFWMD and St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), and state and federal grants. All grant dollars received will apply to the Authority's cost of developing the Project and are intended to reduce the cost of Project water to the City, the County and any other Project water recipients.

The parties shall work to ensure that the Project as designed and developed meets the following general provisions:

2.1 Is consistent with the Authority's Regional Framework and most recent Water Supply Master Plan, including:

2.1.1 Is consistent with the long-term integration of water supplies from various sources, including the potential future integration of alternative water supplies;

2.1.2 Is financially feasible;

2.1.3 Provides long-term/permanent regional supply; and

2.1.4 Provides an environmental benefit.

2.2 Is consistent with the SWFWMD's applicable policies and plans, including:

2.2.1 Is consistent with the District's Strategic Plan for the Northern Region;

2.2.2 Supports/provides the development of alternative water supplies;

2.2.3 Provides/improves resource management opportunities; and

2.2.4 Is consistent with the SWFWMD's and SJRWMD's Cooperative Funding Policies.

### 3. DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECT AGREEMENT

The Parties shall develop a Project Agreement that defines each Party's participation and obligations in the Project. The Agreement shall be submitted for approval to the Parties' respective governing bodies, and shall, at a minimum, include the following:

- 3.1 Detailed Project description;
- 3.2 Project Location;
- 3.3 Identification of expected Project yield and phasing (if applicable);
- 3.4 Description of the obligations of each Party during design and construction phases;
- 3.5 Identification of Parties' real property ownership in the Project;
- 3.6 Identification of Parties' individual ownership in installed Project facilities;
- 3.7 Identification of water connection/delivery locations;
- 3.8 Identification of each Party's control of the installed Project facilities;
- 3.9 Parties' participation and responsibilities in obtaining and maintaining Environmental Permits and the acquisition of all transmission rights-of-way needed by the Parties;
- 3.10 Identification of each Party's responsibilities in Project facility operations and maintenance;

- 3.11 Identification of cost shares in the Project for each Party including capital costs, operational and maintenance costs, administrative costs, and methods of contributing each Party's share of the cost for the Project;
- 3.12 Each Party's anticipated quantity of water from the Project;
- 3.13 Minimum finished water quality requirements for delivery;
- 3.14 Project schedule;
- 3.15 Designated project contacts;
- 3.16 Amendments to the Agreement; and
- 3.17 Termination of the Agreement.

#### 4. AMENDMENTS

This MOU may be amended only in writing by the Parties.

#### 5. TIMEFRAME & TERMINATION

The MOU may be terminated at any time by any party upon 30 days prior written notice to the other Parties. Unless extended by mutual written consent of the Parties, this MOU will terminate automatically on September 30, 2028, or upon the execution of a Project Agreement by all respective governing bodies of the Parties, whichever date is earlier.

#### 6. PROJECT UNDERSTANDING

Execution of this MOU and development of a Project Agreement will not guarantee selection of the Project for regional partnership unless and until the Project Agreement is approved by the Parties' governing bodies.

7. CONTACTS

All correspondence and notifications relating to this MOU and/or the Project shall be made to the following:

**City of Wildwood**

Bill Ed Cannon, City Manager  
Bruce H. Phillips, PE, PLS, Utility Director  
100 N. Main Street  
Wildwood, FL 34785

**Marion County**

Attn: Lee Niblock, County Administrator  
Attn: Flip Mellinger, Director of Utilities  
Marion County  
601 SE 25th Avenue  
Ocala, FL 34471-2690

**Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority**

Mr. Richard Owen, Executive Director  
3600 W Sovereign Path  
Suite 228  
Lecanto, FL 34461

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this MOU for the purposes expressed.

CITY OF WILDWOOD, FLORIDA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ed Wolf, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Jacobs, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

---

Ashley Hunt, City Attorney  
City of Wildwood, Florida

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
MARION COUNTY, FLORIDA

---

Carl Zalak III, Chairman

ATTEST:

---

David R. Ellspermann, Clerk of the Circuit Court

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

---

Matthew Minter, County Attorney  
Marion County, Florida

WITHLACOOCHEE REGIONAL  
WATER SUPPLY AUTHORITY

---

Dennis Damato, Chairman

ATTEST:

---

Richard S. Owen, Executive Director



December 27, 2013 DRAFT

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

---

Larry Haag, General Counsel for the  
Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority

**Item 9.c.**  
**Interlocal Agreement**  
**Update**

**Item 9.c. Revised and Restated Interlocal Agreement Update . . . Richard S. Owen**

The WRWSA's Revised and Restated Interlocal Agreement was approved by the Hernando County and Sumter County boards of county commissioners in December. The Agreement is scheduled for approval by Marion County on January 7, and tentatively by Citrus County on January 14. Staff will provide a status report on approvals by the member governments.

**Staff Recommendation:** This item is for information only and no action is required.

**Item. 9.d.**  
**Correspondence**

**RECEIVED DEC 16 2013**

LAW OFFICES

**HAAG, HAAG & FRIEDRICH, P.A.**

452 PLEASANT GROVE ROAD  
INVERNESS, FLORIDA 34452

JEANNETTE M. HAAG\*\*  
JOHNNYE L. FRIEDRICH\*  
LARRY M. HAAG\*  
TANYA M. WILLIAMS

TELEPHONE: (352) 726-0901

FACSIMILE: (352) 726-3345

\*CERTIFIED CIRCUIT COURT MEDIATOR

\*BOARD CERTIFIED CITY, COUNTY AND  
LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL LAW

\*ADMITTED TO OKLAHOMA BAR

December 12, 2013

Purvis Gray and Company, LLP  
Certified Public Accountants  
443 E. College Ave.  
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Re: Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority  
Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 2013

Dear Sir or Madam:

I have been asked to advise you of the legal status of the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority with reference to any current, pending, or potential litigation claims or assessments as to the year ending September 30, 2013 and through the date of this letter.

For the fiscal year of October 1, 2012 through and including September 30, 2013, and through today's date, the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority was not involved in any litigation nor, to my knowledge, are there any pending or threatened litigation claims or assessments against the Authority. Additionally, from my knowledge of the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority, there exist no unasserted claims or assessments against same through the date of this correspondence.

This is to confirm that in the course of performing legal services to the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority, with respect to matters recognized to involve an unasserted possible claim or assessment that may call for a financial statement disclosure, I will so advise the Authority and your office and will additionally consult with all parties as to any questions when it is necessary.

Page 2 of 2 Pages  
Letter to Purvis Gray and Company  
Re: WRWSA  
December 12, 2013

Additionally, this is to acknowledge that if I form any professional conclusion which would, in my opinion, need to be disclosed as to certain possible claims and assessments, that I will do so and advise my client to that effect.

The Authority owed the amount of \$0 for professional services and expenses incurred up to and including September 30, 2013.

If you have further questions, please feel free to call.

Cordially,

HAAG, HAAG & FRIEDRICH, P.A.

By:   
LARRY M. HAAG

LMH/ss

cc: Richard S. Owen, Executive Director, WRWSA



November 25, 2013

Haag, Haag & Friedrich, P.A.  
Attn: Larry M. Haag  
452 Pleasant Grove Road  
Inverness, Florida 34452

Dear Mr. Haag,

Our auditors, Purvis, Gray and Company, LLP, are conducting an audit of our financial statements at September 30, 2013 and for the year then ended. This letter will serve as our consent for you to furnish to our auditors all the information requested herein. Accordingly, please provide to them the information requested below involving matters with respect to which you have been engaged and to which you have devoted substantive attention on behalf of Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (the Authority) in the form of legal consultation or representation.

Pending or Threatened Litigation, Claims, and Assessments (excluding unasserted claims and assessments)

Please prepare a description of all material pending or threatened litigation, claims, and assessments (excluding unasserted claims and assessments). Materiality for purposes of this letter includes items involving amounts exceeding \$5,000 individually or in the aggregate. The description of each matter should include:

- 1) the nature of the litigation;
- 2) the progress of the matter to date;
- 3) how management of the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority is responding or intends to respond to the litigation; e.g., to contest the case vigorously or to seek an out-of-court settlement; and
- 4) an evaluation of the likelihood of an unfavorable outcome and an estimate, if one can be made, of the amount or range of potential loss.

Also, please identify any pending or threatened litigation, claims, and assessments with respect to which you have been engaged but as to which you have not devoted substantive attention.

Unasserted Claims and Assessments

We have represented to our auditors that there are no unasserted possible claims or assessments that you have advised us are probable of assertion and must be disclosed in accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 62, Paragraph 100.

We understand that, whenever, in the course of performing legal services for us with respect to a matter recognized to involve an unasserted possible claim or assessment that may call for financial statement disclosure, if you have formed a professional conclusion that we should disclose or consider disclosure

concerning such possible claim or assessment, as a matter of professional responsibility to us, you will so advise us and will consult with us concerning the question of such disclosure and the applicable requirements of Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 62, Paragraph 100 (excerpts of which can be found in the ABA's *Auditor's Letter Handbook*). Please specifically confirm to our auditors that our understanding is correct.

Response

Your response should include matters that existed as of September 30, 2013, and during the period from that date to the effective date of your response. Please specify the date of your response if it is other than the date of reply.

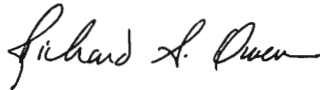
Please specifically identify the nature of, and reasons for, any limitations on your response.

Our auditors would appreciate receiving your reply by December 20, 2013, with a specified effective date as close as feasible to that date. We appreciate your timely response to such requests.

Other Matters

Please also indicate the amount we were indebted to you for services and expenses (billed and unbilled) on September 30, 2013.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard A. Owen".

Richard Owen, Executive Director  
WRWSA





## REQUIRED AUDITORS' COMMUNICATION LETTER

November 22, 2013

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

Pursuant to our engagement letter dated October 26, 2005, we are pleased to confirm our understanding of the services we are to provide Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (the Authority) for the year ended September 30, 2013. We will audit the financial statements of the business-type activities and the major fund, including the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the basic financial statements of the Authority as of and for the year ended September 30, 2013. Accounting standards generally accepted in the United States of America provide for certain required supplementary information (RSI), such as management's discussion and analysis (MD&A), to supplement the Authority's basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. As part of our engagement, we will apply certain limited procedures to the Authority's RSI in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. These limited procedures will consist of inquiries of management regarding the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We will not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance. The following RSI is required by generally accepted accounting principles and will be subjected to certain limited procedures, but will not be audited:

### ■ Management's Discussion and Analysis

#### Audit Objectives

The objective of our audit is the expression of opinions as to whether your basic financial statements are fairly presented, in all material respects, in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles and to report on the fairness of the supplementary information referred to in the second paragraph when considered in relation to the financial statements as a whole. Our audit will be conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards for financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and will include tests of the accounting records of the Authority and other procedures we consider necessary to enable us to express such opinions. We cannot provide assurance that unmodified opinions will be expressed. Circumstances may arise in which it is necessary for us to modify our opinions or add emphasis-of-matter or other-matter paragraphs. If our opinions on the financial statements are other than

#### Certified Public Accountants

P.O. Box 141270 • 222 N.E. 1st Street • Gainesville, Florida 32614-1270 • (352) 378-2461 • FAX (352) 378-2505  
Laurel Ridge Professional Center • 2347 S.E. 17th Street • Ocala, Florida 34471 • (352) 732-3872 • FAX (352) 732-0542  
443 East College Avenue • Tallahassee, Florida 32301 • (850) 224-7144 • FAX (850) 224-1762  
5001 Lakewood Ranch Blvd. N., Suite 101 • Sarasota, Florida 34240 • (941) 907-0350 • FAX (941) 907-0309  
MEMBERS OF AMERICAN AND FLORIDA INSTITUTES OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS  
MEMBER OF AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS PRIVATE COMPANIES AND S.E.C. PRACTICE SECTIONS

**Audit Objectives (Concluded)**

unmodified, we will discuss the reasons with you in advance. If, for any reason, we are unable to complete the audit or are unable to form or have not formed opinions, we may decline to express opinions or to issue a report as a result of this engagement.

We will also provide a report (that does not include an opinion) on internal control related to the financial statements and compliance with the provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a material effect on the financial statements as required by *Government Auditing Standards*. The reports on internal control and compliance will each include a paragraph that states that the purpose of the report is solely to describe the scope of testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance, and the result of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting or on compliance, and that the report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering internal control over financial reporting and compliance. The paragraph will also state that the report is not suitable for any other purpose. If during our audit we become aware that the Authority is subject to an audit requirement that is not encompassed in the terms of this engagement, we will communicate to management and those charged with governance that an audit in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards and the standards for financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* may not satisfy the relevant legal, regulatory, or contractual requirements.

**Management Responsibilities**

Management is responsible for the basic financial statements and all accompanying information as well as all representations contained therein. As part of the audit, we will assist with preparation of your financial statements and related notes. You will be required to acknowledge in the written representation letter our assistance with preparation of the financial statements and that you have reviewed and approved the financial statements and related notes prior to their issuance and have accepted responsibility for them. You agree to assume all management responsibilities for any nonaudit services we provide; oversee the services by designating an individual, preferably from senior management, who possesses suitable skill, knowledge, or experience; evaluate the adequacy and results of the services; and accept responsibility for them.

Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls, including evaluating and monitoring ongoing activities, to help ensure that appropriate goals and objectives are met; for the selection and application of accounting principles; and for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles.

Management is also responsible for making all financial records and related information available to us and for ensuring that management is reliable and financial information is reliable and properly recorded. You are also responsible for providing us with: (1) access to all information of which you are aware that is relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements; (2) additional information that we may request for the purpose of the audit; and (3) unrestricted access to persons within the government from whom we determine it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

Your responsibilities include adjusting the financial statements to correct material misstatements and for confirming to us in the written representation letter that the effects of any uncorrected misstatements aggregated by us during the current engagement and pertaining to the latest period presented are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole.

**Management Responsibilities (Concluded)**

You are responsible for the design and implementation of programs and controls to prevent and detect fraud, and for informing us about all known or suspected fraud affecting the government involving: (1) management; (2) employees who have significant roles in internal control; and (3) others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements. Your responsibilities include informing us of your knowledge of any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the government received in communications from employees, former employees, grantors, regulators, or others. In addition, you are responsible for identifying and ensuring that the entity complies with applicable laws, regulations, contracts, agreements, and grants for taking timely and appropriate steps to remedy any fraud, violations of contracts or grant agreements, or abuse that we may report.

Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining a process for tracking the status of audit findings and recommendations. Management is also responsible for identifying for us previous financial audits, attestation engagements, performance audits or other studies related to the objectives discussed in the Audit Objectives section of this letter. This responsibility includes relaying to us corrective actions taken to address significant findings and recommendations resulting from those audits, attestation engagements, performance audits, or other studies. You are also responsible for providing management's views on our current findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as well as your planned corrective actions, for the report, and for the timing and format for providing that information.

**Audit Procedures—General**

An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements; therefore, our audit will involve judgment about the number of transactions to be examined and the areas to be tested. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. We will plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable rather than absolute assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, whether from: (1) errors; (2) fraudulent financial reporting; (3) misappropriation of assets; or (4) violations of laws or governmental regulations that are attributable to the entity or to acts by management or employees acting on behalf of the entity. Because the determination of abuse is subjective, *Government Auditing Standards* do not expect auditors to provide reasonable assurance of detecting abuse.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, combined with the inherent limitations of internal control, and because we will not perform a detailed examination of all transactions, there is a risk that material misstatements may exist and not be detected by us, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards*. In addition, an audit is not designed to detect immaterial misstatements or violations of laws or governmental regulations that do not have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, we will inform the appropriate level of management of any material errors, any fraudulent financial reporting, or misappropriation of assets that come to our attention. We will also inform the appropriate level of management of any violations of laws or governmental regulations that come to our attention, unless clearly inconsequential. Our responsibility as auditors is limited to the period covered by our audit and does not extend to later periods for which we are not engaged as auditors.

**Audit Procedures—General (*Concluded*)**

Our procedures will include tests of documentary evidence supporting the transactions recorded in the accounts, and may include direct confirmation of receivables and certain other assets and liabilities by correspondence with selected individuals, funding sources, creditors, and financial institutions. We will request written representations from your attorneys as part of the engagement, and they may bill you for responding to this inquiry. At the conclusion of our audit, we will require certain written representations from you about the financial statements and related matters.

**Audit Procedures—Internal Control**

Our audit will include obtaining an understanding of the entity and its environment, including internal control, sufficient to assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements and to design the nature, timing, and extent of further audit procedures. Tests of controls may be performed to test the effectiveness of certain controls that we consider relevant to preventing and detecting errors and fraud that are material to the financial statements and to preventing and detecting misstatements resulting from illegal acts and other noncompliance matters that have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. Our tests, if performed, will be less in scope than would be necessary to render an opinion on internal control and, accordingly, no opinion will be expressed in our report on internal control issued pursuant to *Government Auditing Standards*.

An audit is not designed to provide assurance on internal control or to identify significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. However, during the audit, we will communicate to management and those charged with governance internal control related matters that are required to be communicated under American Institute of Certified Public Accountants professional standards and *Government Auditing Standards*.

**Audit Procedures—Compliance**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, we will perform tests of the Authority's compliance with the provisions of applicable laws, regulations, contracts, agreements, and grants. However, the objective of our audit will not be to provide an opinion on overall compliance and we will not express such an opinion in our report on compliance issued pursuant to *Government Auditing Standards*.

**Engagement Administration, Fees, and Other**

We understand that your employees will prepare all cash or other confirmations we request and will locate any documents selected by us for testing.

We will provide copies of our reports to oversight agencies; however, management is responsible for distribution of the reports and the financial statements. Unless restricted by law or regulation, or containing privileged and confidential information, copies of our reports are to be made available for public inspection.

The audit documentation for this engagement is the property of Purvis, Gray and Company, LLP and constitutes confidential information. However, pursuant to authority given by law or regulation, we may be requested to make certain audit documentation available to federal or state agencies providing direct or indirect funding, or the U.S. Government Accountability Office for purposes of a quality review of the audit, to resolve audit findings, or to carry out oversight responsibilities. We will notify you of any such request. If requested, access to such audit documentation will be provided under the supervision of Purvis, Gray and Company, LLP personnel. Furthermore, upon request, we may provide copies of selected audit documentation to the aforementioned parties. These parties may intend, or decide, to distribute the copies or information contained therein to others, including other governmental agencies.

Governing Board  
Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority  
Lecanto Government Building  
Lecanto, Florida

-5-

November 22, 2013

**Engagement Administration, Fees, and Other (Concluded)**

The audit documentation for this engagement will be retained for a minimum of five years after the report release date or for any additional period requested by a federal or state agency.

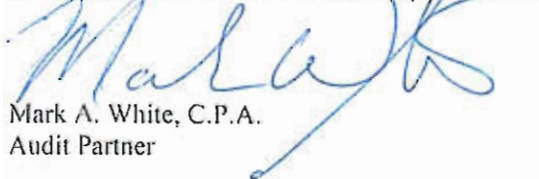
We expect to begin our audit in November 2013 and to issue our reports no later than December 31, 2013. I am the engagement partner and am responsible for supervising the engagement and signing the reports or authorizing another individual to sign them. Our fee for these services will be at our standard hourly rates plus out-of-pocket costs (such as report reproduction, word processing, postage, travel, copies, telephone, etc.) except that we agree that our gross fee, including expenses, will not exceed \$8,370. Our standard hourly rates vary according to the degree of responsibility involved and the experience level of the personnel assigned to your audit. Our invoices for these fees will be rendered each month as work progresses and are payable on presentation. The above fee is based on anticipated cooperation from your personnel and the assumption that unexpected circumstances will not be encountered during the audit. If significant additional time is necessary, we will discuss it with you and arrive at a new fee estimate before we incur the additional costs.

*Government Auditing Standards* require that we provide you with a copy of our most recent external peer review report and any subsequent reports received during the contract period. Accordingly, our 2013 peer review report accompanies this letter.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of service to the Authority and believe this letter accurately summarizes the significant terms of our engagement. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Very truly yours,

PURVIS, GRAY AND COMPANY, LLP

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark A. White', is written over the printed name and title.

Mark A. White, C.P.A.  
Audit Partner

Enclosure  
MAW/cjp



**Fowler, Holley, Rambo & Stalvey, P.C.**  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS  
BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

Curtis G. Fowler, CPA, PFS, CFP® Carlton W. Holley, CPA C. Wayne Rambo, CPA, CVA Richard A. Stalvey, CPA

3208 Wildwood Plantation Drive · Post Office Box 1887 · Valdosta, GA 31603-1887 · (229) 244-1559 · (800) 360-3123 · Fax (229) 245-7369

System Review Report

September 11, 2013

To the Partners of  
Purvis, Gray and Company, LLP  
and the National Peer Review Committee

We have reviewed the system of quality control for the accounting and auditing practice of Purvis, Gray and Company, LLP (the firm) in effect for the year ended May 31, 2013. Our peer review was conducted in accordance with the Standards for Performing and Reporting on Peer Reviews established by the Peer Review Board of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. As a part of our peer review, we considered reviews by regulatory entities, if applicable, in determining the nature and extent of our procedures. The firm is responsible for designing a system of quality control and complying with it to provide the firm with reasonable assurance of performing and reporting in conformity with applicable professional standards in all material respects. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the design of the system of quality control and the firm's compliance therewith based on our review. The nature, objectives, scope, limitations of, and the procedures performed in a System Review are described in the standards at [www.aicpa.org/prsummary](http://www.aicpa.org/prsummary).

As required by the standards, engagements selected for review included engagements performed under *Government Auditing Standards*, audits of employee benefit plans and an audit performed under FDICIA.

In our opinion, the system of quality control for the accounting and auditing practice of Purvis, Gray and Company, LLP in effect for the year ended May 31, 2013, **has been suitably designed** and complied with to provide the firm with reasonable assurance of performing and reporting in conformity with applicable professional standards in all material respects. Firms can receive a rating of *pass*, *pass with deficiency(ies)* or *fail*. Purvis, Gray and Company, LLP has received a peer review rating of *pass*.

Fowler, Holley, Rambo & Stalvey, P.C.  
Fowler, Holley, Rambo & Stalvey, P.C.

SERVING VALDOSTA AND SOUTH GEORGIA SINCE 1956

James E. Folsom, CPA R. Arden DeLoach, Jr., CPA B. Scott Taylor, CPA Robert D. Elliott, CPA Emily A. Browning, CPA, CFFA  
Dustin C. Wilkes, CPA Tiffany A. Craig, CPA Betsy C. Smith, CPA Joanna R. Jenkins, CPA

[www.valdostacpa.com](http://www.valdostacpa.com) · MEMBER OF AGN INTERNATIONAL





An Equal  
Opportunity  
Employer

# Southwest Florida Water Management District

2379 Broad Street, Brooksville, Florida 34604-6899

(352) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476 (FL only)

On the World Wide Web at [WaterMatters.org](http://WaterMatters.org)

**Bartow Service Office**  
170 Century Boulevard  
Bartow, Florida 33830-7700  
(863) 534-1448 or  
1-800-492-7862 (FL only)

**Sarasota Service Office**  
6750 Fruitville Road  
Sarasota, Florida 34240-9711  
(941) 377-3722 or  
1-800-320-3503 (FL only)

**Tampa Service Office**  
7601 U.S. 301 North (Fort King Highway)  
Tampa, Florida 33637-6759  
(813) 985-7481 or  
1-800-836-0797 (FL only)

**Carlos Beruff**  
Chair, Manatee

**Michael A. Babb**  
Vice Chair, Hillsborough

**Randall S. Maggard**  
Secretary, Pasco

**Jeffrey M. Adams**  
Treasurer, Pinellas

**Todd Pressman**  
Former Chair, Pinellas

**H. Paul Senft, Jr.**  
Former Chair, Polk

**Bryan K. Beswick**  
DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands

**Thomas E. Bronson**  
Hernando, Marion

**David W. Dunbar**  
Hillsborough, Pinellas

**Wendy Griffin**  
Hillsborough

**George W. Mann**  
Polk

**Vacant**  
Charlotte, Sarasota

**Vacant**  
Citrus, Lake, Levy, Sumter

**Robert R. Beltran, P.E.**  
Executive Director

November 22, 2013

Richard Owen, AICP  
Executive Director  
Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority  
3600 West Sovereign Path, Suite 228  
Lecanto, Florida, 34461

Subject: Master Regional Water Supply Plan Update Project No. (N438-3);  
Agreement No. 13C00000062

Dear Mr. Owen:

The Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority (Authority) entered into a cooperative funding agreement (agreement) with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) on March 4, 2013, to complete the subject project. The Notice to Proceed was issued March 5, 2013; and the agreement termination date is August 15, 2014. The scope of work for this project is described in Exhibit "A" and is divided into tasks to assist in monitoring progress. Each task is assigned a date for completion. If a project task cannot be completed by the scheduled date, paragraph 1.1 of the agreement gives instructions for revising the schedule.

The Authority has requested approval to extend the deadlines for completing the remaining tasks. The Authority has encountered an unforeseen delay due to complications in developing water conservation projections. This is the first revision to the Project Schedule. The current and the revised schedules are tabulated below.

Current and Revised Project Schedule, Exhibit "A"

Activity	Current Completion Date	Revised Completion Date
Commence Meetings with WRWSA TRC	February 28, 2013	No Change
Delivery of Draft RWSP Update Report	December 31, 2013	March 31, 2014
Final PROJECT Completion and Report Publication	March 31, 2014	July 1, 2014

Mr. Richard Owen, Executive Director

Subject: Master Regional Water Supply Plan Update Project No. (N438-3); Agreement No.  
13C00000062

Page 2

November 22, 2013

In accordance with paragraph 1.1 of the original agreement, and as the District's Contract Manager, I hereby approve the request from the Authority, dated November 22, 2013, to extend the deadlines for completing the tasks listed in Exhibit "A." Please note that the agreement termination date of August 15, 2014, has not been changed. If the project cannot be completed by the agreement termination date, it will be necessary to amend the agreement. If you have any questions, please contact Jay G. Hoecker at (352) 796-7211, extension 4388.

Sincerely,



Jay G. Hoecker  
Water Supply Specialist  
Water Supply Section  
Water Resources Bureau

JGH

Approved by:

  
Kenneth R. Herd, P.E., Bureau Chief  
Water Resources





## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Jay Hoecker, Water Supply Specialist  
**FROM:** Nancy H. Smith, Administrative Assistant  
**DATE:** November 22, 2013  
**SUBJECT:** Cooperative Funding Projects Update

---

The WRWSA has 3 ongoing cooperative funding projects: N278, Pilot Regional Irrigation System Evaluation Program; N491, Phase 2 Regional Irrigation System Evaluation Program; and N438-3, Regional Water Supply Plan Update.

### N278, Pilot Regional Irrigation System Evaluation Program

- This project is on schedule and nearing completion. The on-site evaluations are completed (230), the follow-up inspections are completed (89), and the customer satisfaction survey is completed (74). Water use data from the utilities is available for 134 accounts showing a savings of 56,288 gallons of water per day in the 1-year post irrigation system evaluation. The final report is due January 31, 2014.
- 

### N491, Phase 2 Regional Irrigation System Evaluation Program

- This project began in March 2013 with the first on-site evaluation completed in April 2013. To date, 57 single-family residential irrigation systems have been evaluated, or 14.8 percent of 384 possible evaluations. Contacts with high water users, all single-family residential accounts, continue to be made either by mail or phone contact.
- 

### N438-3, Regional Water Supply Plan Update

- The five-year update to the WRWSA Regional Water Supply Plan is well underway. Demand projections are complete. Evaluation of ground and surface water availability is 85% complete. Evaluation of water supply options is 63% complete. The project is several months behind the original milestone schedule due to delays

in executing the cooperative agreement between the District and the WRWSA and problems encountered with using the Conserve Florida model for estimating conservation savings potential. The University of Florida has delivered its first product for the model results and is finalizing a report documenting the model application and extrapolation. A request to extend the draft report due date to April 1, 2014 has been submitted.

**Item. 9.e.  
News Articles**

## Water district: Demand to exceed supply by 2035

By **Fred Hiers**

Staff writer

*Published: Friday, December 27, 2013 at 4:00 p.m.*

*Last Modified: Friday, December 27, 2013 at 4:00 p.m.*

There will not be enough groundwater to meet the predicted demand in the Marion County area of the St. Johns River Water Management District.

That was the conclusion of the district's proposed long-range plan to address water needs to 2035. It estimated Region 2, which includes east Marion and north Lake and Volusia counties, will see a 33 percent increase in population and a 31 percent hike in water demand.

The district's proposed plan predicts that by 2035, Region 2's groundwater demand will reach 212 million gallons per day and exceed available fresh groundwater by 64 million gallons per day.

As such, the water district will hold public meetings to seek input in January and February. The district also invites input through its website and makes the plan available at [floridaswater.com/DWSP2013](http://floridaswater.com/DWSP2013).

The grim Region 2 prediction is mirrored in the district's prediction for all the area it oversees, according to the plan.

The district's population is expected to increase by nearly 1.8 million people by 2035, and total water demand is expected to increase by 314 million gallons per day, or mgd.

The district in its preliminary report estimates the water demand in the St. Johns Water Management District will exceed groundwater availability by 256 million gallons per day. But the district is proposing conservation and alternative sources to make up for the difference.

"The plan provides water users with a clear plan to meet water-supply needs through the year 2035. Water conservation can partially offset the projected increase in water demand, and the plan identifies sufficient alternative water supply development options and management techniques to supply the needed water," the district noted in a news release.

In its water use plan released this month, the district noted water conservation alone could reduce 2035 water demand by 84 to 214 mgd depending on the level of implementation, but "a conservation-only strategy will not meet the 2035 projected increase in water demand."

Instead, the district will encourage such strategies as aquifer recharge and storage for

later use and adding fresh water to wetlands.

The district was created by the Florida Legislature as one of the state's water management districts in 1972. It oversees water resources in about 8 million acres — or about 21 percent of Florida's water and land area.

Region 2's water use has relied mostly on groundwater, said the district.

"(But) groundwater alone cannot supply the 2035 projected increase in water demand without unacceptable impacts to wetlands ... and spring flows," according to the district's plan.

The district estimates there is still 148 mgd of fresh groundwater available for sustainable withdrawals in Region 2. But the 2035 groundwater demand projection for Region 2 is 212 mgd, creating a 64 mgd shortfall.

The district thinks alternative supplies can make up the difference, including brackish groundwater from coastal areas and surface waters from the St. Johns and Ocklawaha rivers, as well as the desalination of saltwater.

Many environmentalists contend there is not nearly that amount of groundwater available, nor can the St. Johns and Ocklawaha safely provide the water the district wants.

Public input on the issue can be made online, by mail or email. Details are available on the web page. The comment period will close Feb. 20.

Public meetings and a technical-methods workshop will be held to discuss the plan and to obtain public input. The public meetings will include a presentation and district staff will be available to answer questions.

Contact Fred Hiers at 867-4157 or [fred.hiers@starbanner.com](mailto:fred.hiers@starbanner.com).

## Adena Springs Ranch gets more time to answer water district's request

By **Fred Hiers**  
Staff writer

*Published: Wednesday, December 25, 2013 at 7:43 p.m.*

*Last Modified: Wednesday, December 25, 2013 at 7:43 p.m.*

Adena Springs Ranch's request for permission to pump groundwater for its Marion County cattle operation and meat processing plant will enter its third year in the permitting process in 2014.

This month, the St. Johns River Water Management District granted Adena another extension in collecting information the district says it needs in deciding whether the ranch should be allowed to pump 5.3 million gallons of water per day for its Fort McCoy operation.

The ranch is being developed by Canadian-based billionaire Frank Stronach, who owns at least 30,000 acres of land in Marion County and more than 30,000 acres in Levy County.

Adena Springs Ranch now has until March 12, 2014, to give the district the information it wants or ask for another extension.

Adena's initial water request for 13.3 million gallons was submitted in December 2011. The withdrawal would have exceeded the amount all of Ocala is permitted to pump from the aquifer.

A year later, Adena reduced its request to 5.3 million gallons per day.

Many environmentalists and scientists have warned that allowing such a withdrawal would damage the springs in Marion County and dangerously reduce the groundwater level.

Under the permit request, Adena would still be allowed a potential maximum daily irrigation use of 21.57 mgd for its operation of more than 15,000 grass-fed cows.

If Adena supplies the district the information it wants, and staffers are satisfied, the staff would make a recommendation to the district board. The board would have 90 days to make a decision.

The board could approve or deny the request, or could approve the request but with a lower allocation, district spokeswoman Teresa Monson said.

Monson said the district's repeated requests for information, and Adena's requests for additional time to respond, are not unusual for a water request this size.

The district analyzes the effects of proposed water withdrawals using complex computer models.

Adena engineers predict their proposed withdrawal would lower the water level at Silver Springs in Marion County by no more than about 0.3 inches. Opponents argue, however, that the springs and river have already seen a reduction in flow of about 30 percent due to over withdrawal.

As for the new March deadline, Adena Springs Ranch spokeswoman Honey Rand said, "While it's true that longer processing time costs more, the more important question is, does the district have the information it needs to make a decision?"

"Adena Springs Ranch has fully cooperated with the district throughout the process, making modifications, improving operational systems and changing management tactics. The result will be a permit that protects the environment and still allows economic development," she added.

*Contact Fred Hiers at 867-4157.*



## DEP survey on permitting costs concerns environmentalists



Craig Pittman, Times Staff Writer

Wednesday, December 25, 2013 8:51pm

For four months, Florida's environmental regulators have been asking businesses and local governments how much their rules are costing.

The state Department of Environmental Protection has been sending out surveys asking questions like, "What kinds of costs did you incur applying for your industrial wastewater permit?" and, "Would you be required to incur the costs ... if not for the permit application and compliance requirements?"

"I've never seen a survey like this before," said Vicki Tschinkel, who ran the DEP's predecessor, the Department of Environmental Regulation, from 1981 to 1987 and now is on the board of 1,000 Friends of Florida.

Florida environmentalists are alarmed by the survey's focus on tabulating the cost of 15 permits that are supposed to protect the environment.

"It looks over the top, like they're saying, 'Give us reasons to reduce regulations in Florida,' " said Charles Lee, director of advocacy for Audubon Florida.

The survey says the DEP is asking these questions because the agency "wishes to better understand the economic impacts our regulations have on permit and license holders."

Actually, the goal is aimed more toward the future, explained DEP press secretary Patrick Gillespie. Under state law, he said, "any time any agency proposes a rule change, it has to calculate whether the proposed rule would have a cost attached to it."

But it can be hard to calculate the cost without knowing the price tag of the current rules, he said.

"The department sent out the survey to regulated businesses to try to collect data for any future proposed rule changes," Gillespie said.



A *Tampa Bay Times* request to see the results of the survey so far did not yield the names of respondents, but the DEP spreadsheet did show the numbers in various categories.

Since the surveys began going out in August, 72 responses have come back to the DEP. Twenty-five replies came from businesses, 14 from individuals, 17 from counties, seven from cities and nine from other government agencies.

Fifty of them reported that they had obtained permits from the DEP, 43 had gotten state permits from one of the five water management districts, and 16 had gotten permits from city or county governments.

Three types of permits were the most common: Eleven said they had gotten consumptive-use permits for pumping water from the aquifer; 23 said they had received environmental resource permits, issued for filling in wetlands or building docks; and 23 got permits for dealing with stormwater runoff.

Of the 11 that got consumptive-use permits, three identified themselves as power plant owners, and eight said they had spent more than \$10,000 fulfilling all the requirements for the permit.

Of the 23 that obtained an environmental resource permit, 17 said they had spent more than \$10,000 and five said they had spent more than \$5,000. A majority of those who responded to the survey said they wouldn't have spent that much money — on consultants, engineering, biological monitoring and other expenses — if it hadn't been for the permit.

The survey does not ask any questions about the results of those permits, prompting Lee to say, "It suggests a fixation on something that's not part of keeping Florida green."

*Craig Pittman can be reached at [craig@tampabay.com](mailto:craig@tampabay.com). Follow him on Twitter @craigtimes.*

DEP survey on permitting costs concerns environmentalists 12/25/13 [Last modified: Wednesday, December 25, 2013 8:48pm]

© 2013 Tampa Bay Times

Monday, December 23, 2013

FROM [THE NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA](#):

THE CAPITAL, TALLAHASSEE, December 18, 2013 A bipartisan group of senators is poised to introduce legislation to protect Florida's natural springs in what they expect to be the first in a series of measures aimed at improving lake, river and aquifer conditions statewide. Sen. David Simmons, R-Altamonte Springs, one of the authors of the pending legislation, said a focus of the measure would set goals for the reduction of nutrients that pour into the springs.

The proposal, still being finalized, comes as an equally ambitious proposal has already started to advance in the Senate that would focus on South Florida waterways and as the next House and Senate leaders have declared the state's water supply to be a key issue of their terms.

"I think it's a realization by senators, particularly the incoming leadership of the House and Senate, that our environment is a tremendous asset and one that is jeopardized right now," Simmons said. "Not to say we didn't realize it previously. I think everyone did. But the time to act is now. If we don't act now the cost of cleanup is going to far transcend the cost of prevention."

Simmons said the proposal will encourage the use of recycled water and water storage for farmers and developers, limit how much water can be withdrawn from the spring sheds, and create protection zones intended to reduce pollutants from entering the water bodies.

The funding needed and the revenue sources have yet to be set, Simmons said.

Audubon of Florida estimates that the work needed to increase the flow of water into the natural springs that run throughout central and northern Florida, while reducing pollutants entering the springs, could cost in the hundreds of millions of dollars. The biggest expense would be the need to purchase land around the springs.

Eric Draper, executive director of Audubon of Florida, called the growing attention from state lawmakers on the need to address water issues "exciting," but added that he's still waiting to see what measures are actually proposed.

"I think the test will be whether these legislators have the stomach to actually regulate the pollution that is going into the springs," Draper said. "The Legislature will eventually need to go to the source of the problem."

Draper considers land acquisition the top priority, followed by managing the recharge areas that ensure rainfall goes into the ground to help re-supply the springs.

Other key areas to address are the minimum flow levels that can determine if a spring is facing harm and the expensive proposition of replacing septic tanks with centralized sewage systems, Draper said.

Will Abberger, the chairman of the Florida's Water and Land Legacy constitutional amendment campaign and director of conservation finance for The Trust for Public Land, was equally hopeful that lawmakers will take meaningful action on water quality and quantity issues.

"I don't know what their motivation is, I hope they're beginning to understand what a huge need this is for the state," Abberger said.

Abberger's group is proposing a constitutional amendment that would funnel \$10 billion over 20 years into land-conservation and environmental efforts.

The pending springs legislation is the joint effort of Sens. Simmons, Charlie Dean, R-Inverness, Alan Hays, R-Umatilla, Wilton Simpson, R-Trilby, and Bill Montford, D-Tallahassee.

"We've sat down and have gone over it line by line, making sure everybody is satisfied with the language," Simmons said of the pending legislation.

Simpson on Monday introduced a separate measure (SB 536) that would require the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the five water-management districts to study the factors that prohibit or complicate the expansion of reclaimed — recycled or irrigation quality — water in Florida.

The study, which would be due before the 2016 legislative session, would also seek recommendations on how to eliminate those impediments.

The springs proposal is being floated as the next Senate president, Orlando Republican Andy Gardiner, pitched a "workable" statewide policy for protecting Florida's natural resources on Dec. 10 during his speech accepting the leadership position for the 2015 and 2016 sessions.

"We all know that Florida's economy is tied to tourism, but there is no reason why it can't be tied to ecotourism," Gardiner said.

Gardiner is expected to partner on water issues with Rep. Steve Crisafulli, R-Merritt Island, who is slated to become the next House Speaker. Crisafulli had earlier announced he wanted lawmakers to take a broader approach to the vast water problems that confront Florida.

The springs proposal will run alongside an ambitious \$220 million plan to redirect water and reduce pollutants out of Lake Okeechobee and through the Florida Everglades by Sen. Joe Negrón, R-Stuart, the chairman of the powerful Appropriations Committee.

Simmons said the springs proposal shouldn't conflict with Negrón's plan, which has already started to move through the Senate.

"We all benefit from Indian River Lagoon being cleaned up as well as the springs," Simmons said.

Because of the attention given to the problems confronted throughout the summer by South

Florida's waterways, Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam has said lawmakers needed to remain focused on water quality and quantity issues statewide.

Besides the springs and issues with Lake Okeechobee, Florida has filed a federal lawsuit against Georgia about a shortage of freshwater flowing into Apalachicola Bay. Florida argues that heavy water consumption in the metro Atlanta area has reduced downstream flows into the bay, endangering Apalachicola's oyster industry.

For the 2014 session, Putnam's department has proposed \$10 million to address nutrient reduction practices and water retention efforts in the Lake Okeechobee watershed, \$8.2 million for best management practices in the northern Everglades, and \$5.2 million to reduce agricultural nutrients from reaching the state's northern springs.

The Department of Environmental Protection, which has included \$15 million for springs restoration in its budget proposal, is also requesting \$75 million that Gov. Rick Scott proposed for Everglades restoration efforts and \$40 million for environmental land acquisition.

On Monday, December 23, 2013 8:24 AM, Diane Salz <[salz.govconsultant@gmail.com](mailto:salz.govconsultant@gmail.com)> wrote:

## **Controversial plan for pumping water from sinkhole gets state permit**

Tuesday, December 17, 2013 5:00pm

A controversial plan to pump water out of a Tampa sinkhole to supplement the flow of the Hills-borough River won unanimous support Tuesday from the Southwest Florida Water Management District board.

The city's \$11 million plan calls for pumping up to 2 million gallons a day from Blue Sink, a complex of sinkholes in Sulphur Springs, then piping that water to the base of the dam on the river and pouring it out.

The water from Blue Sink is supposed to help replace the river flow that was lost when the city built the dam in 1897 to create a reservoir that provides Tampa's drinking water. The restored freshwater flow will help hold the salinity of Tampa Bay in check, which is important for the health of the snook and other fish living there.

However, people who live around Blue Sink fear pumping water from the sinkholes will create even more sinkholes, not to mention draining their lakes and sucking their private wells dry.

"We're just concerned about what might happen," Jim Wilson of the North Forest Hills Neighborhood Association told the board of the agency commonly called Swiftmud.

Tampa Water Department chief Brad Baird said that the neighbors have nothing to worry about. He pointed out that the permit requires regular monitoring of Blue Sink, as well as a promise by the city to fix any problems that the pumping might cause.

The city's engineers, in their application for a 30-year pumping permit, estimated that at most the city would need to pump water from the sink just 287 to 318 days out of a year. Some years, Baird said, they might not need any water from the sink at all.

The city's studies say none of the 800 wells within a 1-mile radius "is expected to be significantly impacted" by that amount of pumping. At most they might drop two-tenths of a foot, the city's engineers predict.

But those conclusions are based on a pair of 30-day pumping tests and a computer model, and the neighbors are not buying the test results.

Hydrologists have repeatedly pointed out that the computer model commonly used for

Florida water permitting assumes that what is underground is sand. It's actually karst, a Swiss cheese arrangement of crumbling limestone, which alters both the speed and the direction of the flow of the aquifer.

Not all the neighbors felt the same way. Barbara Ewanowski, whose family has long owned Ewanowski Spring, pointed out that her spring provides the water that flows through Blue Sink. But since the sinkhole was plugged with trash and other debris, the water has repeatedly backed up and flooded her property, killing dozens of oak trees.

Pumping water out of Blue Sink would help restore her property, she said, so she's supporting the project.

So is Friends of the River, the group that has pushed hardest for restoring the Hillsborough's historic flow into Tampa Bay.

"I am confident the use of Blue Sink will not endanger the environment," John Ovink of the Friends of the River told the Swiftmud board.

Swiftmud is more than just the regulator issuing the permit for the Blue Sink pumping.

It's also Tampa's partner on the Blue Sink project, paying half of the tab. Swiftmud also happens to be the regulator that pushed for restoring the river's flow into Tampa Bay and is now overseeing how Tampa carries out that order.

Now that Swiftmud has approved the permit, construction is likely to begin next year and finish in 2015.

Controversial plan for pumping water from sinkhole gets state permit 12/17/13

[Last modified: Tuesday, December 17, 2013 11:26pm]

[© 2013 Tampa Bay Times](#)



**Subject:** Daily Commercial: SJRWMD allowing Niagra to draw from LFA...

**Date:** Monday, December 23, 2013 8:15:46 AM Eastern Standard Time

**From:** Diane Salz

**To:** WRWSA

**CC:**

## Water Management staff to recommend that Niagara be allowed to pump more

Posted: Wednesday, December 18, 2013 6:00 am

Roxanne Brown | Staff Writer [roxanne.brown@dailycommercial.com](mailto:roxanne.brown@dailycommercial.com) | [0 comments](#)

The St. Johns River Water Management staff will recommend that the district's Governing Board approve a 20-year permit for Niagara Bottling Company of Groveland at its Jan. 14 meeting.

The announcement by the water management staff Tuesday follows a move by Niagara to change its consumptive use permit (CUP) application, allowing the company to draw from the Lower Floridan aquifer for its water bottling operation.

By utilizing the Lower Floridan aquifer, and reducing its Upper Floridan withdrawal, the request meets one of the goals of the Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI.)

SJWMD staff have determined that the application meets District permitting criteria.

"On permits, we basically look at, 'Is it reasonably beneficial, is it in the public's best interest and will it not harm existing water users?'" Water Management Spokesman Hank Largin said. "Our staff says this application meets that criteria."

Niagara is asking to pump between 484,000 to 910,000 gallons per day (gpd). During the permitting process, Niagara said that by 2024, all 910,000 gpd would be withdrawn from the Lower Floridan aquifer.

The Lower Floridan aquifer is separated from the Upper Floridan aquifer and subsequently from the land surface by a semi-confining unit. Officials believe withdrawing from the lower aquifer creates less impact than the current permitted withdrawal from the Upper Floridan, Largin said in a press release.

"I know 910,000 gallons of water per day sounds like a huge amount of water, but it's not as large of an amount as some businesses that use water to produce a product to sell may be using. It's larger than some but not as large as others," Largin said.

"When Niagara first applied to pump 484,000 gallons per day, not all people agreed with decisions made to allow it. The administrative law judge was challenged in the decision and the courts ruled that the decision to allow the permit was the right one," Largin said. "People may want to consider that yes, water use is going up (not yet approved officially), but because they (Niagara) are going lower or deeper, the small impact that occurred from the original withdrawal per day usage will be even smaller."

"That's what Niagara said and our staff is agreeing with it."

Joe Kilsheimer, public relations consultant for Niagara, has provided documents showing that Niagara is one of seven bottled water operations permitted in the 18-county St. Johns River Water Management District.

Those seven bottled water companies are allocated a combined 2 million gallons a day from the Floridan aquifer,

less than three-tenth's of 1 percent of the water used in the district on a daily basis, according to district officials.

A list of the biggest potential users of permitted water from the Floridan aquifer in Lake County show that the city of Clermont is No. 1 since it is allowed to pump up to 2,887 million gallons per year. Clermont is followed by The Village Center Community Development District (up to 1,782 million gallons for public consumption and irrigation), the city of Tavares (up to 1,547 million gallons), the city of Fruitland Park (up to 445 million gallons) and the city of Mascotte (up to 444 million gallons.)

Next on the list are a half-dozen commercial water users with the potential to pump more than Niagara does now, Kilsheimer's information shows.



**Subject:** Hernando study shows filtering devices...

**Date:** Monday, December 23, 2013 8:11:03 AM Eastern Standard Time

**From:** Diane Salz

**To:** WRWSA

**CC:**

BROOKSVILLE — A months-long study of residents in southeastern Hernando County showed no significant differences in the level of arsenic in the bodies of people whose private wells are known to be contaminated with the element, but where faucets are equipped with filtering devices, compared with those whose wells contain safe levels of arsenic.

A report released by the Hernando County Health Department last week showed that urine samples collected from adults and children participating in the study showed only a marginal difference between the two groups. Further testing showed that 94.4 percent of the total arsenic levels likely came from a nontoxic organic source. Organic arsenic is typically found in food.

A total of 360 individuals from 166 households participated in the \$60,000 study, which was funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and authored by the Florida Department of Health Bureau of Epidemiology. Testing was done between April and July, and included homes where a point-of-use filter had been installed on the kitchen tap as well as homes where higher levels of arsenic are not found.

County environmental health manager Al Gray said the study helped his department learn how well filter systems protect the bodies of adults and children.

"The numbers show that they are definitely doing what they are designed to do," Gray said. "As long as people use them, it appears that the danger of arsenic contamination is minimal."

County health officials have long had concerns over high arsenic levels in groundwater in some rural areas where the chemical was once used as an agricultural pesticide. Tests conducted between 2007 and 2012 identified 312 Hernando properties where samples showed higher concentrations of the element than both the state and federal governments deem safe. As a result, those residences qualified for help from the state Department of Environmental Protection, which provided affected homes with a small filter that could be installed next to the kitchen sink to provide water for drinking and cooking.

Participants in the Health Department study were asked to provide regular urine samples to test for accumulated arsenic levels. In addition, they completed a questionnaire on individual daily water consumption and exposure patterns, dietary history and other possible sources of arsenic exposure.

Nearly 50 percent of the participants were from "control" households with well water that had arsenic levels below 8 micrograms per liter, while the other half were classified as "case" households with arsenic levels exceeding 10 micrograms per liter of water.

Gray said that Hernando County was selected to participate in the study because it is known to have a large number of wells with arsenic levels above the normal limit, and that the data collected will be used in a peer review study that will eventually be published.

Loqan Neill can be reached at [lnNeill@tampabay.com](mailto:lnNeill@tampabay.com) or (352) 848-1435.

**Subject:** Orlando Sentinel Editorial

**Date:** Sunday, December 22, 2013 11:33:42 AM Eastern Standard Time

**From:** Diane Salz

**To:** WRWSA

**CC:**

## Water problems demand action statewide: Editorial

December 22, 2013

After years of official neglect, Florida's precious but imperiled waterways are finally starting to draw the attention they badly need from the state's leaders. It's about time.

The two lawmakers in line to be Senate president and House speaker after the 2014 elections, both Central Florida Republicans, have declared that dealing with water problems will be among their priorities. State Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam has been active and outspoken on the issue, too.

But talk, as the saying goes, is cheap. The Legislature and Gov. [Rick Scott](#) will need to put some serious money and regulatory muscle into protecting and restoring Florida's waterways.

Those waterways are not only the source of the state's drinking water, but the lifeblood of its agricultural industry, the foundation of its rich and diverse ecosystems and wildlife, and a critical component of its tourism-driven economy. Florida has no future without clean water.

Federal and state lawmakers launched a multibillion-dollar effort years ago to restore the [Everglades](#), but other Florida waterways in distress — including the state's iconic natural springs and the [Indian River Lagoon](#) — demand action, too.

State lawmakers, until now, haven't been up to the challenge. Earlier this year, for example, they set aside only \$15.5 million for springs restoration in the \$74 billion state budget. And that was after the state's regional water-management districts estimated that \$120 million would be needed for the job.

The tide could be turning. Last month a state Senate committee recommended a \$220 million plan to rescue the Indian River Lagoon and other badly degraded waterways.

Now a bipartisan group of state senators, led by [Altamonte Springs](#) Republican [David Simmons](#), has drafted a comprehensive plan to restore and protect springs. Other lawmakers, including Orlando Democrats Darren Soto and Linda Stewart, also have been working on springs legislation.

Simmons' plan includes measures aimed at reducing pollution from fertilizer runoff from farms and lawns, and from septic tanks. It also includes provisions to increase water recycling and storage, and limit pumping. Such steps would address the two sides of the water problem in Florida: quality and quantity. Simmons says these efforts could be funded with a portion of documentary-stamp revenue, a \$2 billion-a-year pot of money.

Environmentalists are rightly skeptical of any plans from the Legislature. Lawmakers have underfunded efforts before, and been too timid in taking on polluters. They'll need to follow through this time with decisive, effective action.

The multibillion-dollar cost of restoring the Everglades is a stark lesson for lawmakers in the economics of neglecting

water problems. As expensive as steps to solve those problems might seem now, they'll be peanuts compared to the bill in the future if nothing is done.

Copyright © 2013, [Orlando Sentinel](#)

**Subject:** Herald-Tribune: FL's springs under siege

**Date:** Sunday, December 22, 2013 11:30:51 AM Eastern Standard Time

**From:** Diane Salz

**To:** WRWSA

**CC:**

## Florida's bubbling springs. Beautiful. Beloved. And under siege.

*Cindy Swirko, Halifax Media Group*

*Published: Sunday, December 22, 2013 at 1:00 a.m.*

On U.S. 27 in Lafayette County between Branford and Mayo, numerous signs point the way and the distance to Troy and Convict springs, two bubbling holes where the chilled water provides adventure for scuba divers and a refreshing dip for everyone.

That stretch of U.S. 27 is also dairy alley — Lafayette County is one of Florida's biggest milk producers. People making their way to the cavernous blue springs can see — and smell — brown goop shooting out of large, powerful sprinklers.

Scientists with the state Department of Environmental Protection, the Suwannee River Water Management District, the University of Florida and other agencies have blamed cow manure, the nutrient-rich waste, as a primary culprit, along with fertilizer overuse, in the degradation of the region's springs.

Springs and the aquifer from which their water boils up are under severe stress, and water experts say the consequences could be considerable to the economy, the cost of water and the health of springs that have been drawing humans to the natural fountains for eons.

Scientists say it is not too late. But the potential solutions are costly and politically difficult.

Read this special report at [fragilesprings.com](http://fragilesprings.com)

## Editorial: Ignoring the causes

*Published: Friday, December 20, 2013 at 6:01 a.m.*

*Last Modified: Wednesday, December 18, 2013 at 11:38 p.m.*

How many times do we Floridians have to be told what is ailing our spectacular freshwater springs? Frankly, it takes little more than a glance into any spring to identify the problems. The algae-covered bottom and the low water lines are telltale — and it is a story that is told over and over from Ichetucknee Springs to Manatee Springs to Silver Springs.

Nitrate pollution and overpumping are slowly but surely destroying our springs.

In this paper's series "Fragile Springs," virtually every article has identified nitrate pollution, sometimes 10 times normal levels, and declining spring flows, sometimes by up to half, as the primary causes of the degradation and diminishment of Florida's 700 natural springs.

Neither is a big revelation. Nitrate pollution and declining water flows have been cited by environmentalists and state water managers for years as detrimental to our springs' health. Yet the problems not only persist but worsen.

Springs degradation is inarguably a state crisis, yet our lawmakers in Tallahassee refuse to have serious discussions about saving our springs, let alone taking serious steps. Oh, there have been attempts to begin reversing the destructive practices that are destroying our springs, but they have been short-lived.

Former Sen. Lee Constantine pushed through legislation in 2010 that would have required Florida's 2.7 million septic tanks to undergo inspections to make sure they were working properly. But that bill was repealed just two years later under pressure from special-interest groups.

Even the original water management bill, passed in 1972, recognized that overpumping could imperil our springs and demanded that the water districts determine the minimum flows and levels of the state's waterways, including its springs, and monitor them. Now more than 40 years later, we still await that mandate to be carried out.

Water tables and water flows continue to fall. Nitrate and stormwater pollution continue to increase. Yet we see no concentrated efforts in the Legislature to curb the use of fertilizers for either agricultural or domestic use or stem continued expansion of septic tanks.

As for water flow, consumptive use permits not only are not being curbed, the administration of Gov. Rick Scott is working feverishly to make it even easier for large

water users to get and keep permits.

Maybe most inexplicable in the whole springs' crisis is that the people who live around and love Florida's springs not only are cognizant, but impassioned over these natural gems that are slowly dying, yet our government officials are not.

At some point the Florida Legislature has to make some tough decisions and enact some tough laws that will severely curb nitrate pollution and slow the drawdown of the aquifer if we are to save our springs. As State Sen. Charlie Dean of Inverness said recently, we have enough studies; we know what is killing our springs.

We can see it. Now it is time to do something substantive to save them.

*Copyright © 2013 Gainesville.com – All rights reserved. Restricted use only.*

Subject: Fw: NEW WATER PERMITTING PORTAL PROVIDES ONE-STOP ACCESS TO ALL WATER RESOURCE PERMITTING INFORMATION  
From: Diane Salz <[dialz@yahoo.com](mailto:dialz@yahoo.com)>  
Date: Tue, Dec 17, 2013 9:04 am  
To: Richard Owen <[richardowen@wrwsa.org](mailto:richardowen@wrwsa.org)>  
Cc: Nancy Smith <[nsmith@wrwsa.org](mailto:nsmith@wrwsa.org)>

On Tuesday, December 17, 2013 10:41 AM, Florida Department of Environmental Protection <[FloridaDEP@public.govdelivery.com](mailto:FloridaDEP@public.govdelivery.com)> wrote:



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Dec. 17, 2013

**CONTACT:** DEP Press Office, 850.245.2112, [DEPNews@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:DEPNews@dep.state.fl.us)

## **NEW WATER PERMITTING PORTAL PROVIDES ONE-STOP ACCESS TO ALL WATER RESOURCE PERMITTING INFORMATION**

*~Access and education key to helping Florida residents and businesses~*

**TALLAHASSEE** – The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, along with the state's five water management districts, recently launched [Florida's Water Permitting Portal](#). This portal provides information about all water resource permitting in Florida in one place. The agencies have integrated existing online services with the portal, providing one place for residents and businesses to go to determine what permits may be needed and from which agency. The website will continue to add new features to enhance and simplify online access and make the work more transparent.

Governor Rick Scott said, "Our number one priority is growing more jobs and opportunities for Florida families, and DEP's portal will help streamline the permitting process for businesses so we can create more jobs and be better stewards of our natural resources."

This new online system is an open door for residents, local governments and the private sector to find information and assistance from the Department and water management districts. The water permitting portal enables users to apply for commonly issued authorizations, permits, certifications and renewals, pay fees and submit monitoring reports and other compliance documentation. It's also a great place to get information about compliance and other water program information.

"The Department of Environmental Protection and the water management districts are focused on creating an effective regulatory process for all Florida citizens," said DEP Secretary Herschel T. Vinyard Jr. "Educating Floridians on the regulatory process is key to the success of these efforts."



The portal allows visitors to electronically apply for permits and other authorizations including:

- Environmental Resource Permits (and authorizations to use state-owned submerged lands, where applicable).
- Consumptive and Water Use Permits.
- Well Construction Permits.
- Works of the District Permits.

"By helping Florida's businesses and residents understand when and how to apply for permits, the Water Permitting Portal serves as a great tool for continually providing excellent customer service—which is an important priority of the District," said Jon Stevenson, Executive Director of the Northwest Florida Water Management District. "Through our continued focus on improving service and efficiencies, the District has reduced our processing time by more than 40 percent for consumptive use and 80 percent for environmental resource permits over the last two years."

"The website provides easy format for the public to determine basic permitting information," said Ann Shortelle, Executive Director of the Suwannee River Water Management District. "This website is very helpful and allows anyone with a computer to search a single website for consumptive use and environmental resource permit information."

"Online access to permitting provides an important benefit to citizens looking to manage different types of applications from the comfort of their business or home," said Robert Beltran, Executive Director for the Southwest Florida Water Management District. "It's important to provide citizens efficient and effective access to these services to make it easier for the public to interact with water management districts."

"The statewide E-permitting site makes accessing water resources permitting information far more convenient for the public," said Hans Tanzler III, Executive Director of the St. Johns River Water Management District. "This is one more step in our work to add transparency to our permits and data."

"The new permitting portal exemplifies our shared focus on excellent customer service," said Blake Guillory, Executive Director of the South Florida Water Management District. "It also supports the significant progress we've made in achieving statewide consistencies in the entire regulatory process. The process recognizes regional technical differences while streamlining and simplifying the administrative application and process."

This new service is provided in keeping with efforts to conduct more paperless business. Applicants are able to apply for permits by submitting the application and associated materials online instead of having to submit paper copies to the Department. This will save time and money for applicants as well as staff. In addition to eliminating the cost of printing and mailing permit application documents, application fees for online submittals are reduced, and are entirely eliminated for self-certifications.



## Editorials

### Putting water on the front burner

Published: December 15, 2013

It's too early to say whether the 2014 session of the Florida Legislature will be the "Year of Water," but momentum is building in that direction. And if correct policy decisions are made, the state will be in a stronger position to protect the environment, including Florida's wondrous natural springs, strengthen the economy, and bolster agriculture.

Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam recently noted that the environmental "devastation" on both sides of the state caused by the release of high volumes of polluted water from Lake Okeechobee this year has created "momentum" among lawmakers to fund water resource projects and discuss water policy next session.

In addition, Rep. Steve Crisafulli, R-Merritt Island, who has been chosen by colleagues to succeed House Speaker Will Weatherford of Wesley Chapel after the 2014 session, has said that water issues will be a top priority during his two-year term overseeing the House.

Putting water on the front burner is essential to Florida's future. Water shortages are common in the Tampa Bay area and other parts of the state, as are water use restrictions. And too often, piecemeal approaches are taken that fail to address the challenges the state has in meeting the water needs of the public, agricultural interests and businesses, especially in times of drought.

The Legislature hurt matters by gutting the state's Growth Management Act, which required a statewide planning perspective in addition to local and regional reviews.

This renewed attention to water issues comes as the state Senate considers a \$220 million plan to reduce pollution and redirect water in South Florida. But Crisafulli, in comments to reporters recently, was right to caution that officials shouldn't get "too laser-focused" on one region — that water issues need to be looked at "from the standpoint of the overall needs of the state."

Those needs, he noted, include agriculture, drinking water, cleaning up Florida's polluted natural springs, and helping the troubled Apalachicola River region.

Putnam also has stressed that other areas need help as well. "There is an extraordinary bias to the south at the expense of the springs and Apalachicola Bay," he said last month.

The South Florida water improvement plan includes \$20 million to clean up Indian River Lagoon, and proposals to clean water that flows into Lake Okeechobee from the Orlando area. Meanwhile, Putnam's proposed 2014 budget includes \$10 million to target "nutrient reduction practices" and \$5.2 million to address farming nutrient runoff into

freshwater springs in North Florida — a major problem.

The Department of Environmental Protection is requesting \$75 million for Everglades' restoration, \$15 million for springs cleanup and \$40 million to purchase environmental lands, among other projects.

Locally of note, Sen. Wilton Simpson, R-Trilby, whose businesses include a large chicken farming operation in east Pasco County, is drafting legislation calling for a comprehensive study on expanding “the beneficial use of reclaimed water, storm water and excess surface water ...”

The study would include evaluating the feasibility of building “regional storage features” on public or private land that could store such water for use in agricultural irrigation, public water supply and wetland restoration, among other uses.

Although building regional facilities may be cost prohibitive, it only makes sense to put to use the tens of millions of gallons of treated wastewater and other water that is dumped into Florida waters. Doing so could reduce groundwater pumping and greatly help farmers and ranchers.

Crisafulli also says the state needs to return to investing in local water projects — a worthwhile endeavor that was severely curtailed during the state's economic downturn. Alternative water supply projects in the Tampa Bay area have resulted in a huge decrease in groundwater pumping that had damaged the environment.

We cannot afford to return to the days of groundwater overpumping, which is why the state needs to help communities develop water projects. Nor should lawmakers fall for a water-supply scheme that surfaces every few years in Florida — tapping water-rich areas, such as North Florida, to satisfy the thirst of regions that have poorly managed growth. The local-sources first law must be followed.

This new emphasis on water issues and the environment will greatly benefit Florida. Though surrounded by water, Florida has major water challenges. Comprehensive water policies that include all facets of water use are needed instead of the reactionary approach of the past.

**Subject:** Fwd: Landmark Water Proposals Coming in 2014 Legislative Session  
**Date:** Friday, December 13, 2013 10:59:51 PM Eastern Standard Time  
**From:** Diane Salz  
**To:** WRWSA  
**CC:**

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Diane Salz <[salz.govconsultant@gmail.com](mailto:salz.govconsultant@gmail.com)>  
Date: Fri, Dec 13, 2013 at 10:58 PM  
Subject: Landmark Water Proposals Coming in 2014 Legislative Session  
To: Diane Salz <[disalz@yahoo.com](mailto:disalz@yahoo.com)>

12/13 Tallahassee Democrat

Florida lawmakers say they plan to take major steps to protect the state's springs and freshwater supply during the next legislative session.

In recent weeks, the incoming leaders of the state House and Senate have signaled that they intend to make water issues a priority when they take the helm after the 2014 elections.

But a bipartisan group of state senators plan to get started before then. They are working on a proposal to protect Florida's springs.

Sen. Bill Montford, D-Tallahassee, chairs the Senate Agriculture Committee and has been taking part in regular meetings with four Republican colleagues. He said they are working on "landmark" legislation intended to serve as "the opening play ... for a tremendous and significant approach to addressing water issues" over the next few years.

"I think you're going to see that this spring, this session, there is going to be a concerted effort to take a first major step in a comprehensive solution to preserving both quantity and quality of water resources in the state of Florida — something not only for our children but our children's children," said Sen. David Simmons, R-Altamonte Springs.

Simmons said Sen. Charlie Dean, R-Inverness, is the leader of the quintet, which also includes Sens. Wilton Simpson, R-Trilby, and Alan Hays, R-Umatilla. All three chair key committees overseeing environmental issues.

They are working on proposals intended to:

- Require regulators to create protection zones and curb pollution around the state's major springs.
- Limit water withdrawals that could harm flow levels in those springs.
- Encourage the use of reclaimed water and water-storage systems that would give businesses and farmers alternative water sources while reducing pumping from the aquifer.
- Ensure property owners are not stuck with the bills for connecting their homes to municipal sewer systems or cleaning up runoff from their septic tanks.

The legislation aims to attach deadlines to the state's water-quality and water-quantity requirements, make them stronger around dozens of Florida's most prized springs, and provide substantial state funding to help meet them, Simmons said.

He said the senators will likely revise their proposal as they hear from state agencies, local governments, industry groups and farmers. But he said he has advice for anyone who denies there's a problem: "Get a reality check. Go

down to one of our endangered springs and take a swim.”

“Doing nothing is not a solution, and that is unacceptable to us,” Simmons said. “Compromise is acceptable.”

Montford and Simmons said they hope to encourage those compromises by tackling a range of issues in a single bill, from water supplies to water-quality threats from septic tanks to wastewater treatment to agricultural runoff. By providing state funding, they intend to reduce, and in some cases eliminate, the costs to local governments, farmers and homeowners.

Eric Draper, the executive director of Audubon of Florida, said any effort to curb pollution affecting rivers and springs is going to face pushback from developers and agricultural interests. But with the economy rebounding and concerns about the health of Florida’s environment mounting across the state, he said he senses a growing appetite for springs legislation.

“I think we’re seeing the pendulum swinging back toward the legislators recognizing that Floridians want environmental protection,” he said.

Future legislative leaders have indicated they plan to wrestle with water-quality issues in the coming years. After his colleagues voted to designate him as the next Senate president, state Sen. Andy Gardiner, R-Orlando, said protecting the state’s natural resources, including water — and promoting them to boost tourism — would be one of his three main priorities leading the Senate.

His counterpart in the house, Rep. Steve Crisafulli, R-Merritt Island, has sent a similar message. In a recent newspaper guest column, he called for statewide water planning.

“If there’s one issue that I’ve identified, having the opportunity to become speaker (after the 2014 elections), this is the one,” he said.

Last session, lawmakers approved \$10 million for springs protection, and Environmental Protection Secretary Herschel Vinyard said the state was able to turn that into \$36 million in projects by working with local governments and water management districts.

Crisafulli said he expects the House to take a “project-based approach” in the upcoming session, and lay the groundwork for an overhaul of the state’s water policies in the years that follow, noting that lawmakers are not going to untangle Florida’s complex water issues in a single 60-day session.

Montford said he agrees it will take a multi-year effort.

“We did not get into the position we’re in overnight, and we will not get out overnight,” he said. “We’ll make a tremendous start on it this year.”

## St. Johns River again eyed as water source for Central Florida

By [Meredith Rutland](#) Wed, Dec 11, 2013 @ 7:15 pm | updated Thu, Dec 12, 2013 @ 7:59 am

A new plan to provide Central Florida with water for drinking and agriculture could tap into the St. Johns River, revamping a years-long debate about taking water from the river for city use.

**SEE ALSO: [Former St. Johns Riverkeeper named new Riverkeeper for St. Johns County's Matanzas River](#)**

Central Florida is growing faster than its water supply, the Floridan aquifer, can support. The area uses 800 million gallons a day, according to a 2010 estimate provided in a multi-agency water supply plan. However, it's estimated that by 2035, Central Florida will grow by 1.4 million people — a 49 percent jump to 4.1 million people — and will need 1.1 billion gallons a day of water to support residents, agriculture and the region's tourism industry.

The aquifer can't keep up with that growth, so the region's water management experts are looking at other options, including as much as 155 million gallons a day from the St. Johns River.

This isn't the first time the St. Johns River has been eyed for a large-scale water project.

In 2009, a collection of Central Florida cities proposed withdrawing 262 million gallons a day from the St. Johns and Ocklawaha rivers. That proposal was put on the back burner due to public pressure.

Now that the issue has cooled, river advocates are concerned large withdrawals could be possible.

The plan is still a draft and contains 139 suggestions for how to meet Central Florida's water needs. Most of the suggested options contain small solutions — between .01 million gallons a day and 10 million gallons a day. Only seven of the proposed plans could provide more than 10 million gallons of water a day.

Three of those involve the St. Johns River, but there isn't a guarantee all three, or even any of the three, of those options will be chosen, said Tom Bartol, assistant director of the Division of Regulatory, Engineering and Environmental Services for the St. Johns River Water Management District.

At this point, it's too soon to say which projects will be chosen as water supplies, said Mark Middlebrook, head of the St. Johns River Alliance. While that makes it difficult to determine the potential impact to the river, he said it's important to keep a close eye on the issue.

"They're still numbers that are going to make people in North Florida stand up and pay attention," he said.

If any of the suggestions involving the St. Johns River are chosen, the river would be impacted, said St. Johns Riverkeeper Lisa Rinaman.

Taking more water from the river could cause more toxic algae blooms because it would condense pollution, she said. It could also draw in more salt water from the neck of the river in Duval County which could kill sea grasses that filter out contaminants harmful to marine populations.

"It's a recipe for disaster when it comes to the St. Johns River," Rinaman said.

To meet Central Florida's water needs, the draft plan suggests taking a maximum of 155 million gallons of water a day from the river at several points, in addition to 36.55 million gallons a day currently being withdrawn from the river and connecting bodies of water.

A maximum of 50 million gallons a day could be taken from the Taylor Creek Reservoir in Cocoa and a nearby section of the St. Johns River. The plan estimates the amount will be closer to 42 million gallons a day.

Another 55 million gallons a day could be pulled from the St. Johns River near Florida 46 in Sanford.

A maximum of 50 million gallons a day could be taken from the river near Yankee Lake in Seminole County, with the estimate of use closer to 30 million gallons a day.

Right now, 27.75 million gallons a day are taken from the St. Johns River for five projects. Another project withdraws 8.8 million gallons a day from the Taylor Creek Reservoir, which holds excess flood water from the St. Johns River. The current withdrawals are used from Melbourne to DeLand for needs that range from consumption to watering for landscaping and golf courses.

A four-year-long study completed in 2012 found the St. Johns River can be used as an alternative water source without serious harm to the river. The St. Johns River Water Supply Impact Study stated the river could sustain removing up to 155 million gallons a day with minor effects, a conclusion the St. Johns Riverkeeper organization questioned.

Bartol said the more likely solution is that water management districts will focus on conserving water, which he estimated could add about 45 million gallons a day back into Central Florida's water supply. The various agencies will then choose suggested options to fill the remaining 255 million gallons a day needed.

The draft plan does not provide funding for the projects. That is handled by state and local governments, water management agencies and utility companies, said John Fitzgerald, North Florida Water Initiative Leader for the St. Johns Water Management District.

Rinaman said since most of the suggested options are for small amounts, she's concerned the projects involving the St. Johns River will be chosen because it provides the "bigger bang for their buck."

The project to take water from the river near the Taylor Creek Reservoir is expected to cost \$628.7 million. The project near Florida 46 is expected to cost \$548.26 million. The project near Yankee Lake is expected to cost between \$53.2 million and \$217.9 million, according to the Central Florida water supply draft plan.

Meredith Rutland: (904) 359-4161

## A Big Shift at the State's Water Management Districts

By Chris Curry

Halifax Media Services

**Published: Saturday, December 7, 2013 at 10:06 p.m.**

**Last Modified: Saturday, December 7, 2013 at 10:15 p.m.**

As springs across the region struggle with declining flow and rising pollution, environmental activists worry that they have no strong voice left on the water management district boards charged with protecting the state's springs, rivers, lakes and aquifer.

Groups such as the Florida Conservation Coalition, a partnership of several statewide environmental organizations, say they lost their last advocate in May, when Gov. Rick Scott decided not to reappoint Richard Hamann — a water and environmental law expert at the University of Florida and past president of the Florida Defenders of the Environment — to a second term on the board of the St. Johns River Water Management District.

Environmentalists say the state's five water management district boards are now stacked with representatives of industry and business and lack members with a primary focus on environmental protection.

They argue that the makeup of the water boards, along with the budget-slashing of Scott's first year in office and Tallahassee's ongoing process to "streamline" water withdrawal permitting across the state, combine to hamper springs protection efforts and weaken the water management districts.

Today, the composition of the district boards leans far more heavily toward business than 10 to 15 years ago, says Pat Harden, the vice president of the Howard T. Odum Springs Institute.

### **MORE BALANCED**

A member of the St. Johns board in the 1990s, Harden would be a rarity today — an environmental activist serving on a water management board.

A founding member of the environmental group Friends of the Wekiva River, which formed in the midst of Florida's growth boom to advocate for the protection of the river, Harden served on the St. Johns board from 1991 to 1999, including time as chairman.

"I think we had a more balanced board between people who worried about the environment and conservation and business and professionals," Harden, now a Gainesville resident, said.

The state Department of Environmental Protection "had oversight, but they let the boards do their work because the boards, by and large, had the staff with the expertise, and they knew the area."

The tilt toward business interests has picked up steam under Gov. Rick Scott, whose term has included new directors of all five water management districts and major staff changes in the leadership of the DEP, environmentalists say.

Water management district officials say that, whether they are affiliated with an environmental group or not, board members take protection of the resource seriously.

“When you speak to our board members, you will find that, while they are businessmen and women, they are good stewards of the environment. ... I think that just because someone is not president of an environmental group, it does not mean they are not an environmental steward,” Suwannee River Water Management District Executive Director Ann Shortelle said.

Hamann was appointed by former Gov. Charlie Crist in 2009.

In May 2011, he was the lone board member of the St. Johns board to vote against a 20-year permit for Jacksonville's utility that consolidated more than two dozen existing permits and eventually could allow groundwater pumping of as much as 162.5 million gallons per day.

That permit was approved over concerns that groundwater pumping in the Jacksonville area had contributed to historically low levels on the lakes in the Keystone Heights area as well as lower aquifer levels and river and spring flows in the Suwannee district's jurisdiction.

Hamann, a faculty member at the Levin College of Law Center for Government Responsibility, said even when he was not on the prevailing side of a vote, it was important to have the environmentalists' point of view represented on the board.

“I think there has been more representation from an environmental perspective in the past,” he said. “Even if you do not have a majority, I think it is good to have a voice in the discussions — and that is now lacking.”

In May, Scott gave Hamann's seat to Douglas Burnett, a consultant to defense contractors, retired major general with the Florida National Guard and a former commercial airline pilot.

Other members of the St. Johns board include the president of an Orlando environmental consulting firm for developers, the president of a transportation and civil engineering firm, a citrus industry representative, the president of a defense contractor consulting firm, the past president of a Jacksonville manufacturing industry association and executives with forestry and environmental engineering consulting firms.

Marion County's representative is Ocala attorney Fred Roberts Jr.

The Suwannee board includes a cattle rancher, farmers, a road builder, a real estate appraiser for an agricultural credit union, an engineer and land surveyor, an attorney and an accountant.

#### **DIVERSE GROUP**

Roberts, an Ocala native, said the St. Johns board reflects a variety of backgrounds and viewpoints.

“I feel we have a relatively diverse group from several different disciplines,” he said. “Me personally, I am a sixth-generation Floridian, and I certainly recognize first and foremost that water is a scarce resource that has to be protected. I grew up in Florida. I want to see my children grow up in Florida. I hope to see my



grandchildren grow up in Florida.

"It is critical that we protect such a valuable resource. But there must be a balance between protecting that resource and making good use of that resource," he said.

Merillee Malwitz-Jipson, president of the environmental group Our Santa Fe River, said what is lacking now on the Suwannee board is an advocate to say no to new permits to pump water as springs struggle with declining flow and rising pollution.

"I think it's heavily stacked toward agriculture and business," Malwitz-Jipson said of the Suwannee board. "They say we can't stop issuing permits because it's going to stop growth."

Malwitz-Jipson wants the Suwannee district to stop issuing permits until minimum flows and levels are set for the Lower Santa Fe and Ichetucknee rivers and several priority springs along the rivers, including Poe.

That argument to turn down permits until more work was done setting minimum flows also was made by the environmental group Save Our Suwannee and member of the Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District in late 2011, when the Suwannee board unanimously approved a series of groundwater pumping permits for dairy farms that totaled about 5.5 million gallons per day.

Still, an ongoing situation in the St. Johns district has stirred up some skepticism about the effect minimum flows will have on permitting and pumping.

In the Keystone Heights area, drying Lake Geneva, Lake Brooklyn and Cowpen Lake are all below adopted minimum flows and levels, and the St. Johns district is moving toward lowering the adopted levels, a process that's not yet final.

University of Florida political science assistant professor Katrina Schwartz, who teaches a course in the politics of water, said that while the state DEP always had oversight over the water management districts, Tallahassee has been more "heavy-handed" in recent years.

## **SLASHED BUDGETS**

In his first budget cycle after election, Scott slashed water management district budgets by a combined \$700 million in 2011, leading to hundreds of layoffs.

Some of the rule changes during his tenure largely restrict water management districts from reducing allowable permitted water withdrawal levels on a permit because of changes in the economy or population growth rates.

After the last legislative session, Scott signed into law a measure that forbids districts from reducing groundwater pumping of a utility that builds a desalination plant.

The state is in the process of putting in place uniform criteria that all water management districts need to follow when considering an application for a consumptive-use permit.

State Sen. David Simmons, R-Altamonte Springs, said the water management districts do not have the

funding or enforcement tools needed to make significant strides in saving the springs. Round after round of scientific studies, he said, were just delaying the necessary actions with “analysis paralysis.”

Simmons has drafted but not filed a bill that would identify 21 “outstanding” Florida springs that the state and water management districts have to protect. The bill, in its first draft, would tie not just water quantity but water quality to consumptive-use permitting. Districts could not issue new permits that reduce the flow of a spring or affect a spring polluted by nitrates. Tougher fertilizer regulations and wastewater treatment plant upgrades would be required. On lots one acre or smaller, homes on septic would, at no cost to a residential homeowner, have to hook up to municipal sewage.

The first draft of Simmons' bill was circulated for comments and received a letter of objection signed by 30 organizations over costs and other issues. The organizations included the Associated Industries of Florida, the Florida Cattlemen's Association, the Florida Chamber of Commerce, the Manufacturers Association of Florida and the Florida Rural Water Association.

Simmons said a second draft is being prepared.

“If we don't do it now, I think we will be so far behind, it will be many generations before we catch up, and it will be a lot of economic pain on all of us,” Simmons said.

“People come to Florida because of our pristine water. And if someone would suggest to you we are not degrading that water now, I would suggest that person needs a reality check.”

— *Chris Curry writes for The Gainesville Sun.*

**Subject:** Fwd: FL's Water Issues...by Pam McVety

**Date:** Friday, December 6, 2013 9:40:34 AM Eastern Standard Time

**From:** Diane Salz

**To:** WRWSA

**CC:**

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Diane Salz <[salz.govconsultant@gmail.com](mailto:salz.govconsultant@gmail.com)>

Date: Fri, Dec 6, 2013 at 9:39 AM

Subject: FL's Water Issues...by Pam McVety

To: Diane Salz <[disalz@yahoo.com](mailto:disalz@yahoo.com)>

Re: "We need commitment on Florida's water issues" (My View, Dec. 5).

I am pleased that Rep. Steve Crisafulli wants to lead on water issues, but dismayed that he is calling for the development of a state water policy. We have one. Check out Chapter 373 Florida Statutes and Chapter 62-40 Florida Administrative Code. Together they are our state water policy. It is one of the best in the nation, according to legal experts.

Yes, water management in Florida is a mess. Republicans have hired nonprofessionals and fired professional water managers, cut the water budget in the five water management districts, cut land acquisition, tried to weaken dredge-and-fill rules, and further politicized water management. I would say that it is a perfect storm of mismanagement that has helped fuel the current crisis. Mind you, the crisis has been building for decades because of population growth, but the good news is that the structure and law are in place to make sure water is properly managed. It just needs to be implemented properly, and that will take leadership and money.

We can get out of this mess, but our leaders need to consult the professionals who know what needs to be done. Here are a few that I recommend because they have much to offer:

Contact Jim Stevenson for springs. He chaired the two spring task forces that wrote excellent recommendations on what is needed to protect and restore our treasured springs. To understand how water law works, contact Richard Hamann, a lawyer at the University of Florida. He is a legal expert on Chapter 373 and a former board member of the St. Johns Water Management District.

For practical expertise on how a water management district should be run, contact Sonny Vergara. He was the executive director of the Southwest Florida Water Management District and the St. Johns River Water Management District, and general manager of the Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority. For what needs doing to restore the Everglades, contact Estus Whitfield, former environmental adviser to several governors and a leader on Everglades restoration.

No one knows more than Steve Leitman about the ACF conflict and how to resolve it. There also are plenty of staff in the DEP who know and understand water law and policy but do not feel that they can speak out. Consult them. Finally, read Tom Swihart's water blog. He has his finger on the pulse of water issues and its history.

These people and many other good professionals can help put water management on a sustainable course and get Florida out of its current water mess.

Two more points to those who want to solve our water mess: First we have a state water management plan. Use it and keep it updated. Second, natural systems also need water in the right amount at the right time, not just agriculture and the public for drinking. The needs of natural systems have to be met if Florida is to be a vital

productive state.

Our leaders shouldn't mess with water policy, because it is not broken. They should use it wisely and humbly acknowledge that those that came before them knew what they were doing.

Subject: Fwd: St. Johns River Water Management District Water News  
From: Diane Salz <[disalz@yahoo.com](mailto:disalz@yahoo.com)>  
Date: Tue, Dec 10, 2013 3:28 pm  
To: Richard Owen <[richardowen@wrwsa.org](mailto:richardowen@wrwsa.org)>  
Cc: Nancy Smith <[nsmith@wrwsa.org](mailto:nsmith@wrwsa.org)>

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Water News <[waternews@sjrwmd.com](mailto:waternews@sjrwmd.com)>  
Date: December 10, 2013 at 5:22:59 PM EST  
To: <[disalz@yahoo.com](mailto:disalz@yahoo.com)>  
Subject: St. Johns River Water Management District Water News

Email not displaying correctly? [Click to view online.](#)

## St. Johns River Water Management District Water News

News, meetings  
and notices

December 10, 2013

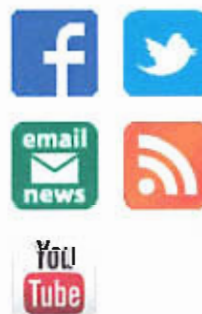
### District funds two additional cost-share projects to protect springs, reduce groundwater dependency

The St. Johns River Water Management District has added **two reclaimed water projects** to its \$22 million commitment for this fiscal year's cooperative funding projects. These new projects will provide springs protection and reduced groundwater dependency in central Florida.

Earlier this year, the District identified 22 projects for funding, representing nine counties and \$59 million in construction projects. The District's Governing Board announced on Dec. 10 that an additional \$800,000 was identified in the District's budget to allow the inclusion of a reuse project for the city of Ocala and a city of Winter Garden reclaimed water project expansion.

The Ocala project is an expansion of the city's existing reclaimed water system that will allow the delivery of 800,000 gallons per month of reuse water to two city parks for irrigation. The Winter Garden project will save 148,000 gallons of water per day by expanding the city's reclaimed water systems into three residential subdivisions.

#### Connect with us



#### Upcoming meetings

For a listing of upcoming meeting dates, times and locations, visit:

- [Governing Board meetings and agendas](#)
- [Other District meetings and notices](#)

#### Contacts

District staff contacts for:

- [Local governments](#)
- [Public and media](#)

[How to contact your local government](#)

## Process under way to set minimum flows and levels for Lower Ocklawaha River and six central Florida lakes

Also on Dec. 10, the District's Governing Board voted to begin the process to set minimum flows and levels (MFLs) for the [Lower Ocklawaha River and six lakes in Lake and Orange counties](#) to help prevent significant harm to those important water resources.

When the rulemaking is completed, MFLs would be established for the Lower Ocklawaha River at State Road 40 in Marion County and for lakes Apopka, Beauclair, Dora, Eustis, Griffin and Harris in the Upper Ocklawaha River chain.

Workshops will be held in 2014 to obtain public input. The public will also have opportunities to provide input throughout the process and when the Governing Board considers adopting the MFLs.

### About us

The St. Johns River Water Management District is a regional agency of the state of Florida whose mission is to protect and ensure the sustainable use of water resources. The District is responsible for managing groundwater and surface water resources in all or part of 18 counties in northeast and east-central Florida.

[floridaswater.com](http://floridaswater.com)

St. Johns River Water Management District  
P.O. Box 1429 • Palatka, FL 32178-1429

(800) 725-5922

© 2013 St. Johns River Water Management District

[Unsubscribe from this list.](#)

Florida Public Records Law Notice: Emails to and from 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.



Subject: Fw: Speaker Designate 2014-15 Steve Crisafulli on Water Issue  
From: Diane Salz <disalz@yahoo.com>  
Date: Thu, Dec 05, 2013 9:25 am  
To: Richard Owen <richardowen@wrwsa.org>  
Cc: Nancy Smith <nsmith@wrwsa.org>

Source: Tallahassee Democrat By: Steve Crisafulli

On Thursday, December 5, 2013 11:23 AM, Diane Salz <salz.govconsultant@gmail.com> wrote:

One of Florida's most precious resources is water. Our state is world renowned for our 1,200 miles of beaches, our springs and more than 7,700 large lakes.

Yet Florida's water supply is more than just a tourist attraction — it's also the heart of our agriculture industry and the source of drinking water we all depend upon to live our lives. Water is so essential to our existence, yet water policy is often overlooked or tackled in a parochial manner. Neither approach is right.

To ignore the growing demand for and the quality of our supply leaves our state incredibly vulnerable. Focusing on one community at a time in a piecemeal approach can lead to new problems in another down the road.

As an example, look no further than South Florida's recent challenges. This year, the region faced one of the rainiest summers on record. To reduce the chance of flooding, excess fresh water from Lake Okeechobee was pumped into South Florida estuaries. While this addressed the immediate problem of relieving pressure on the dike maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, it also upset fragile coastal ecosystems downstream and negatively impacted the local economies.

Rightly, local public officials at every level mobilized to address the problem. Many of the ideas that have come out of the task force spearheaded by state Sen. Joe Negron, R-Stuart, correctly consider the state as a whole and the connectivity of our waterways. But, with emotions high and attention so focused on one region, there is a need to guard against tunnel vision and focusing exclusively on one problem to the detriment of others.

It is why I am calling on policymakers on every level to embrace three principles as we look for water policy solutions and establish water funding priorities.

First, as we deliberate on water issues, we must do so through the lens of a comprehensive, statewide approach to protect the long-term health of Florida's water ecosystems. Water has no boundaries, and it is imperative that policymakers, opinion leaders and the public reject a limited parochial view.

There are issues across the state, from the Northern Indian River Lagoon, located in the legislative district I represent, to the Apalachicola River, to our freshwater springs, and I intend to see that each of them gets attention in Tallahassee.

Second, Florida's water management policy must be flexible so that water managers can adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. In a state that is annually in the path of hurricanes and tropical storms, where the average doorstep is only 100 feet above sea level, and where the decisions of neighboring states can harm our water supply, having an effective water management strategy is critical for our survival.

Third, we must attack our water needs with long-term and short-term strategies. Water management strategy is not enough. We must also continue to invest in proactive measures to effectively deal with our immediate water quality issues.

During the prolonged economic downturn, our state pulled back on funding local water projects. As the fiscal outlook improves, I believe it is critical that we re-engage our partnership with local governments to strategically invest in projects that will improve our overall water supply and quality, such as the Everglades restoration bill we passed this year.

The 2014 legislative session is approaching, and the Legislature must work with Gov. Rick Scott, Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam, Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Herschel Vinyard, and the water management districts to craft a smart, comprehensive water policy for our state.

As a growing population, weather events and even decisions by neighboring states strain our water resources, it is imperative we have a comprehensive plan in place to protect water quality and access for all Floridians, not just today, but for generations to come.

**Subject:** Fwd: Water - Resource Sustainability Requires Planning & Action  
**Date:** Thursday, December 5, 2013 2:39:32 PM Eastern Standard Time  
**From:** Diane Salz  
**To:** WRWSA  
**CC:**

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Diane Salz <[salz.govconsultant@gmail.com](mailto:salz.govconsultant@gmail.com)>  
Date: Thu, Dec 5, 2013 at 2:39 PM  
Subject: Water - Resource Sustainability Requires Planning & Action  
To: Diane Salz <[disalz@yahoo.com](mailto:disalz@yahoo.com)>

Bright Ideas for Florida in 2014

From: Gainesville Sun  
Editorial

## Water - Resource sustainability requires planning and action

12/5/2013

Florida's population is predicted to break 20 million by the end of 2015. Nowhere will the strain on the state's natural resources be more pronounced than on its water supply, making 2014 a good year to start managing water resources more assertively.

Some Florida communities have taken noteworthy steps toward water sustainability. When Gainesville Regional Utilities, which serves the city and surrounding area, began seeking a 20-year groundwater pumping permit from the St. Johns River Water Management District last year, it decided it would ask to withdraw no more water than it is allowed to take now — saying essentially it can accommodate an expected 24% increase in customers over the next 20 years with conservation measures and increased use of reclaimed water. The Gainesville region has a strong, well-planned growth agenda, so its approach isn't some tree-hugger anti-business tactic.

A number of regions in Florida, including central Florida, have overdrawn their groundwater accounts, with additional pumping from aquifers likely to cause major environmental harm. Already, groundwater pumping and pollution have done significant damage to Florida's springs — environmental jewels with economic heft as major tourist attractions.

Short-term, the state's water management districts would do well to turn Gainesville's approach into policy and begin to manage water resources in the black, allowing no net increase in groundwater pumping as they renew consumptive use permits by utilities, businesses, farms and others.

Longer term, the state may want to review a measure advocated in 1989 by a task force-type group, the Water Resource Commission, convened by Gov. Bob Martinez. That group recommended collecting a fee from all users based on water used, with credits given for aquifer recharge, use of reclaimed water, reverse osmosis and other technologies. Funds from the fee were to go into development of alternative sources of water, reuse systems, protection of recharge areas and incentives for conservation. Agriculture and utilities don't like the idea, but there are many ways to structure fees to be fair.

The state needs to act. As Florida sues Georgia for consuming river water, including water from the Apalachee River,



that our state needs for the shellfish beds in Appalachicola Bay and the Gulf, there's no small awkwardness in the fact that in the last decade, the metro Atlanta region has marshaled a large group of water agencies and local governments behind water conservation efforts that now include a rainwater harvesting program. Per-capita usage in the Atlanta region fell 15% from 2006 to 2009 while the population has increased 6%.

Florida's beef with Atlanta is real, but so is our own failure so far to aggressively take the kind of steps we need to in our own back yard

# NEWS SERVICE FLORIDA



## NEXT HOUSE SPEAKER WANTS STATEWIDE WATER PLANNING

By JIM TURNER

THE NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA

Contact [news@newsserviceflorida.com](mailto:news@newsserviceflorida.com)

THE CAPITAL, TALLAHASSEE, December 2, 2013 .....

As the Senate pursues an ambitious \$220 million plan to redirect water and reduce pollutants in South Florida, the next House speaker wants lawmakers to consider a broader approach to the vast water problems confronting the entire state.

Rep. Steve Crisafulli, R-Merritt Island, wants lawmakers to factor in water issues faced by the agriculture industry and drinking-water sources, as well as problems facing Florida's freshwater springs, the Apalachicola River region in Florida's Panhandle and the northern Indian River Lagoon, as they prepare to allocate money for water-resource projects in next year's budget. "The water issues need to be approached in a comprehensive fashion," Crisafulli said Monday. "It's important we don't get too laser-focused on one region of the state, but look at it from the standpoint of the overall needs of the state."

The directive from Crisafulli, who is in line to become House speaker in November 2014, sets up expected political horse-trading over funding for water issues between the House and Senate at a time when the Legislature has the prospects of a budget surplus entering the session.

The Senate plan was crafted by Sen. Joe Negrón, R-Stuart, who chairs the budget-writing Appropriations Committee. Negrón's plan was initially conceived with a focus on improving water quality in the St. Lucie estuary, which during the summer was inundated with nutrient-heavy waters released from nearby Lake Okeechobee under the direction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. As the plan advanced out of Negrón's Select Committee on Indian River Lagoon and Lake Okeechobee Basin, it included proposals by Gov. Rick Scott to increase the flow of water to the south, and by Senate Majority Leader Lizbeth Benacquisto, R-Ft. Myers, to assist the Caloosahatchee Estuary on the west side of the state.

"It's exciting to see state leaders competing over who will do the most for the environment," said Eric Draper, executive director of Audubon of Florida. "This is something we haven't seen in a long time." Draper, who has complimented Negrón for being able to quickly put together a plan, agreed Monday with most of the general approach pitched by Crisafulli.

Negrón said doesn't believe a proposed statewide approach will impact the Lake Okeechobee and Everglades improvement plan. "The more focus we have on water

policies the better," Negron said. "We can do more than one thing at one time." Negron noted that more than \$10 million was budgeted for freshwater springs in the 2013 session and he expects more will be done next year. Also, the South Florida plan includes proposals to clean water that enters the lake from the Orlando region and \$20 million to remove muck from the northern Indian River Lagoon that stretches into Crisafulli's area of the Space Coast.

Crisafulli's general proposal is intended to "reject a limited parochial view" and provide flexible policies that water managers can adapt to rapidly changing circumstances that range from the pending impact of hurricanes to decisions of neighboring states on Florida's water supply. Crisafulli said putting a premium on water issues that benefit the state will be a priority of his term as House speaker.

In an opinion piece for the Orlando Sentinel on Sunday, Crisafulli wrote that "focusing on one community at a time in a piecemeal approach can lead to new problems down the road." His focus will be primarily getting "tangible" projects in place rather than instituting new policies.

Crisafulli's comments echo sentiments from Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam that lawmakers need to remember that South Florida isn't the only part of the state where water quality and quantity have become dire issues. "There is an extraordinary bias to the south at the expense of the springs and Apalachicola Bay," Putnam told reporters on Nov. 18.

Florida has filed a federal lawsuit against Georgia about a shortage of freshwater flowing into Apalachicola Bay. Florida argues that heavy water consumption in the metro Atlanta area has reduced downstream flows into the bay, endangering Apalachicola's oyster industry.

The budget proposal from Putnam's department for the 2014 session includes \$10 million to address nutrient reduction practices and water retention efforts in the Lake Okeechobee watershed, \$8.2 million for best management practices in the northern Everglades, and \$5.2 million to reduce agricultural nutrients from reaching the state's northern freshwater springs.

The Department of Environmental Protection has included in its budget proposals \$75 million that Gov. Rick Scott proposed for Everglades restoration efforts, \$40 million for environmental land acquisition, and \$15 million for springs restoration, up from the \$10 million designated during the 2013 session.

The proposals are being considered by Scott, who will offer a budget plan before the 2014 legislative session. The governor has a couple of items among Negron's list, including \$90 million that would be spread over three years to bridge a 2.6-mile section of the Tamiami Trail west of Miami.

Other provisions in the Senate plan include \$40 million to speed construction of the state's portion of a C-44 reservoir and stormwater treatment area for the Indian River Lagoon-South Restoration Project; \$32 million for projects tied to ensuring that all surface-water discharges into the Everglades Protection Area meet water quality standards; and a request for the Army Corps to give DEP authority to regulate releases when the risk of dike failure around Lake Okeechobee is less than 10 percent. -END-

## Fragile Springs

### Diving into history of Florida's springs

*By Bill Thompson*

*Halifax Media Services*

*Published: Sunday, December 1, 2013 at 8:33 p.m.*

Throughout this year, the state of Florida has been celebrating the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Juan Ponce de Leon, the Spanish explorer credited with discovering and christening the state.

While the myth that de Leon's quest was tied to the hunt for a fountain of youth has been thoroughly debunked, the myth endures, with Florida's history closely associated with the history and usage of its unique springs.

Harley Means, assistant state geologist for the Florida Geological Survey's geological investigative section, said most Florida springs developed 20 million to 25 million years ago.

They are, essentially, large sinkholes.

Millions of years ago, once the seas had sufficiently receded to expose the Florida peninsula to rainfall, the slightly acidic rainwater ate away at the limestone landscape, Means said.

The voids created by that action subsequently reached a depth where the groundwater beneath pushed through the Earth's surface.

Almost all of the state's springs are located north of Interstate 4, Means said, because that part of Florida is richest in the karst terrain that holds limestone.

And the history of the springs continues to evolve, Means noted.

Much like new sinkholes continue to open, the chasms from which existing springs sprang continue to grow with each new rain.

"It's imperceptible on a human scale," Means said, "but in geologic time, it's a constant process."

What also has been constant, for at least the past 12,000 years, is human reliance on the springs, said Scott Mitchell, executive director of the Silver River Museum in Silver Springs.

#### **'MAGNETS FOR HUMANS'**

Archaeologists have uncovered tools and weapons around springs across North Florida that date to the end of the last Ice Age, he said.

"As long as there have been people in Florida, they've been hanging around the springs," Mitchell said.

"Springs have always been magnets for human habitation. If you live out in the woods and have to make a living, they are the place to be."

Freshwater springs, he pointed out, were not just a source of water for the earliest Floridians, but also food and transportation.

Besides tools, weapons and pottery, scientists have found remains of turtles, alligators, white-tail deer, otters and other critters that pre-historic people captured and ate as the animals ventured near the water, Mitchell said.

And in a distant age when wetlands were a lot wetter, Native Americans in dug-out canoes could travel far from home by launching from a springhead, Mitchell noted.

“From Silver Springs you could float down to Orlando or up to Jacksonville, and never have to get out of the boat,” he said.

The arrival of the Spaniards continued the process. Mitchell said 16th-century Spanish missionaries following in de Leon’s wake migrated to the areas inhabited by the Native Americans for the same reasons the Indians lived there.

Dale Cox, a retired journalist writing at the website [exploresouthernhistory.com](http://exploresouthernhistory.com), notes that the most significant historical feature at Ichetucknee Springs, for example, is the Mission San Martin de Timucua, founded in 1608.

That mission, Cox writes, like others in Florida, was home to Catholic friars sent to convert Native Americans to Christianity. The site included a church, cemetery and a home for the priest.

“Springs were very clearly draws for early settlers and explorers,” Cox said in an email. “Almost all Florida springs, including Silver there in Ocala, are associated with a wide variety of prehistoric and historic sites.”

## **'BOWLS OF LIQUID LIGHT'**

The march of time, and of new settlers to the Sunshine State, eventually meant tourists.

And springs were — and still are — a key destination.

Silver Springs is often credited as Florida's first major tourist attraction, drawing as many as 50,000 visitors a year by the 1870s.

The journalist Edward King, who in 1874 published an account of his tour through the defeated Confederacy, called attention to Silver Springs during a steamboat journey down the Ocklawaha River.

“Silver Springs is certainly one of the wonders of the world,” King wrote. “The tradition that it is the 'Fountain of Youth,' of which the aborigines spoke so enthusiastically to Ponce de Leon, seems firmly founded.”

The city of White Springs, however, disputes Silver Springs' claim to be Florida's first tourist trap.

The Library of Congress has in its collection a picture of a four-story bathhouse built in the early 20th century around White Springs, in Hamilton County near the Georgia state line.

The caption for the artwork recalls that the spring was “recognized for its medicinal qualities by Indians, settlers and subsequent developers of this locale.” The building featured examination and treatment rooms, a concessions area and dressing rooms.

On its website, the city of White Springs maintains that the “healing powers” of the spring water, which was bordered by rocks covered with sulfur crystals, attracted visitors from as far away as

Philadelphia as early as 1832.

That, in essence, made White Springs the first tourist destination in Florida, city officials claim.

Today, White Springs is more renowned as the home of the Stephen Foster Memorial Museum and the annual Florida Folk Festival. That's because the springs went dry in 1990.

Today, although tourists — divers, canoeists, swimmers and tubers — are still a key audience, it is the state of Florida that's doing the beckoning.

Many of Florida's best known springs — including in this region Blue, DeLeon, Rainbow, Ichetucknee, Manatee and Peacock — are in state hands, incorporated into the state park system.

The state has been acquiring them since 1949 and now owns 17 major springs, the Tampa Bay Times reported last year.

Silver Springs joined them as part of the park system on Oct. 1.

Florida's environmental regulators are doing so because the future of the state's springs does not appear as glorious as their past.

Pumping to feed a thirsty populace has depleted the flow of many springs, while pollution has robbed them of their clarity.

In 2000, a special task force appointed by then-Gov. Jeb Bush noted that threatened springs were places where children were baptized, where towns were born and tourists came for healing.

Preserving them was vital for ecological and economic reasons, the panel concluded, in recommending a series of steps to reverse their decline.

"Each is a special place to someone, and each has a story," the report said of Florida's springs. "The implementation of the recommendations contained in this report will help ensure that Florida's 'bowls of liquid light' will sparkle for the grandchildren of the children who play in Florida's springs today."

*Bill Thompson writes for the Gainesville Sun. Read more about the series at [fragilesprings.com](http://fragilesprings.com).*

**Subject:** Fwd: Beruff won't finish term on SWFWMD board  
**From:** Diane Salz <salz.govconsultant@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Mon, Nov 25, 2013 8:36 am  
**To:** WRWSA <richardowen@wrwsa.org>  
**Cc:** "<nsmith@wrwsa.org>" <nsmith@wrwsa.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Diane Salz <salz.govconsultant@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Mon, Nov 25, 2013 at 10:35 AM  
**Subject:** Beruff won't finish term on SWFWMD board  
**To:** Diane Salz <disalz@yahoo.com>

## Beruff won't finish term on water board

By [Jeremy Wallace](#), Herald-Tribune

Manatee County developer Carlos Beruff told the Lakewood Ranch Republican Club on Friday that he expects to cut short his tenure on the [Southwest Florida Water Management District Board](#), which oversees regional water policy.

Beruff was appointed for a term that runs until March 1, 2017. In May he was elected to a 1-year term as the 13-member board's chairman.

But Beruff told 30 people at a lunch meeting on Friday that when his tenure as chairman of the water district ends, he's intends to resign from the board, feeling he's accomplished what he set out to do - which is bring a business approach to the agency's spending.

Beruff pushed back at the criticism that he got on the board to help him with his development projects. He said if anything he feels SWFMD officials have been tougher on him because they want to avoid any appearance of looking like he is getting special treatment.

Beruff used most of his hour-long presentation at the Republican Club meeting to highlight the reforms he's pursued since he was appointed to SWFMD in July 2009 by then Gov. Charlie Crist.

When he first got there, Beruff said the agency had almost 900 employees. Even though the state was in a recession and permit requests were way down, Beruff said the agency was spending money and hiring employees like the economy was booming. He said as a businessman that didn't make any sense to him.

"Even though permits were dropping, they were still hiring staff and not cutting any overhead," Beruff said.

But during the last four years, the agency has slashed budgets, reduced staff and changed leadership. The agency now has less than 600 employees.

While some critics argue that has all made the agency less capable of enforcing environmental rules to protect water resources, Beruff said the agency is providing services even better than it was before and is managing taxpayer dollars better.

The SWFMD board is one of just three boards Beruff serves on. He is also a member of the State College of Florida board of trustees and the Sarasota-Bradenton Airport Authority.

Beruff told the Republican club that his message to any group he talks to now is more of a public service message to convince more regular people to join boards and commissions to bring fresh eyes to agencies that can be otherwise be slow to change. When he first was getting involved he did so because he wanted to find out how tax dollars are really being handled by the government, he said..

"Is there as much waste in government as I think there is?" Beruff said of his motivation.

Beruff said despite what some critics say he's not into joining the boards just for a title or perceived power. Beruff said he only wants to be on the boards and commissions if there is something that really needs to be done. He said he doesn't want to be just sitting in some meeting to hold a title.

"I don't want a badge, I want to do something," Beruff said in an interview after the meeting.

Asked about the problems Florida's open government laws present for public officials by someone in the audience, Beruff said he's fully supportive of the laws and says there should be transparency in government.

"The good outweighs the bad by a thousand times," Beruff said.



**Subject: Silver Springs Labeled by NPS as Threatened**

**From: Diane Salz <salz.govconsultant@gmail.com>**

**Date: Mon, Nov 25, 2013 8:16 am**

**To: WRWSA <richardowen@wrwsa.org>**

**Cc: "<nsmith@wrwsa.org>" <nsmith@wrwsa.org>**

**SILVER SPRINGS** — The National Park Service plans to label Florida's iconic Silver Springs as threatened in an upcoming report because of its elevated level of contaminants and depleted water flow, officials said.

A federal monitor visited the springs earlier this year as part of the government's National Natural Landmarks program.

Silver Springs' downgraded status will be reflected in the next program update, and it will be the first time the park service has needed to call attention to the springs' decline, said Mike Litterst, a spokesman for the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Carolyn Davis, the landmarks program regional coordinator who visited Silver Springs in February, tells the Ocala Star-Banner that the downgraded status was no surprise.

Davis reported findings that are well known to local and state environmental regulators, water managers, geologists and engineers: Water quality has decreased as nitrate levels increased over the decades, and the drop-off in water quantity is likely linked to a combination of over-pumping and an extended drought.

The designation as threatened "says you've got something very important, so let's see if we can turn this around," said Davis.

"It's a nationally significant landmark, and I've got my fingers crossed," Davis said.

Parks officials release the reports about the country's natural landmarks every two years.

Davis said that because of budget cuts, inspections have become less frequent.

They are supposed to come every two or three years, but Silver Springs had not been inspected since the early 1990s, she said.



**Subject:** Officials fear future water shortages  
**From:** Diane Salz <salz.govconsultant@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Mon, Nov 25, 2013 7:50 am  
**To:** WRWSA <richardowen@wrwsa.org>  
**Cc:** "<nsmith@wrwsa.org>" <nsmith@wrwsa.org>

## Officials fear future water shortages

Livi Stanford | Staff Writer [livi.stanford@dailyccommercial.com](mailto:livi.stanford@dailyccommercial.com) | Posted: Sunday, November 24, 2013 6:00 pm

Water experts and county officials sounded the alarm Thursday, stating an alternative water source to groundwater use must be found in the next five years to avoid a direct effect on lake levels and the quality of life in South Lake.

"We shouldn't be afraid of planning," Commissioner Sean Parks said. "If we don't plan for water, it could get expensive for you and for all of us. If we lose our water resources, you are losing a lot of sales tax and tourist development dollars. These things fund infrastructure, roads and schools."

A panel of experts from the Lake County Water Authority and the St. Johns River Water Management District weighed in on the problem of dwindling reserves in the Floridan Aquifer at the first annual South Lake Water Summit.

The three-hour summit held at Clermont City Hall drew a large crowd, including public officials and state representatives.

New growth and development have resulted in more water being withdrawn from the Floridan Aquifer, they said especially with the increase in demand only expected to rise.

But finding alternative water sources is an expensive proposition, especially considering the high demand for reclaimed water and astronomical costs for other sources such as surface bodies of water.

Parks said the issue weighed heavily on him after a conversation he had a few years ago with Fred Sommer, who organized the first triathlon event in Clermont.

"If you lose the lakes and water resources, you will lose my business and many other businesses, and the quality of life," Parks said of Sommer's cautionary words.

Parks stressed there is an action plan to address the issue.

"We will follow up with action," he said. "You can in a sense hold us accountable to that."

Between now and 2025 the population is expected to increase 56 percent, according to county officials.

While the lack of rainfall is a major factor affecting low lake levels, groundwater withdrawals, and human impacts, such as surface water diversions and irrigation, are also contributors, the panelists said.

"There is a demand of 300 million gallons of water by 2035 and we only have 50 million gallons that can be met by our traditional source," said Alan Oyler, consultant for St. Johns River Water Management District, who is assisting the South Lake Regional Water Initiative. "All of the utilities are going to have to find 250 million gallons of water. For us to meet project demands, we are going to have to import water from someplace else."

Groveland Mayor Tim Loucks, who founded the South Lake Regional Water Initiative with Parks, said there is not one specific cause of the declining lake levels.

"Rainfall does affect the lake levels and does affect the Floridan Aquifer," he said. "Once the aquifer goes down, the lakes begin to seep."

Officials said the most feasible and cost effective alternative water source is reclaimed water from Water Conserv II, the largest world reuse project in Orange County, which "combines agricultural irrigation with aquifer recharge via rapid infiltration basins," according to information from Conserv II.

But, there are challenges to overcome in this area, as Conserv II officials previously said the demand for reclaimed water is only growing; and they must also meet their own regional needs.

Otherwise, Oyler said the only alternative sources are Yankee Lake, Taylor Creek, Water Co-op, and OUC/Orlando, with the closest alternative resource nine miles away.

Officials said residents would pay \$1.62 per 1,000 gallons to withdraw the water from Conserv II compared with \$11.22 per 1,000 gallons to acquire it from Yankee Lake.

"That is why planning is important, and I don't want to be on the hook for being responsible for doing a project like that," Parks said referring to the alternatives to Conserv II.

Mike Perry, executive director of the Lake County Water Authority, said the cumulative rainfall deficit since 2004 is 62.35 inches, equivalent to 5.2 feet.

"We are 10 inches below the annual average just for this year," he said.

The panelists gave presentations on low lake levels, the Central Florida Water Initiative, and the South Lake Regional Water Initiative.

The South Lake Regional Water Initiative, consisting of the South Lake Chamber of Commerce, the county and the municipalities of Clermont, Groveland, Minneola, Mascotte and Montverde, have come together to address "regional solutions in the critical areas of reclaimed water distribution, minimum flows and levels of the region's lakes and rivers, and alternative water supplies and conservation"

They are working parallel to the Central Florida Water Initiative, to find a cost effective and alternative water source.

For more than an hour, residents addressed to the members of the panel questions and concerns. Numerous residents expressed frustration about Niagara Bottling LLC withdrawing 484,000 gallons per day from the aquifer, with a pending permit to withdraw more water.

Meanwhile, others said sand mines, water diversions and irrigation are affecting lake levels.

Ginger D'Amico, angrily spoke out against Niagara's use of the aquifer.

"I don't understand the St. Johns River Water Management District in allowing a company as big as Niagara to withdraw 484,000 gallons a day out of the aquifer while we have to potentially pay \$11.22 per 1,000 gallons," she said.

In response, Tom Bartol, water supply bureau chief for the St. Johns River Water Management District, said: "There is this notion that bottled water is an important part of water from the aquifer. It amounts to less than half a percent."

Even so, Darrell Reeves was still not convinced, expressing his worries about continued withdrawals by the company.

"All you people say our lakes are going down and saying we should conserve," he said. "We can't turn around and let a private for profit company suck the water out. I don't want to tell my kids they can't go on the lake because some profit company is taking our water and shipping it out."

Parks said he agreed that the company should contribute if they are going to commercially benefit from it.

But, he said, in order to prevent such a company from receiving a permit, the state statute must change.

Peter Brown said he lives in the heart of the aquifer and said "there is a massive amount of water being destroyed by the sand mines of Lake County."

While mentioning that he could not speak on a pending case before the county commission concerning a proposed sand mine in the heart of the Wellness Way Sector Plan, Parks said "there are absolutely serious issues (with sand mines) on water resources and traffic, which also affect adjacent lands."

In an interview Friday, Oyler said it is hard to judge what impact sand mines might have on lake levels.

"It will depend on how the sand mine is using water or diverting (it) for their use," he said.

One resident questioned the sector plan and whether it would simply bring 44,000 additional people, amounting to urban sprawl.

The sector plan would transform 16,000 acres in the southeast corner of the county into a hub for high-tech health care jobs and other industries. It is expected to attract people who like to bike, walk and enjoy an active, healthy lifestyle.

"Despite whether the sector plan was in the place, 48,000 people could live in that area," Parks said. "If we did nothing the population growth would occur in piecemeal growth fashion, along with the same issues. Unless we plan."

There are plans for future summits to address the issues.

**Subject:** Nation-wide Cow Shortage & Adena Springs...

**From:** Diane Salz <salz.govconsultant@gmail.com>

**Date:** Fri, Nov 22, 2013 7:27 am

**To:** WRWSA <richardowen@wrwsa.org>

**Cc:** "<nsmith@wrwsa.org>" <nsmith@wrwsa.org>

**Florida cattle industry is poised to grow to help offset a nationwide shortage of cows (11/21/13)**

The Florida cattle industry is poised to grow to help offset a nationwide shortage of cows because of drought and as land for other uses becomes less in demand, said **Jim Handley**, executive vice president of the **Florida Cattlemen's Association**, according to [The Gainesville Sun](#).

Handley was keynote speaker at the Farm-City Week luncheon Wednesday sponsored by two local **Kiwanis** clubs, the **Alachua County Cattlemen's Association**, the **Alachua County Farm Bureau** and the **University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences**.

Recent droughts in the West and Midwest have led to a 61-year low in cattle population, and economists predict record profits over the next three to five years, Handley said.

An affiliate of the **Mormon Church** that recently bought 383,000 acres from **The St. Joe Co.** in the Florida Panhandle will convert some of the timberland to cattle pasture, he said. The church already owns the largest cow-calf operation in the nation with 44,000 head at **Deseret Ranches** in Central Florida.

Demand for local and grass-fed beef is leading to expanded operations for finished cattle, a small but growing sector of the Florida cattle industry, Handley said.

That includes plans to expand **Adena Springs Ranch** in Marion County, as well as cattle farms in Suwannee and Sumter counties.

**Subject:** Fwd: Adam Putnam continues to push for statewide water policy

**From:** Diane Salz <[salz.govconsultant@gmail.com](mailto:salz.govconsultant@gmail.com)>

**Date:** Thu, Nov 21, 2013 1:06 pm

**To:** WRWSA <[richardowen@wrwsa.org](mailto:richardowen@wrwsa.org)>

**Cc:** "<[nsmith@wrwsa.org](mailto:nsmith@wrwsa.org)>" <[nsmith@wrwsa.org](mailto:nsmith@wrwsa.org)>

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Diane Salz <[salz.govconsultant@gmail.com](mailto:salz.govconsultant@gmail.com)>

**Date:** Thu, Nov 21, 2013 at 3:05 PM

**Subject:** Adam Putnam continues to push for statewide water policy

**To:** Diane Salz <[disalz@yahoo.com](mailto:disalz@yahoo.com)>

## Adam Putnam Continues Push for Statewide Water Policy

By: [Jim Turner News Service of Florida](#) | Posted: November 21, 2013 3:55 AM

"There is an extraordinary bias to the south at the expense of the springs and Apalachicola Bay," Putnam told reporters in the Capitol this week.

As the Florida Legislature is being asked to consider a \$220 million package to redirect water and reduce pollutants flowing from Lake Okeechobee, Putnam wants lawmakers to consider other issues. That includes the challenges of pollutants entering the state's springs, the St. Johns River and Tampa Bay, reducing pollution entering Lake Okeechobee from the north and the declining conditions of Apalachicola Bay in the Panhandle.

Florida has filed a federal lawsuit against Georgia about a shortage of fresh water flowing into Apalachicola Bay. Florida argues that heavy water consumption in the metro Atlanta area has reduced downstream flows into the bay, endangering Apalachicola's oyster industry.

"If the Everglades were suffering from inadequate freshwater flows coming from Georgia, the whole state would have a level of interest, and a level of decibels, much higher than what they seem to have for Franklin County, and that's not right," Putnam said.

Putnam addressed his concerns about the need for a statewide water-management plan in October to members of the House and Senate.

The appearances before House and Senate committees came before the Senate Select Committee on Indian River Lagoon and Lake Okeechobee Basin proposed a \$220 million package that stems from pollutants being discharged from the lake into waterways such as the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee rivers.

The Senate's package includes a wide range of projects, such as \$90 million that would be spread over three years to bridge a 2.6-mile section of the Tamiami Trail west of Miami. Groups such as the Everglades Foundation have called the highway "one of the most prominent dams" blocking the natural flow of the River of Grass from the lake to the southern Everglades.

Putnam said he would increase focus on the northern Everglades and areas north of Lake Okeechobee. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers discharges water from the lake to ease pressure on a dike that surrounds the massive water body.

"If you can slow the water down from getting into the lake, or treat it before it gets into the lake, then you're having an impact on what the potential harm is to the dike and what the storage capacity of the lake is," Putnam said.

The department's budget proposal for the 2013 session includes \$10 million to address nutrient reduction practices and water retention efforts in the Lake Okeechobee watershed, \$8.2 million for best management practices in the northern Everglades, and \$5.2 million to reduce agricultural nutrients from reaching the state's northern freshwater springs.

The Department of Environmental Protection has included in its budget proposals \$75 million that Gov. Rick Scott has proposed for Everglades restoration efforts, \$40 million for environmental land acquisition, and \$15 million for springs restoration, up from the \$10 million designated during the 2013 session.

The proposals are being considered by Scott, who will offer a budget plan before the 2014 legislative session.

Around the State

**Item 10.**  
**Hydrologic Update**

**Item 10. Hydrologic Update . . . Lois Sorensen, SWFWMD**

The SWFWMD recently declared Phase 2 Water Shortage restrictions in the Tampa Bay area, including Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas counties. There has been extensive news media coverage regarding this declaration. Much of the WRWSA's geographic area receives this same news media coverage, even though the WRWSA area was not affected by this action. Ms. Sorensen will provide a report on the action taken by the SWFWMD, why this action was deemed appropriate for the Tampa Bay region, and the hydrologic conditions within the WRWSA's four-county area.

**Staff Recommendation:** This item is for information only and no action is required.

**Item. 11.a.**  
**AWWA Fall**  
**Conference Recap**

11/15/2023 11:00 AM

**Report to the Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority:  
Florida Section AWWA Fall Conference & 5th Annual Water Summit  
December 2 -- 5th, 2013  
Omni Orlando Resort at Champions Gate**

**PROGRAM:**

Hosted by the **Florida Section of the American Water Works Association (FSAWWA)**, the **5th Annual Water Summit** addressed: ensuring that new supplies of water will be developed so that all users in all parts of the state will have adequate supplies of water to meet all their needs now and into the future, including sufficient water to meet the needs of natural systems and whether direct potable reuse should be part of Florida's water future. By the year 2030, statewide water demands are anticipated to be sustained through a combination of alternative water supplies, water use efficiency, and collaborative multi-jurisdictional water supply efforts. Summit speakers included: Rep. Jason Brodeur (House District 28); Rep. Ray Pilon (House District 72); Drew Bartlett, Florida DEP Deputy Secretary; Ron Basso (SWFWMD); Edgar Fernandez (FSAWWA Utility Council (UC) Legislative Committee Chair). The **FSAWWA Utility Council (UC)** also met during the conference, providing its member utilities with representation and advocacy on legislative and regulatory issues. The UC voted to establish a Small Systems Assistance Program to promote UC membership to small utilities currently under-represented on the UC. Also discussed were issues for the 2014 Legislative Session including: water infrastructure funding; springs legislation; water & wastewater utilities; and minimum flows and levels (MFLs).

**FORECAST FOR 2014:**

**water infrastructure funding**  
**springs legislation**  
**water and wastewater utilities**  
**utility employee safety**  
**minimum flows and levels**  
**irrigation of edible crops with reclaimed water**

**ATTENDEES:**

Over 400 people attended the Florida Section AWWA Fall Conference representing public and private water utility interests, city and county governments, environmentalists, water management districts, as well as agricultural and industrial sector representatives from across the state. A collegial program format allowed time for attendees to challenge the speakers with an array of interesting questions. The event provided an excellent opportunity to discuss relevant topics informally with speakers and other attendees, as well as networking within a broad professional arena of water experts.