



**WITHLACOOCHEE
REGIONAL
WATER
SUPPLY
AUTHORITY**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WITHLACOOCHEE WATER AUTHORITY APPROVES GRANTS TO LOCAL APPLICANTS

Water conservation emphasis is Authority's primary goal.

BROOKSVILLE, FL, July 21, 2010 -- Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply Authority representing Citrus, Hernando, Marion and Sumter counties awarded \$130,000 in matching grants for a variety of local water conservation programs in the region. Citrus, Hernando and Marion counties will oversee local programs for rebates, incentives, irrigation audits, outreach, media campaigns, education, and grants for low-flow devices. Water conservation coordinators representing each applicant county were on hand to discuss their programs. Authority Executive Director Jack Sullivan was very pleased with the quality of the water conservation program proposals and the on-going success of the region's water conservation coordinators. "It's gratifying to see the region mark progress toward attaining our goal of meeting the 150 gallons per day per capita rate of use required by SWFWMD's new rule," Jack Sullivan explained. Water management district staff described how the Northern District Utility Outreach Program should further help the region comply with the district's new rule seeking to reduce water demand from an average of 187 to 150 gallons per day per capita by 2018. Among other things, the district provides suggestions for landscape irrigation ordinances as well as practical advice to homeowners on shrubbery and plants. Consultants and the water management districts agree that sometime in the distant future, 20 to 30 years from now, expensive alternative water sources will need to be collaboratively developed for affordability. When needed, alternatives to groundwater would likely include a proposed desalination plant at the Crystal River power plant and water safely withdrawn from the Withlacoochee River, as approved and permitted by the water management district and the Department of Environmental Protection. In the future, users of the water will pay for the bonding needed to finance the alternative water system, not the general local governments. At the present time however, water conservation programs are the most appropriate way for the Authority to help local governments extend the use of lower cost groundwater supplies.

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The WRWSA is a multi-county special district of the state of Florida charged with planning for and developing cost efficient, high quality water supplies for its member governments. The Authority promotes environmental stewardship through its water conservation programs and in the future will develop alternative water sources to augment groundwater supplies to meet the region's long -term needs.