

Executive Summary

Introduction

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| <p>The Partnership:</p> <p>The North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan Project Conceptualization (NFRWSPPC) Partnership is a voluntary collaborative effort between four water supply utilities and three state agencies. The utilities are the largest four utilities located within the North Florida Regional Water Supply Planning Area and collectively serve over 1.3 million residents of north Florida.</p> | <p>Partnership Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Clay County Utility Authority (CCUA)■ Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU)■ JEA■ St. Johns County Utility Department (SJCUD)■ St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD)■ Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD)■ Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) |
| <p>The Mission:</p> <p>The purpose of the Partnership is to identify potential large-scale groundwater recharge projects that can work in conjunction with conservation and other projects to meet minimum flows and levels (MFLs) requirements for the Lower Santa Fe and Ichetucknee Rivers (LSFIR). This effort builds upon the North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan and other water supply planning efforts with the goal of restoring and protecting these valuable natural resources while ensuring adequate water supply for the region. The goal of the Partnership is to address the impacts from all water users, including utilities.</p> | <p>Project Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Perform a comprehensive identification and screening of potential alternatives to increase aquifer recharge to offset impacts of current and future pumping to meet proposed LSFIR MFLs■ Identify a short-list of potential alternatives for further evaluation■ Develop order-of-magnitude costs■ Identify next steps needed to further vet potential alternatives and implement final alternative(s) |

Background

SRWMD and FDEP are developing LSFIR MFLs to protect these resources from significant harm due to reduction in spring and river flow resulting from current and future groundwater withdrawals. **Table ES.1** summarizes the proposed recovery and prevention goals at the most critical flow monitoring points for the LSFIR. The recovery goals are based on current pumping, and the prevention goals are based on projected future pumping through 2045. A recovery and prevention plan to meet these goals must accompany the MFL upon adoption. The water management districts and FDEP have engaged stakeholders throughout the water supply planning and MFL development process to develop projects and approaches to meet the proposed MFLs. However, the Partnership recognized that efforts to date have not identified projects that fully meet the recovery and prevention goals. The Partnership initiated efforts to identify and screen potential large-scale projects that could work in concert with conservation efforts and other locally implemented projects to meet the MFL goals in an environmentally sustainable manner.