

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-003

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF BRANFORD, FLORIDA, OPPOSING THE FIRST NORTH FLORIDA (WFNF) PIPELINE PROJECT AS CURRENTLY PROPOSED; REQUESTING AN IMMEDIATE MORATORIUM PENDING INDEPENDENT STUDY; AND DIRECTING TRANSMITTAL TO STATE OFFICIALS

WHEREAS, the St. Johns River Water Management District and the Suwannee River Water Management District approved elements of the Water First North Florida (WFNF) project in November 2025, which includes a proposed approximately 90-mile pipeline to transport highly treated reclaimed water from facilities in the Jacksonville metropolitan area to wetlands within the Suwannee River Basin for purposes of aquifer recharge; and

WHEREAS, the project is estimated to cost between \$1.0 and \$1.1 billion, including approximately \$400 million in funding from JEA, and proposes to recharge the Floridan Aquifer with more than 40 million gallons per day; and

WHEREAS, the Floridan Aquifer supplies drinking water, agricultural irrigation, and ecological baseflow to springs and rivers throughout Suwannee County, including the Ichetucknee River and the Santa Fe River; and

WHEREAS, Town of Branford has not been provided with comprehensive, independent environmental, hydrogeologic, public health, or economic impact studies evaluating long-term effects of the proposed discharge on groundwater quality, spring systems, wetlands, private wells, property values, tourism, or agricultural production; and

WHEREAS, Suwannee County has not been provided with comprehensive evidence that water piped or injected into the aquifer will meet the 0.35 mg/L numeric nutrient criterion; and

WHEREAS, concerns have been raised by residents, landowners, and regional stakeholders, including the WWALS Watershed Coalition, regarding potential accumulation of nutrients, emerging contaminants such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), pharmaceuticals, and other constituents of concern in recharge areas; and

WHEREAS, the precise locations of proposed recharge wetlands and the long-term monitoring, liability, and remediation framework have not been fully disclosed or evaluated in coordination with the Town of Branford; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the Town of Branford has a statutory responsibility to safeguard the health, safety, natural resources, and economic stability of the residents of the Town of Branford;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF BRANFORD IN SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA:

1. The Town of Branford formally opposes the WFNF pipeline project as currently proposed due to unresolved environmental, public health, and economic concerns.
2. The Town of Branford calls for an immediate moratorium on planning, surveying, permitting, funding disbursement, land acquisition, or construction activities related to the WFNF project within or affecting the Town of Branford until:
 - (a) Independent, peer-reviewed environmental and hydrogeologic impact studies are completed;
 - (b) Public health risk assessments are conducted;
 - (c) Economic impact analyses are completed; and
 - (d) Pilot recharge testing and long-term monitoring protocols are publicly evaluated.
3. The Town of Branford urges the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Suwannee River Water Management District, the St. Johns River Water Management District, and the Florida Legislature to withhold further permits, approvals, or funding until the above conditions are satisfied and to consider alternative water management strategies, including reduction of groundwater withdrawals in urban source regions and localized recharge or conservation measures.
4. The Town of Branford invites neighboring towns/cities, including Fort White, and Mayo, to adopt similar resolutions and coordinate intergovernmental engagement in any related regulatory or administrative proceedings.

5. The Town Clerk is directed to transmit copies of this Resolution to:

- The Governor of the State of Florida;
- Members of the Florida Senate and House of Representatives representing this region;
- The Executive Directors of the Suwannee River Water Management District and St. Johns River Water Management District;
- The Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection;
- The Chief Executive Officer of JEA; and
- Relevant environmental and watershed organizations.

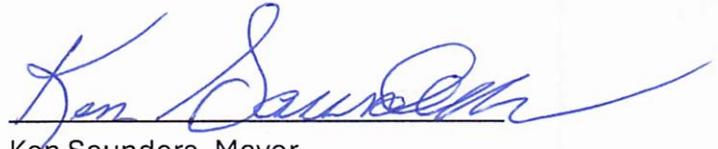
PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED, by the Town of Branford, Town Council on this 10th day of March, 2026.

Attest:

Mayor, Town of Branford, Florida



Town Clerk



Ken Saunders, Mayor

Town Council, Town of Branford, Florida



Kevin Knighton, Council President

