

SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board
FROM: Troy Roberts, Office Chief, Communications and Outreach
THRU: Katelyn Potter, Division Director, Outreach and Operations
DATE: February 12, 2026
RE: Springs Protection Awareness Month Proclamation

RECOMMENDATION

Proclaim April 2026 as Springs Protection Awareness Month.

BACKGROUND

In recent years, the Florida Legislature has adopted resolutions recognizing the importance of Florida's springs and natural resources by declaring the month of April as Springs Protection Awareness Month.

The District contains more than 450 documented springs, including the highest concentration of freshwater springs in Florida, and the highest concentration of first-magnitude springs in the United States. The District is defined by world-renowned springs, including 14 of the 30 Outstanding Florida Springs as identified by the Legislature.

Springs provide habitat for wildlife and plant species, as well as natural, recreational, and economic value. Recreational use of springs supports ecotourism in the region providing opportunities for swimming, fishing, diving, kayaking, canoeing, and wildlife viewing. The estimated total economic benefits associated with recreational use (due to direct spending, supply chain activity, and income re-spending) support over 1,000 full and part-time jobs and generates \$9.4 million annually in economic output¹. These international resources are a major priority for the District.

Increasing public awareness of the District's ongoing work to protect springs is a key part of accomplishing the District's mission.

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Attachment

¹Borisova, Tatiana; Hodges, Alan W.; Stevens, Thomas J. "Economic Contributions and Ecosystem Services of Springs in the Lower Suwannee and Santa Fe River Basins of North-Central Florida." University of Florida, Food and Resource Economics Department. May 29, 2014. pp 3.