

SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Robbie McKinney, Hydrologic Program Manager, Office of Water Resources

THRU: Hugh Thomas, Executive Director

DATE: April 30, 2026

RE: April 2026 Hydrologic Conditions Report

RAINFALL

- Districtwide average rainfall for the month was 0.88", which was about 74 percent lower than the 1932-2025 average of 3.38" (Table 1, Figure 1). The 12-month period ending April 30 reflected a Districtwide rainfall deficit of 20.22", which was an increase to the 19.98" deficit seen at the end of March. District counties ranged from just over 0.5" to 1.4" of rainfall on average, with parts of Taylor, Suwannee, Columbia, Hamilton, Union, Gilchrist, and Dixie counties receiving more than 2.5 inches of rainfall (Figure 2).
- Overall, a 12-month rainfall deficit was present in all river basins, with the Aucilla and Coastal basins increasing in deficit by the end of April (Figure 3). A small area in the southern Waccasassa Basin showed a deficit of less than 8 inches. Portions with deficits greater than 29" were also observed in the Aucilla, Santa Fe, and Suwannee basins. Each river basin increased its 3-month rainfall deficit by the end of April (Figure 4). No surpluses were seen over the past 3 months, and each river basin had areas measuring anywhere from less than 6" to more than 9" of deficit. Sections with greater than 9" of rainfall deficit can be seen in all 5 of the basins.

SURFACE WATER

- **Rivers:** Most of the river gages in Figure 5 finished the month in the extremely low (<10th percentile) flow range, with only the Ichetucknee River showing below normal (10th – 25th percentile) flows. New long-term daily minimum flow records were set in April at gages on the Suwannee (Ellaville and Branford), Santa Fe (Worthington Springs), Econfinia (Perry), and Withlacoochee (Pinetta) rivers. Additionally, other river gages throughout the District and South Georgia saw much below normal flows both at the beginning and end of the month (Figure 6). Gages on the Santa Fe (Worthington Springs and Graham), New River, and St. Marys (North Prong) ended April with zero flow.
- **Lakes:** Water levels decreased at each of the monitored District lakes this month (Figure 7). Water levels at Governor Hill, Sneads Smokehouse, Hampton Lake, and Lake Crosby were below the equipment sensor this month due to ongoing drought conditions. The median decrease in stage across measured lakes was about 0.4', and each of the monitored lakes ended April below their long-term averages.
- **Springs:** Flow measurements were made at 16 springs in April by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), District staff, and contractors. Flows at Manatee Springs ranged from extremely low to normal throughout April (Figure 8). Similarly, Fanning Springs saw below normal to normal flows throughout the month (Figure 9).