

SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Hugh Thomas, Executive Director

DATE: June 29, 2026

RE: **Public Hearing** for Approval of Order Number 26-004, Modified Phase II Water Shortage

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct a public hearing and approve Order Number 26-004, Modified Phase II Water Shortage.

BACKGROUND

On April 14, 2026, the Board adopted a Modified Phase II Water Shortage Order Number 26-003 based on ongoing drought condition, which expires July 31, 2026.

Drought conditions persist throughout the District. Groundwater conditions and 12 to 24-month rainfall totals remain well below average. All counties in the District are categorized as being in moderate, severe, or extreme drought.

Rainfall predictions from the National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center for the next three-months (July – September 2026) call for equal chances of above, near, or below normal rainfall.

Given the ongoing drought conditions and reduced aquifer levels, staff recommend issuing Water Shortage Order 26-004 maintaining a modified Phase II water shortage Districtwide. This order maintains previous restrictions, with modifications to the Miscellaneous and Agricultural requirements, and extends the water shortage through December 31, 2026 unless otherwise modified, revoked, or rescinded by the Governing Board or the Executive Director as delegated by the Governing Board.

The District is encouraging all users to plan proactively for the possibility of an extended drought with the potential for additional regulatory measures, especially focused on reducing water use from less efficient systems and processes. The issuance of a Modified Phase II Water Shortage Order would apply to all counties within the District and unincorporated portions of Alachua and Levy counties, consistent with existing memoranda of understanding with neighboring Districts.

Because of the aforementioned factors, staff recommends that the Governing Board approve Order Number 26-004, Modified Phase II Water Shortage.

RLM/ak
Attachment