

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 17, 2017

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Noah D. Valenstein, Executive Director
Suwannee River Water Management District

Ann B. Shortelle, Ph.D, Executive Director
St. Johns River Water Management District

SUBJECT: Approval of the Joint North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the 2015-2035 Joint North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan (NFRWSP).

BACKGROUND

Staff from the SJRWMD and SRWMD, along with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, have been working collaboratively since 2012 to develop the NFRWSP. The NFRWSP encompasses 14 counties, including Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Duval, Flagler, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Suwannee, and Union.

The purpose of the partnership is to protect natural resources and water supplies in north Florida. This goal is being achieved through collaborative planning, scientific-tool development and related efforts. The NFRWSP has identified sufficient sources of water to meet the needs of the environment and the projected demands through 2035.

DISCUSSION

Over the past four years, the Districts coordinated 36 Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) meetings, two public workshops, and more than 50 other outreach meetings to engage stakeholders from many perspectives, in order to discuss their concerns regarding water supply. Additionally, a technical team consisting of experts in the field of groundwater modeling, developed the North Florida Southeast-Georgia Regional Groundwater flow model, generally referred to as the NFSEG model. The NFSEG Model was used to assess potential resource constraints, should all projected reasonable-beneficial demands be met by fresh groundwater. The results of that assessment determined that fresh groundwater alone could not supply the 2035 increased demand of 117 mgd without causing unacceptable impacts to the water resources. To address this potential deficit, the plan identifies over 200 mgd of effective conservation measures and water supply development and water resource development projects to meet the projected demand, while protecting the environment. Comments received during the public comment period from October 4, 2016 through December 5, 2016, were responded to in Appendix A and where appropriate, incorporated into the final draft of the plan.

District staff of the SRWMD and SJRWMD recommend that the Governing Boards approve the 2015 – 2035 NFRWSP, recognizing each District's authority for water supply planning extends to water supply planning regions within its boundaries as established in section 373.069, F.S.