

PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

**Joint Public Workshop
St. Johns River Water Management District
Southwest Florida Water Management District
South Florida Water Management District
2020 Draft Minimum Flows and Levels Priority Lists and Schedules for the CFWI Area**

September 1, 2020

A joint public workshop addressing the annual update of the minimum flows and levels priority lists and schedules of the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), with an emphasis on the Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI) area, was held on from 10:00 A.M. to ~11:20 A.M. on September 1, 2020. The meeting was facilitated to provide an opportunity for local governments, private organizations and the public to be part of the scheduling of minimum flows and levels and reservations for priority water bodies.

The meeting was advertised in the Florida Administrative Register, local newspapers, water management district web sites, and the CFWI web site. In addition, numerous interested parties and local government staff and officials were notified of the meeting and a press release was made available to the regional media.

Following the directive in the Emergency Order issued by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for conducting all public meetings electronically to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the public meeting was held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Doug Leeper, the Minimum Flows and Levels Program Lead for the SWFWMD, Andrew Sutherland, the Water Supply Planning Technical Program Manager for the SJRWMD, and Don Medellin, a Principal Scientist with the SFWMD facilitated the meeting and were joined by additional members of each District's staff. A total of 103 individuals participated in the meeting.

A brief slide presentation highlighting the proposed priority lists and schedules of the three Districts with jurisdiction in the CFWI area was made by Mr. Leeper, Dr. Sutherland, and Mr. Medellin. Opportunities available to stakeholders for comment on each District's priority list and schedule were highlighted and include: providing oral comment during the workshop; providing written or oral comments to District representatives by September 23rd (SWFWMD), September 24th (SFWMD) and October 1st (SJRWMD); and providing input directly to the District Governing Boards during their respectively scheduled meetings on October 10th (SFWMD), October 13th (SJRWMD) and October 20th (SWFWMD), when each District's staff expects to present an updated priority list and schedule to their respective Boards for approval. Meeting participants were encouraged to provide input at the earliest date possible, to allow time for consideration of the input.

No specific suggestions concerning the prioritization or scheduling of water bodies for the establishment of minimum flows and levels or water reservations were provided during the

meeting. Highlights regarding questions and issues identified by meeting participants during the meeting are provided below along with responses provided by water management district staff. The meeting agenda and a printed version of the slides shown during the meeting, are also provided below.

Workshop Participant Questions and Comments

Natalie Fausel requested clarification on dates for public comment referenced in the presentation.

Mr. Leeper responded by reviewing the opportunities and schedule for public comment on each District's proposed priority list and schedule that were included in the meeting presentation. He noted the dates each District would prefer to receive comments, the dates each Governing Board would be asked to approve their respective priority list and schedule, and the November 15th deadline for submission of the priority lists and schedules to the DEP.

Angel Martin asked a couple questions about SJRWMD's redundancy and gap analysis for minimum flows and levels prioritization including whether the analysis was going to be used to determine data collection needs in the future and also be used for model updates. He also asked if the optimization process is statistically based.

Dr. Sutherland indicated the SJRWMD anticipates using the redundancy and gap analyses to support assessment of minimum flow and level prioritization as well as for identification of data collection needs, including streamflow gage and well installation. Finally, he indicated that the redundancy and gap analyses are statistically based.

Angel Martin asked about any thoughts or discussion regarding establishment of a water reservation for groundwater in the CFWI area. He also asked how groundwater model domain overlap, where it exists, is handled by the districts.

Mr. Leeper indicated that he was not aware of any plans to establish a water reservation for any groundwater systems in the CFWI area. He added that as discussed during the workshop, the SWFWMD has recently established a reservation for water stored in Lake Hancock and released to Lower Saddle Creek for recovery of minimum flows in the upper segment of the Peace River, and the SFWMD is seeking to establish reservations for the Kissimmee River, Headwater Lakes and Upper Chain of Lakes for the protection of fish and wildlife.

Regarding model overlap, Mr. Leeper noted, the Expanded East Central Florida-Transient model is used by all districts for assessments within the CFWI area, and if available, results from other models are also considered to aid in the identification of the most reasonable predictions associated with model simulations. He indicated the consideration and potential use of all available modeling tools is similarly applied to other areas of the state.

To help address Mr. Martin's questions, Mr. Medellin suggested that Mr. Martin stay engaged in the CFWI rulemaking process that is being led by the DEP. He noted that a rule development workshop for the process is tentatively being scheduled by the DEP for the end of September.

Rob Dennis referred to slide #12 of the SJRWMD portion of the meeting presentation and asked whether cross-district-boundary withdrawal impacts been identified for any minimum flows and levels on the proposed SJRWMD priority list and schedule. He also asked if any potential impacts have not yet been identified, when would they be identified.

Dr. Sutherland indicated that cross-district-boundary impacts have not been completely determined for water bodies included on the draft SJRWMD priority list and schedule, and added that any potential cross-district-boundary impacts would be indicated on the priority list presented to the District Governing Board for approval on October 13th and subsequently submitted to the DEP by November 15th.

Mr. Leeper added to Dr. Sutherland's response by noting that the Florida Statutes require identification of potential cross-district-boundary impacts on the water management district priority lists and schedules, in particular for instances when it may be appropriate for the DEP rather than a water management district to establish a minimum flow, minimum level or a reservation.

Rob Dennis: asked if the SJWMD is planning to request that the DEP adopt any of the minimum flows and levels included on their proposed priority list and schedule.

Dr. Sutherland noted that no requests to the DEP for minimum flow or level adoption of the listed water bodies is anticipated, at this time.

Angel Martin asked if the SFWMD or SWFWMD are planning to adopt a minimum flows and levels prioritization process similar to that being used by the SJRWMD. He also asked if the process was being considered for the CFWI planning area.

Mr. Medellin noted that the SFWMD is not considering use of such an approach, because most minimum flows and levels within that district are strongly influenced by the Central and South Florida Flood Control Project (C&SF project) as opposed to water withdrawals. The C&SF project is a system of canals (2,200 miles in length) and structures that interconnects many lakes, rivers and wetlands within the SFWMD. Mr. Medellin added that minimum flows and levels within the SFWMD are typically associated with very large, regionally significant systems, such as the Everglades, which extends over 1.6 million acres. In the case of CFWI area, SFWMD has chosen to adopt a water reservation rule that encompasses the entire Kissimmee watershed, which extends over 172,500 acres.

Mr. Leeper noted that the SWFMWD is currently not considering use a specific minimum flows and levels prioritization process like that being used by the SJRWMD. He added that minimum flows or levels have been established for over 200 water bodies distributed throughout the SWFWMD, and many have been or are scheduled for reevaluation. He

further noted that many, if not all of the criteria identified for the SJRWMD optimization approach have been and will continue to be used for minimum flow and level establishment and reevaluation in the SWFWMD. Finally, Mr. Leeper indicated that SWFWMD staff are interested in learning more about the SJRWMD approach to identify potential enhancements to their current prioritization processes.

Workshop Agenda

Joint Public Workshop for Minimum Flows and Levels Priority Lists and Schedules for the Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI) Planning Area

South Florida Water Management District
Southwest Florida Water Management District
St. Johns River Water Management District

Tuesday, September 1, 2020
10:00 am

Following the Governor's directions to reduce public gatherings and practice social distancing to reduce the spread of COVID-19, this public workshop will be held electronically via Microsoft Teams.

To join the meeting via Teams, please click-on or copy and paste the following link into your browser and follow the instructions provided at the website: [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#). Alternatively, you can use this URL to join the meeting: <https://bit.ly/33rrHkQ>. Use of the Chrome browser is recommended for best compatibility with Teams.

To join the meeting by telephone only, dial 1-786-749-6127 and when prompted enter the conference ID: 478 771 808#.

Agenda

1. Introductions.....Don Medellin, SFWMD
2. SJRWMD MFLs Priority List.....Andrew Sutherland, SJRWMD
3. SWFWMD MFLs Priority List..... Doug Leeper, SWFWMD
4. SFWMD MFLs Priority List..... Don Medellin, SFWMD
5. Stakeholder comments
6. Adjourn

For questions, please contact Doug Leeper by email at doug.leeper@watermatters.org, by telephone at 1-800-423-1476 or 352-796-7211, extension 4272, or by mail at 2379 Broad Street, Brooksville, Florida 34604-8899.

The Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) does not discriminate on the basis of disability. This nondiscrimination policy involves every aspect of the District's functions, including access to and participation in the District's programs, services and activities. Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation, or would like information as to the existence and location of accessible services, activities, and facilities, as provided for in the Americans with Disabilities Act, should contact Donna Eisenbeis, Sr. Performance Management Professional, at 2379 Broad St., Brooksville, FL 34604-8899; telephone (352) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476 (FL only), ext. 4708; or email ADACoordinator@WaterMatters.org. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the agency using the Florida Relay Service, 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) or 1-800-955-8770 (Voice). If requested, appropriate auxiliary aids and services will be provided at any public meeting, forum, or event of the District. In the event of a complaint, please follow the grievance procedure located at WaterMatters.org/ADA.

Workshop Slide Presentation

**Joint Public Workshop for
Minimum Flows and Levels
Priority Lists and Schedules
for the CFWI Area**



St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD)
Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD)
South Florida Water Management District (SPWMD)

September 1, 2020

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Teams Meeting Protocol

Please adhere to the following:

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- Use the hand raise function to be recognized for commenting
- State your name when speaking
- Put your cell phone on vibrate
- If using your phone for audio, please mute your computer microphone and speaker



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Agenda

1. Introductions and Background.....Doug Leeper, SWFWMD
2. SJRWMD MFLs Priority List.....Andrew Sutherland, SJRWMD
3. SWFWMD MFLs Priority List.....Doug Leeper, SWFWMD
4. SPWMD MFLs Priority List.....Don Medelin, SPWMD
5. Stakeholder comments
6. Adjourn

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Statutory Directive for MFLs

Water management districts or DEP must establish MFLs that set the limit or level...

"...at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area."

Section 379.002(1), Florida Statutes

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Statutory Directive for Reservations

Water management districts may...

"...reserve from use by permit applicants, water in such locations and quantities, and for such seasons of the year, as in its judgment may be required for the protection of fish and wildlife or the public health and safety."

Section 379.22(2)(a), Florida Statutes

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District Priority Lists and Schedules Meet Statutory and Rule Requirements

- Prioritization is based on the importance of waters to the State or region, and the existence of or potential for significant harm
- Includes waters experiencing or reasonably expected to experience adverse impacts
- MFLs the districts will voluntarily subject to independent scientific peer review are identified
- Proposed reservations are identified
- Listed water bodies that have the potential to be affected by withdrawals in an adjacent water management district are identified

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2020 Draft Priority List and Schedule

- Annual priority list and schedule required by statute for each district
- Presented to respective District Governing Boards for approval
- Submitted to DEP for review by Nov. 15th
- Districts are seeking stakeholder input
- Written comments may be submitted to/by:
 - SJRWMD Oct. 1, 2020 Andrew Sutherland - asutherland@sjrwmd.com
 - SWFWMD Sept. 23, 2020 Doug Leeper - doug.leeper@watermatters.org
 - SPWMD Sept. 24, 2020 Don Medelín - dmedellin@spwmd.gov

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Central Florida Water Initiative

- Collaborative process among FDEP, SJRWMD, SPWMD, SWFWMD, FDACS, regional public water supply utilities, and other stakeholders
- CFWI Planning Area includes Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole and southern Lake counties
- Evolved from previous Central Florida Coordination Area efforts



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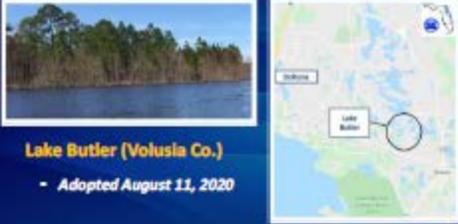
SJRWMD Draft 2020 MFLs Priority List and Schedule

Posted on the SJRWMD web site at <https://www.sjrwmd.com/centralfloridawaterinitiative/>

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Lake Butler (Volusia Co.)

- Adopted August 11, 2020



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SJRWMD Long Range Planning Effort

- MFLs are dependent on water budget and hydraulic models
- LRP will ensure that MFLs schedule aligns with:
 - Surface water model development
 - Water Supply Plan updates
 - three planning regions: NF, CSEC, CFWI
 - Groundwater model updates

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SJRWMD Draft 2020 MFLs Priority List

Priority Year	Item ID / Description	Water Body Name	Water Body Type	Priority
2020	01-001-001	Bradwell	Lake	City
	01-001-002	Osceola	Lake	City
	01-001-003	Wright	Lake	Seminole
2021	01-001-004	Agulhas Coast?	Lake	Lake
	01-001-005	Lake Wales Over and seasonal springs?	Over / Springs	Change/Change
	01-001-006	Walden Springs?	Springs	Change/Change
	01-001-007	Bank Springs?	Springs	Change
2022	01-001-008	Arroyo/Sebastian/Maple?	Lake	Change/Lake
	01-001-009	Proctor?	Lake	Change
	01-001-010	Red Bay?	Lake	Seminole
2023	01-001-011	Leffler	Lake	Lake
	01-001-012	Harold Basin Lake (Sebastian, Ocala, Polk, Orange)	Lake	Lake
2024	01-001-013	Red Cypress?	Lake	Seminole
	01-001-014	Wright	Lake	Monitor

*Under Review in the CFWI

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SJRWMD MFLs Priority List – Next Steps

MFLs Network Optimization

Scientifically sound method for efficient MFL network and assessment

- 1) **Redundancy analysis:** to ensure efficient resource use by identifying and assessing sentinel systems; and
- 2) **Gap analysis:** to ensure an efficient MFL network distributed to protect water resources from current and future pumping impacts

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Planning Zones

- Ensure sufficient MFLs to protect each groundwater basin
- Based on spatial variability of hydrogeology of UFA
- 11 Planning Zones based on groundwater sub-basins



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Redundancy Analysis: Spatial Distribution

- Determine if there are redundant adopted MFLs
- Identify sentinel system(s) that are most appropriate to update or assess in areas with redundant systems
- Efficient use of resources
- Prioritize for model updates, assessment and MFLs re-evaluation
- Based on correlation and location of lakes within each planning zone

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Gap Analysis

- Ensure efficient, effective MFL network
- MFLs distribution, sufficient to protect regional water resources from significant harm due to current and future pumping



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Summary

A new method is under development to ensure:

- A scientifically sound and efficient MFL network and MFL assessment within the SJRWMD
- Efficient resource use by identifying and assessing sentinel systems
- MFLs are distributed across the district to protect water resources from significant harm due to current and future pumping

This involves:

- A redundancy analysis to prioritize adopted MFLs
- A gap analysis to identify areas where MFLs are needed

MFLs Priority List and Schedule may change in coming years based on Network Optimization effort

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SWFWMD Draft 2020 Priority List and Schedule

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SWFWMD Priority List and Schedule

Current: 2019



Proposed: 2020



Posted on SWFWMD web site at <https://www.sfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/water-quality-and-recreation>

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SWFWMD Draft Priority List Update – “Completions”

- 2019/2020 MFLs
 - 5 of 6 Northern Tampa Bay lake (Calm, Charles, Church, Echo, Sapphire) reevaluations
 - 40 of 41 Northern Tampa Bay wetland reevaluations
 - 14 unchanged, 19 revised and 7 repealed; plus 2 new adopted
 - Chassahowitzka River/Chassahowitzka Spring Group/Blind Spring reevaluation
 - Homosassa River/Homosassa Spring Group reevaluation
 - Rainbow River/Rainbow Spring Group emergency rule replacement
- 2020 Reservation
 - Lake Hancock/Lower Saddle Creek

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SWFWMD Draft Priority List Update – “Changes”

- 3-year list to be submitted to DEP
 - MFLs scheduled for 2021, 2022, 2023, with some 2020 “hold-overs”
 - WFL maintain an extended list of MFLs/reservations for internal use
- Rescheduled MFLs
 - Lake Linda (Northern Tampa Bay) reevaluation moved from 2019 to 2020
 - Shell Creek (lower segment) moved from 2020 to 2021
 - Bradley River (lower segment) moved from 2021 to 2023
 - Manatee River (lower segment) moved from 2021 to 2023

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SWFWMD Draft Priority List Update – “Changes” (continued)

- Deleted MFLs
 - 5 Northern Tampa Bay lake (Barbara, Crenshaw, Ellen, Helen, Mound) reevaluations previously scheduled for 2021
- Added MFLs
 - 1 lake (Marion) reevaluation in 2020
 - 3 SWUCA lake (North Lake Wales, Verona, Tulane) reevaluations in 2022

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SWFWMD Proposed Priority Water Bodies

- 2020 MFLs
 - 6 Northern Tampa Bay lake (Cypress, Garden, Halfmoon, Jackson, Linda (moved from 2019), Strawberry) reevaluations*
 - 1 Levy County lake (Marion) reevaluation*
 - 1 Northern Tampa Bay wetland reevaluation*
 - Peace River (lower segment) reevaluation*
- 2021 MFLs
 - Shell Creek (lower segment) moved from 2020

* Reevaluation may be advanced/completed in 2020

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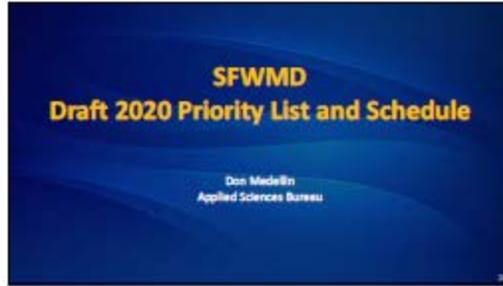
SWFWMD Proposed Priority Water Bodies

- 2022 MFLs
 - 3 lake (1 Lake Wales, Verona, Tulane) reevaluations
 - Little Manatee River (lower segment)
 - Little Manatee River (upper segment)
- 2023 MFLs
 - Charlie Creek
 - Horse Creek
 - SWUCA Saltwater Intrusion Minimum Aquifer Level reevaluation
 - Bradley River (lower segment) (rescheduled from 2021)
 - Manatee River (lower segment) (rescheduled from 2021)

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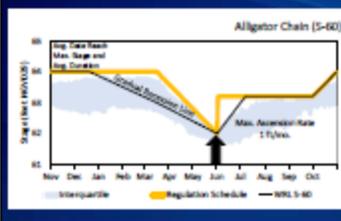
Kissimmee River and Chain of Lakes - Fish and Wildlife

- Fish Community**
 - Approximately 50+ species
- Water Birds**
 - 68 species of wetland dependent birds
 - 14 species of wading birds including Federally threatened wood stork
 - 16 species of ducks
- Amphibians and Reptiles**
 - 24 species
- Mammals**
 - 4 species wetland dependent



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Water Reservation Lines and Historical Stages



- Protecting maximum lake stages and durations
- Protecting breeding season stages
- Protecting minimum lake stages
- Protecting transition from minimum to maximum and lake refill capacity

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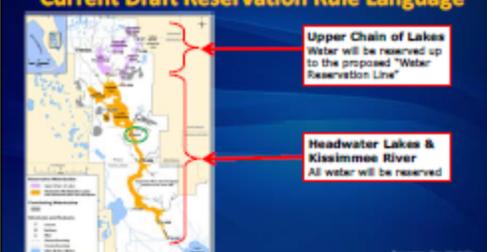
Water Reservation Line Example



Month	Regulation Schedule (ft)	Water Reservation Line (ft)
Nov	55.5	55.5
Dec	55.5	55.5
Jan	55.5	55.5
Feb	55.5	55.5
Mar	55.5	55.5
Apr	55.5	55.5
May	53.5	55.5
Jun	53.5	55.5
Jul	55.5	55.5
Aug	55.5	55.5
Sep	55.5	55.5
Oct	55.5	55.5

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Current Draft Reservation Rule Language



- Upper Chain of Lakes**
Water will be reserved up to the proposed "Water Reservation Line"
- Headwater Lakes & Kissimmee River**
All water will be reserved

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Example: Withdrawals from Shingle Creek



- Date: Sept. 1st
- Actual stage in Lake Tohopekalga: 53.85 ft
- Water reservation stage for Lake Tohopekalga, 53.5 ft
- Actual stage higher than water reservation line; therefore, withdrawals may be allowed, subject to the downstream checks

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Project Milestones

- January 2019 - New modeling tool: Upper Kissimmee Operations Simulation Model (UK-OPS)
 - Used as a regulatory tool
 - Incorporates the revised water reservation lines
 - Evaluated different hypothetical withdrawal scenarios
- March 2020 - Updated technical document to include the best available data
- March 2020 - Revised rules (Chapter 40E-10, F.A.C., and Applicant's Handbook)
- April 17, 2020 Rule Development Workshop #3
- June 9, 2020 Rule Development Workshop #4

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Kissimmee River and Chain of Lakes Water Reservation

- Currently in rule development process
- Draft rules and supporting technical documents are posted on the website:
- <https://www.sfwmd.gov/our-work/water-reservations>
- Regionally significant waterbodies – ~177,500 acres in size
- Reservation will protect the existing public investment of nearly \$800 Million for the Kissimmee River Restoration
- Construction Completion Spring 2021 - Kissimmee River Restoration
- Rule adoption targeted for December 2020

Presentor Don Medella 37

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NEXT STEPS

Kissimmee Rule Development Schedule	
Activity	Date
Public Workshop #5	September 3, 2020
Complete SERC Evaluation	September 21, 2020
Notice of Proposed Rule *	October 8, 2020
Rule Effective Date **	December 3, 2020

* Governing Board action required
** Provided no changes are made and no request for public hearing is timely received

Presentor Don Medella 38

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Stakeholder Comment

Written comments may be submitted to/by:

SJRWMD	Oct. 1, 2020	Andrew Sutherland - asuther@sjrwmd.com
SWFWMD	Sept. 23, 2020	Doug Leeper - doug.leeper@watermatters.org
SPWMD	Sept. 24, 2020	Don Medella - dmedell@sfwmd.gov

Governing Board meetings open to the public:

SJRWMD	Oct. 13, 2020	Palatka
SWFWMD	Oct. 20, 2020	Brooksville
SPWMD	Oct. 10, 2020	West Palm Beach

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EXTRA SLIDE(S)

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2020 CFWI RWSP Schedule

- February: Steering Committee approved release of draft 2020 CFWI RWSP
- February/March: Presentation to District Governing Boards
- March to May: Public comment period
- April: Host four public workshops
- May to August: Public comments/responses and update of draft
- August/September: Management Oversight Committee review of updated draft
- October: Steering Committee approval of final draft 2020 CFWI RWSP
- November: Governing Board approvals of final draft 2020 CFWI RWSP



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