

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

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

August 28, 2026



Agenda

- Introductions and background..... Andrew Sutherland, SJRWMD
- SJRWMD MFLs Priority List Andrew Sutherland, SJRWMD
- SWFWMD MFLs Priority List.....Gabe Herrick, SWFWMD
- SFWMD MFLs Priority List..... James Beerens, SFWMD
- Stakeholder comments
- Adjourn

Statutory Directive for Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels (MFLs)

Water management districts or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (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.”

Subsection 373.042 (1), Florida Statutes

District Priority Lists and Schedules Meet Statutory and Rule Requirements

- **MFLs Priority lists include:**

- Waters that are regionally significant, and have the potential for significant harm due to water withdrawal
- Waters experiencing or reasonably expected to experience adverse impacts
- Identification of MFLs the districts will voluntarily subject to independent scientific peer review
- Identification of MFLs systems that have the potential to be affected by withdrawals from an adjacent water management district

District Priority Lists and Schedules Meet Statutory and Rule Requirements

- Annual priority list and schedule required by statute for each district
- Submitted to District Governing Boards for approval
- Submitted to Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for review by November 15, 2026
- Districts are seeking stakeholder input
- *Written comments may be submitted to/by:*

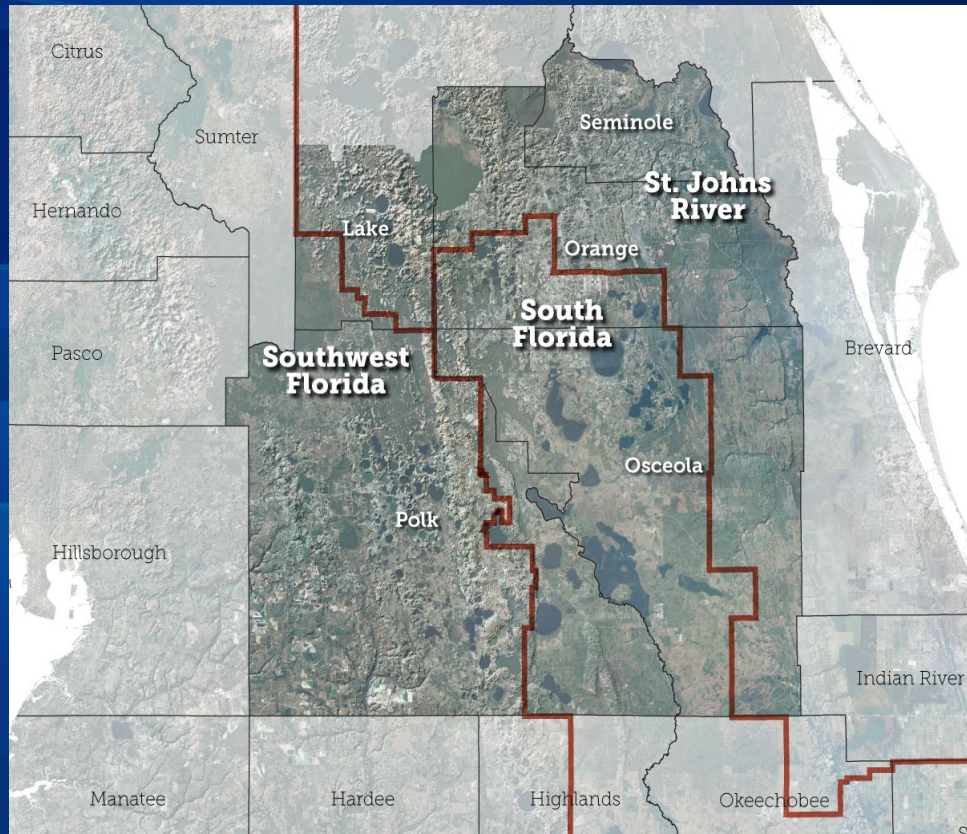
SJRWMD Sep 30, 2026, Andrew Sutherland, asutherl@sjrwmd.com

SWFWMD Sep 30, 2026, Gabe Herrick, gabe.herrick@swfwmd.state.fl.us

SFWMD Sep 26, 2026, James Beerens, jabeeren@sfwmd.gov

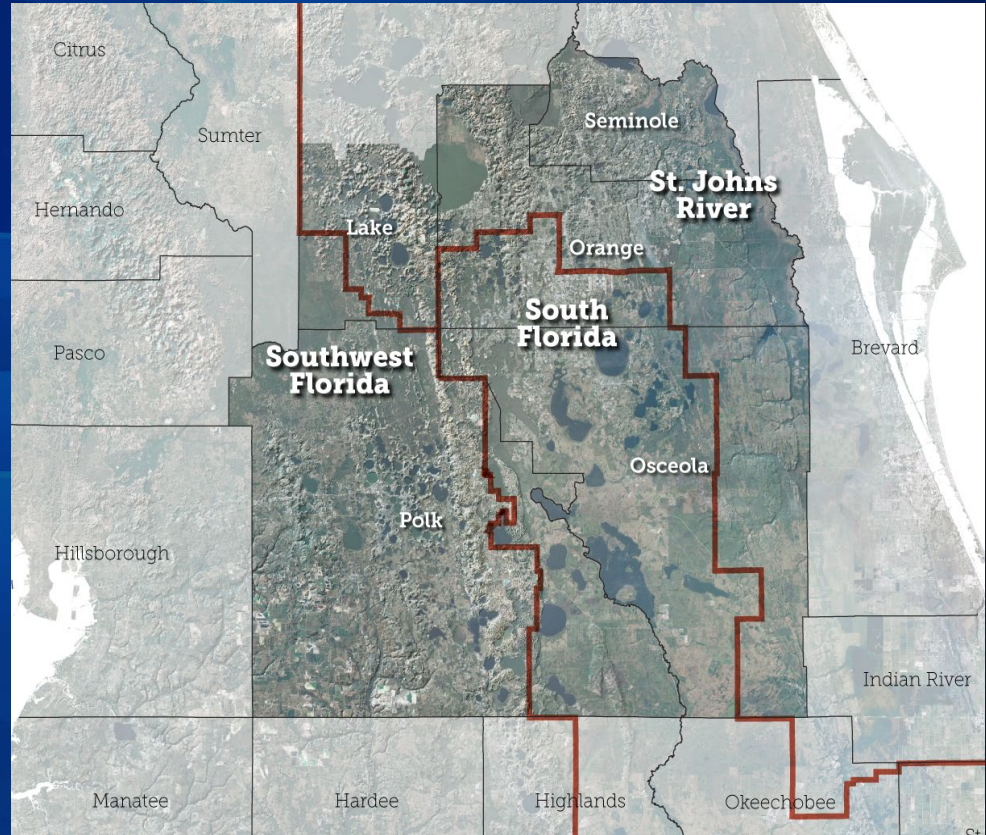
Central Florida Water Initiative

- Collaborative process among DEP, SJRWMD, SFWMD, SWFWMD, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (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



Central Florida Water Initiative (continued)

- Chapter 62-41, Florida Administrative Code, effective on June 21, 2021
- These rules address the consumptive uses of water within the CFWI area
- They also address a uniform process for setting minimum flows/levels and reservations within the CFWI area
- Meeting between WMDs and DEP to discuss MFLs is required each year



SJRWMD

Draft 2026 MFLs Priority List and Schedule

SJRWMD MFLs webpage:

<https://www.sjrwmd.com/minimumflowsandlevels/>

Updates

- **Wekiva River Basin Systems: move to 2028**
- **Sylvan Lake: move to 2028**
- **Recommend moving these systems due to their status (P or R), need for a Strategy, and time required to work with stakeholders to develop water supply and water resource development projects necessary to recover these systems.**

Updates

- **Upper Ocklawaha River Basin Lakes** (Lake County):
 - Changing Priority Year to 2029
- **Lake Weir** (Marion County):
 - Changing Priority Year from 2028 to 2027
- **Johns Lake** (Lake and Orange Counties)
 - Seeking governing board approval for adoption **Sept.** GB (9/8/2026)
- **Lake Prevatt** (Orange County):
 - Seeking governing board approval for adoption **Oct.** GB (10/13/2026)

SJRWMD 2026 MFLs Priority List and Schedule

Priority Year	New or Re-Evaluation	Water Body Name	County	Voluntary Peer Review	Cross-Boundary Impacts?
2026	New	Johns Lake*	Orange / Lake	Yes	Yes
	Re-Evaluation	Lake Prevatt*	Orange	Yes	Yes
2027	Re-Evaluation	Lake Weir	Marion	Yes	Yes
2028	New	Little Wekiva River (and assoc. springs)*	Seminole / Orange	Yes	Yes
	Re-Evaluation	Wekiva River at SR46*	Seminole / Lake	Yes	Yes
	Re-Evaluation	Wekiwa Springs (and assoc. spring) *	Seminole / Orange	Yes	Yes
	Re-Evaluation	Rock Springs*	Orange	Yes	Yes
	Re-Evaluation	Sylvan Lake*	Seminole	Yes	Yes
2029	New	Lake Apopka*	Lake	Yes	Yes
	New	Lake Griffin	Lake	Yes	Yes
	New	Lake Harris (or other Burrell Basin Lakes)	Lake	Yes	Yes

* CFWI water bodies

Adopted MFLs and New Methods

Focusing on adopted MFLs

- **MFLs Network Optimization** process to identify sentinel systems
- **Environmental recon** to verify older (20 – 30 yr) MFLs metrics
- **Model development and assessment** of older MFLs
- **Adopted MFLs** that may be in Prevention or Recovery based on updated modeling and assessment
- **Ongoing work** may lead to Priority List additions

New and Evolving Methods

- **Statistical modeling, biomonitoring, field data collection, flowing systems, etc...**

SWFWMD

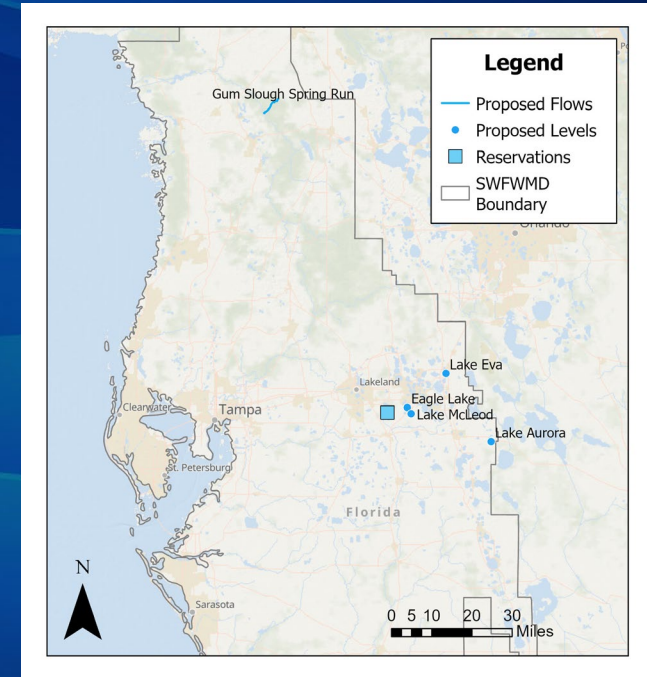
Draft 2026 Priority List and Schedule

SWFWMD MFLs webpage:

<https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/mfls>

2026

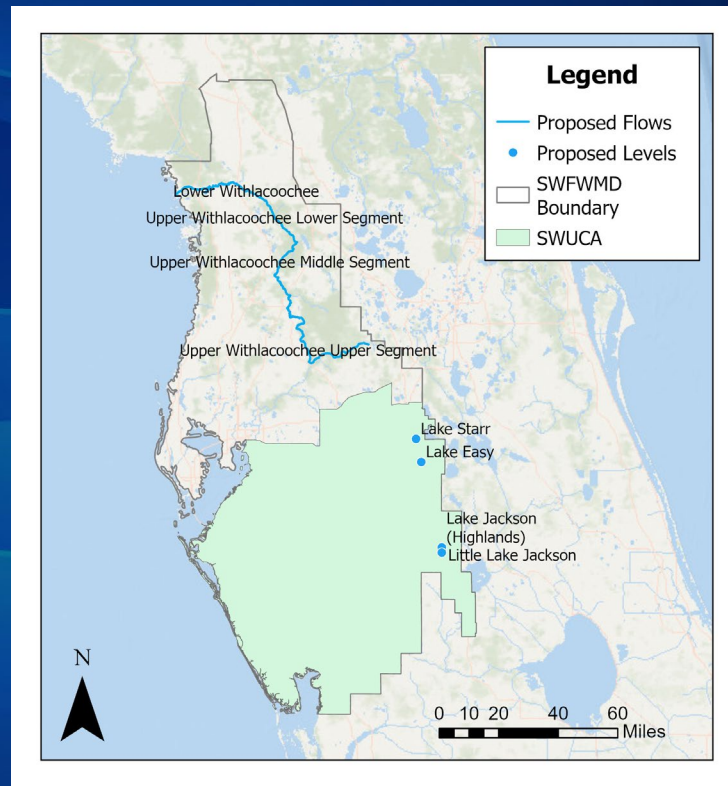
System Name	Type	County(s)
Aurora, Lake	Reevaluation	Polk
Eagle Lake	Reevaluation	Polk
Eva, Lake	Reevaluation	Polk
McLeod, Lake	Reevaluation	Polk
Gum Slough Spring Run/Group	Reevaluation	Sumter, Marion
Lake Hancock / Saddle Creek	Reservation	Polk



Upper and Lower Withlacoochee and SWUCA SWIMAL MFLs rescheduled to 2027.

2027

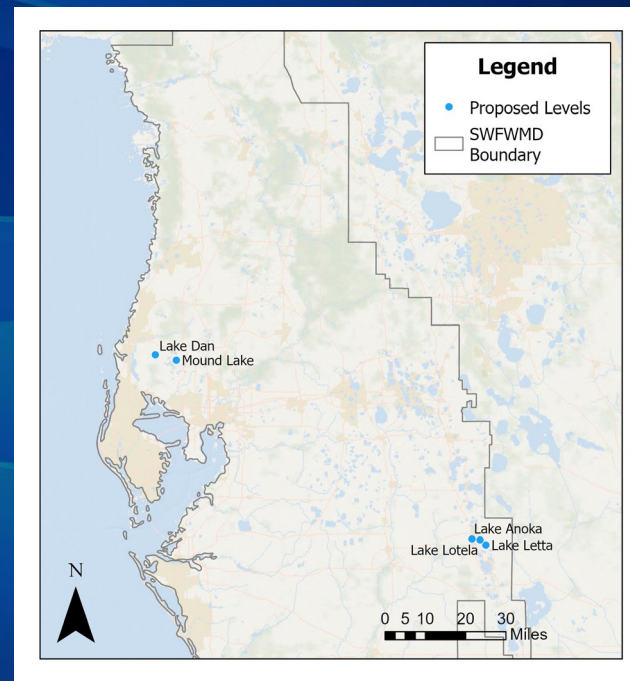
System Name	Type	County(s)
Easy, Lake	Reevaluation	Polk
Jackson, Lake	Reevaluation	Highlands
Little Jackson, Lake	Reevaluation	Highlands
Starr, Lake	Reevaluation	Polk
Upper Withlacoochee (three segments)	New	Citrus, Sumter, Marion, Hernando, Pasco, Lake, Polk
Lower Withlacoochee	New	Citrus, Levy
SWUCA SWIMAL	Reevaluation	Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota



Upper Withlacoochee, Lower Withlacoochee, and SWUCA SWIMAL rescheduled from 2026 to 2027. Crystal River/Kings Bay rescheduled from 2027 to 2029.

2028

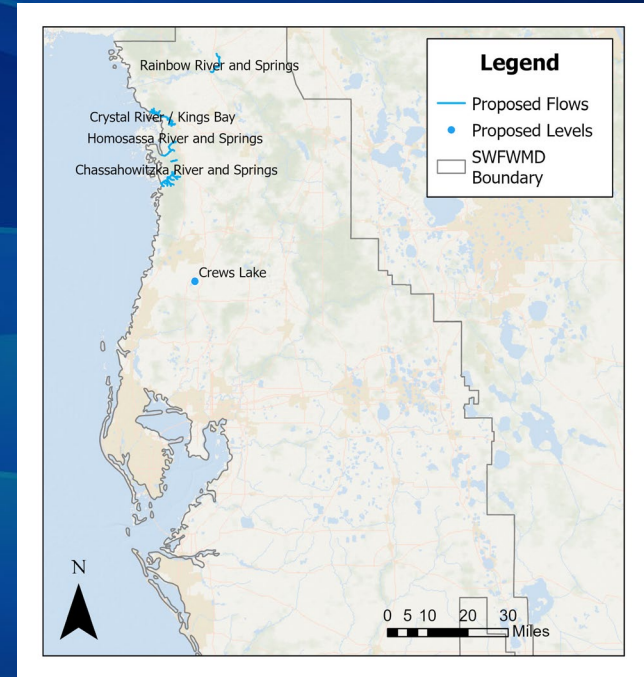
System Name	Type	County(s)
Lake Anoka	Reevaluation	Highlands
Lake Dan	Reevaluation	Hillsborough
Lake Letta	Reevaluation	Highlands
Lake Lotela	Reevaluation	Highlands
Mound Lake	Reevaluation	Hillsborough



There are no changes from the previous list.

2029

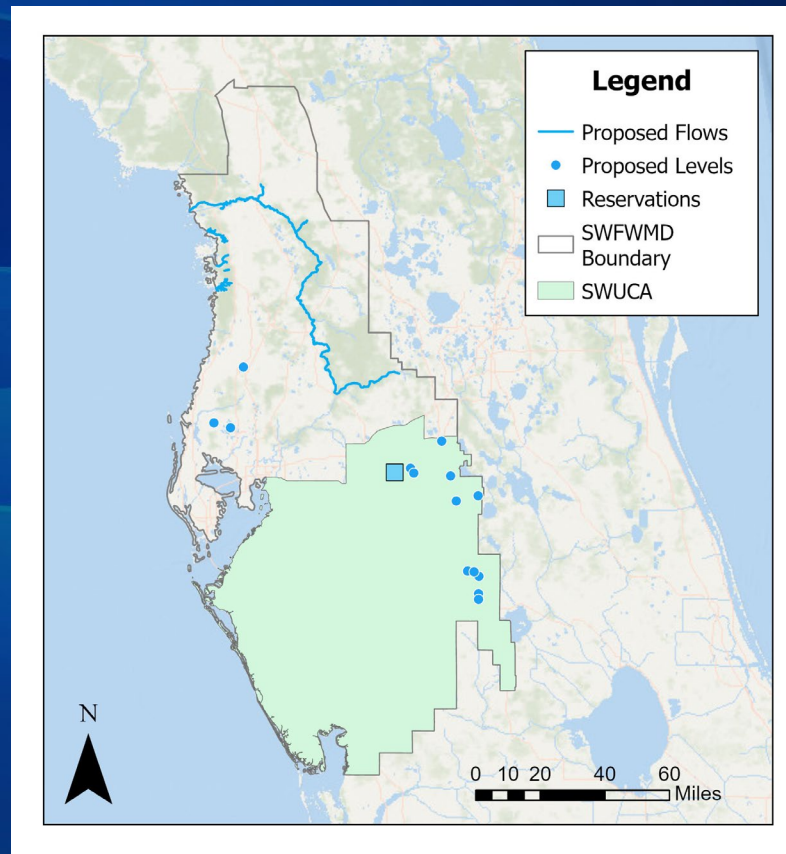
System Name	Type	County(s)
Crews Lake	Reevaluation	Pasco
Homosassa River and Springs	Reevaluation	Citrus
Chassahowitzka River and Springs	Reevaluation	Citrus, Hernando
Rainbow River and Springs	Reevaluation	Marion
Crystal River/Kings Bay	Reevaluation	Citrus



Crews Lake, Homosassa, Chassahowitzka, and Rainbow are new additions. Crystal River/Kings Bay rescheduled from 2027.

Proposed MFLs & Reservations through 2029

System type	Count
Lakes	14 (6)
Freshwater Rivers	4 (1)
Estuaries	4
Springs	6 (1)
Aquifers	1 (1)
Reservations	1
Total	30 (9)



SFWMD

Draft 2026 Priority List and Schedule

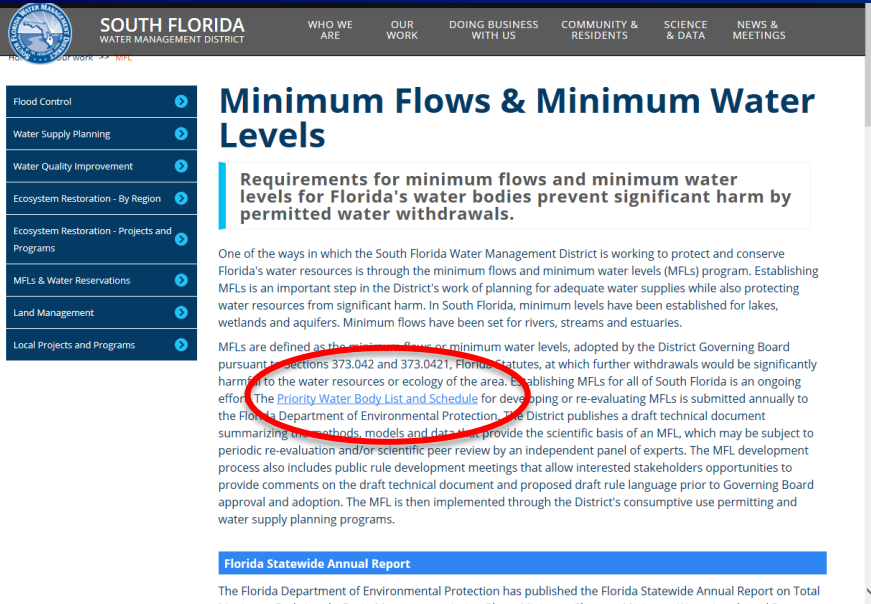
MFL Website:

www.sfwmd.gov/our-work/mfl

Reservations Website:

www.sfwmd.gov/our-work/water-reservations

SFWMD Approved Priority List and Schedule Posted in Two Locations on Website



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

WHO WE ARE | OUR WORK | DOING BUSINESS WITH US | COMMUNITY & RESIDENTS | SCIENCE & DATA | NEWS & MEETINGS

Minimum Flows & Minimum Water Levels

Requirements for minimum flows and minimum water levels for Florida's water bodies prevent significant harm by permitted water withdrawals.

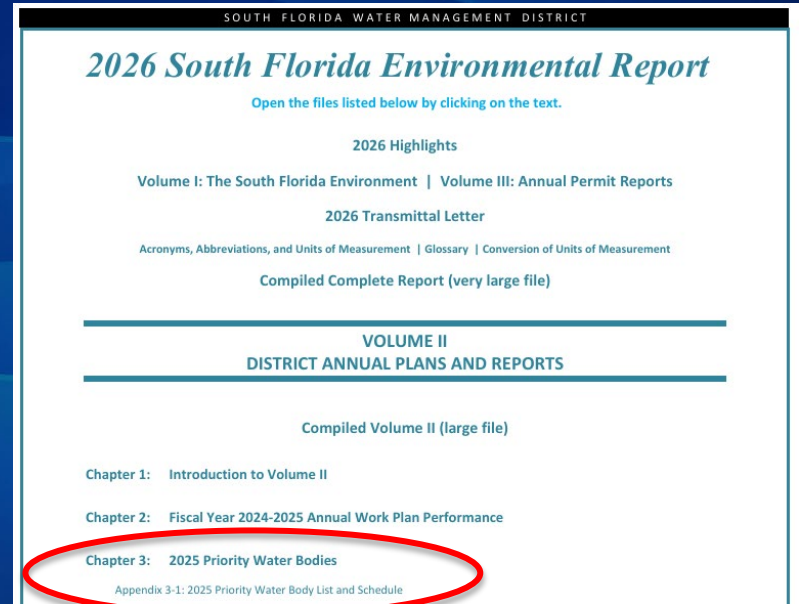
One of the ways in which the South Florida Water Management District is working to protect and conserve Florida's water resources is through the minimum flows and minimum water levels (MFLs) program. Establishing MFLs is an important step in the District's work of planning for adequate water supplies while also protecting water resources from significant harm. In South Florida, minimum levels have been established for lakes, wetlands and aquifers. Minimum flows have been set for rivers, streams and estuaries.

MFLs are defined as the minimum flows or minimum water levels, adopted by the District Governing Board pursuant to Sections 373.042 and 373.0421, Florida Statutes, at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area. Establishing MFLs for all of South Florida is an ongoing effort. The **Priority Water Body List and Schedule** for developing or re-evaluating MFLs is submitted annually to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The District publishes a draft technical document summarizing the methods, models and data that provide the scientific basis of an MFL, which may be subject to periodic re-evaluation and/or scientific peer review by an independent panel of experts. The MFL development process also includes public rule development meetings that allow interested stakeholders opportunities to provide comments on the draft technical document and proposed draft rule language prior to Governing Board approval and adoption. The MFL is then implemented through the District's consumptive use permitting and water supply planning programs.

Florida Statewide Annual Report

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection has published the Florida Statewide Annual Report on Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for various pollutants in Florida's water bodies. This report provides information on the progress of TMDL implementation and the status of water quality in Florida's water bodies.

<https://www.sfwmd.gov/our-work/mfl>



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

2026 South Florida Environmental Report

Open the files listed below by clicking on the text.

2026 Highlights

Volume I: The South Florida Environment | Volume III: Annual Permit Reports

2026 Transmittal Letter

Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Units of Measurement | Glossary | Conversion of Units of Measurement

Compiled Complete Report (very large file)

VOLUME II

DISTRICT ANNUAL PLANS AND REPORTS

Compiled Volume II (large file)

Chapter 1: Introduction to Volume II

Chapter 2: Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Annual Work Plan Performance

Chapter 3: 2025 Priority Water Bodies

Appendix 3-1: 2025 Priority Water Body List and Schedule

https://sfer-docs.sfwmd.gov/2026_sfer_final/sfer_toc_v2.pdf

SFWMD Draft 2026 Priority List & Schedule

- There are no waterbodies proposed for the 2026 Priority List within the Central Florida Water Initiative Area
- Districtwide Priority List will be presented at the October 8 Governing Board meeting

Stakeholder Comments / Questions?

Stakeholder Comment

Written comments may be submitted to/by:

SJRWMD	Sep 30, 2026, Andrew Sutherland, asutherl@sjrwmd.com
SWFWMD	Sep 30, 2026, Gabe Herrick, gabe.herrick@swfwmd.state.fl.us
SFWMD	Sep 26, 2026, James Beerens, jabeeren@sfwmd.gov

Governing Board meetings open to the public:

SJRWMD	Oct 13, 2026	Palatka
SWFWMD	Oct 27, 2026	Tampa
SFWMD	Oct 8, 2026	West Palm Beach



THANK YOU