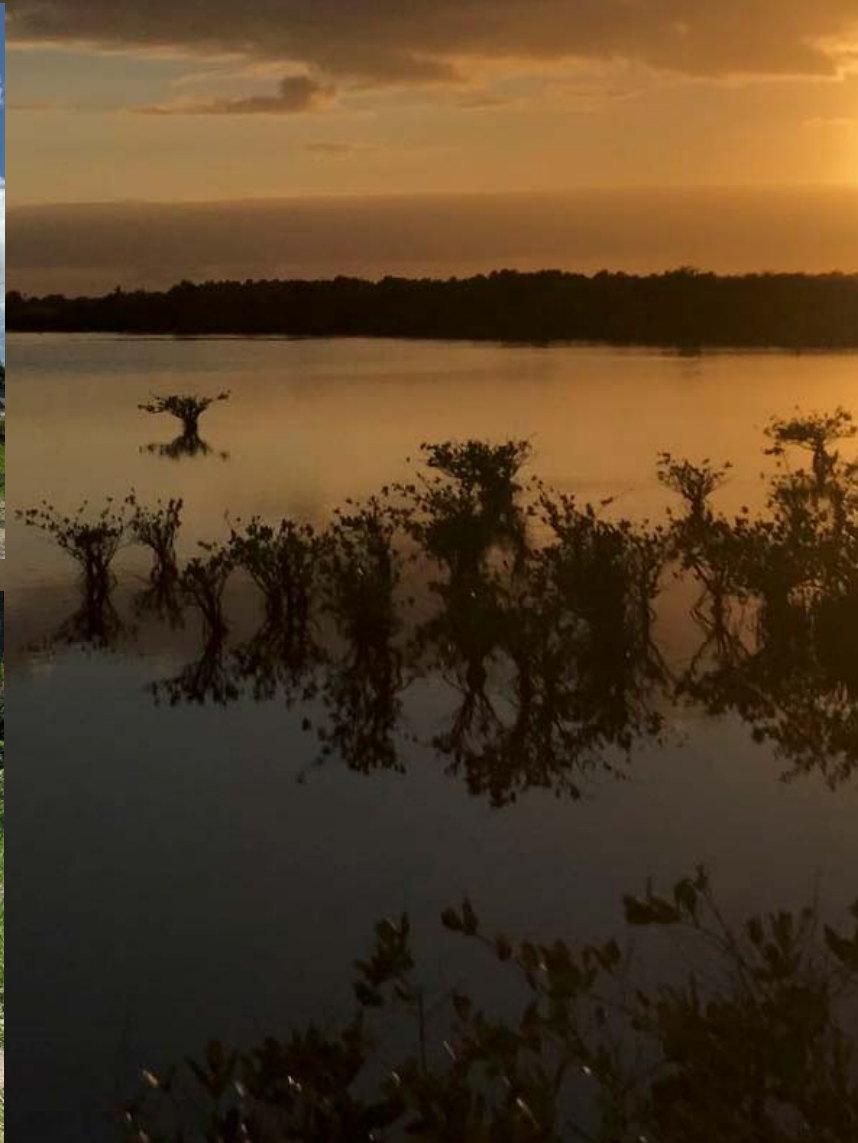




# ST. JOHNS RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Fiscal Year 2026  
Cost-Share  
Program Guidance



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# FISCAL YEAR 2026 COST-SHARE PROGRAM GUIDANCE

## INTRODUCTION

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The Governor and Legislature recognize the importance of developing alternative water supplies for the growing economy and health of Florida's natural systems. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the state's five water management districts (Districts) share a responsibility to identify and implement conservation, reuse, and other alternative water supply and water resource development projects.

This guidance is provided for applicants to the Fiscal Year 2026 Cost-Share Program. In accordance with Chapter 373, Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Governing Board (Board) may participate and cooperate with county governments, municipalities, water supply authorities, and other interested public and private entities in water management programs and projects of mutual benefit, provided such programs and projects are consistent with the St. Johns River Water Management District's (District) statutory authority and will ensure proper development, utilization, and conservation of water resources and ecology within the jurisdictional boundaries of the District.

Over the past four legislative sessions, Governor DeSantis and the Florida Legislature, have approved \$170 million statewide to develop water resource and water supply projects to help protect water resources and meet the needs of existing and future users. In anticipation of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 legislative appropriations, the District is accepting applications for alternative water supply (AWS) projects, water conservation (WC) projects/programs, and projects that directly benefit a spring.

Funding (up to 50% match) may be provided to assist with the construction costs of projects that support any of the following:

- Alternative water supply (AWS) or water resource development (WRD)
- Water conservation (including the installation of water conserving devices and other implementation costs)
- Springs enhancement, restoration, and/or protection (including water quality and natural systems projects)

## Funding Eligibility

To qualify for the cost-share program, municipalities and counties must have adopted a landscape irrigation ordinance that is consistent with the District's model irrigation ordinance:

<https://www.sjrwmd.com/static/waterconservation/Model-Water-Conservation-Ordinance.pdf>

Utilities must have an established water conserving rate structure or a condition of service to address irrigation conservation.

For phased projects, the overall master plan identifying each phase should be included in each application submittal along with a summary of the status of the previous phase(s), whether complete or not. The summary should contain, at a minimum, whether the previous phase(s) received District cost-share funding, percent complete of the phase(s), and an updated schedule for completion as well as reasons for any schedule delays. **Each phase must have demonstrable (stand alone) benefits associated with that phase only.** Benefits and cost-effectiveness must be calculated based on the individual project phase. Projects that are permitted and ready to begin construction will receive a higher score during the application review process.

Note: This is a State of Florida reimbursement program, with the entire project scope expected to be completed within the funding period, regardless of amount awarded. There is no guarantee the applicant will be awarded the amount requested. The applicant should indicate in section C-1 of the application whether funds are available to accomplish the project if an amount less than that requested is recommended.

## Projects/Work Funded

For project costs to be eligible for reimbursement, the related construction activity must occur during the term of the Agreement.

The following types of project costs will generally be considered for funding: construction, construction engineering and inspection services, materials directly related to construction of the project, improved nutrient treatment processes of existing wastewater treatment facilities, pumping stations and storage facilities, transmission and distribution systems, plumbing retrofits (conservation-related), improved landscape irrigation efficiencies, and water quality best management practices that provide water quality benefits to springs. Feasibility and land acquisition projects may be eligible for funding if they relate to one of the project types listed above and are necessary to implement a regional project. For funding consideration of project types not listed, applicants are encouraged to contact one of the District's project managers.

The following costs are examples of those that will generally **not** be considered eligible for cost-share funding: software for planning and data collection purposes that does not lead to a calculated and direct conservation benefit, preparation of bids, geotechnical investigations, augmentation wells, emergency generators, meter replacement including AMI / AMR meters, easement acquisition, contamination assessments or remediation, monitoring costs once construction is complete, debt service, legal and lobbying fees, impact fees, capital charges,

impact fees (see below) operation and maintenance activities, construction of new potable water mains, biosolids, or projects required for mitigation purposes.

While these are general examples there are exceptions. Please contact District staff for clarification as it pertains to a specific project. Additional information on ineligible costs is included in each of the project specific sections below. The applicant is encouraged to contact a District representative for guidance to ensure whether costs are reimbursable. Costs that are excluded from funding will not be credited toward recipient's portion of the cost-share.

Note: Impact fees are not reimbursable and are defined as a one-time cost imposed on all new residential and commercial construction (or existing residents where septic is being converted to sewer) by local governments to defray the cost of growth's "impact" on vital services such as water and sewer, or other infrastructure needs. They are the responsibility of the applicant.

## Applications

The complete application using the online application system is available at:  
<https://www.sjrwmd.com/localgovernments/funding/districtwide/>

Applications must be submitted prior to 5 p.m. on January 31, 2025.

If your project is selected by the FDEP for funding, you will be contacted to create a statement of work using information from your application. Therefore, a complete and detailed application will facilitate timely completion of a contract.

## PROJECT TYPES

### 1. Alternative Water Supply

The Florida Legislature has annually approved funding for development of water supply and water resource development projects. Eligible projects for consideration are construction-ready and provide an alternative water supply benefit within the District. These projects must be submitted as part of the District's annual cost-share program. All projects must be vetted by the District and approved by the District's Board prior to being submitted to the FDEP for funding consideration. The funding priority is for regional projects in the areas of greatest need and those that provide the greatest benefit to the protection of Florida's natural systems. The water management districts, review requests for funding in a public and transparent process.

The District will consider the following factors in the selection of AWS projects:

- Projects that provide regional benefits
- Projects that benefit water bodies with adopted Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs), particularly those that are in recovery or prevention.
- Projects that provide dual benefits to water supply and water quality

- Projects with complementary efforts, such as AWS projects that also provide flood protection, or recreational benefits.
- Cost-effectiveness
- The return on investment, i.e. the amount of funding the state grant will leverage by District and/or local cooperators, while recognizing the funding limitations of REDI or other economically disadvantaged communities

Eligible projects are alternative water supply projects that are submitted by a water management district, approved by a water management district governing board, and are one of the following project types:

- Reclaimed Water
- Stormwater
- Surface Water
- Brackish Groundwater
- Desalination
- Other Non-Traditional Source(s)
- Other Water Quantity

AWS projects will typically achieve many of the following objectives:

- Assist waterbodies, whose status is in Prevention or Recovery, in meeting established MFLs
- Help meet projected water demand in a sustainable manner
- Maintain the perpetual use of source water through replacement of original systems with newer technologies or methods that are more efficient or allow sustainable use of the source water
- Develop alternative supplies in a cost-effective manner
- Achieve an economy of scale and diversify water sources for reliability and sustainability (multi-jurisdictional water supply system projects)

Projects that are listed in an MFL Prevention or Recovery Strategy or are listed in a Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP) will score in the High category for Benefit. Projects that are listed in an Outstanding Florida Spring (OFS) MFL Prevention or Recovery Strategy approved by the Board after June 30, 2016 will receive the highest point value in the High category. Projects that benefit other MFL waterbodies or are listed in a proposed MFL Prevention or Recovery Strategy or Water Supply Plan will score in the Medium category.

Provide a description of the AWS project and the water source that it is replacing. Provide evidence that the proposed alternative source has the quantity available for the proposed project. Estimate when the project benefits will be realized and explain the basis for the estimate. Also, provide supporting documentation for the project's benefit calculations. If your project is located within a springshed, provide calculations based on the methodology specified in FDEP's October 2017 Springs Funding Guidance (Guidance) document, found here:

<https://floridadep.gov/springs/Funding>.

## 2. Water Conservation

Water conservation is the prevention and reduction of water use to improve efficiency of use and to avoid using water when not needed for the intended purpose. The District seeks to leverage available funds to encourage projects that result in measurable water savings. Eligible projects include the following examples (this is not an exhaustive list, and applicants are encouraged to contact staff for other project types that may qualify):

- Residential water conservation projects, such as the replacement of older less efficient plumbing fixtures and devices with newer higher efficiency models, or improved landscape irrigation system efficiency.
- Recreational/aesthetic water use projects that focus on improving the efficiency of irrigation systems or replacing systems with more efficient types.
- Commercial / Industrial / Institutional projects vary from manufacturing and cooling processes to typical indoor and outdoor conservation (plumbing and irrigation).

Water conservation projects result in measurable water savings and must not include the use of an alternative source. **Projects that include only staff time or labor hours will not be funded.** Projects must include the purchase of materials or approved devices. The applicant must describe how the project will result in water savings and provide supporting documentation to prove a benefit. Water conservation projects that support an MFL Prevention or Recovery Strategy or that show a documented savings of 20% or more will score in the highest category for Benefit. Projects that are listed in a RWSP will score in the Medium category.

## 3. Springs Enhancement, Restoration, and/or Protection

Since 2014, the Florida Legislature has annually approved \$50 million for Springs Restoration Funding that benefit OFS within the District.

The water management districts, including the District, review submitted requests for funding in a public and transparent process. Eligible projects for consideration are construction-ready and provide a benefit to the springs within the District. All projects must be vetted by the District and approved by the District's Board prior to being submitted to the FDEP for funding consideration. Eligible project types include water quality, alternative water supply, and water conservation.

Qualifying projects include water quality improvement, water supply, water conservation, and natural systems projects that provide a measurable benefit to springs within the District. The District and FDEP will consider the following factors in the selection of springs projects:

- Nutrient reductions to improve water quality
- Measurable quantity (flow) improvements
- Applicant match commitment
- Readiness to proceed in a timely manner
- Proximity to a priority focus area (PFA) or spring(s)
- Cost-effectiveness
- Whether the project is part of a restoration, prevention or recovery plan (i.e., BMAP, RAP, or MFL Recovery or Prevention Strategy)

- Whether the project is part of a multi-year program or (phased) project implementation plan

Eligible projects can include:

- Water quality projects, including:
  - Those that treat stormwater runoff where no treatment currently exists
  - In-lake or in-stream water quality improvements through implementation of best management practices
  - Improvement of the treatment efficiency of an existing wastewater facility/system
  - Septic-to-sewer
- Natural systems projects
- Projects benefitting MFL waterbodies

### *Springs Water Quality Projects*

The District seeks to leverage available funds for projects to address springs water quality issues. Projects should focus on water quality improvements through nutrient-load reduction, for example:

- Projects that treat stormwater runoff where no treatment currently exists
- In-lake or in-stream water quality improvements through implementation of best management practices
- Improvement of the treatment efficiency of an existing wastewater facility/system
- Connection of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems OSTDS to central sewer
- Projects that support local governmental efforts in the implementation of a BMAP, Reasonable Assurance Plan (RAP), SWIM Plan or other water quality enhancement plans

Projects that reduce nutrient loading within or upstream of a spring that has an established nutrient Pollutant Load Reduction Goal or TMDL, or an adopted BMAP, RAP, or SWIM plan will score in the high category for benefit. Cost effectiveness will be scored independent of benefit scoring.

The following information is required for all water quality nutrient-load reduction projects.

- Relationship to any nutrient TMDLs, as well as information on the TMDL, RAP, and BMAP status (i.e., approved or pending)
- Description of the water quality improvement and jurisdictional extent (i.e., regional project that includes multiple jurisdictions or an intermediate or local project for a single jurisdiction)
- Project and watershed acreages, where applicable
- Methodology and estimates for the pre-project and the post-project nutrient loadings for each targeted pollutant (i.e., total nitrogen [TN], total phosphorous [TP]). Past projects have utilized the BMPTRAINS or STEPL models to develop estimates.

Refer to the following websites for more information about these two models:

- BMPTRAINS for TN and TP nutrient loads: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/bmprains/>
- STEPL for nutrient and sediment loads:



[https://19january2021snapshot.epa.gov/nps/spreadsheet-tool-estimating-pollutant-loads-step1\\_.html](https://19january2021snapshot.epa.gov/nps/spreadsheet-tool-estimating-pollutant-loads-step1_.html)

If your project is located in a springshed, provide calculations based on the methodology specified in DEP's October 2017 Guidance document:

<https://floridadep.gov/springs/Funding>

If the proposed project is listed within a BMAP, provide the unique DEP ProjID number (e.g., 2390). If your project is part of a BMAP project but is not identical, please provide the BMAP ProjID number that most closely corresponds to your project and explain the relationship between the two in section B-2. If you have any questions about this requirement, please contact Lou Donnangelo at the phone number or email address provided at the end of this document.

### *Springs Septic-to-Sewer Projects*

To score in the High category for Benefit, the project must benefit a water body that is listed as impaired for nutrients or be located within the PFA of an OFS springshed. Projects will be ranked on proximity to these waterbodies as well as other hydrologic characteristics. The overall benefit to mission rankings of high, medium, or low will be assigned based upon a composite scoring.

#### **Requirements for application:**

Entities submitting septic-to-sewer projects must have a local ordinance, in accordance with Subsection 381.00655, F.S., that requires mandatory hookup after written notification of sewerage availability. If such an ordinance is in development, choose "In Progress" on the application and attach a description of the status in Section D.

Maps should be uploaded in Section D of the online application system. Provide a map (GIS shapefile preferred, if possible) showing the project area with the anticipated number and type of septic tanks (commercial or residential) that will be abandoned prior to property connection to sewer. For commercial parcels, also include the type of commercial and the square footage of the building.

Note: District staff will calculate the nutrient reduction for each septic-to-sewer project based on the information submitted in the application. District staff's calculation will be used to evaluate the core mission benefit and the project's cost effectiveness.

### *Springs Natural Systems Projects*

A natural systems project involves the restoration or enhancement of natural wetlands, uplands, or surface waters. Typical projects may include habitat restoration, exotic and nuisance species removal in a native community, native species planting in a native community, wetland hydrological restoration, native species shoreline stabilization, and oyster reef creation. Describe the project location and attach two maps: a regional location

map and a more detailed project area map (additional maps may be provided as needed to more clearly show the project location or attributes). Provide all details related to the restoration or enhancement proposed including the acreage of the project. Funding is not available for compensatory water quality treatment, required mitigation, or non-native community types (e.g., landscaped parks, residential neighborhoods).

Natural systems scoring will consider the following components:

- Project targets specific threatened or endangered species
- Project restores rare habitat (Florida Natural Areas Inventory Listing of S1, S2, or S3)
- Project involves a wildlife corridor between areas of national, state, or regional ecological significance
- Management plan is or will be developed to maintain ecological viability of the project site
- Project includes a volunteer labor and education component
- Project area has strong potential for recharge or has the potential to enhance water resources
- Project assists an MFL in prevention or recovery
- Project enhances / restores an existing natural community through planting of native vegetation and / or restoring natural elevations
- Project restores / improves hydrology to a surface water or wetland showing signs of hydrologic stress
- Project eliminates nuisance/exotic vegetation listed as Category I or II on Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council's most current list of invasive plants:  
<https://www.floridainvasives.org/plant-list/2023-invasive-plant-species/>
- Project reduces shoreline erosion through establishment of natural native plant communities (living shorelines)
- Project restores fire regime to a pyrogenic community

A project will score in the High category if the project supports three or more natural systems criteria shown above. A project will score in the Medium category if the project supports two of the criteria shown above.

### *Springs Projects that Benefit MFL Waterbodies*

The project description should include the location and distance of the project in relation to the potentially affected MFL waterbody, the amount of water withdrawn or recharged (in million gallons per day [mgd]) for the project, and whether the project is providing an alternative water or non-traditional water source to offset withdrawals. District staff will determine the percentage of recovery from the project to the MFL water body.

A project will score in the High category if the project provides significant percent recovery for an MFL waterbody whose status is prevention or recovery by providing recharge to groundwater or a decreased impact of groundwater or surface water withdrawals. A project will score in the Medium category if the project decreases the impact of groundwater or surface water withdrawals on other MFL waterbodies, OFS, other spring flows, or local wetlands.

Projects listed in an MFL Prevention or Recovery Strategy approved by the Governing Board after June 30, 2016 will receive the highest point value in the High category.

### *Springs Water Supply and Water Conservation Projects*

Follow the guidance as outlined above in sections 1. Alternative Water Supply and 2. Water Conservation.

# GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETING THE FISCAL YEAR 2026 APPLICATION

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The FY 2026 cost-share program application and the evaluation criteria that will be used to score applications are available at <https://www.sjrwm.com/localgovernments/funding/districtwide/>. District staff will review the application based on the information provided. The following guidance is intended to assist the applicant with submitting a complete application.

## A. Basic Information

A-1: Enter the applicant's name and project name.

A-2: Enter the project manager or contact person's information for this project. Correspondence concerning this application will only be sent to the person listed in A-2.

A-3: Enter the contact information of the person who has authority to enter into a contractual agreement. If it is the same as A-2 above, A-3 can be left blank.

A-4: Check the box corresponding to the county where the project is located.

A-5: Check the box corresponding to the Water Supply Planning Region in which the project is located. Refer to map at [www.sjrwm.com/water-supply/planning/](http://www.sjrwm.com/water-supply/planning/).

A-6: TMDLs, BMAPs, RAPs, WBIDs, MFLs, and Springs: Indicate whether the project benefits a spring, whether the project is located within a Springs PFA and if the project is listed in a Prevention Strategy for the implementation of minimum flows and levels (MFLs).

- a. Indicate if the project is located within an area with an established TMDL, RAP or BMAP. If yes, provide the name of the TMDL waterbody, BMAP, and Waterbody Identification number (WBID). If no, just provide the WBID(s).

To determine if the project is within a TMDL, RAP or BMAP area, use the Interactive map on the FDEP website at:

<https://floridadep.gov/dear/water-quality-restoration/content/impaired-waters-tmdls-and-basin-management-action-plans>

Note: If the proposed project is listed within a BMAP, provide the BMAP project number (e.g., VC-3 or LM-4). Be sure that your project name corresponds to the BMAP project name. If your project is part of a BMAP project but is not identical, please provide the BMAP project name and project number that most closely corresponds to your project and explain the relationship between the two in section B-2.

- b. Indicate if the project benefits a waterbody that has established MFLs and a Prevention / Recovery Strategy. If yes, provide the name of the MFL waterbody and prevention recovery strategy. Information on MFL water bodies is located on the District's website at [www.sjrwm.com/minimumflowsandlevels](http://www.sjrwm.com/minimumflowsandlevels).

- c. Indicate if the project benefits a spring. If yes, provide the spring name, if the project is located in the PFA, or listed in a prevention strategy for implementation of MFLs.
- A-7: Indicate if the applicant is eligible under the REDI provisions for waiver or reduction of the matching funds requirement, as defined by F.S. 288.0656.
- A-8: For County or Municipal applicants, indicate if a landscape irrigation ordinance has been implemented in general accordance with the District's Model Water Conservation Ordinance for Landscape Irrigation. Refer to the following link for a list of entities that currently meet the requirement and for the model ordinance language:  
[www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions/](http://www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions/)  
If such an ordinance is in development, choose In Progress and attach a description of the status in Section D.
- Additionally, utilities must have a water conservation rate structure or condition of service to address irrigation conservation. If these are in development, choose In Progress and attach a description of the status in Section D.
- A-9. Has the project been submitted under a previous cost-share program? Provide the date(s) and project name(s) of previous submittal(s).
- A-10 In accordance with 161.55, F.S., if the project is located within the Coastal Building Zone (as defined in Subsection 161.54(1), F.S.), a Sea Level Impact Project (SLIP) study is required. A copy of the SLIP study should be attached in Section D of the application.

## **B. Project Information**

- B-1: Check the primary project type (alternative water supply, water conservation, springs).
- B-2: The Project Description section is a specific scoring criterion and as such, the project should be described in a clear, concise, and sufficiently detailed manner that will allow District staff to adequately understand the project elements. The quality, clarity, and thoroughness of information requested in the entire application is highly important to the District's understanding of the project you are proposing for funding assistance. The score for this category includes the overall application quality.

Additional information may be provided to supplement the understanding of the project, such as maps, plans, and drawings. However, the primary source of information used to evaluate the project description must be contained in Section B-2. Any additional information must be clear and concise and plainly support the information provided in Section B-2.

- a. Write a succinct, clear, description of your project.
- b. Is this project multi-phased or part of a larger overall effort? If yes, describe the phases(s) proposed for funding in this application and how the phase relates to larger projects you have underway or planned in the future. Include the overall master plan and identify the phase(s) in this funding request. Each phase must have a clearly defined start and finish. Each phase must be a stand-alone project with demonstrable benefits. Specify the water resource benefit(s) expected from that phase only. Identify if your project helps to implement

a RWSP, adopted BMAP, RAP, SWIM Plan or other adopted regional resource management plan.

Note: Poorly described or incomplete project details will negatively impact a project's scoring and final rank. The determination of the quality and completeness of the project description is exclusively up to the judgement of the District and includes the quality of the entire application.

- c. Describe the project location and attach two maps: a regional location map and a more detailed project area map. The detailed map should identify any potentially affected MFLs, TMDLs, BMAPs, RAPs, impaired WBIDs, or affected wetlands or springs (additional maps may be provided as needed to more clearly show the project location or attributes).
  - d. Provide the latitude and longitude coordinates (to six places in decimal degrees) for the location of your project. Example: 40.446010° N 79.982255° W. Use a centroid if your project covers a large area.
- B-3: Describe the benefit: Alternative Water Supply, Water Conservation, or Springs. Benefits are expected to be realized within 5 years of completion of construction. Include information to support the timing that the benefits will be realized. A project with a secondary benefit may receive up to 10 additional points depending on the validity of the stated secondary benefits and whether those benefits have been quantified.

The project must demonstrate an increased benefit over the existing condition, not the total possible benefit of the construction project. For example, for a reclaimed water extension project, the benefit is the amount of new reclaimed water being provided to a specific number of connections in a community, not the total capacity of the pipe. For a springs water quality project, the benefit would be the reduction in nutrient loads when comparing the existing and post construction site conditions.

- B-4 If the project is an AWS or WRD project, identify the source of water for the project by checking all that apply. If using a surface water or "other" source, identify the source's location and name if applicable.
- B-5: For springs septic-to-sewer projects
- a. Indicate the number of residential and / or commercial septic tanks proposed to be abandoned. Provide the capacity (daily flow) for commercial or multi-family tanks. If the project selected makes sewer connections available to properties currently served by onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems (OSTDS), verify, by checking the box, that you agree that you will provide notification of the availability of sewer and the requirement to connect within 365 days of the notification, per s. 381.00655, F.S. Proof of such notice will be required in the grant agreement following construction completion and prior to reimbursement.
  - b. Indicate the current level of buy-in or approval from neighborhood for sewer connections (percent commitment).

- c. Provide the name and facility ID of the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) to which the sewer will be connected, and if that WWTP is an advanced wastewater treatment (AWT) plant. Identify the type of treated wastewater disposal type (RIB, sprayfield, reuse) and indicate if the receiving wastewater facility has existing capacity to accept the flow associated with this project. If not, indicate when the capacity at the facility will be expanded.
  - d. Indicate if the project will subsidize the connection of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems to existing infrastructure, other incentives being offered (if any), and if connections will be required.
  - e. Indicate who will be responsible for abandonment of the existing OSTDS.
  - f. Indicate whether the scope includes connecting individual houses currently served by OSTDS and the number of houses.
  - g. Indicate if the scope of this project as proposed make new connections to sewer available for OSTDS that will be connected at a future date but not part of this scope.
  - h. Indicate how many of the OSTDS are on individual parcels one acre or less.
- B-6: If you have a consumptive use permit (CUP), Environmental Resource Permit (ERP), or permit determination for the project site, provide permit type, number, expiration date and current compliance status.

B-7: Project Readiness - The likelihood of successfully completing the project is addressed here.

Project readiness is a critical factor in the overall scoring of project applications. Using the information described below, and required within the application, those projects showing a higher likelihood of beginning and remaining on schedule will receive additional points in the scoring process. Aspects of project execution will be scored using the information provided in the application. Factors such as the date of construction start, percent of design completed at the time of application, permitting status, surety of funding and land ownership and access will be scored individually. Those projects with start dates beginning immediately after October 1st of the program fiscal year, those with completed design at the time of application, permits received, funding obtained, and land under ownership or with executed access documentation will receive a higher score.

- a. Complete the Project Status Table, checking all applicable project components and include estimated (month / day / year) start and completion dates for each component selected. Include the current percentage of completion at the time of application for any project components already underway or completed for planning, design, permitting and bidding actions by the application submittal date. If construction began prior to October 1, 2023, the project is not eligible, unless the project is phased and the application is for a new phase.

Failure to meet the stated construction start date may be grounds for cancellation of the Agreement. Cancellation of the agreement based upon schedule deviation is at the sole discretion of the District.

Failure to identify a committed funding source and meeting the requirements for release of the funding match will result in a lower score for project readiness. This should include activities that could affect the overall schedule such as commission approval dates and field studies (e.g., geotechnical work, survey, rights-of-way or land acquisitions, and utility locations). Be aware that an indication that outside funding has been approved may not address when those funds will be available for use. The time needed to fully secure outside funds and have them available to spend on the project (e.g. certifications, inspections, reviews and approvals and required contracts with the funding entity) must be accounted for in the proposed project construction schedule. If alternative funding sources are being sought but are not yet in place, then the Project Readiness score will be adjusted down from what is presented in the application.

- b. Describe the public support generated for the project. Have you held any public meetings or workshops to describe the project? Have you presented the project to the council or commission? Has the project been identified in a community newsletter or press release?

B-8: Check “Yes” to indicate that you have identified all required permits necessary for this project.

B-9: Indicate if property and/or easements needed for the project are under the applicant’s ownership or control. If portions of the needed property are under ownership but others are not, indicate the steps being taken obtain ownership and the likelihood that all property will be under the applicant’s control prior to the beginning of construction.

### **C. Project Cost Information**

C-1: Project cost breakdown, cost share request, and other funding sources

- a. Attach a table or spreadsheet with detailed project costs for each project component or task. The table should detail all project costs.
- b. The funding table includes details of the funding request.
  - 1. Enter the overall total construction cost and enter the total construction cost in the two boxes broken down by FY. Year 1 (FY 2026) is 10/1/2025 – 9/30/2026. Year 2 (FY 2027) is 10/1/2026 – 9/30/2027. The total of these two costs should equal the total estimated construction cost of the project.
  - 2. Enter the total amount of all other project costs including land acquisition, planning, design, permitting, and bidding.
  - 3. Enter the total estimated project cost. The total project cost should equal the sum of the construction cost (1.) and other project costs (2.) Do not include annual O&M costs.
  - 4. Enter the total cost share amount that is being requested (up to fifty percent (50%)). REDI communities can request up to 100% reimbursement of construction costs.
  - 5. Enter the estimated annual O&M cost.
  - 6. Enter the estimated service life of the components of the project in years.



- c. Identify the applicant's funding contribution and all other outside sources of funding, including any State or Federal appropriations, grant monies, or municipal bonds. Include the status of the identified funding sources. Funding for the recipient's match should be in place or committed at the time of application submittal. Failure to identify a secured funding source will result in a lower score for project readiness.

Other types of match (in-kind contributions, legislative appropriations, federal funding, costs of design, permitting, and engineering, companion projects, prior phases not previously funded, prior land acquisition) should also be identified. Prior FDEP funding cannot be considered as other match.

This is a State of Florida reimbursement program, with the entire project scope expected to be completed within the funding period, regardless of amount awarded. There is no guarantee the applicant will be awarded the amount requested. The applicant should indicate in section C-1 whether funds are available to accomplish the project if an amount less than that requested is recommended.

- d. Identify if this is a single entity project or multi-jurisdictional with two or more partners. Identify the partners and include a copy of any partnership agreements, memos of understanding (MOU) and status. For example, indicate when negotiations on an agreement or MOU will be complete, or if one is in place, provide the expiration date and when it will be renewed, if at all. Also, indicate the percentage of funding provided by each partner to the project.

C-2: Quantification of Benefits – The quantified benefits should reflect the net increased benefit over the existing condition and not the total gross benefit of the construction project. In addition, the benefit shown must be realized within five years of completion of construction of the funded project. Where the funding is for a phase of a larger project, the benefits must reflect those expected from the specific phase associated with this funding.

- For water Supply and Water Conservation projects, provide the estimated quantity conserved or alternative water made available in mgd. For projects located in springsheds, refer to the FDEP methodology for the calculation of benefits directly to the spring.  
(<https://floridadep.gov/springs/restoration-funding/documents/guidance-springs-funding>.)
- For Springs water quality projects, provide the target pollutant reduction in lbs/yr for TN, TP and / or both. Estimate the benefits using accepted engineering methods. For projects located in springsheds, refer to the FDEP methodology for the calculation of benefits directly to the spring.
  - (<https://floridadep.gov/springs/restoration-funding/documents/guidance-springs-funding>.)
- If the project is a project listed within a BMAP, provide the credited nutrient reduction value associated with the project within the BMAP. *As stated*

*previously, District staff will calculate the annual nutrient load reduction for septic-to-sewer projects.*

- For Springs natural systems projects, provide acres of wetlands and / or uplands or linear feet of shoreline enhanced or restored.
- For Springs MFL projects, provide the volume of water, in mgd, recharged by the project or the volume of AWS source used to offset withdrawals (in mgd). District staff will calculate the MFL benefit based on the information provided.
- For projects that support water quality or water quantity improvements to Florida springs, refer to FDEP's 2017 Guidance at:  
<https://floridadep.gov/wra/wra/documents/guidance-springs-funding>.
- Appendix C of the FDEP 2017 Guidance describes calculation of nitrogen load reductions to springs, and Appendix D of the Guidance describes how to calculate the quantity of water made available. In all cases, provide backup information showing how benefits were calculated.

C-3: Cost-Effectiveness – Cost-effectiveness will be either automatically calculated or be calculated by staff, based on the information provided in the application.

## PRE-APPLICATION MEETINGS

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The applicant is encouraged to meet with District staff prior to submittal of their application. Pre-application meetings will consist of reviewing the application requirements and answering questions by the applicant. Staff will not provide a complete evaluation of the application at the meeting. Applicant must provide all the information in the guidance document on the application whether or not it is discussed at the meeting.

If you have any questions, contact:

1. Lou Donnangelo (904) 448-7930, [ldonnangelo@sjrwmd.com](mailto:ldonnangelo@sjrwmd.com)
2. Nitesh Tripathi (386) 312-2359, [ntripath@sjrwmd.com](mailto:ntripath@sjrwmd.com)
3. Shane Howell (321) 473-1350; [SHowell@sjrwmd.com](mailto:SHowell@sjrwmd.com)

## Application Checklist

**While the on-line application should guarantee that all needed information is provided, this checklist is intended to assist applicants in identifying minimum requirements for completing the on-line application form.**

- All sections of the application are filled in completely
- Construction phasing information (if applicable)
- Detailed project cost breakdown
- Cost-effectiveness calculator (spreadsheet)
- Calculations for quantification of project benefits
- Applicant has identified all required permits necessary for project construction
- Application is signed and dated

## FY 2026 COST-SHARE EVALUATION FORM



FY 2026 Evaluation Form

Project Name:	
Reviewer:	
Date:	
<b>1. Project Description (Application Section B-2) (10 points possible)</b>	
Project description and supporting material are well written and succinct - Excellent (10 points)	
Project description and supporting material are good (7 points)	
Project description and supporting material are adequate (4 points)	
Project description and supporting material are not clear or succinct; poorly defined project (0 points)	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>0</b>
Justification for score:	
<b>2. Benefit (Application Section B-3) (30 points possible)</b>	
<b>a. Water Supply</b>	
<b>(Alternative Water Supply Project or Water Conservation Project)</b>	
High water supply benefit expected (24, 27, or 30 points)	
Medium water supply benefit expected (14, 17, or 20 points)	
Low water supply benefit expected (4, 7, or 10 points)	
<b>b. Water Quality</b>	
High water quality benefit expected (24, 27, or 30 points)	
Medium water quality benefit expected (14, 17, or 20 points)	
Low water quality benefit expected (4, 7, or 10 points)	
<b>c. Natural Systems</b>	
High natural systems benefit expected (24, 27, or 30 points)	
Medium natural systems benefit expected (14, 17, or 20 points)	
Low natural systems benefit expected (4, 7, or 10 points)	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>0</b>
Justification for score:	
<b>Secondary Benefit (5 or 10 points total, even if more than one additional benefit)</b>	
a. Water Supply	
b. Water Quality	
c. Natural Systems	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>0</b>
Justification for score:	
<b>3. Project Readiness (Application Section B-7) (20 points possible)</b>	
Project will start by 1/31/2026 (13 points)	
Project will start by 4/30/2026 (7 points)	
Project will start by 8/30/2026 (1 points)	
Project will start after 8/30/2026 (0 points)	
Scoring additions for design, permitting, land access and funding	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>0</b>
Justification for score:	
<b>4. Cost Effectiveness (Application Section C-3) (30 points possible)</b>	
Cost Effectiveness Scoring will be calculated for each project type separately as identified in section C of the application. Only the primary Core Mission project type will be used to score a project. A maximum of 30 points for cost effectiveness can be obtained for a project. See Evaluation Guidance Manual for scoring criteria.	
High (30 points)	
Medium (20 points)	
Low (10 points)	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>0</b>
Justification for score:	
<b>Total Score:</b>	<b>0</b>

NOTES: