St. Johns River
Water Management District

2026–2030 Strategic Plan

December 2025

Contents

Strategic Plan and Strategic Plan Annual Work Plan Report

The District's annual strategic plan and strategic plan annual work plan report are developed in lieu of a district water management plan, in accordance with Section 373.036(2)(f), F.S, and meet the requirements of Section 189.0694, F.S. The strategic plan annual work plan report is published in the Consolidated Annual Report and available at: sjrwmd.com/documents/plans.

List of Critical Wetlands

The District's strategic plan, in accordance with sections 373.036(2)(e) and 373.036(2)(f)5., F.S., includes by reference the list of critical wetlands approved by the Governing Board on October 14, 2025, and available at: sjrwmd.com/documents/plans.

Message from the Chair

It is my honor to present the St. Johns River Water Management District's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan. This plan outlines our commitment to protecting Florida's water resources while meeting the needs of our growing communities. As we face evolving challenges such as population growth and increasing demands on our natural systems, this document serves as a roadmap for ensuring water sustainability and ecological resilience in our region.

Under the leadership of Governor Ron DeSantis and with the support of the Florida Legislature, our state has made unprecedented investments in protecting water resources and enhancing environmental resilience. From updated stormwater rules that improve water quality management to historic funding for springs restoration and land conservation, these efforts provide the foundation for the initiatives outlined in this strategic plan.

The Governing Board remains steadfast in its dedication to our core missions: safeguarding water quality, ensuring sustainable water supplies, enhancing flood protection and restoring natural systems. With this strategic plan, we focus on initiatives that address regional priorities, from nutrient reduction projects in the Ocklawaha River Basin to seagrass restoration in the Indian River Lagoon.

Collaboration is at the heart of our success. Through partnerships with local governments, stakeholders and the public, we are implementing innovative solutions and leveraging resources to achieve long-term environmental and economic benefits. This plan represents our collective vision for a sustainable future.

On behalf of the Governing Board, I extend my gratitude to our staff, partners and the communities we serve for their dedication to this important work. Together, we can ensure that Florida's water resources are protected for generations to come.

Sincerely,
Rob Bradley
Chair, Governing Board

Governing Board

A nine-member Governing Board sets the policies for operation of the St. Johns River Water Management District (District). Board members are appointed by Florida's Governor to staggered four-year terms and serve without pay. The Florida Senate must confirm all appointments to the water management district boards.

Rob Bradley
Chair

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Vice Chair

Cole Oliver
Treasurer

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Secretary

Ryan Atwood

Doug Bournique

Douglas Burnett

Ron Howse

Janet Price

Overview

The St. Johns River Water Management District (District) is a science-based organization responsible for managing and protecting water resources in northeast Florida. The District's job is to ensure there are adequate water supplies to meet the needs of current and future users while protecting ecosystems and restoring water quality and related natural resources.

The District has authority over 12,283 square miles, which is approximately 21 percent of the state's land area, and encompasses all or part of 18 counties in northeast and east-central Florida.

The District includes the watersheds of the St. Johns, Ocklawaha, and Econlockhatchee rivers, the northern two-thirds of the Indian River Lagoon, and the Florida portion of the St. Marys River Basin. The District is also home to eight of Florida's 30 "Outstanding Florida Springs" (OFS) — Silver Springs, Silver Glen Springs, Alexander Springs, Blue Spring, DeLeon Springs, Wekiwa Springs, Rock Springs and Gemini Springs. In 2022, an estimated 5.9 million people resided within the District's boundaries, a population that is projected to reach approximately 6.8 million by 2040.

Water management districts are funded by ad valorem (property) taxes, state and federal appropriations, permit fees, interest earnings, and other sources. The Governing Board-approved millage rate for fiscal year (FY) 2024–25 is 0.1793 mills. More information about budgeting is included in the District's final budget documents.

Core Missions

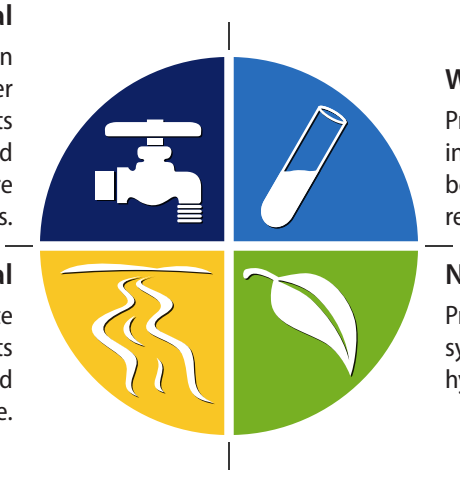
The mission of the St. Johns River Water Management District is "to protect our natural resources and support Florida's growth by ensuring the sustainable use of Florida's water for the benefit of the people of the District and the state." To accomplish its mission, the District has identified four specific core missions and goals:

Water supply goal

Identify and implement conservation opportunities and develop water supply plans, strategies and projects to protect water resources and natural systems while meeting future reasonable and beneficial uses.

Flood protection goal

Acquire and manage lands and operate structures to minimize flood impacts and to protect people, property and infrastructure.



Water quality goal

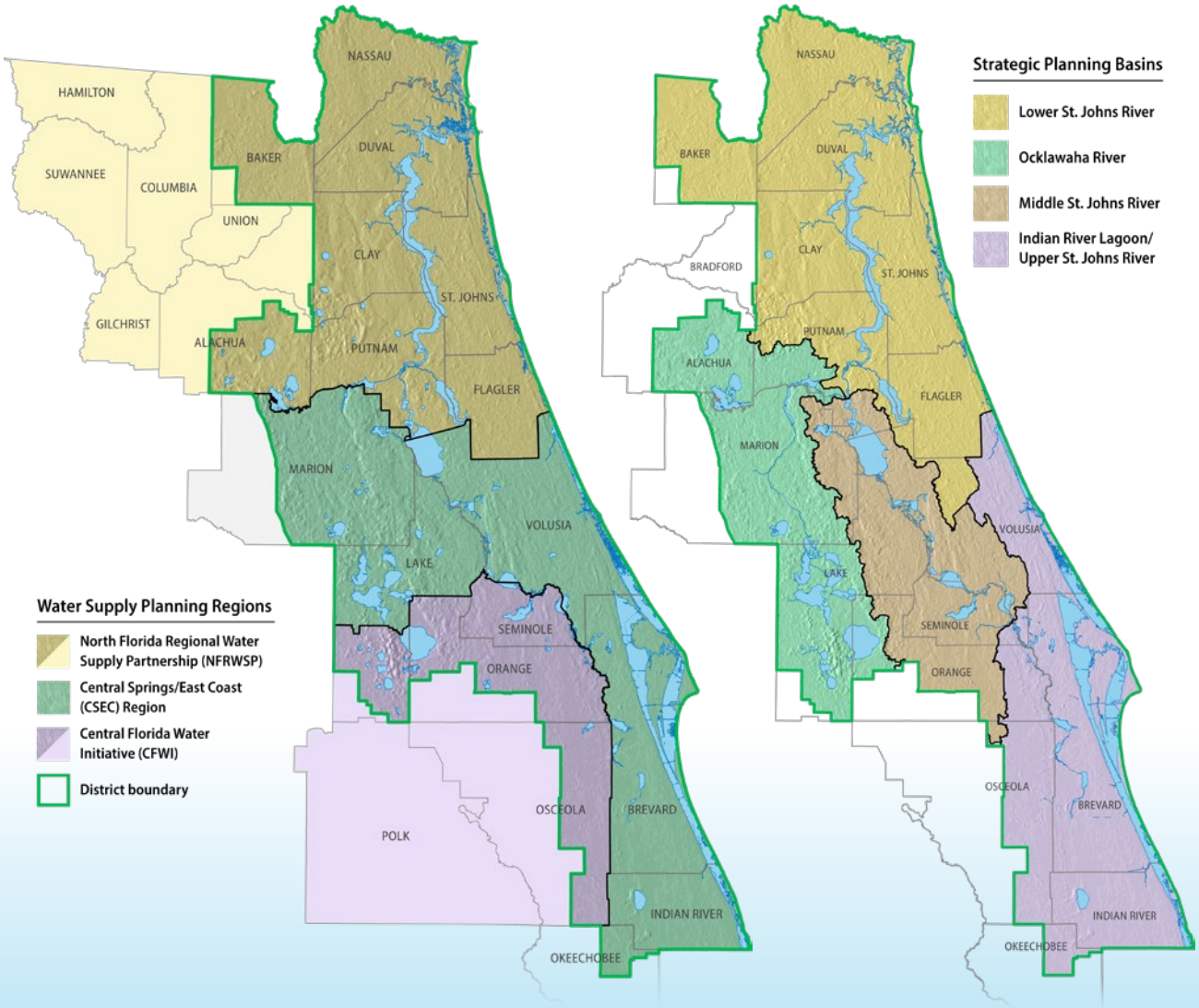
Protect and improve water quality in surface and groundwater for the benefit of natural systems, water resources and the public.

Natural systems goal

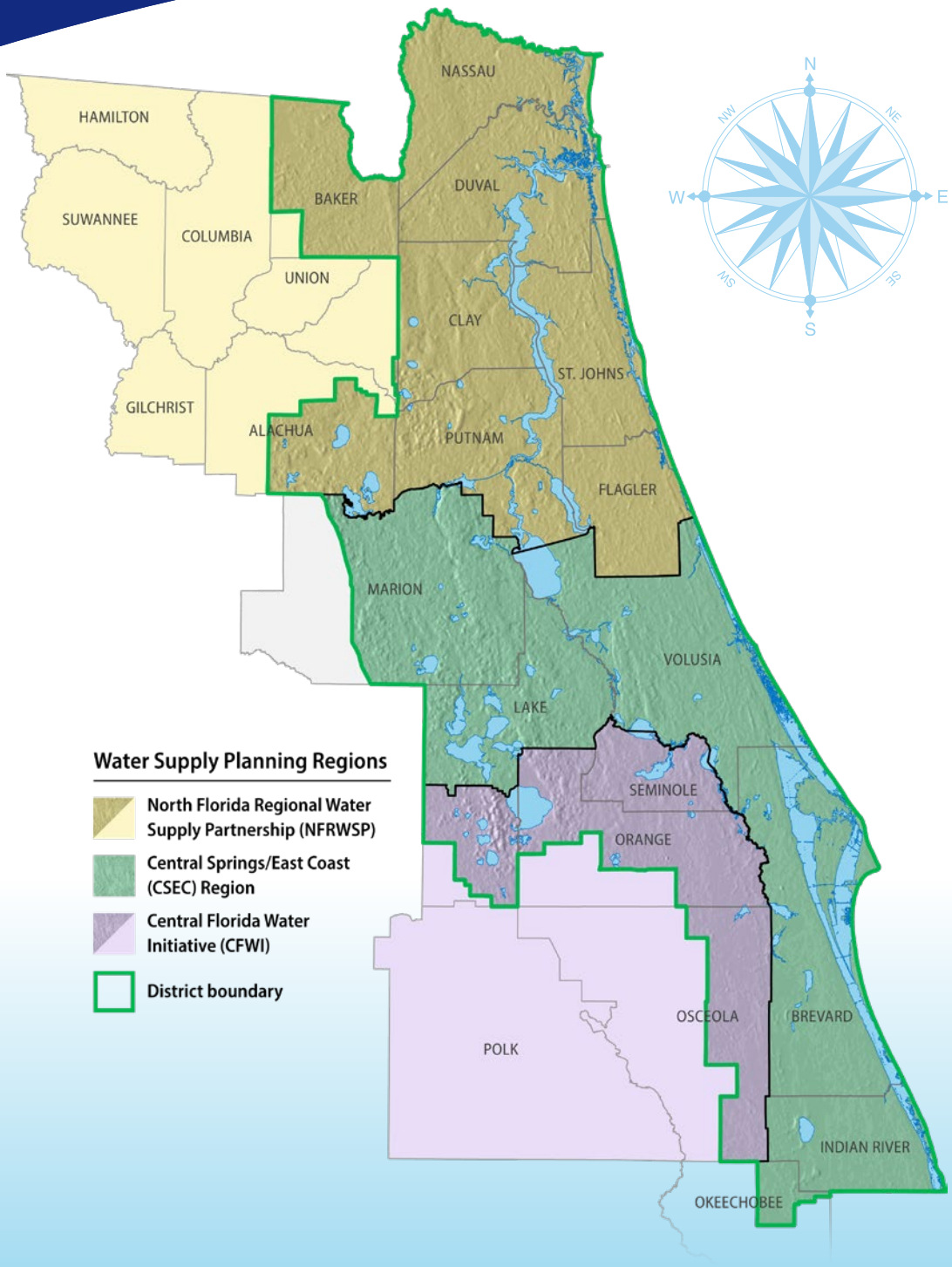
Preserve, protect and restore natural systems to support their natural hydrologic and ecological functions.

Strategic planning framework

The St. Johns River Water Management District organizes its work by two complementary geographic frameworks. For **water supply planning**, the District is divided into **three water supply planning regions** — the Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI), the Central Springs/East Coast (CSEC) and the North Florida Regional Water Supply Partnership (NFRWSP). Separate regional water supply plans are developed for each of these regions to identify long-term water needs and strategies. For its other three core missions — **water quality**, **natural systems** and **flood protection** — the District is divided into **four strategic planning basins** based upon surface water drainage divides: the **Lower St. Johns River, Ocklawaha River**, **Middle St. Johns River** and **Indian River Lagoon/Upper St. Johns River**. These basins allow the District to tailor science, data and project priorities to local conditions and to focus resources efficiently on basin-specific challenges and opportunities.



Districtwide initiatives and highlighted projects



As part of its strategic planning efforts, the District identified several high priority initiatives that span most, or all, of the District as well as several projects worth highlighting.

Water supply

Develop and implement regional water supply plans

The District's mission includes ensuring adequate and sustainable water supplies are available to meet future needs for both people and the environment. The water supply planning process is an open and public process required by statute when current water sources are not adequate to supply existing and future uses while sustaining natural systems (Section 373.709, F.S.). The process includes local governments, public supply utilities, agriculture, business and environmental organizations as well as other stakeholders. Regional water supply plans (RWSPs) identify future water supply needs for a 20-year planning horizon as well as programs and projects needed to ensure sustainable supplies.

STRATEGIES

- Develop, implement and update regional water supply plans for each of the District's three water supply planning regions
- Develop and update hydrologic models for use in water supply planning
- Coordinate with other water management districts on RWSPs
- Facilitate collaborative regional project development in areas of constrained groundwater resources

The District is divided into three water supply planning regions: Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI), Central Springs/East Coast (CSEC) and the North Florida Regional Water Supply Partnership (NFRWSP). Separate RWSPs are developed for each water supply planning region.

In the CFWI water supply planning region, the District continues to work in partnership with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), representatives from utilities, the agricultural industry, environmental organizations and other stakeholders. The CFWI planning area covers all or parts of five counties, including Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole and southern Lake. The most recent water supply plan update was completed in December 2025. To meet the requirements of Section 373.709, F.S., which requires that the districts reevaluate their determinations concerning the need for a water supply plan at least every five years, work has already begun on the 2030 plan update. This effort includes developing population and water demand projections, performing environmental assessments of wetlands and surface waters, and updating the regional groundwater flow model.

In the CSEC water supply planning region, the District continues coordination with neighboring water management districts (SFWMD and SWFWMD), FDACS, local governments, utilities and other stakeholders. The CSEC water supply planning region covers all or parts of six counties, including eastern Marion, northern Lake, Volusia, Brevard, Indian River and northern Okeechobee. The RSWP for this planning area was completed in February 2022. Preparation of the 2027 five-year update to the CSEC RWSP is currently underway and will include projected water demands extending to the 2050 planning horizon. Two new groundwater models will be utilized to assess water resources in the 2027 plan update. The Central Springs Groundwater Flow Model version 1.1 (CSM v1.1), developed collaboratively with SWFWMD, will replace the Northern District Model version 5 and the Volusia Groundwater Flow Model. The status assessments for the CSEC MFL water bodies will be updated using the CSM v1.1 with the results guiding the need for potential updates to the existing approved prevention and recovery strategies or the development of new strategies. In addition, the Southern District Density Dependent Groundwater Flow and Transport Model will allow for predictive water quality scenarios in areas of the planning region where saltwater intrusion is a concern.

In the NFRWSP water supply planning region, the District continues to work in partnership with Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD), DEP and other stakeholders. The NFRWSP planning area covers 14 counties, including Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Duval, Flagler, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Suwannee and Union. The most recent North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan was approved in December 2023. Work has also begun in this planning area for the update scheduled for completion in 2028.

Develop and implement minimum flows and levels (MFLs) and associated prevention and recovery strategies

One way that the District is working to protect Florida's water resources is through its MFLs program. As a part of fulfilling its mission and statutory responsibilities (Sections 373.042 and 373.0421, F.S.), the District establishes MFLs for priority water bodies within its boundaries. MFLs define the limits at which further water withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of an area. MFLs are one of many effective tools used by the District to assist in making sound water management decisions and preventing significant adverse impacts due to water withdrawals.

STRATEGIES

- Maintain and implement the MFL priority list and schedule
- Develop and update hydrologic models for use in setting MFLs
- Develop and improve MFL determination and assessment methods
- Engage stakeholders in MFL development
- Develop and implement prevention and recovery strategies

Since its MFL program was initiated, the District has established MFLs on 129 waterbodies (102 lakes, 14 springs, 6 rivers and 7 wetlands). A total of 35 of those MFLs have been re-evaluated, and one MFL has been repealed. At its October 2025 meeting, the 2025 Minimum Flows and Levels Priority List and Schedule was approved by the Governing Board. In accordance with the Priority List, six MFLs are planned to be re-evaluated over the next three years. The re-evaluation process includes the consideration of updated methods and additional data collected since the establishment of the initial MFLs. Hydrologic models used in the setting of the MFLs are also developed or updated. The Priority List also directs the development of five new MFLs during this same three-year period.

If a priority water body falls below or is projected to fall below its adopted MFL within 20 years, subsection 373.0421(2), F.S., requires the development of a recovery or prevention strategy to recover the waterbody or prevent a waterbody from falling below the MFL. The strategy must include measures to either restore the flow or level to the MFL or prevent it from declining below the MFL, incorporating additional water supplies, conservation efforts and efficiency measures to achieve the MFLs while meeting current and future demands. As of December 2025, 14 water bodies within the District are in prevention or recovery.

To address the waterbodies that are in prevention or recovery, the District's Governing Board has approved the following prevention/recovery strategies: *Prevention Strategy for the Implementation of Silver Springs Minimum Flows and Levels*; *Prevention Strategy for the Implementation of the Lake Butler Minimum Levels; Prevention/Recovery Strategy for Implementation of Minimum Flows and Levels for Volusia Blue Spring and Big, Daugherty, Helen, Hires, Indian and Three Island Lakes; and Recovery Strategy for the Implementation of Lakes Brooklyn and Geneva Minimum Levels*. The District will continue to monitor its progress in implementing these strategies.

In November 2025, DEP published a Notice of Proposed Rule to amend the previously adopted MFLs for the Lower Santa Fe and Ichetucknee rivers and associated priority springs (collectively the LSFIR MFLs), located within the SRWMD. DEP proposed the LSFIR MFLs because impacts to those MFLs were expected to occur from more than one water management district. Based on the best available information, two of the three recommended flows are not being achieved. Since some of the LSFIR MFLS are in recovery, the *2025 Implementation Strategy for the LSFIR MFLs* was adopted by both SRWMD and the District. As discussed in more detail below, work has already begun on project implementation.

Promote water conservation

Water conservation is a critical element to satisfying the water supply needs within the District while sustaining water resources. To achieve its water conservation objectives, the District focuses on education, outreach and strategic partnerships to drive behavioral change. Key initiatives supporting these efforts include the Water Conservation Rebate Program, the Florida Friendly Landscaping Program, Florida Water Star[SM] and the Water Less campaign.

STRATEGIES

- Continue to provide water conservation education through public presentations and targeted public outreach programs such as the Water Less campaign
- Promote the use of the Florida Water Star[SM] certification program for new residential and commercial development
- Establish effective, quantifiable and achievable water conservation practices through the consumptive use permitting program
- Expand and enhance partnerships with agriculture through the implementation of the District's Agricultural Cost-Share Program
- Provide financial incentives to increase levels of water conservation through continuation of the District's Water Conservation Rebate Program

Faced with water resource constraints throughout the District, maximizing the efficiency of current and future water use is critical to sustaining existing water supplies and decreasing the need for, or size of, costly water supply and water resource development projects. Effective public communication on the importance of water conservation and its benefits, both environmental and financial, will continue to be a top priority for the District.

Develop and implement water resource development and other projects

In subsection 373.705(1)(a), F.S., the Legislature found that the "proper role of the water management districts in water supply is primarily planning and water resource development…." Water resource development includes the development and implementation of regional water resource management strategies from data collection and technical assistance to the construction, operation and maintenance of major public works facilities to provide for flood control (Sections 373.019(24) and 373.707(3), F.S.). As discussed further in the regional priorities section, the District is committed to developing and implementing projects that support its goal of water supply and water resource development.

STRATEGIES

- Continue implementation of the abandoned artesian well program
- Encourage the development and implementation of regional water resource development projects through partnerships
- Focus the use of District funds on regional water resource development projects

The District continues to implement its highly successful abandoned artesian well program.

Free-flowing abandoned artesian wells can waste millions of gallons of water each day and adversely impact water quantity and quality. Therefore, the District works with well owners to plug abandoned artesian wells at no cost to the well owners. Since Nov. 2020, the District has abandoned 767 wells, saving an estimated 92.5 mgd. The program typically abandons 15 wells each month and is taking steps to continue that trend in the upcoming year.

The District is completing the Black Creek Water Resource Development Project.

The primary goal of the Black Creek Water Resource Development Project, located in Clay County, is to provide additional water supply by recharging the Upper Floridan aquifer using high flows from Black Creek as a source. The project is among several identified in the *North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan* and the *Recovery Strategy for the Implementation of Lakes Brooklyn and Geneva Minimum Levels* to help meet future water supply demands while protecting natural resources. The completed project has the capability to divert up to 10 million gallons per day (mgd) during high flows from the South Fork of Black Creek through a 17-mile-long transmission pipeline, to a treatment area before discharging to Alligator Creek. Alligator Creek flows directly to Lake Brooklyn and eventually Lake Geneva. The Upper Floridan aquifer is recharged through the lake bottoms, which are hydraulically connected to the aquifer. The Black Creek Water Resource Development Project will increase Upper Floridan aquifer levels and support MFLs for Lakes Brooklyn and Geneva. The project is anticipated to be completed in early 2026.

The District is completing the design of the Taylor Creek Reservoir Improvements Project.

Located in eastern Orange and Osceola counties, the Taylor Creek Reservoir (TCR) currently provides surface water to the city of Cocoa for potable water use and to other agricultural interests in the area. The TCR Improvements Project is the initial phase of the overall, multi-phased project known as the TCR/St. Johns River Water Supply Project (TCR/SJR Water Supply Project). The TCR/SJR Water Supply Project is included in the CFWI RWSP. The District anticipates substantial alternative water supply benefits from the overall project, which will include water storage in TCR in conjunction with surface water diversions from the St. Johns River. Through implementation of the overall TCR/SJR Water Supply Project, up to 54 million gallons per day (average annual daily flow) of surface water may be made available for public supply and consumptive use. This will help reduce future impacts to MFLs, including springs and wetlands, within the CFWI planning region. The District is working with five water suppliers on the future TCR/SJR Water Supply Project. The District is designing and constructing the TCR Improvements Project phase. This phase

includes raising L-73 and modifying the operating schedule. The five water suppliers are responsible for the subsequent project phases, which will include a pump station intake at the St. Johns River and water supply treatment and transmission infrastructure. The District is currently scheduled to complete the design of the Improvements Project in 2027 and begin construction in 2028.

The District has initiated implementation of Water First North Florida

The *2025 Implementation Strategy for the LSFIR MFLs* discussed above includes the proposed aquifer recharge project known as Water First North Florida. Water First North Florida is a 40 mgd Upper Floridan aquifer recharge project utilizing advance-treated reclaimed water from the JEA Buckman and Southwest Water Reclamation Facilities (WRFs). The advance-treated reclaimed water will receive additional treatment by natural filtration in a treatment wetland prior to recharging the Upper Floridan aquifer. The proposed project will help meet regional water supply needs and provide flow recovery at LSFIR priority springs and surface waters.

Additional study of the proposed project is necessary. An engineering study is needed to identify and evaluate potential treatment wetland site(s) for additional treatment of the WRF's reclaimed water. The study will also identify potential aquifer recharge sites. These efforts directly support the LSFIR MFLs prevention and recovery efforts and would provide crucial information for the planning of the Water First North Florida project. The engineering study is scheduled to commence in early 2026 and be completed in 2028.

Water quality

Monitor and assess water quality

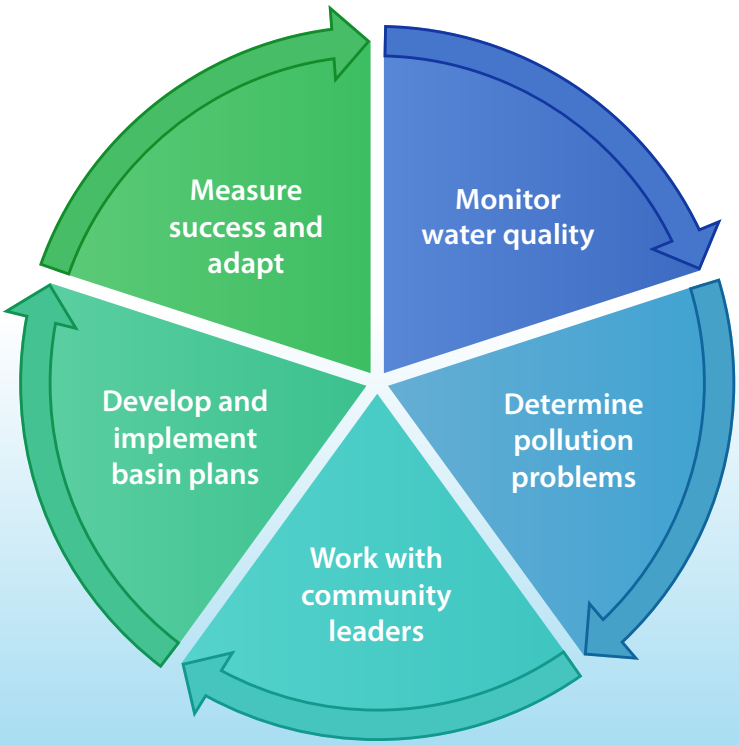
Water quality monitoring and assessment at the District is a continual, ongoing cycle where data are collected and analyzed to identify challenges and solutions for the health of water resources. This information is formalized in the District's four strategic planning basin plans. The strategic planning basin plans are coordinated with regional stakeholders and local governments and address the science, data, research, projects and programs needed within each basin. The four strategic planning basin plans are used to identify the regional priorities established in the next section of this strategic plan.

Protect and improve water quality

The District strives to protect and improve water quality through its strategic planning basin plans, project implementation and regulatory programs. The strategic planning basin plans identify the specific challenges in each strategic planning basin as well as actionable solutions that can be implemented by the District, stakeholders and/or partners. The District has a long history of successful water quality project implementation to help address challenges in its rivers, lakes, estuaries and springs. An example of one of these projects is the C-10 Water Management Area project which is discussed in more detail in the regional priorities section of this plan. In addition, land acquisition and management are also important components of the District's water quality protection plan. The District's regulatory program addresses stormwater issues through its Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) program. The District is committed to developing and implementing projects that support its goal of improving water quality.

STRATEGIES

- Maintain long-term water quality and hydrology monitoring networks
- Cost-effectively operate the District's water quality laboratory
- Analyze and share accurate water quality data and information



The water quality monitoring, planning, and project implementation cycle.

Natural systems

Land acquisition

The District owns or has interests in more than 770,000 acres of land throughout its 18-county service area. The District is the lead manager of more than 430,000 acres, while it manages the remainder through a variety of partnerships with numerous agencies and local governments. The District acquires and manages uplands and wetlands to protect and preserve water resources and for flood protection, water quality and natural systems benefits, and to support aquifer recharge. In addition, these lands protect plant and wildlife habitat and provide areas for public recreation and environmental education. The benefits are far-reaching for the public and environment, helping to advance all the District's core missions. The majority acreages of District conservation lands preserve the ability of floodplains to store floodwaters, filter sediments and nutrients, and provide critical wetland habitat.

As such, acquisitions are focused on wetlands, especially floodplain and coastal wetlands, and uplands which buffer waterbodies and provide habitat. The District maintains a five-year land acquisition plan (which is integrated into the strategic plan) that identifies parcels suitable for acquisition, conservation and management.

In addition, effective July 1, 2022, section 373.036(2)(e), F.S., requires the District to develop a list of critical wetlands to be acquired using funds from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund (List of Critical Wetlands) in cooperation with local governments. The statute requires the List of Critical Wetlands to be included in the District's Strategic Plan. In developing the List of Critical Wetlands, the District must consider the ecological value of the wetland as determined by the physical and biological components of the environmental system, the effect of the wetland on water quality and flood mitigation, the ecosystem restoration value of the wetland and the inherent susceptibility of the wetland to development due to its geographic location or natural aesthetics. Since the publication

of its first list in 2023, more than 6,500 acres, identified from the District's List of Critical Wetlands, have been acquired and placed into public ownership by the (i) Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, (ii) the District, or (iii) our local government partners.

Land management

The District's land management responsibilities include habitat restoration, prescribed fire and wildfire response, and invasive and nuisance species management. The District actively pursues partnerships for land management with other state agencies, local governments and nonprofit organizations. In fact, more than three-quarters of the District's land holdings have been purchased, and are being managed, in conjunction with other groups.

Land management plans (LMPs) are established for District-managed properties. Each LMP provides for water resource protection, a diversity of habitats, compatible recreational uses, and wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement. Legislative directives guide the land management planning process from acquisition evaluations to the development of land management plans. These plans identify resource needs and compatible uses, and the District solicits public input in the review and update for each plan. Ultimately, these plans are approved by the District's Governing Board.

Public use and enjoyment of District owned and managed lands is important. Virtually all District property is open to the public for recreational activities that are compatible with conservation, including hunting, camping and boating and compatible agricultural purposes.

STRATEGIES

- Focus on acquiring fee or less-than-fee simple interest (conservation easements) in properties that enhance optimal land management boundaries and ecosystem resilience in floodplains to provide water resource and natural systems protection
- Pursue partnerships to further land acquisition and management efforts
- Ensure land management actions fulfill approved land management plans
- Focus land management efforts on prescribed fire, invasive vegetation management, restoration and enhancement of natural communities, protection of lands from degradation, vandalism and erosion
- Pursue the annual goal of enhancing natural systems habitats by conducting prescribed fire on 35,000 acres
- Provide for resource-based recreation where appropriate

Flood protection

A key element in the District's flood protection responsibility is its role as local sponsor for two federal flood control projects: the Upper St. Johns River Basin Project and the Ocklawaha River Basin portion of the Four River Basins, Florida Project. The District is responsible for operating and maintaining 175 miles of farm/project levees, 115 miles of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers/District-constructed flood control levees, 12 major flood control structures, and numerous minor water control structures, weirs and pump stations. The District also has an interest in over 770,000 acres of land, including floodplain wetlands that border the St. Johns River and other rivers and tributaries that can safely store floodwaters.

To meet this mission, the District works in five areas to improve flood protection:

- Structural flood protection, which involves the construction, operation, and maintenance of water control structures and levees to retain water in impoundments and then release the water based on established regulation schedules
- Non-structural flood protection which focuses on the acquisition and management of floodplain wetlands that provide floodwater storage and restoring coastal wetlands which have been impacted by altered drainage
- Review of new construction designs to ensure that development adheres to stormwater rules related to drainage and management of stormwater
- The collection of hydrologic data, including rainfall, water elevations and flows, analysis of these data and sharing these data in real-time with federal partners such as the US Geological Survey and National Weather Service for their flood forecasts
- Coordination with local governments on planning and responses to weather events

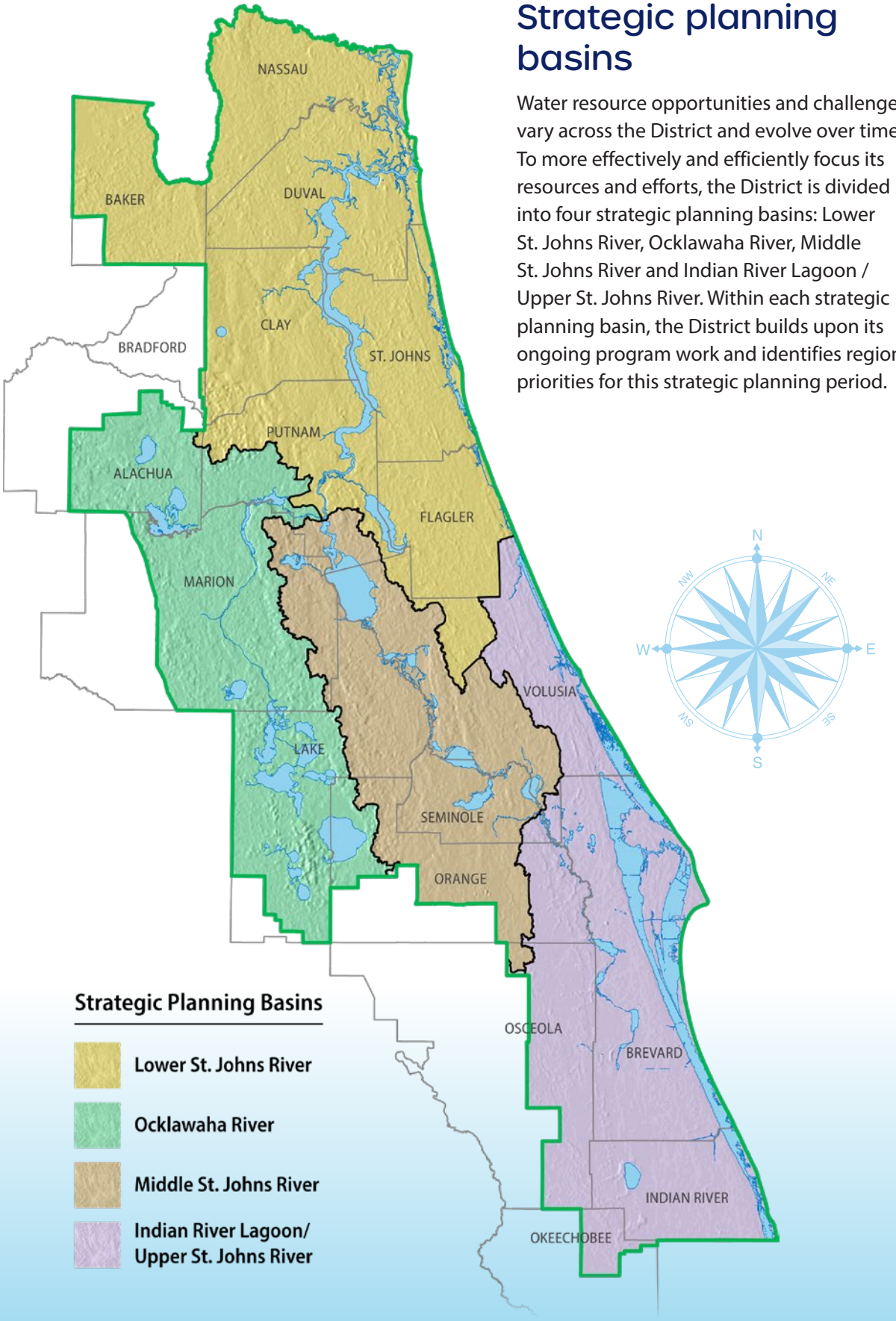
STRATEGIES

- Operate and maintain the District's structural flood protection systems
- Implement renovations or replacements of water control structures as scheduled, including but not limited to, replacing wingwalls at S-157, refurbishing the Burrell Dam, replacing or refurbishing the Apopka Dam, refurbishing S-161, and refurbishing gates at multiple water control structures
- Implement Capital Improvement projects to maintain flood protection while enhancing the water resource to improve water supply including Taylor Creek and C-10 Reservoir projects
- Collaborate with our partners to build more resilient communities through our conservation, cost-share and research efforts
- Preserve and restore the floodplains of rivers, lakes and coastal communities that provide flood water storage
- Ensure new development will not cause adverse flooding through implementation of the District's permitting program
- Collect and share real-time data on water levels with the U.S. Geological Survey, National Weather Service and local governments
- Coordinate with local, state and federal partners to minimize flood damage after major storm events and maintain District flood protection systems

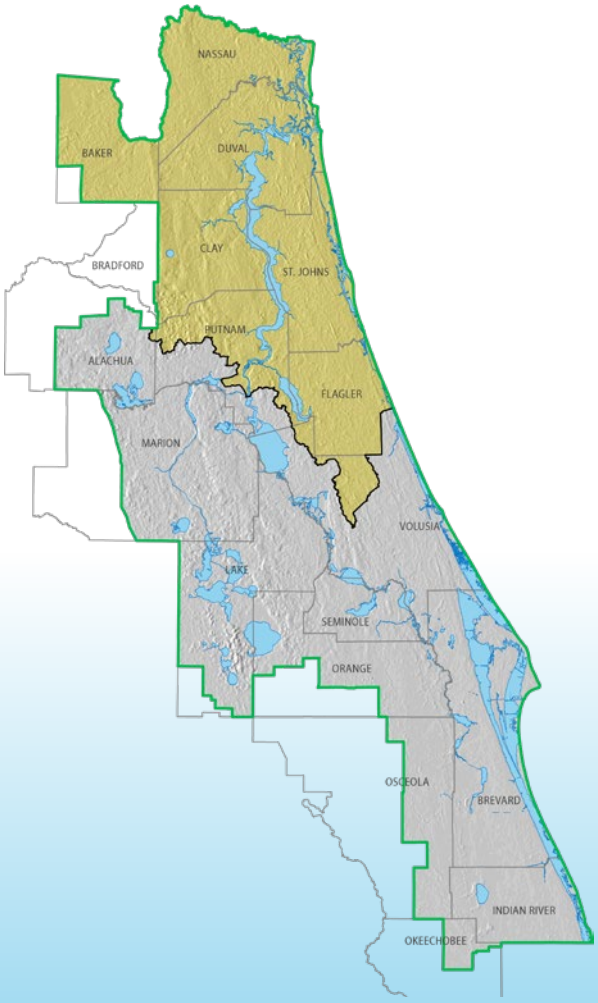
Regional priorities

Strategic planning basins

Water resource opportunities and challenges vary across the District and evolve over time. To more effectively and efficiently focus its resources and efforts, the District is divided into four strategic planning basins: Lower St. Johns River, Ocklawaha River, Middle St. Johns River and Indian River Lagoon / Upper St. Johns River. Within each strategic planning basin, the District builds upon its ongoing program work and identifies regional priorities for this strategic planning period.



Lower St. Johns River Strategic Planning Basin



Basin priorities

- Protect and improve water quality in surface waters
- Protect and enhance submerged aquatic vegetation within the basin
- Restore and enhance wetlands within the Northern Coastal Basin
- Enhance flood protection along lakes and rivers

Protect and improve water quality in surface waters

Objectives:

- Develop projects to reduce excess nutrient loadings and legacy nutrients
- Develop in-field and regional projects to reduce nutrient loading from the Tri-County Agricultural Area (TCAA)

Highlight:

Reducing excess nutrients

The District initiated a basin feasibility study in FY 2024–25 to identify cost-effective project concepts to reduce excess nutrient loadings and legacy nutrients. The feasibility study is scheduled to be completed by October 2026. In addition, the Doctors Lake Enhanced Effluent Treatment Project is an on-going water quality improvement project that removes dissolved phosphorus from the wastewater stream at Clay County Utility Authority's Fleming Island Regional Water Reclamation Facility.

Reducing nutrient loading from the Tri-County Agricultural Area (TCAA)

The TCAA, located in Putnam, St. Johns and Flagler counties and in close proximity to the St. Johns River, continues to have an increasing trend in nutrient loading to the river. The TCAA Water Management Partnership was developed to identify and implement on-farm projects and practices that improve water and nutrient use efficiency. These projects and practices reduce the movement of nutrients to the lower St. Johns River, improve water conservation and maintain the long-term viability of agriculture in the TCAA.

Protect and enhance submerged aquatic vegetation within the basin

Objectives:

- Investigate conditions impacting the St. Johns River's submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV)
- Continue to monitor changes in SAV abundance, distribution, and health to assess potential stressors, resilience, and adaptive capacity
- Develop plans and projects for natural systems improvement

Highlight:

Investigations into SAV abundance and stressors

In addition to annual monitoring, the District is also identifying other opportunities to aid SAV recovery in the river. The District and FWC scientists have been conducting experiments to evaluate the potential role of herbivory by grazers (e.g., turtles, manatees, fish and crabs) on SAV recovery.

SAV monitoring

The District has been conducting annual monitoring of the lower St. Johns River's SAV since 1995. By mapping SAV in waterways, scientists can measure a waterway's health by monitoring plant distribution and abundance from year to year.

Natural systems improvement

The District will continue to monitor SAV coverage in the main stem of the St Johns River while focusing on the many factors that can potentially affect SAV coverage. Deeper and darker water is an important limiting factor in SAV recovery, and District staff will continue to evaluate potential projects with this in mind.

Restore and enhance wetlands within the Northern Coastal Basin

Objectives:

- Address key impacts of urban watersheds
- Assemble and evaluate existing water quality data, trends and habitats pertaining to the Northern Coastal Basin in collaboration with federal, state and local agencies
- Develop and implement natural system projects that restore critical shoreline, coastal uplands and intertidal systems
- Develop projects to maintain and improve resilience of coastal marshes

Highlight:

Impact of urban watersheds

Water resource challenges in the Northern Coastal Basin (NCB) range from stormwater runoff to leaking septic systems to boat wakes. Urban watersheds present a unique problem in that cost-effective solutions for addressing these challenges are limited. District staff will continue to pursue cost-effective solutions to these problems.

Water quality trends

District staff published a technical paper on NCB water quality trends in August 2025. Overall, nutrient concentrations declined across the NCB, with some localized increases in total phosphorus or total nitrogen. Data on algal abundance, as measured by chlorophyll-a, showed that declines were more prevalent in the northern NCB, while increases were observed in the southern NCB.

Efforts to restore critical habitat

A shared recognition of the advantages of comprehensive watershed planning and cooperative interagency coordination led to the establishment of the District led Northeast Florida Estuarine Restoration Team (NERT). NERT was initiated in 2010 and is a collaboration between the District, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Restoration Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Coastal Program, FWC, DEP Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection, FDACS, and The Nature Conservancy to regionally coordinate estuarine habitat restoration efforts in the NCB plan area.

Resiliency and coastal habitat restoration

Coastal restoration and enhancement projects will continue to progress as these projects address multiple goals including natural systems restoration, water quality improvement, recreation and flood protection. Resilience is built into all of the projects undertaken by the District, no more so than in coastal restoration projects, which must be designed with sea level rise in mind.

Enhance flood protection along lakes and rivers

Objectives:

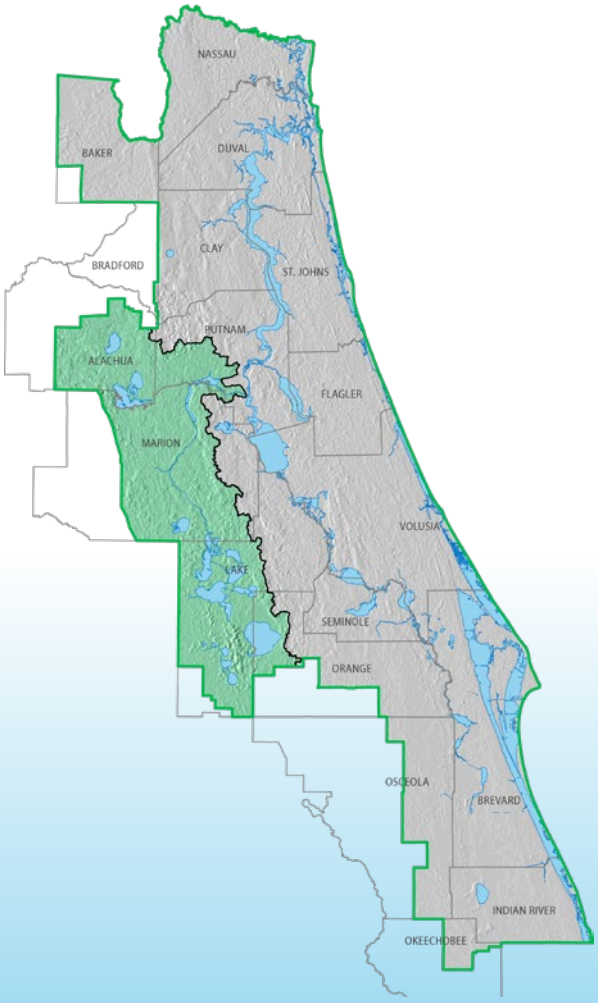
- Evaluate flooding within the Deep Creek basin

Highlight:

Deep Creek flooding

The Deep Creek basin has experienced significant flooding from extreme weather events. Residential and agricultural areas have sometimes been inundated for weeks after the storms. District staff are working with federal, state and local government, water control districts and affected landowners in this basin to better understand the causes and possible solutions to mitigate chronic flooding issues and minimize water quality impacts to downstream receiving waters.

Ocklawaha River Strategic Planning Basin



Basin priorities

- Improve and protect water quality of springs, lakes and waterways
- Enhance water management and flood protection
- Restore and enhance springs, lakes and floodplain marshes in the Ocklawaha River Basin

Improve and protect water quality of springs, lakes, and waterways

Objectives:

- Develop projects to reduce excess nutrient loadings and legacy nutrients
- Continue annual rough fish harvest to reduce legacy phosphorus availability
- Continue Lake Apopka Marsh Flow-Way operation
- Continue actions that reduce phosphorus loading from former muck farm conservation areas, such as Apopka North Shore, Sunnyhill Restoration Area and Emeralda Marsh Conservation Area

Highlight:

Reducing excess nutrients

Although many of the lakes, springs and waterways in the Ocklawaha River Basin (ORB) have experienced reduced nutrient loading and downward nutrient trends, there are still lakes and systems that are nutrient enriched. The District initiated a basin feasibility study in FY 2024–25 to identify nutrient sources and project recommendations that will reduce nutrient loading as well as internal recycling of legacy nutrients. The feasibility study is scheduled to be completed by October 2026.

Nutrient management through rough fish harvesting

The annual harvest of rough fish, typically native gizzard shad, will continue in Lake Apopka. The District initiated this program in Lake Apopka in 1993 and has expanded it over the years to include lakes Denham, Dora, Griffin, Newnans and George. The 2025 Lake Apopka harvest alone removed the equivalent of 5,996 pounds of phosphorus.

Lake Apopka Marsh Flow-Way

In addition to the identification of new water quality improvement projects, the District will continue the operation of the Lake Apopka Marsh Flow-Way (MFW). The MFW has contributed to reducing legacy phosphorus loads and bringing the lake's total phosphorus (TP) concentration to below the target level. The MFW filters algae, suspended sediments and associated nutrients from the lake's water, before being returned to the lake. This recirculating system filters about 30% of the lake's volume each year. Since operation began in 2003, more than 70,000 tons of total suspended solids, and 36 tons of TP have been removed from the lake.

Enhance water management and flood protection

Objectives:

- Refurbish and operate water control, flood protection and navigational infrastructure in the Ocklawaha River Basin
- Initiate Upper Ocklawaha River Basin (UORB) flood protection level of service assessment and adaptation planning to improve resiliency

Highlight:

Refurbishment and repair of critical infrastructure

The District has the responsibility for providing flood protection, water regulation and navigation for the UORB chain of lakes and the seventy-four-mile-long Ocklawaha River through a series of canals, locks and dams. Inspections are conducted routinely, and this critical infrastructure is in need of refurbishment. In FY 2024–25, the District initiated the refurbishment of many of these structures including repair of the C-231 levee bordering Sunnyhill Restoration Area. Refurbishment of the Burrell Lock will be completed in December 2025, refurbishment of the Burrell Dam will commence in the spring of 2026, and design of the Apopka Lock and Dam refurbishment and upgrades design activities will begin in late 2025.

UORB flood protection level of service

Resiliency within the ORB is addressed, in part, through improving the level of flood protection in the region. The flood protection level of service provided by existing infrastructure will be evaluated, and strategies and projects will be developed to mitigate flood impacts and improve overall flood protection performance. This project is scheduled to begin in December 2025 and is expected to be completed by January 2029.

Restore and enhance springs, lakes and floodplain marshes in the ORB

Objectives:

- Continue floodplain restoration and land acquisition efforts
- Continue Lake Apopka restoration efforts

Highlight:

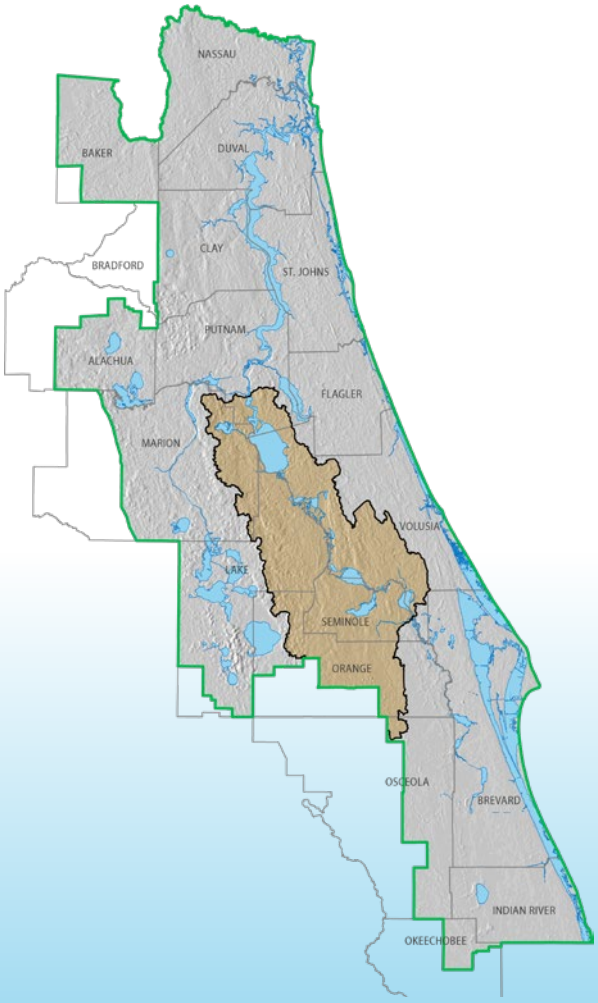
Land acquisition and floodplain restoration

The District purchased over 50,000 acres of historical floodplain marshes throughout the ORB including the Lake Apopka North Shore, Lake Harris Conservation Area, Emeralda Marsh Conservation Area, Sunnyhill Restoration Area and Orange Creek Restoration Area. The restored properties were primarily purchased to reduce nutrient loading to nearby lakes. However, there were additional benefits that included water storage and recharge, restoring and preserving critical wetland habitats, and providing recreational opportunities. Future work includes improving the hydrology of those wetland systems and managing invasive and nuisance plants and animals.

Lake Apopka restoration

The ORB's improving water quality has driven the ongoing recovery of SAV in the lake. Lake Apopka was devoid of SAV until 1995, but by 2024 had native SAV, emergent or floating-leaf vegetation growing around 95% of its perimeter and expanding into deeper areas of the lake. With the improvement in water quality, SAV planting around the perimeter has proven very successful. In the past two years the District has planted over a hundred acres of SAV, and plans to plant another 56 acres in the upcoming year. These plants are doing well and spreading rapidly. The District is also supporting an NGO planting of 35 acres of SAV. The restoration of SAV has in turn created critical sport fish habitat and their increasing abundance has attracted the return of fishing tournaments. District funding of this successful restoration program will continue.

Middle St. Johns River Strategic Planning Basin



Basin priorities

- Improve water quality of springs, lakes and rivers
- Protect Outstanding Florida Springs
- Enhance flood protection along lakes and rivers

Improve water quality of lakes and rivers

Objectives:

- Develop projects to reduce excess nutrient loadings and legacy nutrients
- Continue Lake Jesup Nutrient Reduction Project
- Protect sustainable native ecosystems including shoreline vegetation and SAV
- Continue annual rough fish harvest at Lake George

Highlight:

Reducing nutrient loading

The District initiated a basin feasibility study in FY 2024–25 to identify potential projects to reduce excess nutrient loadings and legacy nutrients. The feasibility study is scheduled to be completed by October 2026. In addition, the Water Quality and Flood Protection Feasibility Study for the Loch Haven Chain of Lakes (Loch Haven Study), with the goal of flood protection and long-term nutrient management in the upper Howell Creek Basin, was completed in spring 2025. The District plans to initiate design and permitting of one to three conceptual projects identified in the Loch Haven Study in 2026.

Lake Jesup Nutrient Removal Project

The District is under contract for the design and permitting of a full-scale nutrient reduction project. The nutrient removal project is located on a 9.7-acre District-owned upland property, adjacent to the east shore of Lake Jesup, and will pump and treat raw water from the lake before discharging it back into the lake. The design includes pilot-scale evaluation and testing as well as permitting. The pilot project is expected to be completed by July 2026 and the District anticipates design completion by fall 2027.

Lake Jesup Sediment Phosphorus Inactivation Project

During the 2025 legislative session, $15M in funding was provided to begin planning of a project to chemically bind bioavailable phosphorus in the lake's sediments. This would reduce the recycling of phosphorus into the water column and help reduce algal bloom intensity. The

District and DEP have begun drafting the technical Scope of Work and funding agreements necessary to use current and anticipated future funds for the project.

Shoreline and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) protection

The District monitors SAV at specific locations within Lake George and is developing a partnership with FWC and Seminole County to monitor SAV in lakes Jesup, Harney and Monroe. In addition, shoreline and littoral native vegetation in these lakes is monitored and assessed by District staff. The recovery of SAV is critical to the restoration of the basin's natural systems and water quality.

Nutrient management through rough fish harvesting

Efforts to remove legacy phosphorus from Lake George have focused on the harvest of rough fish, typically native gizzard shad. The District initiated this program in Lake George in 2013. The 2025 harvest alone removed the equivalent of 9,497 pounds of phosphorus.

Protect Outstanding Florida Springs

Objectives:

- Reduce contributing springshed nutrient loading
- Protect native SAV in spring runs

Highlight:

Reducing nutrient loading

Five Outstanding Florida Springs (OFS) within the MSJRB have been designated as nitrogen impaired by DEP. The District continues to partner with local governments to facilitate projects targeted at reducing nitrogen loading within each of the designated impaired OFS springsheds. Projects include septic-to-sewer conversions, septic system upgrade rebate programs and addressing stormwater runoff nitrogen loading.

Protect sustainable native SAV

District staff continue to monitor and track trends as part of assessing the health and coverage of native SAV in spring runs. SAV provides an important food source for overwintering manatees, serves an important role in sediment stabilization and habitat and is also an indicator of water quality in springs.

Enhance flood protection along lakes and rivers

Objectives:

- Continue acquisition and management of floodplain wetlands
- Facilitate regional flood protection projects through local government partnerships including the Central Florida Coordination Work Group
- Complete development of the Upper and Middle St. Johns River Real-time Flood Forecasting Resiliency Model

Highlight:

Regional flood protection

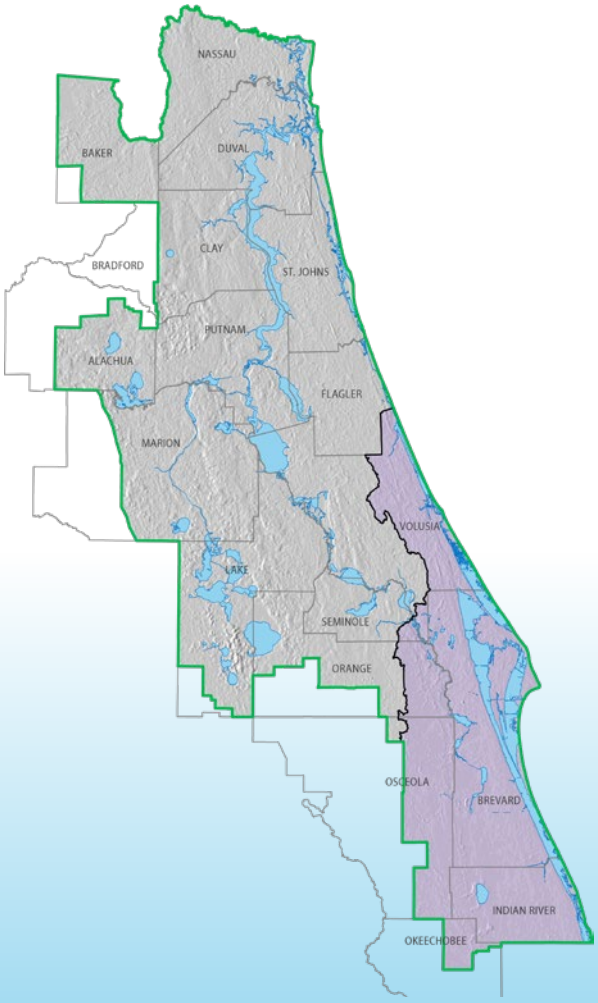
The low elevation of the Middle St. Johns River, and its vulnerability to reverse flows and heavy rainfall during tropical events, combine to create the largest range in river elevations along the St. Johns River.

The District's land acquisition program incorporates non-structural flood protection in combination with preserving and protecting Florida's water resources. The District's future land acquisition strategy for the basin will continue to focus on land acquisition opportunities along the St. Johns, Wekiva and Econlockhatchee rivers, and lakes Jesup, Monroe and Harney to provide non-structural flood protection, water resource protection, enhancement or restoration of natural systems, floodplain connection, water quality improvements and link important natural areas or land management boundaries. In addition, the District will continue to engage with local government partners and SFWMD in regional structural flood protection projects through the Central Florida Coordination Work Group. The work group was formed by the District in 2023 in response to Hurricane Ian to bring together water managers from the two water management districts, Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties, and their municipalities to increase cross-boundary communication and coordination.

Flood forecasting model

The District has undertaken the development of the Middle and Upper St. Johns River Real-time Flood Forecasting Resiliency Model, which is expected to be completed in fall 2027. This model will rely upon hydrologic data (rainfall, water levels and flow) to forecast flood elevations along the St. Johns River within these two basins.

Indian River Lagoon/ Upper St. Johns River Strategic Planning Basin



Basin priorities

- Improve water quality within the Indian River Lagoon (IRL)
- Protect and enhance seagrass within the IRL
- Continue acquisition and restoration of IRL wetlands
- Ensure the sustainability of the Upper St. Johns River Basin (USJRB) water quality improvement projects
- Continue environmental restoration efforts in the USJRB

Improve water quality within the Indian River Lagoon

Objectives:

- Reduce excess nutrient loadings and legacy nutrients through nutrient reduction projects
- Operate the Crane Creek/M-1 Canal Flow Restoration project
- Complete design and initiate C-10 Water Management Area construction
- Continue enhanced monitoring and conduct in-depth data analyses to further project development

Highlight:

Reducing excess nutrients

The *2024 Indian River Lagoon Stormwater Capture and Treatment Project Development and Feasibility Study (2024 Study)* identified 30 local- to medium-scale stormwater treatment project concepts designed to enhance water quality within the IRL. The 2024 Study builds on the 2017 Indian River Lagoon Stormwater Capture and Treatment Preliminary Feasibility Analysis. The District has a long history of successful partnerships in the IRL and will continue to work with partners to further evaluate these potential projects, potentially bringing conceptual projects to fruition.

Crane Creek/M-1 Canal Flow Restoration and C-10 Water Management Area projects

Two projects within the IRL basin, the Crane Creek/M-1 Canal Flow Restoration and C-10 Water Management Area (WMA) projects, are of particular interest. The projects divert nutrient-enriched freshwater flow back west toward the St. Johns River (the historical flow path) and away from the IRL. Prior to entering the St. Johns River, the nutrients are removed in stormwater treatment areas. The projects have the dual benefit of reducing freshwater input to the IRL and returning this flow to the St. Johns River where it is available as an alternative water source to downstream users. Construction of the Crane Creek/M-1 Canal Flow Restoration project was completed in spring 2025 and is operational. Completion of the design phase for the C-10 WMA project is currently scheduled for 2028.

Enhanced water quality monitoring and analysis

The District's water quality monitoring program provides critical data for informed resource management decisions. Documenting patterns and trends in water quality through data collection, the addition of monitoring sites and collaboration with other agencies, can assist the District to identify problem areas (hot spots) and better focus water quality improvement projects. The District continues to refine, focus and enhance its monitoring network to better understand water quality trends and develop science-driven projects.

Protect and enhance seagrass within the Indian River Lagoon

Objectives:

- Continue seagrass research to ensure successful establishment of SAV
- Understand the distribution and behavior of seaweed in IRL
- Develop opportunities with partners for seagrass restoration efforts

Highlight:

Seagrass research

Seagrass is a major structural habitat and the primary indicator of the health of the IRL. Determining how seagrass populations in the IRL recover after perturbations such as phytoplankton blooms, is important in understanding the resilience of these critical habitats. Through collaborations with Florida Institute of Technology and DEP, the District is evaluating the distribution of seagrass seeds and how sediment and dissolved oxygen characteristics influence spatial and temporal patterns. While Phase I identified patterns in the distribution of seeds, the Phase II expansion of the project will further evaluate variability in seed densities with conditions in the sediment and changes in seagrass cover from the District's long-term monitoring of fixed transects. Cooperative efforts to understand the keys to successful establishment of seagrass are ongoing with the District leading the way through its comprehensive seagrass monitoring program and years of historical data.

Understanding the effect of seaweed and other stressors on distribution and abundance of seagrass

Seagrass communities have declined and recovered over the years based on weather conditions, water quality and other stressors. Various factors can affect seagrass coverage and include the health of the benthic communities (e.g., clams and oysters), seagrass and its interactions with seaweed (Caulerpa), the seagrass seedbank and the possible success of restoration efforts.

Developing partnerships

The District has long-standing relationships with a number of local partners. Cooperative efforts are ongoing to understand seagrass genetics, achieve successful restoration and recruitment and monitor the success of projects.

Continue acquisition and restoration of IRL wetlands

Objectives:

- Acquire key parcels along the IRL in collaboration with partners for purposes of preservation and restoration of coastal wetlands

Highlight:

Land acquisition and restoration

Coastal wetlands are among the most biologically productive natural systems on Earth. Wetland habitats are transitional regions between land and sea that provide an array of valuable ecosystem functions. District staff will continue to pursue opportunities to preserve and restore these wetland areas. Through the District's List of Critical Wetlands and Five-Year Land Acquisition Plan, the District and its many partners have worked to identify key lands for acquisition as part of the effort to reverse the damage done to coastal wetlands to recover the natural and economic benefits they provide.

The Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge T-10-H Dike Removal and Sternstein-Canaveral National Seashore Dragline are recent examples of coastal wetland restoration projects completed in cooperation with local partners and the USFWS. Design and permitting have been completed for the Riverside Conservancy Living Shoreline and the South Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area Restoration projects with construction to be completed in FY 2025–26.

Ensure the sustainability of the Upper St. Johns River Basin (USJRB) water quality improvement projects

Objectives:

- Complete ongoing water quality projects and investigate further project development
- Complete DEP funded research on phosphorus management strategies from the application of Class B biosolids

Highlight:

Continuing water quality improvements in the Upper St. Johns River Basin Project

The lakes in the USJRB, like many of Florida's aquatic ecosystems, are threatened by a variety of factors. Nutrient enrichment stimulates harmful algal blooms, which can produce toxins and shade the water column, reducing the light available to support critical SAV. The District's Upper St. Johns River Basin Project (USJRBP) incorporates large water management areas that filter nutrients from the water before discharging downstream. These areas also segregate the nutrient rich water from marsh conservation areas. The USJRBP is a success story. However, adaptive management of the system is necessary to maintain and enhance the treatment capabilities, flood protection and environmental benefits of the project. Investigations regarding the regulation schedules of the water management and marsh conservation areas, bathymetric surveys of the areas, and the possibility of increased storage and treatment capabilities of these areas are planned.

Biosolids investigations

One increasing source of phosphorus in the USJRB is from the land application of municipal wastewater Class B biosolids. DEP is providing funding to conduct applied research to identify solutions to reduce the threat that phosphorus-rich Class B biosolids can pose to water quality in USJRB receiving water bodies.

Continue environmental restoration efforts in the Upper St. Johns River Basin

Objectives:

- Achieve and maintain management of invasive and nuisance upland and aquatic vegetation
- Complete research and develop projects to optimize hydrologic management and ensure environmental needs of the system are met

Highlight:

Invasive and exotic species management

The District's Land Management Program responsibilities include habitat restoration, prescribed fire, wildfire response and invasive and nuisance species management. Land management plans, approved by the District's Governing Board for each District property, establish the goals and direction for management and use of the lands.

The District Invasive Plant Management Program is charged with managing invasive and nuisance upland and aquatic vegetation on over 400,000 acres of District-owned properties, the majority of which is located in the USJRB. Goals of the program include maintaining invasive and nuisance plant populations at the lowest feasible levels to encourage beneficial native vegetation, protect surface water resources and provide for operation and maintenance of the District's regional flood control projects.

Balancing environmental and flood protection goals

The District continues to prioritize ongoing data collection on hydrologic, water quality and key ecosystem indicators to make science-based decisions and exercise adaptive management techniques in the USJRB. The Elevation Transects in Blue Cypress Marsh Conservation Area (BCMCA) and Hydrologic Restoration in the St. Johns Marsh Conservation Area (SJMCA) are two active projects in the USJRB that exemplify the need for active management and monitoring. The Elevation Transect project assesses changes in topography and soil conditions to support future evaluations of hydrologic performance. The Hydrologic Restoration project involves re-establishing more desirable water levels in SJMCA to support marsh rehydration and ecological resilience. Results from both of these projects will influence water level regulation and environmental considerations.

Fundamental

business processes

The District's fundamental business processes provide day-to-day support for the Districtwide initiatives and help ensure regional priorities are successful. These fundamental business processes include:

- Natural resource assessment and restoration
- Regulatory permitting and compliance
- Resiliency
- Communications, public education and outreach
- Financial planning and management
- Staff resource management
- Information technology

Natural resource assessment and restoration

The District's natural resource assessment and restoration program is responsible for the following environmental services related to natural resource management: surface water, groundwater and environmental sampling and analysis; natural systems, land and water planning and restoration; development of surface water, groundwater, and hydrodynamic models; and administration and coordination with partner agencies.

Regulatory permitting and compliance

The District's regulatory program works diligently to protect water resources as part of the District mandate to ensure sustainable use of Florida's water for people and nature. The regulatory permitting program provides a system of checks

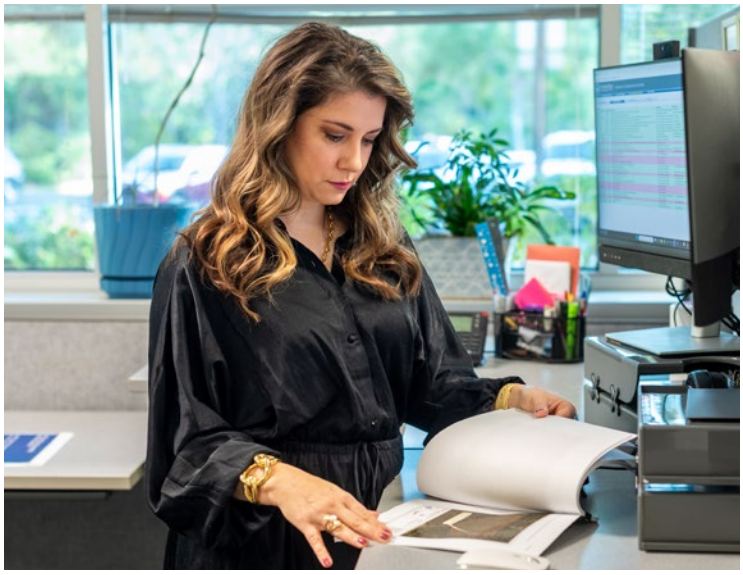
and balances to ensure that the agency is conscientiously protecting water resources while simultaneously working with permit applicants to meet rule criteria. The District has three main regulatory permitting programs: Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP), Consumptive Use Permitting (CUP) and Water Well Construction (WWC). In addition, the District's compliance program conducts compliance reviews and inspections on issued ERP, CUP and WWC permits to ensure the systems are constructed in accordance with approved plans, function as intended and adhere to all permit conditions.

Resiliency

Resiliency is integrated into essentially everything the District does and is reflected in the District's core missions. For example, the District is focused on protecting valuable fresh groundwater from saltwater intrusion. Additionally, the District is committed to assisting local governments as they work to protect their communities from flooding through projects, data collection and analysis, and coordination. One of the District's preferred approaches to protecting water resources is through nature-based efforts, such as land acquisition, wetland enhancement and green infrastructure, like living shorelines, which provide ongoing benefits with less long-term management.

Communications, public education and outreach

Communicating the District's priorities and efforts is an important element of the District's success. The District's communications, public education and outreach program ensures teachers, students, the public, stakeholder groups and news media receive timely, accurate and consistent information about water resources and District programs, projects, rules and Governing Board actions. The information helps promote water resource stewardship, including behaviors that conserve water and decrease water pollution. Information is provided through websites, social media, news



releases, interviews, tours, presentations, events, school curricula, newsletters, podcasts and informational videos.

Financial planning and management

The District's financial planning and management responsibilities include conducting Districtwide budgeting and financial planning activities; providing financial reports and fiscal assistance to the Governing Board, various state and federal agencies and staff; federal, state, and local grant compliance; banking relationships and capital assets; purchasing and procurement; processing payroll and vendor payments; monitoring and billing; preparing financial statements; and maintaining the District's investment program.

Staff resource management

The recruiting and retention of District staff are critical to successfully implementing the core missions and strategic plan. District staff resource management activities include recruitment and hiring, compensation and benefits, training and development, legal compliance, workforce planning and employee relations. Human Resources personnel develop programs and provide support and guidance to staff and management that are aligned with agency leadership direction.

Information technology

The District relies on computing hardware, software and databases to accomplish all aspects of its strategic plan. The information technology program oversees the District's computer hardware, software, computer support and maintenance, information technology consulting services, data centers, network operations, web support and updates, desktop support and application development. Ensuring the continued ability to conduct District business as efficiently and effectively as possible requires the modernization of the District's technology resources over the next few years.

The District's strategic plan for modernizing technology focuses on creating a more secure, resilient, and efficient digital environment that supports all core mission areas. The District is prioritizing upgrades to its information technology infrastructure, including the replacement of aging hardware, enhanced cybersecurity measures and modernization of network architecture to ensure reliability and protection from emerging threats. Cloud-based systems and improved data-management tools will streamline operations, strengthen business continuity, and expand access to essential information for staff and the public. The plan also emphasizes modernizing enterprise applications to increase operational efficiency, improve customer service, prepare for integration of artificial intelligence applications and reduce long-term maintenance costs. Collectively, these efforts will provide a flexible, scalable foundation that enables the District to better manage water resources, support data-driven decision-making, and meet future regulatory, operational and stakeholder needs.

St. Johns River
Water Management District
4049 Reid Street
Palatka, FL 32177
sjrwmd.com