



2006 ANNUAL REPORT

Northwest Florida Water Management District



NORTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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WATER MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND CHALLENGES

As the State of Florida's population continues to grow, so do the Northwest Florida Water Management District's water management responsibilities and challenges. Each year, brings new challenges or new issues to the forefront. Each year both mandated and elected water resources programs and projects are implemented or continued in order to address water supply, water quality, water resource protection and restoration needs of northwest Florida.

Different regions of the District may experience different water resource needs. Anticipating changing water resource needs is integral to resolving them successfully. Several years may be required to accomplish many projects, such as the development of new or alternative water supplies or major surface water restoration projects. Careful planning of these efforts is always paramount. Many projects and programs are successfully completed and undertaken through the cooperative efforts initiated with the District's many partners, local governments and legislatively supported programs. For example, constructing new wellfields, or expanding the capacity of existing ones, to increase water supply requires the cooperation of numerous partners if these multi-million-dollar projects are to be completed. These cooperative projects are crucial for the western portions of our District which have experienced considerable growth in coastal areas.

Throughout 2006 (and into 2007) a major challenge for the District has been the implementation of the Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) program in the northwest region. Approved by the legislature in 2006, the program received a special \$2,740,000 appropriation to launch this effort. The District and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) immediately began taking steps to implement the stormwater portion of the ERP program, scheduled to

begin no sooner than January 1, 2007. This required development of the rule, finalizing an agreement with DEP on activities to be regulated by the District and those to be regulated by DEP and hiring new staff. In the upcoming fiscal year (2007-2008), implementation of the management and storage of surface waters component of the program is scheduled to begin no sooner than January 1, 2008.

The Water Sustainability Trust Fund was first established by the legislature in 2005. The District received \$10 million in the first year (2005-2006) of the program and is slated to receive \$6 million in the second year (2006-2007). These funds can be used to construct alternative water supplies or for projects to protect springs. Additionally, a small amount of funding is provided for surface water improvement projects. Of the first year funds, \$6.5 million were used to support about half the cost of an inland wellfield expansion to supply water to south Walton County. An expansion of the Santa Rosa County Sand and Gravel Aquifer wellfield also was funded as were water reuse projects for Okaloosa and Leon counties. In the upcoming fiscal year, water supply/water treatment assistance for Port St. Joe is expected to be addressed. Also, the District offered assistance to Wewahitchka as it experienced growth and began expanding the production and distribution capacity of the existing city water system.

Coastal Franklin and Gulf counties are experiencing a rapid rate of growth and it is anticipated that traditional sources of supply will not be adequate to meet all of the projected needs for the area. Franklin and Gulf counties have, or are projected to experience, problems related to increased salinity of coastal public supply wells with their continued and expanded use. In June, the District's Governing Board approved a Region V Water Supply Plan for Franklin and Gulf

counties to help identify alternative water supply sources. Identifying an alternative source or a new source of supply will continue to be a focus for the District. The Region V plan is only the second water supply plan the District has initiated. The first was the Region II Water Supply Plan for Santa Rosa, Walton and Okaloosa counties, developed in 2000 and updated in 2006.

Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program projects will continue to receive attention. The 2006 legislature appropriated about \$7.5 million for SWIM priority watersheds, especially projects for the Apalachicola River and Bay, Choctawhatchee River and Bay and St. Andrew Bay. Additionally, road improvements continue throughout northwest Florida, especially in the western portion of the District (Bay County and west). These roadway improvements will result in a number of mitigation projects to offset the Department of Transportation's impacts to wetland areas.

The Florida Forever program followed Preservation 2000 and has provided approximately \$7.5 million a year for land acquisition and capital improvement projects that address water quality and preserve our water resources. Examples of capital improvement projects include habitat restoration, stormwater treatment and sediment abatement and water resource development projects that promote reclamation, storage or recovery of water. For the first four years of the program, 50 percent of the funds available each year were directed to local governmental capital improvement projects. At the end of three grant cycles, 32 awards to local governments had been made for a total of \$14,546,998. It is estimated that the actual cost of all of these projects is well over \$51 million once matching amounts and in-kind services are added. During 2006, the District opened the

application process for the fourth cycle of grants. Additional recipients will be recommended in early 2007.

In 2006, the District acquired 5,456 acres along the Perdido River in western Escambia County. This acquisition will protect the water resources of the Perdido River and Bay ecosystem and extend natural protection of the river across state boundaries. It secures about 15 miles of river frontage along the Florida and Alabama border and brings the total acres owned by the District in its 16-county region to more than 207,000. The District will be developing land management plans for this area, as well as recreational sites. District ownership and management of these lands opens these areas to a multitude of resource-based recreational opportunities for the public.



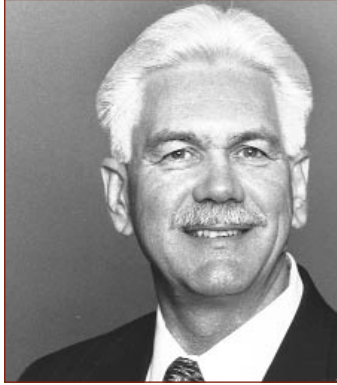
Wayne Bodie
Chair, Governing Board



Douglas E. Barr
Executive Director



GOVERNING BOARD



Wayne Bodie
Chair
DeFuniak Springs
Represents Basin II
Appointed: March 5, 1999
Reappointed: March 2, 2003
Term Expires: March 1, 2007



Joyce Estes
Vice Chair
Eastpoint
Serves at Large
Appointed: March 5, 1999
Reappointed: March 2, 2003
Term Expires: March 1, 2007



Sharon T. Gaskin
Secretary/Treasurer
Wewahitchka
Serves at Large
Appointed: March 5, 1999
Reappointed: March 2, 2000
Reappointed: March 17, 2004
Term Expires: March 1, 2008



Peter Antonacci
Tallahassee
Represents Basin V
Appointed: March 31, 2006
Term Expires: March 1, 2008



Stephanie Bloyd
Panama City Beach
Serves at Large
Appointed: March 2, 2001
Reappointed: March 2, 2002
Reappointed: March 3, 2006
Term Expires: March 1, 2010



Philip McMillan
Blountstown
Represents Basin IV
Appointed: March 3, 2006
Term Expires: March 1, 2007



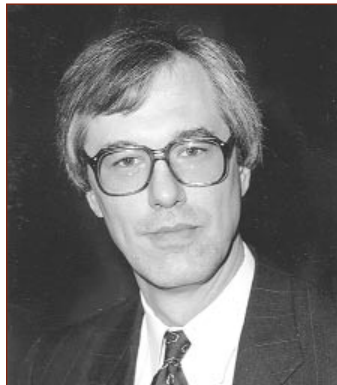
Jerry Pate
 Pensacola
 Serves at Large
 Appointed: November 14, 2006
 Term Expires: March 1, 2009



Sharon Pinkerton
 Pensacola
 Represents Basin I
 Appointed: March 15, 2005
 Term Expires: March 1, 2009



George Roberts
 Panama City
 Represents Basin III
 Appointed: March 3, 2006
 Term Expires: March 1, 2010



Douglas E. Barr
Executive Director
 Northwest Florida
 Water Management District
 Appointed: February 1992

2007 GOVERNING BOARD MEETINGS		
January 25	June 28	September 27*
February 22	July 26	October 25
March 22	August 23	November 30
April 26	September 13*	December 1
May 24*		

Governing Board meetings are held at the District's headquarters office on U.S. Highway 90 except for those marked with an asterisk (*). The May meeting will be held in Crestview, the September 13 meeting is a public hearing on the proposed 2007-2008 fiscal year budget to be held in DeFuniak Springs and the September 27 meeting will be held in Marianna with a public hearing on the budget to follow. This schedule of meetings is tentative and subject to change.

- Basin I:** Perdido and Escambia rivers
- Basin II:** Blackwater and Yellow rivers
- Basin III:** Choctawhatchee River and St. Andrew Bay Coast
- Basin IV:** Apalachicola and Chipola rivers
- Basin V:** Ochlockonee, Wakulla and St. Marks rivers

PLANNING WELL AHEAD: BALANCING WATER RESOURCES WITH DEMAND

As development continued along the coastal areas of northwest Florida, water supply planning for growth became a priority. Concurrent with a doubling of the population over the last 30 years in Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties, the Northwest Florida Water Management District documented declining ground water levels. Along the coast, centered under Fort Walton Beach, a 150-foot decrease in the level of the Floridan Aquifer led to concerns about saltwater intrusion and the ability to meet increasing demand for potable water. It is estimated that population growth within this three-county area will increase demand by an additional 29 million gallons a day between 2005 and 2025.

Due to the lowering aquifer levels and potential for saltwater intrusion, it became evident that water demand could exceed traditional sources within a generation. Recognizing this in 1979, the District began a multi-year technical evaluation of alternative ground water supplies and source areas. The District, local governments and area utilities outlined strategies for identifying and developing these alternative water supplies. Inland wellfields, including the Sand and Gravel and Floridan aquifers were identified as preferred alternatives within all three counties. Development of such inland sources have helped meet growing demand, while sustaining the coastal aquifer systems and avoiding adverse ecological impacts.

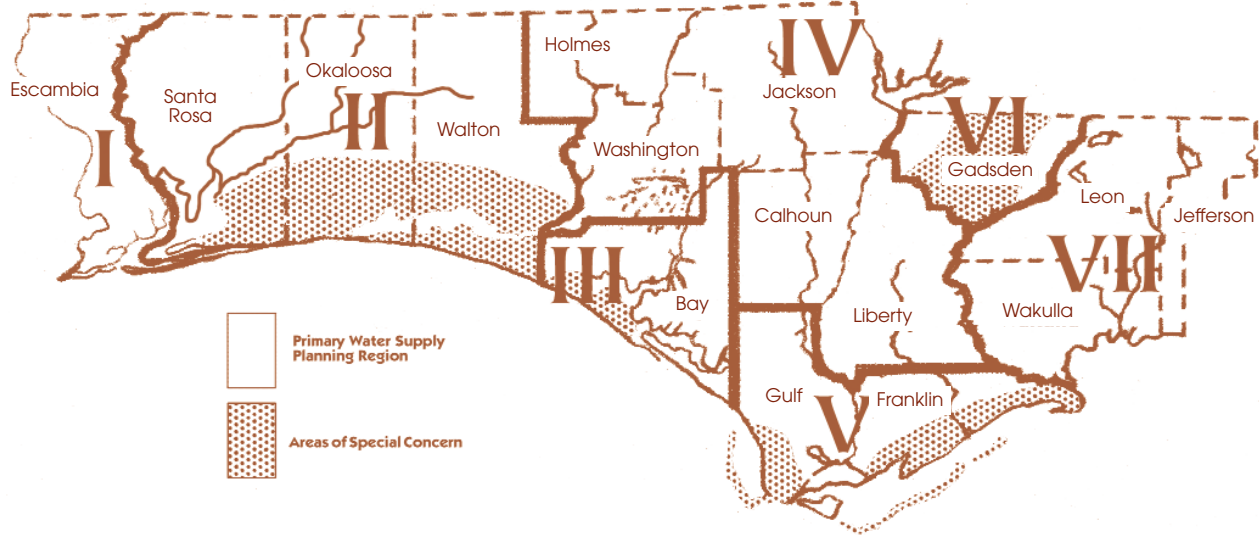
To facilitate planning and support water resource and alternative water supply development, the District developed a Regional Water Supply Plan for Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties. The plan was initially approved in 2000 and updated in 2006. Recent water resource development accomplished through this plan included sophisticated modeling to evaluate the sustainability of the coastal Floridan Aquifer and the feasibility of alternative surface water supplies in northern Okaloosa County. Through this plan, over 70 million gallons per day of potential supply have been identified.

The alternative water supply sources are now in production. A consortium of Santa Rosa County utilities, for example, cooperatively developed an inland Sand and Gravel Aquifer wellfield and transmission system to serve coastal areas of that county. Similar cooperative efforts have occurred in both Walton and Okaloosa counties. The District provided technical assistance for these efforts and helped obtain federal and state grant funding to assist with construction.

A statewide initiative of the 2005 Florida Legislature, the Water Protection and Sustainability program, offers important funding assistance for alternative water supply and water resource development. Administered through the Water Management Districts, the program assists local governments by providing up to 40 percent of the funding needed to construct alternative water supply facilities. Financially disadvantaged small local governments may receive additional funding assistance as well.

In 2005-2006, \$10 million, and in 2006-2007, \$6 million, were made available for alternative water supply development assistance and water resource development in northwest Florida. Much of this has been targeted toward developing alternative water supplies for Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties. The funding also has helped support reclaimed water projects in several counties across the District and the development of the inland Floridan Aquifer as a source to serve coastal Franklin County.

The District has designated seven water supply planning regions across 16 counties and identified areas of special concern.



Highly treated water, reclaimed from advanced wastewater treatment facilities for irrigation purposes, helps reduce demand for drinking water. Also known as water reuse, reclaimed water is used for landscape and crop irrigation and other nondrinking water uses. Many golf courses and public areas in the region irrigate with reuse water.

These efforts help augment a rigorous regulatory effort to ensure that water resources are managed efficiently. Public supply utilities in the region are required to employ conservation measures and reserve new uses of the coastal Floridan Aquifer for drinking water only. Utilities have also helped by distributing the District's water saving conservation brochures.

WATER SUPPLY BY REGION

Ground water is the primary source used for public water consumption across most of northwest Florida and is generally less susceptible to contaminants than surface water. However, the District has cooperated with local governments, public utilities and communities to protect threatened surface waters, as well. It has purchased wetlands for preservation and has engineered innovative stormwater treatments to restore impacted surface waters. Throughout the

seven water supply planning regions, District investigations have helped identify new public water supply sources where they were critically needed. These studies also have helped coordinate planning for long-term growth.

REGION I: PROTECTING GROUND WATER AGAINST SURFACE CONTAMINANTS

In Escambia County, the only county in Region I, the Sand and Gravel Aquifer supplies the region's

potable water. The Sand and Gravel Aquifer interacts closely with surface water runoff and seepage and is recharged by local rainfall. Given a long history of commercial and industrial land uses, parts of southern Escambia County have experienced significant contamination problems. However, local utilities have taken measures to provide enhanced water treatment and relocate wells to meet water quality standards and provide safe drinking water supplies. This region has enough water available from the Sand and Gravel Aquifer to meet its daily demands through 2025.

REGION II: ANTICIPATING GROWING DEMAND

While Santa Rosa County is planning to expand its inland Sand and Gravel Aquifer wellfield, utilities in Walton County have developed the Rock Hill wellfield and are developing additional capacity by expanding the wellfield to the east. It is expected that this effort will provide approximately nine million gallons per day of additional water supply and expand the interconnected transmission and distribution system of the South Walton Utilities, Regional Utilities and the City of Freeport.

The District continues to work with Okaloosa County to pursue several water supply options for coastal areas of the county. These options include additional inland wells. Collector wells potentially placed in the riverbank north of the Yellow River are also under investigation. Other scenarios include possible surface withdrawals from the Shoal River or small reservoirs situated along its undeveloped tributaries where ecological impacts can be effectively managed.

REGION III: PROTECTING SURFACE WATER SUPPLIES

The Panama City area in Bay County (Region III) relies upon surface water from Deer Point Lake Reservoir for drinking water. The reservoir receives the majority of its flow from Econfina Creek, which is fed by springs connected to the Floridan Aquifer. The aquifer is recharged by rainwater

seeping through the soils of the nearby Sand Hill Lakes. The District has purchased over 42,000 acres in the Econfina Creek basin to preserve this pristine water resource. It also has inventoried the resources of the Econfina Creek basin and identified 11 spring groups and 36 spring vents along the creek. These efforts have helped identify those with the greatest potential to be impacted by human activity, as well as those in need of restoration.

Bay County also is considering the feasibility of a ground water source for the western portion of the county that could eventually interconnect with the surface water source. In times of drought and lower creek flows, this ground water source could augment the surface water source. Through these efforts, a high quality freshwater supply for the region will be assured for years to come.

REGION IV: CURRENT SOURCES ARE SUFFICIENT

This region encompasses five counties – Holmes, Washington, Jackson, Calhoun and Liberty. The District’s water supply assessment, completed in 1998 and updated in 2003, concluded that demands now and in the future are within the capacity of the Floridan Aquifer. These counties do not currently require development of alternative water supplies. However, the District administers well construction and consumptive use permitting to help ensure that the water resources and existing legal users are protected.

REGION V: TRANSITIONING TO NEW WATER SUPPLIES

To assist rapidly growing Gulf and Franklin counties, the District continues to explore new water supply sources. In Gulf County, the City of Port St. Joe is transitioning from ground water to surface water through a freshwater canal supplied by the Chipola River. The District assisted with the purchase of the canal and provided funding for a water treatment plant in 2006. The District has identified some 62 springs that contribute to the river’s flow.

The District has also initiated several test well sites as it seeks to identify the best inland water supply source to provide an alternative source for coastal Franklin County. The City of Apalachicola also began monitoring its ground water resources. In 2006, a water supply plan was developed for Region V, which is expected to be approved in early 2007.

REGION VI: MONITORING THE WATERSHED

Though a regional water supply plan is not considered necessary for Gadsden County, Telogia Creek flows and withdrawals are monitored and large wells in the center of the county are widely spaced to reduce draw-down impacts. Also, watershed management efforts are being undertaken by Gadsden County and the City of Quincy in the Quincy Creek basin. Throughout the region, water reuse is recommended for agricultural, nursery and landscape irrigation.

REGION VII: WATER REUSE EXAMINED

Current and future demands are considered to be within the capacity of the Floridan Aquifer in Region VII, comprised of Leon and Wakulla counties and western Jefferson County. Reuse water is recommended for landscape irrigation to reduce Floridan Aquifer withdrawals and to reduce impacts to ground water supplies. The District recently awarded \$1 million to the City of Tallahassee through the Water Protection and Sustainability program to build a water reuse facility. It will treat reclaimed water to acceptable standards for commercial and residential common areas, roadside landscaping and a golf course in southeastern Leon County. This project also will reduce the quantity of wastewater and nutrients currently applied to the Southeast Farm spray field facility, which impacts Wakulla Springs, a first magnitude spring of regional importance.



DISTRICTWIDE ACTIVITIES

Projects and programs undertaken during 2006 by the Northwest Florida Water Management District throughout its 16-counties or in multi-county areas, are reviewed in this section. Projects and programs specific to the various county groupings are discussed in their respective sections. Many programs are on-going and may not be included in this report.

Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) Program

In 2006, the Florida Legislature amended section 373.4145, Florida Statutes, (effective July 1, 2006) creating an Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) program in the northwest for the first time and appropriating \$2,740,000 for 2006-2007. To be implemented by the District and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the program will expand protection for wetlands, waterways and wildlife habitat throughout the District's 16-county area.

In effect throughout the rest of the state since 1993, the ERP program addresses activities such as dredging navigation channels, filling wetlands, urban and residential development, highway construction and installing docks and seawalls. Also managed through the program are stormwater discharges, off-site flooding and construction activities affecting wetlands and other surface waters, including isolated wetlands.

The first phase of the program, the stormwater management portion, is to be implemented no sooner than January 1, 2007. The second phase, management and storage of surface waters, will be implemented no sooner than January 1, 2008.

Alternative Water Supply/Water Resource Development Projects

An overview of water supply challenges facing the District and a long-term strategy for addressing those challenges were presented to the Governing Board in December 2005/January 2006. In particular, this overview focused on water supply planning in Region II (Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties), an

area representing the District's most significant long-term water supply challenge.

The District received \$10 million in the first year of the Water Protection and Sustainability program for water supply/water resource development projects. Of this amount, \$6.5 million was allocated for the Walton County inland wellfield expansion, which would provide additional supply for the coastal areas. The Okaloosa County reuse project received \$2 million; the Tallahassee reuse project and springs protection, \$1 million; and Franklin County's water resource development, \$500,000.

Water Supply Plans

During 2006, an update was prepared for the Region II Regional Water Supply Plan for Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties. This revision builds on the accomplishments of the 2000 Regional Water Supply Plan by continuing the District's water resource development projects and identifying alternative water supply development projects for local governments and utilities. The revised plan identifies preferred alternative supplies from all sources.

Additionally, a water supply plan for Region V (Franklin and Gulf counties) was initiated in June 2006. This draft plan is expected to be approved early in 2007. This brings the total number of plans developed in northwest Florida to two. There are seven water supply planning regions altogether.

Ground Water Modeling

In April, the District engaged the technical services of an outside contractor for ground water flow and solute transport modeling services and for the specific

task of examining saltwater intrusion in the Floridan Aquifer underlying Walton, Okaloosa and Santa Rosa counties. The model is being used to assess the sustainability of current and proposed future ground water withdrawals. The model is a 3-D numerical model that simulates lateral and vertical movement of salt water toward water supply wells along the coast and supports analyses of its movement in the Floridan Aquifer.

Elevation Data Collected

The District entered into an agreement with the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Ocean Service and Coastal Services Center to provide collection and delivery of elevation point data derived from multiple return light detection and ranging (LiDAR) measurements for areas in coastal northwest Florida, specifically, Escambia, Santa Rosa and Walton counties. Some resources involved include the Escambia, Yellow, Blackwater and Perdido rivers, District-owned conservation lands, related floodplains and wetlands, wetland restoration and mitigation areas in southern Escambia and Walton counties and all of the coastal and estuarine shoreline areas of the Pensacola Bay System and Choctawhatchee Bay within Walton County. These data are particularly helpful in managing water resources.

In November, the cooperative agreement was amended to include data collection for Jefferson, Bay and southern Washington counties. The estimated cost of obtaining data for these three additional counties is \$420,000. Data have already been collected for Escambia, Santa Rosa, Walton and Leon counties.

Flood Hazard Map Modernization

District participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Map Modernization program continued in 2006. Through this program, the District receives funding to develop Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs). As part of fiscal year 2005-06 funding, preliminary maps were released for Bay and Gulf counties and flood studies were implemented for Walton County. The original agreement was amended to begin the process of

creating DFIRMs for Gadsden, Leon and Wakulla counties. The final effective DFIRMs were issued for Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.

In September, an agreement with Escambia County to become a Cooperating Technical Partner was approved. This will allow the county to assist the District in collecting hydrologic, hydraulic and other important water resources data. An amendment to the District's Cooperating Technical Partner agreement with FEMA was approved in September, bringing total FEMA funding to \$4,610,820. This funding supports DFIRMs development as well as the District's general administration, oversight, programmatic outreach, web site upkeep (www.nwfwmdfloodmaps.com) and information technology aspects of map modernization.

Florida Forever Grant Contracts Approved

Following approval of Florida Forever capital improvement grants for several local governments throughout northwest Florida in late 2005, the Governing Board approved their associated contractual agreements in January.

Contracts approved included: Long Hollow stormwater retrofit (City of Pensacola), \$600,000; Deer Point Lake dirt road stabilization (Bay County), \$500,000; Call and Cadiz streets stormwater improvements (City of Tallahassee), \$500,000; Harbinwood Estates drainage improvements (Leon County), \$1,000,000; Sawyer Lane stormwater improvement (Franklin County), \$366,000; Okeeheepkee Basin retrofit (Leon County), \$500,000; East Ten Mile Creek stream restoration (Escambia County), \$500,000; Blue Pit wetland stormwater retention (Escambia County), \$500,000; Port of Panama City stormwater improvements (Panama City Port Authority), \$100,000; Lamb Eddy Road stormwater improvements (Calhoun County), \$451,198; abatement of nonpoint source pollution from unpaved roads (Orange Hill Soil and Water Conservation District), \$320,000; stormwater drainage improvements (City of Gulf Breeze), \$1,000,000; Choctawhatchee Bay stormwater Phase I (Walton County), \$500,000; and Rolling Pines Road

stormwater improvements (Washington County), \$440,500. Additionally, an agreement was approved in May to provide Leon County with \$332,000 for the Killlearn Lakes restoration project.

New Florida Forever Grants

During the summer of 2006, the opening of the fourth cycle of Florida Forever capital improvement grants for local governments was announced. The goal of the program is to support management efforts that improve water quality. Projects that employ stormwater improvements, restore natural systems, demonstrate environmental best management practices or implement water reuse are eligible for consideration. Staff recommendations will be presented to the Governing Board in early 2007.

SWIM Priority List

The Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program was created in 1987 by the Florida Legislature. It recognized that the state's surface waters had become degraded or were in danger of becoming degraded and that this could be addressed and prevented through cooperative efforts of the Water Management Districts, state agencies and local governments.

Each Water Management District maintains a list of prioritized water bodies of regional or statewide significance. The Northwest Florida Water Management District adopted its initial SWIM priority list in 1988, updating it in 1993 and 1996. In 2001 it was reviewed once again but no changes were recommended. In January 2006, the District applied a comprehensive approach, designating water bodies based on major riverine and estuarine watersheds.

Watershed-Based Regional Mitigation Plan

In June, the Governing Board approved an agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for a watershed-based regional mitigation plan. A more streamlined approach to federal regulatory approvals, associated with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act as administered by the Corps, is facilitated by the plan.

The District will be able to obtain federal approval of proposed mitigation projects as soon as they are identified. Watershed areas with high water resources value may be preserved or restored well in advance of when wetland impacts are anticipated to occur. The plan allows the District to target areas within a watershed where there are critical water resource restoration or preservation needs. The existing plan only addresses mitigation areas and projects proposed to offset wetland impacts associated with eligible Department of Transportation (DOT) projects.

Florida Springs Initiative

Work on the Florida Springs Initiative, in cooperation with DEP, continued during the year. In June an agreement with DEP was amended to allow the work to include fiscal year 2006-2007. DEP will provide \$181,799 toward this work with the District providing \$100,000 in matching funds. This new agreement marked the 6th year of the project. For the upcoming year, a spring inventory along Pine Log Creek in Bay and Washington counties and springshed delineations for Morrison Spring (Walton County), Jackson Blue Spring (Jackson County) and Wakulla Spring (Wakulla County) will be undertaken. A water chemistry study of springs flowing to Merritt's Mill Pond in Jackson County also will be undertaken. Over 200 Floridan Aquifer springs have been located along the Choctawhatchee River, Holmes Creek, Econfina Creek, Chipola River and within the St. Mark River watershed.

Spring Inventories

In 2004, the District completed two (Chipola River and Econfina Creek) of six planned inventories of springs throughout the northwest area. In 2005, the Choctawhatchee River spring inventory was completed and in 2006, the St. Marks and Wakulla rivers and Holmes Creek spring inventories were done. The last planned inventory, Pine Log Creek in Bay and Washington counties, is slated for completion in 2007. Sixty-three Floridan Aquifer springs and spring groups were documented for the Chipola River and the importance of ground water quality to the Chipola River ecosystem was demonstrated. Within the

Econfina Creek basin, 36 springs or spring groups were identified. These springs account for the majority of the creek's flow. Thirteen springs were identified and verified in the Choctawhatchee River basin. For the St. Marks and Wakulla river basin, 51 springs were identified. Within the Holmes Creek basin, 53 springs were confirmed.

Concerns about water quality for northwest Florida's springs include increasing levels of nitrates. Springs are vulnerable, not only to the increased use of their waters but also, to the activities that occur on the land around them. It has been said that springs serve as windows into the quality of our ground water.

Integrated Water Resources Monitoring

In June, the District and DEP amended a contract to extend the Integrated Water Resources Monitoring program for an additional year. DEP will provide \$216,386 for the continuation of this program, which provides ground and surface water sampling at a network of sites around the District. The District has assisted DEP in collecting and interpreting water quality data from confined and unconfined aquifers, rivers, streams and lakes in the northwest region as part of this statewide program.

Monitoring of Surface Waters

The District has participated in an ambient surface water quality assessment program with DEP for the past 15 years. DEP will provide \$117,949 to continue the program, which provides surface water quality data for the assessment of long-term water quality trends for major streams and rivers in the District. Data collected will be used to develop management strategies to improve surface water quality and minimize negative impacts on surface water resources. Funding for the program is provided through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to DEP.

Independent Auditor's Report

The District's independent auditing firm, James Moore & Company, presented findings of its audit report for October 2004 through September 2005. Again as in previous years, the District received a "clean" audit

without any issues of noncompliance. An unqualified opinion was received, as it has been for the past 12 years, which is the highest level of assurance for an audit.

Inspector General

In April, the Governing Board selected an Inspector General for the District, Kaye Kendrick Enterprises. Ms. Kendrick presented her plan of the areas to be reviewed. The plan calls for establishing a risk ranking for the District, reviewing regulatory and lands permitting procedures/internal controls and examining applicable statutes, rules, etc. pertaining to land acquisition. In October, Ms. Kendrick presented the Inspector General's Audit Report for fiscal year 2005-2006. As a result of procedures performed, no significant exceptions were found that warranted disclosure to management and the Governing Board.

Payments In Lieu of Taxes

Again in 2006, the District was able to reimburse qualifying counties for tax revenue lost as a result of District land acquisitions. Payments in lieu of taxes were made to six counties: Bay, \$5,721.13; Holmes, \$1,997.13; Okaloosa, \$916.80; Santa Rosa, \$17,951.33; Walton, \$18,555.47; and Washington, \$27,128.65.

Access Easements Across District Lands

A workshop was held in February to inform the Governing Board and the public about current District access policy, level of access easement requests and to obtain public input.

In March, a revised access easement policy was presented to the Governing Board for approval. The purpose of the access policy is to enable District staff to respond in a consistent and timely manner to requests from owners of landlocked and/or abutting properties to use District lands for access purposes; to set guidelines (standard procedures) that will ensure that the District maintains adequate control over its lands to protect their natural state and condition, to maintain adequate management control and to

prevent degradation to the land; and to ensure that the District receives just compensation for any rights in real property that are conveyed. Each easement request will require Governing Board approval.

5-Year Work Plan for Land Acquisition

The Florida Forever Land Acquisition Work Plan is now part of the consolidated Water Management District Annual Report required by the Florida Legislature (adopted in 2005). However, Florida Statutes also require that the District adopt, in a public hearing, a five-year work plan for land acquisition.

Since the land acquisition program began, the District's goal has been to bring as much of the floodplains of major rivers and creeks of northwest Florida as possible under public ownership and protection. To date, over 207,000 acres have been acquired either in fee simple purchases or through conservation easements (less than fee). The work plan was adopted in February by the Governing Board.

Reforestation Plans

Reforestation and habitat restoration plans for District lands for the 2006-2007 fiscal year target approximately 1,553 acres. Areas to be restored include disturbed longleaf pine, slash pine and wiregrass habitat in Escambia, Walton and Washington counties. The restoration sites are along the Perdido River, on the Choctawhatchee River/Holmes Creek (Lafayette Creek tract) Water Management Area (WMA) and within the Econfina Creek WMA.

Cleanup, Maintenance and Security Services

In September, a number of agreements were either renewed or issued for the first time that would provide recreational site cleanup, maintenance and enforcement/security services for District lands.

The District's current agreement for public recreation site cleanup and maintenance services for the western region expired and a new private contractor was

selected. An existing agreement covering the central region also was renewed.

Additionally, a contract with Orange Hill Soil and Water Conservation District was renewed for land management construction, maintenance, installation and repair service primarily for the Econfina Creek and Choctawhatchee River/Holmes Creek WMAs.

A contract also was renewed with the Washington County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement/security services for the Choctawhatchee River/Holmes Creek and Econfina Creek WMAs. Earlier, in March, the District renewed its agreement with the Bay County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement and security services on District lands. These areas include the Pitt Spring "day use" recreational area, Econfina Creek land management field office and the Econfina Creek canoe launch. Recreational sites receive their heaviest public use during the swimming/canoeing season, which generally runs from April through the end of September, and during hunting season.

Consumptive Uses of Water

In December, the District participated in a workshop with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Natural Resource Conservation Service to assist farmers with consumptive use issues. Annual notices are sent reminding permittees of items due per the conditions of their permits and explanatory notes were included in the workshop and mail outs. The workshop also stressed the benefits of the Consumptive Use Permitting program and permit compliance to the agricultural community.

In January, proposed amendments to Chapter 40A-2, Florida Administrative Code, Consumptive Uses of Water, were adopted. The revisions (1) clarified rule language; (2) reduced permitting requirements for certain withdrawals posing minimal threat to water resources and other users; (3) expedited the clean-up/remediation of contaminated ground water; and (4) described water use reservations to protect the fish and wildlife of the Apalachicola River and Bay floodplain and ecosystems.

The District also began providing additional public assistance notices to permit holders regarding

conditions of their consumptive use permits. Items provided include: compliance reminder notices sent three times per year; renewal notices sent at least six months and one month prior to permit expiration; and lists of due dates related to the permit at the time of permit issuance.

Well Permitting Program

Since 1991, the District has maintained an agreement with DEP to implement the well permitting requirements of Chapter 62-524, Florida Administrative Code. The program addresses potable well construction in specific delineated areas including portions of Escambia, Jackson, Leon and Santa Rosa counties. The new contract will cover July 2006

through June 2011. During the fiscal year, 97 well construction permits were issued and processed through this program to provide drinking water to individual home owners in rural Jackson County.

New geographic information system (GIS) tools were provided to the well permitting staff in the form of an ArcIMS application for the regulatory program. This allows better quality control of location data entered into the permitting database. Well locations are obtained with a high enough level of accuracy that nearly 100 percent of the wells currently being permitted will be available for inclusion in the District's GIS maps. This adds significantly to the quality of information that can be provided to water well contractors, other agencies and the public.

Permits Issued by County (October 2005 to September 2006)

County	Well Construction Repair and Abandonment	Consumptive Use (new/renewal/modifications)	Surface Water Management (general/individual)	Agricultural and Forestry Surface Water Management (general/individual)
Bay	1,575	14	-	-
Calhoun	245	7	-	-
Escambia	1,605	10	1	5
Franklin	121	7	-	-
Gadsden	308	14	-	9
Gulf	279	10	-	-
Holmes	340	4	-	2
Jackson	825	30	-	-
Jefferson	109	0	-	-
Leon	788	9	-	-
Liberty	72	1	-	-
Okaloosa	1,444	13	6	10
Santa Rosa	1,143	7	2	2
Wakulla	476	3	-	-
Walton	1,233	17	4	10
Washington	444	3	-	-
Total	11,007	149	13	38

The permitting staff has also been creating and providing newsletters for the licensed water well contractors in the District. Newsletter topics cover updates of District events, pertinent rule changes, continuing education classes and locations and other topics of interest to the well drilling community.

E-Permitting Planned

The District has taken several steps toward implementing e-permitting (or permitting online). Several elements of a comprehensive e-permitting system are being developed beginning with applications that provide a benefit to water well contractors and the District. These include: (1) an e-compliance module that allows permittees to enter pumpage, water level and water quality as required by the conditions of their permits and (2) a well completion report entry system that will allow all contractors to enter well completion reports online.

The next step will be developing an e-permitting system for well permits. The water well permit allows construction, abandonment or repair of a well. Approval to begin this next step was given by the Governing Board in July. Additionally, in September, approval was obtained to begin developing e-permitting for the Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) program.

Employee Service Awards and Recognitions

Employees who have achieved 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 or more years of service are recognized each year by the Governing Board. Those staff receiving awards during 2006 included:

For 25 years of service: Earl Bright, Associate Field Representative; R. Donald King, Associate Lands Manager.

For 20 years of service: William O. Cleckley, Director, Division of Land Management and Acquisition; Patrick W. Creel, Maintenance Assistant; Christopher Richards, Chief, Ground Water Bureau.

For 15 years of service: F. Graham Lewis, Senior Environmental Scientist.

For 10 years of service: Ferdouse Sultana, Associate GIS Analyst; John T. Valenta, Associate Lands Manager.

For 5 years of service: Amanda Bedenbaugh, Director, Accounting and Finance Section; David C. Clayton, Environmental Scientist; Karen K. Kebart, Associate Water Resource Planner.

Additionally, special resolutions and plaques were prepared in recognition of the retirement of Jerry L. Sheppard, Associate Field Representative, and Sandra L. Barrett, Permitting Specialist. In July, a special resolution and plaque were presented to Douglas L. Stowell who served as Legal Counsel to the District for more than 27 years.

IN MEMORIAM

Judith K. Duvall

Associate Hydrologist with over eight years of service with the District
died on January 1, 2006

Robert L. Echols

Assistant Field Representative with over 26 years of service
died on June 15, 2006

Thomas R. Pratt

Chief of the Ground Water Bureau with over 24 years of service
died on August 7, 2006

WATER MANAGEMENT IN NORTHWEST FLORIDA

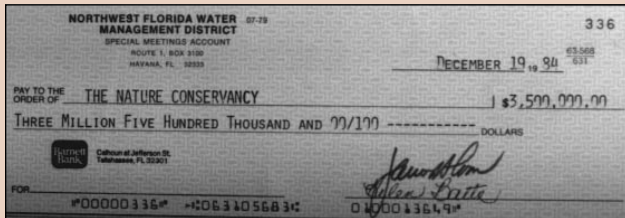
1970s

1972 was called the Year of the Environment with the passage of the Water Resources Act by the Florida Legislature, which established the Water Management Districts and other environmental legislation; Hurricane Agnes made landfall at Mexico Beach on



First Annual Meeting at Wakulla Springs. Left to right: Senator Phil Lewis, Representative Mary Ellen Hawkins, Frank Caldwell, Dean Frank Maloney, Buddy Blain.

June 19 as a category one storm....**1973** first District Governing Board appointed....**1975** Regulation of Wells rules adopted; Hurricane Eloise made landfall near Grayton Beach on September 23 as a category



Check for District's first land purchase of 9,700 acres along Escambia River.

two storm....**1976** Florida constitutional amendment approved by voters on March 9 authorizing four Water Management Districts to levy ad valorem taxes up to one mill and the Northwest Florida Water Management District to levy up to 0.05 mill, one-twentieth of the amount approved for the others;

District began compiling its first District Water Use Plan; first Annual Meeting (Annual Conference on Water Management) held at Wakulla Springs....**1977** alternative water supply sources for Santa Rosa,



Well drilling in the northwest.

Okaloosa and Walton counties studied; best method(s) for improving water quality in Lake Jackson's Meginniss Arm assessed....**1978** first year the District received revenue from ad valorem taxes (\$319,297.11); five-volume Water Resources Management Plan completed; staff moved into new headquarters facility (construction cost \$417,000) in Gadsden County; Works of the District rules adopted....**1979** Florida Legislature established the Conservation and Recreation Land (CARL) Trust Fund; Pensacola Field Office opens.

1980s

1980 designs for a Meginniss Arm/Creek Stormwater detention/filtration facility and artificial marsh for Lake Jackson completed; General and Procedural rules adopted....**1981** Save Our Rivers land acquisition program approved by the Florida Legislature; Marianna Field Office dedicated....**1982** Porter Hole Sink drains the southern portion of Lake Jackson; Regional Water Supply Development Plan for the



Dead Lakes Dam removed.

Coastal Areas of Northwest Florida completed; Consumptive Use Permitting program implemented....**1983** Lake Jackson Meginniss Arm Stormwater Treatment Facility completed; intensive hydrologic investigation of the Sand and Gravel Aquifer in southern



Lake Jackson Meginniss Arm Stormwater Treatment Facility constructed.

Escambia County begun....**1984** Regulation of Agricultural and Forestry Surface Water Management rules became effective in accordance with the Warren S. Henderson Wetlands Protection Act; District adopted a Water Shortage Plan; first Water Resources Atlas of Florida printed; District purchased 9,700 acres of floodplains along the Escambia River in December, its first acquisition under Save Our Rivers....**1985** District purchased 35,500 acres within the Apalachicola River basin and 35,198 acres within the Choctawhatchee River basin; Hurricane Kate made landfall near Mexico Beach on November 21 as a category two storm....**1986** began five-year stormwater drainage evaluation of the Lake Lafayette, Lake Munson, Lake Jackson and Fred George basins; seven local governments formed regional multi-utility authority, Walton/Okaloosa/Santa Rosa Regional Utility Authority; District and The Nature Conservancy jointly acquired 2,888-acre Wakulla Springs tract....**1987** Surface Water Improvement and

Management (SWIM) Act passed; Dead Lakes Dam removed....**1988** Water Management Districts began sundown and sunset reviews; SWIM management plans for Apalachicola River and Bay, Lake Jackson, Deer Point Lake Reservoir and Pensacola Bay completed....**1989** first construction phase of Old Pass Lagoon Circulation Facility completed; groundbreaking for expansion of Lake Jackson Stormwater Treatment Facility.

1990s

1990 Florida Legislature created Preservation 2000 land acquisition program; Alabama challenged U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' plans to reallocate water from Lake Lanier, part of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) system, Florida and Georgia file motions to intervene....**1991** Tallahassee and Leon County Stormwater Management Plan completed; southern and eastern portions of Garcon Point purchased (1,864 acres)....**1992** ACF River Basin Comprehensive Study begun; 15,820 acres purchased in Walton, Holmes, Washington and Jackson counties; 112,000 cubic yards of degraded sediment removed from the Meginniss Arm portion of Lake Jackson....**1993** Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) program created in four Water Management Districts, excluding the northwest; payments in lieu of taxes program begun; Interstate 10 Meginniss Creek Pond Stormwater Treatment Facility opened; Elinor



Flooding of 1990.

Klapp-Phipps Park created with District purchase of 516 acres; 28,172 acre Tate's Hell Forest tract purchased by District, DEP and Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission....**1994** Water Management District Review Commission created; 30,790 acres purchased within the Escambia, Yellow and Choctawhatchee river basins; two Econfina Creek basin tracts purchased (1,401 and 3,751 acres); District Water Management Plan completed....**1995** District streamlined rules, reducing them by 50 percent; Water Management District Review Commission released its final report recommending retention of the state's water management structure; Hurricane Erin made landfall near Pensacola on August 3 as a category one storm; Hurricane Opal made landfall near Navarre on October 4 as a category two storm....**1996** long-term water supply planning required by Executive Order of the Governor; by statute, the Water Management Districts became responsible for provision of mitigation to compensate for the Florida Department of Transportation wetland impacts....**1997** Econfina Creek Field Office opened; 28,954 acres of the Sand Hill Lakes (recharge area) purchased; Choctawhatchee River and Bay SWIM plan completed; ACF River Basin Compact Agreement approved by Legislature, U.S. Congress and President of the United States....**1998** Florida Legislature passed local sources first; Governors

of Florida, Georgia and Alabama convened ACF River Basin Commission for the first time; Hurricane Earl made landfall near Panama City on September 3 as a category one storm....**1999** Florida Legislature adopted Florida Forever program; 7,968 acres purchased along the middle Yellow and lower Shoal river corridors; the



Monitoring surface water.

southern portion of Lake Jackson drained through Porter Hole Sink in September.

2000s

2000 District declared a Water Shortage Warning for northwest Florida due to extreme drought conditions; SWIM management plan for the St. Andrew Bay completed....**2001** Lake Jackson restoration project concluded with two million cubic yards of sediment removed; Water Shortage Warning rescinded; Region II Water Supply Plan for Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties completed....**2002** floodplain map modernization begun; District completed multi-year investigation about sources of nitrogen affecting



Apalachicola River.

Wakulla Springs....**2003** ACF River Basin Compact Agreement expired and states looked to court system for an equitable allocation of water; first time Florida Forever capital improvement grants made available to local governments....**2004** District land acquisitions surpassed 200,000 acre mark; Hurricane Ivan made landfall near Gulf Shores, Alabama on September 16 as a category three storm, significantly impacting the Pensacola area....**2005** new rules for permitting of bottled water operations went into effect; Florida

on July 10 as a category three storm; a 6-9 foot storm surge from Hurricane Dennis impacts Wakulla and Franklin counties....**2006** Environmental Resource



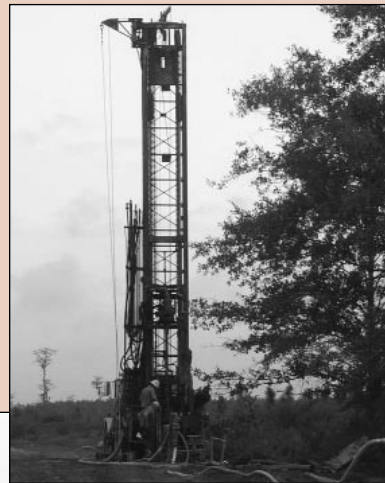
Big Escambia Creek, a \$7.7 million intergovernmental restoration project.

Permitting (ERP) program approved for northwest Florida; water supply plan for Region V (Franklin and Gulf counties) initiated; District purchased 5,456 acres along the Perdido River.



Over 40,000 acres along and adjacent to Econfina Creek acquired by the District, are protecting Bay County's water supply.

Legislature approved Water Protection and Sustainability program and District received \$10 million for first year; federal and state permits issued for the District-owned Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank in Washington County, the first public mitigation bank in the northwest; Hurricane Dennis made landfall between Navarre Beach and Gulf Breeze



Test well drilled to identify new water supply sources for Franklin County.



St. Joseph Lake, Gulf County, regional stormwater treatment facility completed.

JEFFERSON, LEON AND WAKULLA

C O U N T I E S

\$1 Million Provided for Reclaimed Water Facility

Through an agreement with the City of Tallahassee, the District will provide up to \$1 million toward constructing a Tram Road Public Access Reuse Facility in Leon County that will reclaim water and treat it to standards high enough to irrigate public areas. Water will be used to irrigate commercial and residential common areas, roadside landscaping and a golf course in the Southwood area. The facility will help conserve potable water by providing reclaimed wastewater for other purposes. District funding will be provided through the Florida Legislature's Water Protection and Sustainability program.

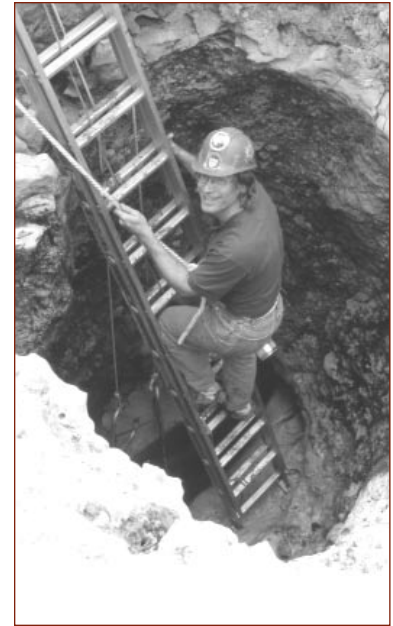
The facility is expected to cost about \$2.5 million and process 1.2 million gallons per day. This will reduce the quantity of wastewater and nutrients currently applied to the Southeast Farm spray field. The new facility will make more efficient use of available water resources while reducing nutrient loads to the underlying Floridan Aquifer and Wakulla Springs. Wakulla Springs is a first magnitude spring of statewide and regional significance.

Lake Jackson Drains Again

Water levels in Lake Jackson have remained low since the drought of 1999/2000 and the lake's initial draining or dry down. There has been a rainfall deficit of over 70 inches in the Lake Jackson watershed between 1996 and mid-December 2006. This rainfall deficit is more than the normal annual rainfall in this area of 63.21 inches.

In 2006, the western section of Lake Jackson drained down Porter Sink on June 12 drying out a large area of the lake. The area briefly held some water after several inches of rainfall but Porter Sink subsequently drained again on June 21. Eastern sections of the lake around Miller's Landing, Church Cove and Meginniss Arm continued to hold water.

The initial draining or natural dry down of the southern portion occurred in September of 1999 through one major opening in Porter Sink. Then two new, significantly larger openings occurred to drain the lake on June 12 and June 21. Since the September 1999 draining, Porter Sink also drained in October 2000, December 2002 and February 2003.



Tom Pratt explores Porter Sink after Lake Jackson's dry down.

Lake Jackson is a closed basin with no surface outflows and draining events occur about every 25 years, sometimes even several months or years in a row. These events can help the lake cleanse itself by limiting nuisance plant growth and oxidizing nutrients. Scientists take advantage of such events to study geology, hydrology and aquatic life and to facilitate restoration and protection of the lake's ecology and habitat. They also take advantage of such natural events to undertake restoration activities such as removing the accumulated sediment on the bottom of the lake, as was done with Lake Jackson from 1999 through 2001.

Prescribed Burns

In February, March and April, the District undertook prescribed burns at the Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park in Tallahassee. Prescribed burns are conducted to enhance or maintain habitat value, to reduce hazardous fuel loading and to control plant growth. When new growth returns in the spring, the overall

effect is beneficial to wildlife and enhances the park experience for joggers, bikers, walkers and nature lovers. The 516-acre Klapp-Phipps Park property was purchased by the District in 1992 to protect and preserve Lake Jackson.

St. Marks and Wakulla Rivers Spring Inventory

In July, the final report of the St. Marks and Wakulla rivers spring inventory was completed. The scope of work for the project included researching spring locations and then visiting each spring to collect photographs, Global Positioning System (GPS) data and field water quality measurements. For springs appearing to be second magnitude or larger, instantaneous discharge measurements also were obtained.

Identified in the study were 51 springs. Springs in the St. Marks and Wakulla river basin included those with typical fissure-type vents and those that incorporated areas of diffuse, upward percolation of ground water into pools and runs. Flow through an exposed conduit in the Floridan Aquifer is considered a karst window and not a spring. Of the springs measured, two were first magnitude springs (Wakulla Spring and St. Marks River Rise), five second magnitude, eleven third magnitude, eight fourth magnitude and three fifth magnitude.

Stormwater Flow Monitoring

An agreement with the City of Tallahassee and Leon County to continue a stormwater flow monitoring program was approved in September. The program includes the operation of 55 surface water and rainfall data collection stations. The District has operated this stormwater monitoring network for 16 years. Continuous records of rainfall and surface water discharges are provided through the monitoring program and are used to design and implement improvements in the stormwater drainage system. These improvements help reduce flooding and improve water quality.

The agreement also provides a real-time radio telemetry flood warning network that is a cooperative

program involving the District, Leon County and the National Weather Service (NWS). It includes 14 stream and rainfall stations that help identify developing flood conditions for emergency management staff. The District and the NWS cooperate on the management and operation of Leon County's flood warning network.

Land Acquisitions

Approval to purchase a 149.11-acre conservation easement along the St. Marks River was given in May. The District closed on the acquisition in August, acquiring specified rights that protect the property and preserve the original ownership. Through conservation easements, the property is protected but is not open to the public. This critical conservation purchase south of Natural Bridge on the St. Marks River will help protect Florida's world class spring ecosystem.

The Wakulla County property consists of five parcels, including four riverfront lots near the St. Marks River Rise, together with a 95.36-acre silvicultural tract. The rise is a resurgence of the river, which quadruples after disappearing down a series of sinks and swallets. The riverfront lots consist primarily of mixed bottomland hardwood and mesic upland pine/hardwood habitat associated with the St. Marks River floodplain. The 95-acre tract contains several small sinks, which likely contribute flow to the river, and is a mixture of natural longleaf pine/wiregrass habitat and loblolly pine plantations.



Habitats are protected through land acquisitions.



CALHOUN, FRANKLIN, GADSDEN, GULF, JACKSON AND LIBERTY

C O U N T I E S

Reservation of Water

Under the adopted revisions to Chapter 40A-2, Florida Administrative Code, Consumptive Uses of Water rule, the flow regime of the Apalachicola and Chipola rivers and the Chipola Cutoff will be preserved.

Chapter 373.223, Florida Statutes, states: "The governing board or the department, by regulation, may reserve from use by permit applicants, water in such locations and quantities, and for such seasons of the year, as in its judgment may be required for the protection of fish and wildlife or the public health and safety. Such reservations shall be subject to periodic review and revisions in the light of changed conditions. However, all presently existing legal uses of water shall be protected so long as such use is not contrary to the public interest."

The revision to the rule is structured to (1) preserve the magnitude, frequency and duration of the flow regime of the main stem of the Apalachicola and Chipola rivers and Chipola Cutoff for the protection of the fish and wildlife of the rivers, their floodplains and Apalachicola Bay ecosystems; (2) protect existing legal users; and (3) provide periodic review of the reservation. The statute does not require that the reservation be terminated, but in this case, the rule revision does call for a termination on January 1, 2016, unless specifically extended by the Governing Board. The rule became effective on February 27, 2006.

The Apalachicola River is the largest river in terms of flow in the State of Florida and, along with the Chipola River and Chipola Cutoff, supports a population of endangered Gulf sturgeon, other federally listed endangered species, freshwater fish and wildlife. The floodplains of these rivers include some of the largest contiguous tracts of bottomland hardwood forests in the southeastern United States. The rivers and the cutoff also are the primary source of

fresh water for the Apalachicola Bay, one of the most productive estuaries along the Gulf of Mexico coast.

Water Treatment Plant for Port St. Joe

In October, a \$4 million grant was approved for the City of Port St. Joe in Gulf County to provide funding assistance for constructing a water treatment plant. This facility will enable the city to shift its public water supply from constrained ground water sources to surface water derived from the Chipola River. An existing freshwater canal allows the surface water to be transported. This new plant and new source of water supply will allow economic growth in the region but reduce the stress on local ground water resources. An estimated three to six million gallons a day will be provided and also will be made available to nearby areas outside city limits.

Franklin and Gulf Water Supply Plan

A draft regional water supply plan for Franklin and Gulf counties was presented to the Governing Board in June. It will be reviewed by several state entities and public workshops will be held to obtain public comments before its expected final approval in 2007. The Region V water supply plan will help secure future water needs for these counties and will allow the District to initiate water supply and water resource development projects through the Florida Legislature's Water Protection and Sustainability program.

Population for Region V, one of seven water supply planning areas, is projected to increase from about 23,000 in 2000 to almost 30,000 by 2025. This is expected to require an additional 1.2 million gallons of water a day for this area.

The plan identifies preferred alternative water sources based on quality, cost, feasibility and resource protection. It also will assist local governments and utilities in arranging for water supply, including

infrastructure construction and facility operations for distribution. The Region V water supply plan is the second plan initiated by the District. The first was the Region II Water Supply Plan for Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties in 2000 and updated in 2006.

Apalachicola Floodplain Restoration

Up to \$1 million was provided to Gulf County in September to begin removing 337,000 cubic yards of dredge spoil from about 15 acres of Apalachicola floodplain owned by the District, which used to be bottomland hardwood forest. The removed materials will be put to beneficial public uses. The planned restoration site is located across the river from the well known Sand Mountain, an area twice the size of the District-owned Site 39. Floodplain restoration to resolve degradation from navigation channel dredging has long been a part of the District's Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) plan for the Apalachicola River and Bay.

Tate's Hell Restoration Activities

As part of the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) Regional Mitigation Plan, three low water crossings were constructed and two road sections within the Doyle Creek watershed in Franklin County were removed. These activities were undertaken to offset wetland impacts associated with the improvements to State Road 65 in Franklin County. Forestry practices since the 1970s have included a grid work of roads and ditches that have disrupted historical flows in the swamp as well as the headwaters of East Bay, the primary nursery area in Apalachicola Bay. These activities are part of the District's larger hydrological restoration effort in Tate's Hell Swamp and are designed to reconnect severed watercourses and enhance water flow in the area.

Stormwater Treatment for Eastpoint

The District and Franklin County initiated an agreement in May to provide stormwater treatment facilities for Eastpoint. A 319 (h) grant of \$251,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was made available for this project. The grant will be

administered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). These Eastpoint facilities are to consist of eight in-ground stormwater treatment units in the Avenue A drainage basin near U.S. Highway 98. The total cost of the project, when matching funds have been added, is \$421,263. The county will own, operate and maintain these stormwater treatment facilities.

Improvements for Dead Lakes Park

In September, Gulf County was awarded a \$35,000 grant to enhance public access and awareness of water resources in the Dead Lakes and Apalachicola River and Bay watershed. These may include educational and fishing facilities such as pond and lake boardwalks and bridges; water resources education signage; inflow controls and outlet structure construction or improvements; pond restoration and revegetation with native wetland species for wetland creation on pond shorelines; boat ramp improvements to include access to District Lands adjacent to stream reaches and floodplain of the Apalachicola River Basin; and preservation of open space.

Water Resource Investigations

The District has participated in a cooperative, jointly funded water resource investigation program with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) for the past 31 years. An agreement was approved in September to provide funding for the operation of continuous discharge and stage stations on Telogia Creek near Bristol, the Apalachicola River at Chattahoochee and the Apalachicola River at Sumatra. These three long-term stations are a high priority for regulating water consumption, flood management and resource management. These stations will be operated by USGS and the data collected will be available on its web site.

Changes in Floodplain Forests

A cooperative agreement between the District and USGS to assess the ecological conditions of the Apalachicola River floodplain forest was amended in



Maund Spring in Jackson County.

September. This work is being undertaken to support litigation involving the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) river basin. The effort examines the influence of water level declines in the river. The District and USGS have been working on this research effort for the past two years and it is expected that the necessary analysis and reporting will be completed in a few months. The Apalachicola River floodplain is the largest contiguous stand of swamps and bottomland forest in the State of Florida (82,200 acres). The composition and distribution of these wetland forests is strongly influenced by water levels of the river.

Plans Made to Replace Florida River Island Bridge

In March, the Governing Board approved a process to bid out three separate designs to replace the Florida River Island bridge in Liberty County with a concrete one. One design was selected and a decision was made to provide a detailed bridge design for bidding

and construction purposes. The bridge provides access to about 6,000 acres of District lands.

Apalachicola Oral History

One of Florida's most endangered river systems, the Apalachicola River and Bay, is preserved through stories of its people in *Voices of the Apalachicola*. The book, published by the University Press of Florida on behalf of the District, can be purchased or can be accessed on the District's web site (www.nwfwmd.state.fl.us) free of charge. It is one of many publications the District has prepared to educate the public about the watershed. A collection of 36 oral histories from those who made their livelihoods along the river and bay, interviewees narrate observed changes to the river system over the last century when cars, bridges, pavement and electricity brought more growth than during any other period in history. Interviews include subjects from Jackson, Gadsden, Calhoun, Liberty, Franklin, Gulf, Leon and Bay counties.



BAY, HOLMES, OKALOOSA, WALTON AND WASHINGTON

C O U N T I E S

\$6.5 Million for Walton Water Supply

The District agreed to provide \$6.5 million toward the construction of seven additional inland water wells northeast of Freeport to supply coastal communities with drinking water. Due to concerns that rapid coastal growth would tax current underground supplies, the District took this step to ensure that southern Walton County would have drinking water for decades.

The new wells will expand current area-wide supplies and are anticipated to produce about nine million gallons per day to help meet long-term public demand. The project also will provide additional storage and expand the transmission and distribution system of the interconnected South Walton Utilities, Regional Utilities and the City of Freeport. The \$6.5 million (about 40 percent of the construction costs) will be provided through the Florida Legislature's Water Protection and Sustainability program. Local utilities will provide the remaining funds for a total cost of about \$18 million. The inland wellfield was included as a water supply development project in the District's 2000 *Regional Water Supply Plan for Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton Counties*.

Expanded Water Reuse

The District agreed to contribute \$2 million to improve the Bob Sikes Water Reclamation Facility near Crestview in Okaloosa County. The estimated \$7 million facility expansion, which also employs new technology, is expected to triple to one million gallons a day the amount of wastewater reclaimed for landscape irrigation in northern portions of Okaloosa County. The facility will use advanced Membrane Bioreactor Technology and other features to treat wastewater to standards high enough to irrigate public access areas. The agreement with the county will help reduce water supply demand in a rapidly developing

area, while also sustaining water resources and protecting associated natural systems for years to come. The service area is expected to include landscapes east and northeast of the City of Crestview.

Surface Water Supply Feasibility Analysis

A scope of work, schedule and budget for a Surface Water Supply Feasibility Analysis for Okaloosa County was presented to the Governing Board in February. The feasibility study included planning level analyses of conceptual surface water and riverbank filtration water supply facilities in Okaloosa County, preliminary evaluations of potential impacts and associated regulatory and technical issues and planning level cost estimates. This work was completed in September.

Surface water supply facilities evaluated include three sites for potential small impoundments (reservoirs) that could receive augmentation during low flow drought periods as diversions from the Shoal or Yellow river. A potential riverbank filtration facility area near the Yellow River downstream of its confluence with the Shoal River also was evaluated. Such a site is conceptually intended to provide direct water supply withdrawals for the county's utility or as an additional source for augmenting supplies from one or more surface water storage reservoirs.

Springs Restoration

After the release of several requests for proposals, the District Governing Board, in February, approved the selection of a firm to provide the District with a conceptual spring restoration and protection design for the Econfina Springs complex. Of primary importance is a spring restoration and protection plan that offers long-term preservation of the resource, allows compatible public recreation and meets the water resource protection goals of the District.



Williford Spring in Washington County.

These sensitive spring areas have been impacted by recreational activities and lack of adequate stormwater protection measures. The restoration and protection designs will be focused on District-owned springs – Pitt, Sylvan and Williford.

Gainer Springs Restoration

Funds were approved in February for an outside contractor to begin a restoration plan for privately-owned uplands and sovereign submerged lands in and around the Gainer Springs complex in Bay County. The plan addressed three principal objectives: stormwater runoff, erosion and revegetation of uplands adjacent to Gainer Springs No. 3; removal and disposal of eroded sediments from sovereign-submerged lands; and restoration of the eroded shoreline around Gainer Springs No. 2.

Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank Management

The first annual assessment of a three-year cooperative agreement with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), was completed and reviewed by the Governing Board in May. Through this agreement, which was initiated in 2005, FWC assists the District in managing the Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank. The agency provides comprehensive assessments of the property's fish and wildlife resources as they relate to managing the property's allowable public recreational opportunities. This includes operation of the check station, regulation of public access and use and enhanced law enforcement for property protection.

In November, the District entered into an agreement with the Orange Hill Soil and Water Conservation

District to undertake erosion control and restoration at eight sites within the Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank. Additionally, through a \$450,000 project, three bridges and two large culverts are being replaced.

Econfina Creek History

Among the many detailed finds of an archaeological survey conducted for the Econfina Creek Water Management Area (WMA) were the charred ruins of the early 1800s Adam's Mill. The survey identifies and records archaeological sites to help the District protect and preserve archaeological and historical resources. To date, surveys have identified over 120 archaeological sites, including three historic cemeteries, numerous prehistoric sites and several sites with prehistoric and early American historic components. The most recent survey closely examined two Gainer family homesteads, Adam's Mill site along Econfina Creek (near State Road 20), the District's Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank and Hobbs Pasture tract, all in Bay and Washington counties.

Bay County Conservancy Receives Grant

A grant funding agreement between the District and the Bay County Conservancy (BCC) was approved in March. The agreement provides mitigation for the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) wetland impacts of 3.9 acres associated with improvements to State Road 73 in Calhoun County within the Chipola River watershed. The BCC will provide 30 acres of mitigation land in Bay County at the headwaters of Juniper Creek within the Chipola River watershed. The BCC also is to provide ecological management in perpetuity of the mitigation site and record a conservation easement that reflects a commitment to preservation and management.

Baywatch Program Funded

The St. Andrew Bay Resource Management Association, Inc. received a \$500,000 grant from the District to fund its Baywatch program, a citizen-led initiative. The Baywatch program trains teams of volunteers who monitor many physical and chemical

water quality factors throughout the St. Andrew Bay estuary. Seagrasses are also monitored as a critical habitat and indicator of water quality. The Baywatch network consists of about 70 sampling stations, including stations within St. Andrew Bay, Lake Powell and estuarine bayous.

Clement Taylor Park Restoration

An agreement between the District and the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA) was initiated in April to implement the Clement Taylor Park aquatic ecosystem restoration project in Okaloosa County. This project provides stormwater treatment for a 43-acre drainage basin within the City of Destin that discharges into Choctawhatchee Bay. The bay, a priority water body of the District's Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program, has been adversely impacted by activities within its watershed. CBA has developed strategies that include reducing watershed pollution from nonpoint and point sources.

Monitoring the Deer Point Watershed

An agreement with Bay County to continue a monitoring program for the Deer Point Lake Reservoir watershed was approved in September. The District has operated and maintained this monitoring network for the county since 1998. The monitoring program includes six discharge stations and three rainfall stations. These monitoring stations measure continuous discharge, rainfall and stage levels. These data provide the major stream flows into Deer Point Lake and are used to manage water resources and identify areas that may require acquisition or additional protection.

New Equestrian Trails

Two new equestrian trails within the Econfina Creek WMA were designated during 2006. These included Sparkleberry Trail, located east of Econfina Creek and Rolling Pines Connector Trail, located west of Econfina Creek. These two additions bring to four the number of designated equestrian trails including the Wolf Pond Horse Trail, designated in 2005, and the

Pine Ridge Equestrian Trail. Local area equestrian groups, working closely with District staff, have planned, marked and mapped these trails. This partnership helps ensure that responsible equestrian activities are compatible with the District's mission to protect the sensitive water resources of Econfina Creek and the Sand Hill Lakes. In order to protect these sensitive water resources, fines will be levied if equestrians leave designated trails.

Longleaf Pine Restoration

Plans to restore (reforest) over 1,095 acres of cutover or disturbed longleaf pine habitat within the Econfina Creek and Choctawhatchee WMAs were made in March. These activities will involve planting about 649,504 longleaf pine tubelings.

Ivory-billed Woodpecker Investigations

Sightings of the reportedly extinct (listed as endangered in Florida) ivory-billed woodpecker occurred in the Florida panhandle along the Choctawhatchee River on District-owned land. These searches were led by an Auburn University research team during the winter/spring of 2005/2006. A research team will again visit the area in late 2006 and early 2007 in an attempt to obtain definitive proof (clear photographic or video evidence) of the bird's existence. The District owns 60,595 acres in the Choctawhatchee River WMA. Other areas that may be investigated include the Apalachicola, Escambia and Yellow rivers. These areas were once known habitat for the ivory-billed woodpecker before extensive logging activities were conducted. Today, there are several isolated stands (or remnant stands) of old growth trees that escaped earlier harvesting or logging activities because they could not be reached easily by loggers. Similar searches are being supported by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Arkansas, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina and Texas.

Exchange of Properties

An exchange of land with the District will protect 1,027.58 acres in Bay County. The District-owned property that was exchanged will be encumbered

by a deed restriction in the form of a conservation easement. The private property acquired included both a 145-acre fee simple tract and a 31-acre tract that only involved a conservation easement. The 31-acre property under the conservation easement had significant rural residential development potential and the 145-acre tract has one-half mile of frontage along the eastern bank of Econfina Creek. This exchange will significantly enhance the protection of Econfina Creek, a Class I (drinking water) resource.

Another exchange of properties involved the District transferring an 18-acre parcel for 60 acres along Bruce Creek in the Choctawhatchee River WMA. The 60-acre parcel consists of bottomland hardwood forest habitat and an old growth pine plantation.

Land Acquisitions

The purchase of 95 acres in Washington County within the Econfina Creek recharge area was approved in January. The parcel consists of 60 percent lake bottom (57 acres) while the remaining 40 percent (38 acres) is natural xeric longleaf pine/wiregrass habitat and mixed longleaf/loblolly pine habitat. This acquisition enabled the District to acquire an inholding (land surrounded by District property) and to provide additional water quality protection for the Econfina Recharge Area and the Wages, Hamlin and Hammock pond system.

In April, a 10-acre acquisition in Washington County was approved. The property primarily consists of xeric sandhill uplands. This acquisition enhances the protection of the Econfina Recharge Area and eliminates an inholding in the Econfina Creek WMA.

In July, the purchase of 13.82 acres in Washington County received approval by the Governing Board. The property consists of mixed bottomland hardwood and mesic pine/hardwood uplands. This acquisition will provide significant water quality protection for White Oak Creek, Porter Lake and the Econfina Recharge Area.



ESCAMBIA AND SANTA ROSA

C O U N T I E S

Perdido River Tracts Purchased

In March, the District’s Governing Board approved the purchase of 5,456 acres along the Perdido River that includes about 15 miles of river frontage. Purchased from International Paper for slightly more than \$12 million, the acquisition was subject to execution of an assignment from The Conservation Fund. In May, the District closed on the property.

This acquisition protects and preserves the water resources of the Perdido River, which is a shifting sand river system. It also will protect its associated habitats, especially Atlantic white cedar wetlands that are unique to the mid-Atlantic and Gulf coasts. The District will restore and manage other major habitats along the river, including longleaf pine forests, numerous perennial streams, seepage slopes and bogs. Plants and animals that will be protected include various pitcher plant species, gopher tortoise and Gulf sturgeon. Large tracts of commercial forestland will ultimately be restored to native longleaf pine/wiregrass habitat. This acquisition also is

significant because it is part of a larger effort to extend the natural protection of the river across state boundaries. The Perdido River is shared with the State of Alabama.

Additionally, the acquisition will open for recreation woodlands that have been closed to the public for years. The Escambia County Board of County Commissioners passed a resolution supporting the purchase and concept of an Escambia County Recreational Water Trail on the Perdido River. Other possible recreational activities include hunting, special opportunity hunting, camping, horseback riding, hiking, bird watching and nature appreciation.

In July, an event was held to celebrate the acquisition, protection of conservation land, forestland, river and stream corridors and recreational areas. Canoe and motor boat tours and upland van tours were conducted to introduce the newly acquired property. Florida Forever funds and some mitigation funding were used to purchase the property and the District plans to partner with Escambia County and the





Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to manage and protect these natural and recreational resources.



Pensacola Bay Cleanup

A federally-funded cleanup of Pensacola Bay in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties, coordinated by the District, ended successfully and cost far less than the estimated \$6.8 million that had been projected to remove hurricane related debris. While the cost was significantly lower at \$2.4 million, the amount of debris collected and removed exceeded expectations.

Divers collected 2,165 cubic yards of wreckage and hazardous waste from five square miles of the bay, five times more than anticipated. Debris collected filled 67 dumpsters. The effort has made the area safer for users.

Bayou Texar Stormwater Treatment

Stormwater discharge to the impaired waters of Bayou Texar and Pensacola Bay will receive new treatment with a retrofit system. The District awarded the City of Pensacola \$90,000 to construct a baffle box system and wet detention pond at 17th Avenue and the CSX Seaboard Railroad. The system is to run stormwater through an underground baffle box where coarse contaminants will settle out. Treated water would then flow to a wet detention pond for further cleaning. The system is expected to eliminate approximately 4,000 pounds of solids yearly from Bayou Texar.

Bayou Chico Dredging Permitted

As part of ongoing efforts by the District to restore water quality to Bayou Chico in Pensacola Bay, a dredge permit was recently authorized by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Progressive shoaling in the bayou has created boating hazards and water quality problems as sediments are disturbed by boats and resuspended in the water column.

For years, the District has partnered with the city, Escambia County and residents to restore basin water quality through stormwater treatment and wetlands protection. This permit authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to deepen a navigation channel and turning basin that has accumulated 30 years of sediment buildup. An estimated 230,000 cubic yards

of materials will be hydraulically dredged and pumped to northeast Clark Sand Pit.

Alum Injection Stormwater Treatment

In 1999, the District was awarded an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Section 319 (h) grant to design and construct a demonstration alum injection stormwater treatment system in Pensacola. The advanced technique to reduce stormwater pollution is the first of its kind in northwestern Florida.

Construction of the facility was started in February 2006 and trial operations began in September. The facility will provide increased treatment levels to the existing "L" Street pond. The pond drains about 854 acres in the upper portion of the 5,000-acre Palafox basin, which in turn drains into Pensacola Bay. The system uses an automated sensor to detect flow in drainage pipes and to spray alum into stormwater. The alum binds with contaminated sediments to form a heavy floc, which then settles in a stormwater pond, permitting treated water to flow out.

COMBINED BALANCE SHEET

SEPTEMBER 30, 2006

Assets

Current Assets:

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	66,661
Investments		46,074,884
Accounts Receivable		18,406
Due From Other Governments		8,630,211
Due From Other Funds		7,215,874
Deposits		780
Total Current Assets	\$	62,006,816

General Capital Assets (Net of Applicable Depreciation):

Land and Improvements	\$	147,399,245
Buildings and Improvements		553,296
Machinery and Equipment		984,702
Total General Fixed Assets	\$	148,937,243

Other Debits:

Amount to be Provided for Retirement of General Long-Term Debt	\$	482,673
Total Other Debits	\$	482,673

Total Assets and Other Debits **\$ 211,426,732**

Liabilities and Fund Equity

Liabilities:

Refundable Deposits	\$	250,902
Accounts Payable and Accruals		1,441,092
Deferred Revenue		17,358,193
Due to Other Funds		7,215,874
Liability for Compensated Absences		482,673
Total Liabilities	\$	26,748,734

Fund Equity:

Investment in General Capital Assets	\$	148,937,243
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Fund Balances:

Reserved:

Land Acquisition	\$	3,700,359
Land Management/Acquisition		5,859,956
Mitigation		489,033
Total Reserved	\$	10,049,348

Unreserved:

Undesignated	\$	595,734
Designated		25,095,673
Total Unreserved	\$	25,691,407

Total Liabilities and Fund Equity **\$ 211,426,732**

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2006

Revenue and Other Receipts

Federal Sources:

US DOT/FDOT-Efficient Transportation Decision Making	\$	161,308
DEP/EPA-Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant-"L" Street Pond		237,816
DEP/EPA Surface Water Sampling Grant Awards		111,658
DEP-Ambient Monitoring		211,348
FEMA-Map Modernization		1,189,468
FEMA-Disaster Relief		2,590,761
Total Federal Sources	\$	4,502,359

State and Local Government Sources:

DEP-Statewide Surface Water Restoration Projects	\$	986,730
DEP-Chapter 62-524 F.A.C. Program Implementation		45,000
DEP-General Appropriations		1,044,926
DEP-Florida Forever Trust Fund		20,129,428
DEP-Water Management Lands Trust Fund		5,569,221
DEP-Payment in Lieu of Taxes (WMLTF)		72,261
DEP-Surface Water Management Permitting Program (Wetlands)		300,000
DEP-Florida Springs Initiative		166,184
DEP-Water Protection and Sustainability Trust Fund		288,019
DEP-Environmental Resource Permitting		110,970
DOS-Division of Historical Resources		21,040
DOT-Mitigation Plan and Restoration Projects		2,042,969
Walton/Okaloosa/Santa Rosa Regional Utility Authority		5,542
Leon County Stormwater Monitoring		117,710
Bay County Stormwater Monitoring		9,700
Bay County Deer Point Watershed Monitoring		29,617
County Tax Collectors-Excess Fees		11,112
Total State and Local Government Sources	\$	30,950,429

Agency Sources:

Ad Valorem Taxes (.05 mill)	\$ 3,856,429
Permit and Inspection Fees	504,415
Regulatory Penalties	66,675
Interest	1,650,705
Timber Sales	945,199
Miscellaneous	8,904

Total Agency Sources \$ **7,032,327**

Total Revenues \$ **42,485,115**

Other Sources:

Sale of General Fixed Assets	\$ 7,810
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Total Other Sources \$ **7,810**

Balance Brought Forward from Prior Fiscal Year \$ **30,652,356**

Total Revenue, Other Sources and Cash Balance \$ **73,145,281**

Expenditures

Salaries and Benefits	\$ 5,859,571
Contractual Services - Consultants	7,473,610
Operating Expenses	1,855,870
Grants and Aids	4,125,672
Operating Capital Outlay	18,089,803

Total Expenditures \$ **37,404,526**

Fund Balance

Reserved:

Land Acquisition	\$ 3,700,359
Land Management/Acquisition	5,859,956
Mitigation	489,033

Total Reserved \$ **10,049,348**

Unreserved:

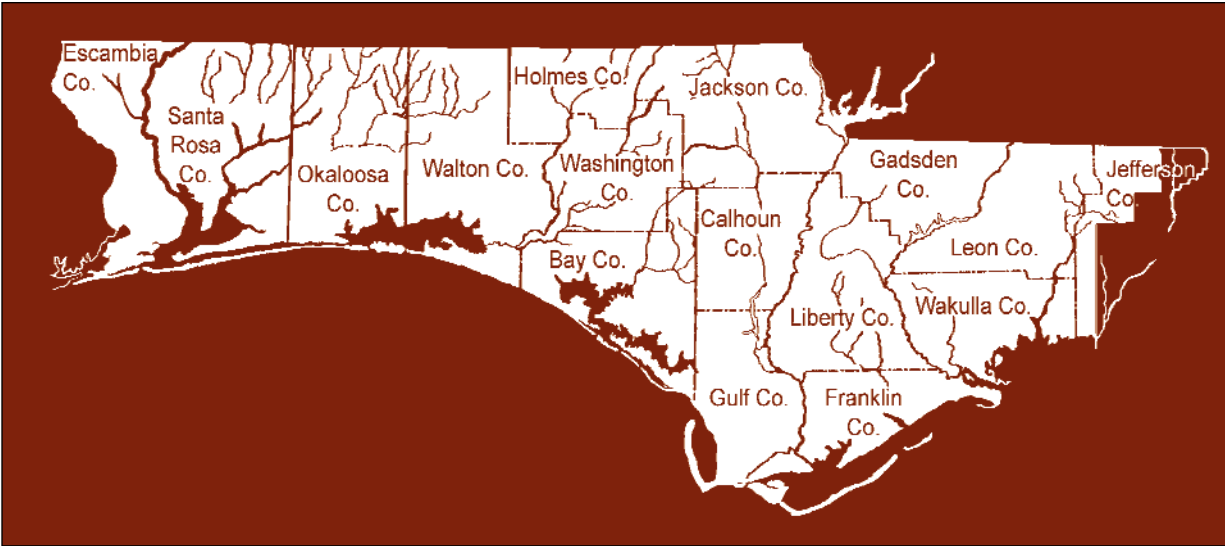
Undesignated	\$ 595,734
Designated	25,095,673

Total Unreserved \$ **25,691,407**

Total Expenditures and Fund Balance \$ **73,145,281**



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ANNUAL REPORT 2006

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