



# **Water Resource Planning in Northwest Florida**

Paul Thorpe

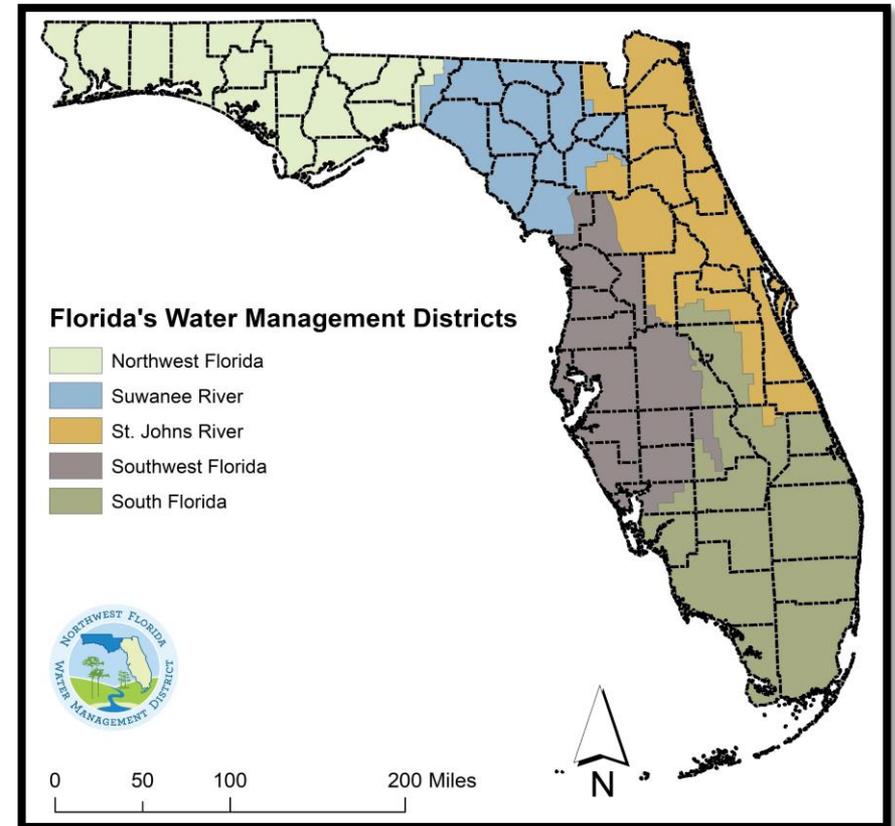
Northwest Florida Water Management District

*October 23, 2019*

# Florida Water Resources Act of 1972

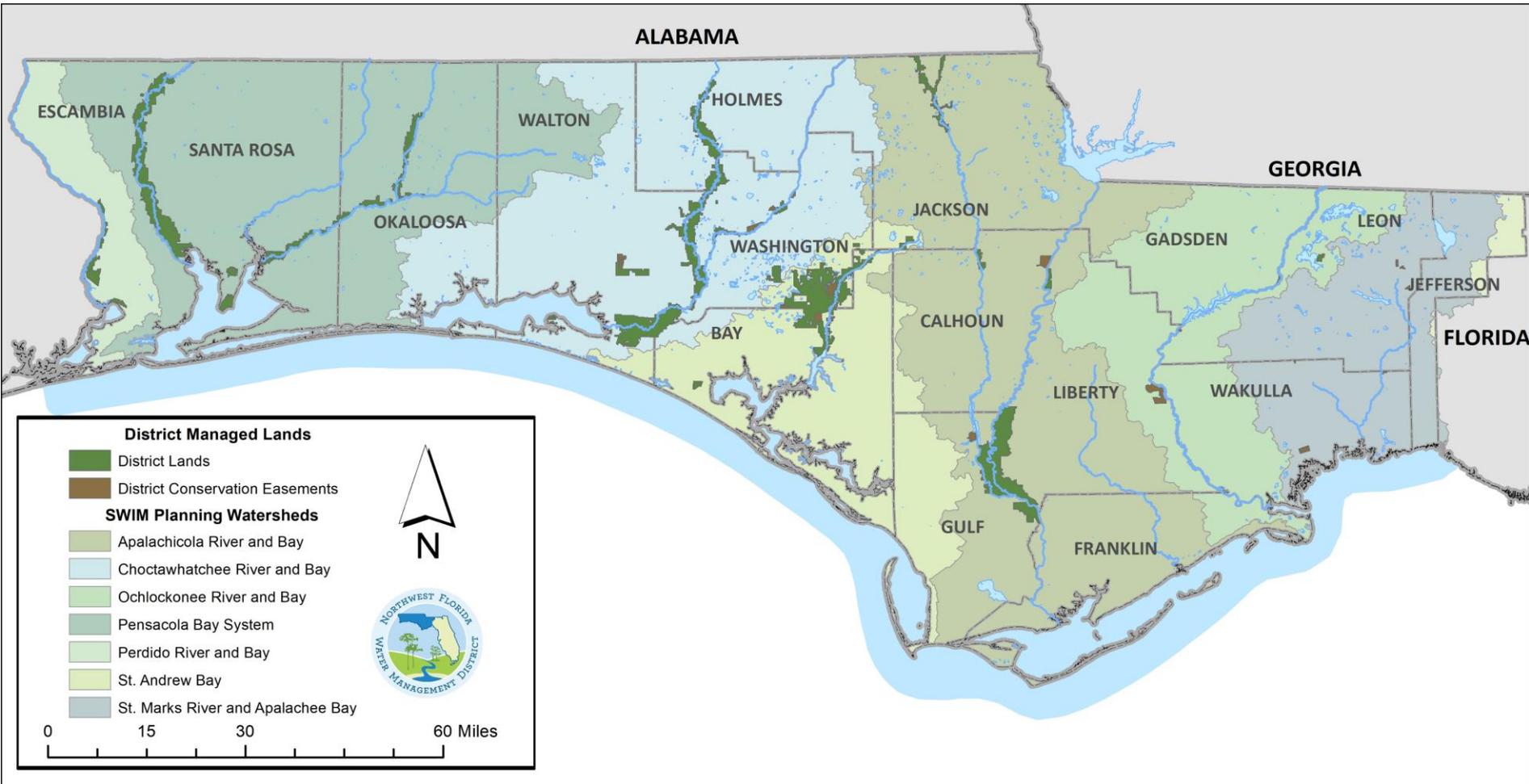
## Chapter 373, Florida Statutes

*“Because water constitutes a public resource benefiting the entire state, it is the policy of the Legislature that the waters in the state be managed on a state and regional basis.”*





# Northwest Florida Water Management District



# Comprehensive Water Resource Management

**Resource Regulation**

**Watershed Management**

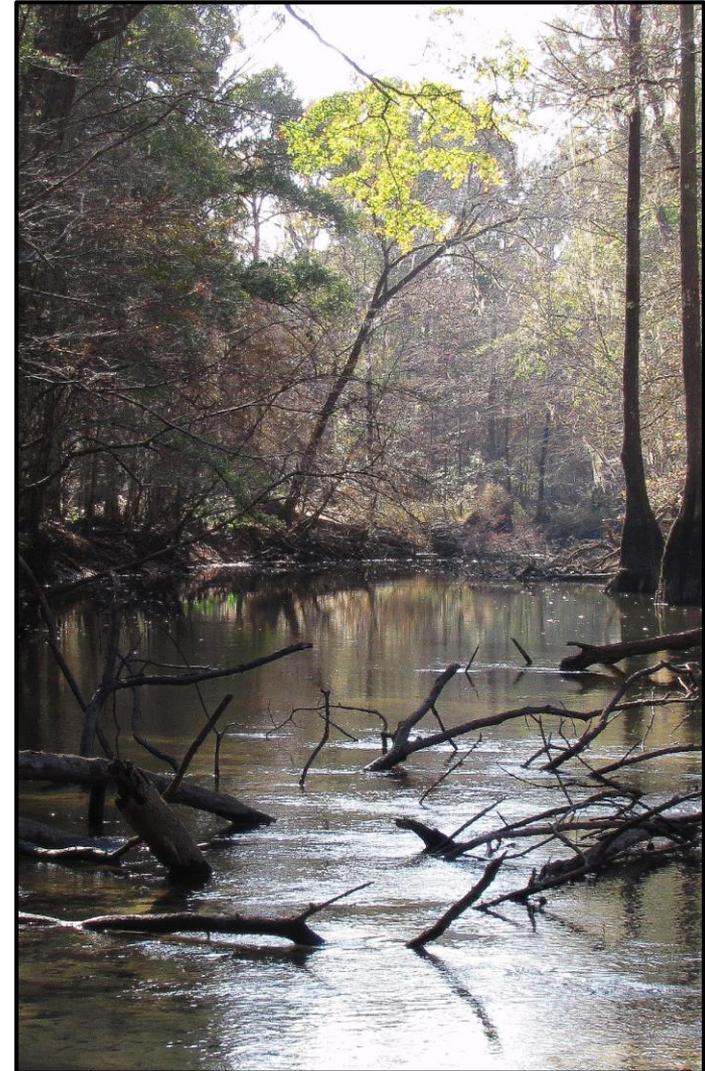
**Minimum Flows and Water Levels**

**Water Supply Planning**

**Water Resource & Supply Development**

**Land Acquisition**

**Restoration**





# Integrated Water Resource Planning



*Water Supply*



*Watershed Management*



*Minimum Flows and Levels*



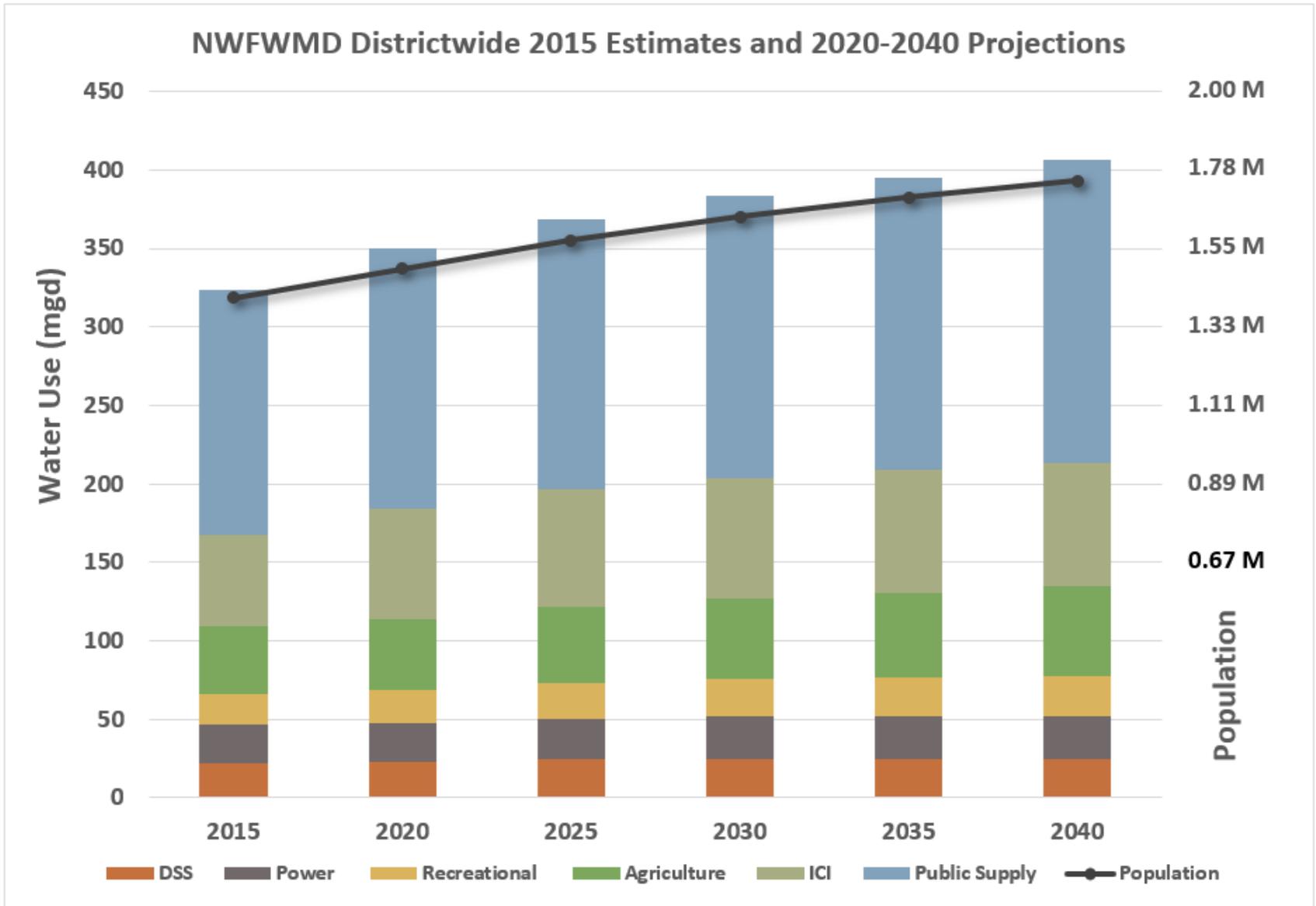
*Land Management*



*Wetland Mitigation*

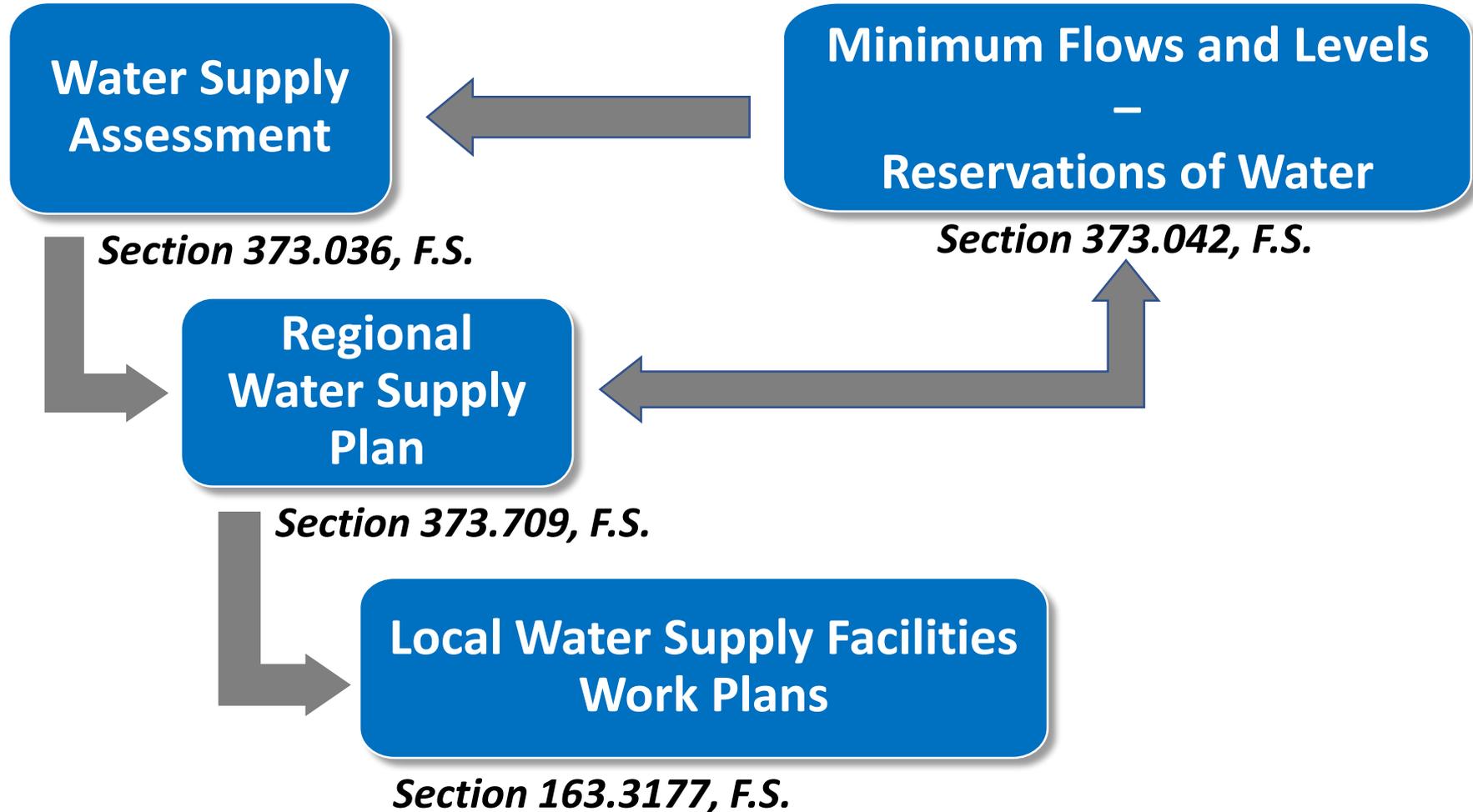


# Water Supply Planning





# Water Supply Planning (Northwest Florida)



**Data, analysis, and planning documents updated every five years**



# Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels

## Section 373.042, Florida Statutes

**What is an MFL?** Limit at which further withdrawals will cause significant harm to the water resources or ecology of the area.

**Purpose:** To protect water resources and associated ecology. Provides information to support water supply planning and water use permitting evaluations.

### **MFLs Shall Be Established for:**

- **Surface waterbodies and aquifers** based on importance of waterbody and potential for significant harm to regional water resources or ecology.
- **1st magnitude** and Outstanding Florida Springs
- **2nd magnitude** springs on state or federal conservation lands



# Northwest Florida MFL 2018 Priority List

Waterbody	Anticipated Rule Adoption
St. Marks River Rise (1 <sup>st</sup> Magnitude)	2019
Wakulla Spring (1 <sup>st</sup> Magnitude)	2021*
Sally Ward Spring (2 <sup>nd</sup> Magnitude)	2021
Floridan Aquifer, Coastal Region II	2021
Jackson Blue Spring (1 <sup>st</sup> Magnitude)	2023*
Shoal River	2024
Gainer Spring Group	2025*
Sylvan Spring Group	2025
Williford Spring Group	2025
Econfina Blue Spring Group	2025
Devils Hole Spring	2025
Floridan Aquifer, Coastal Bay County	2027
Apalachicola River and Chipola River	Water Reservation**



*Wakulla Spring*



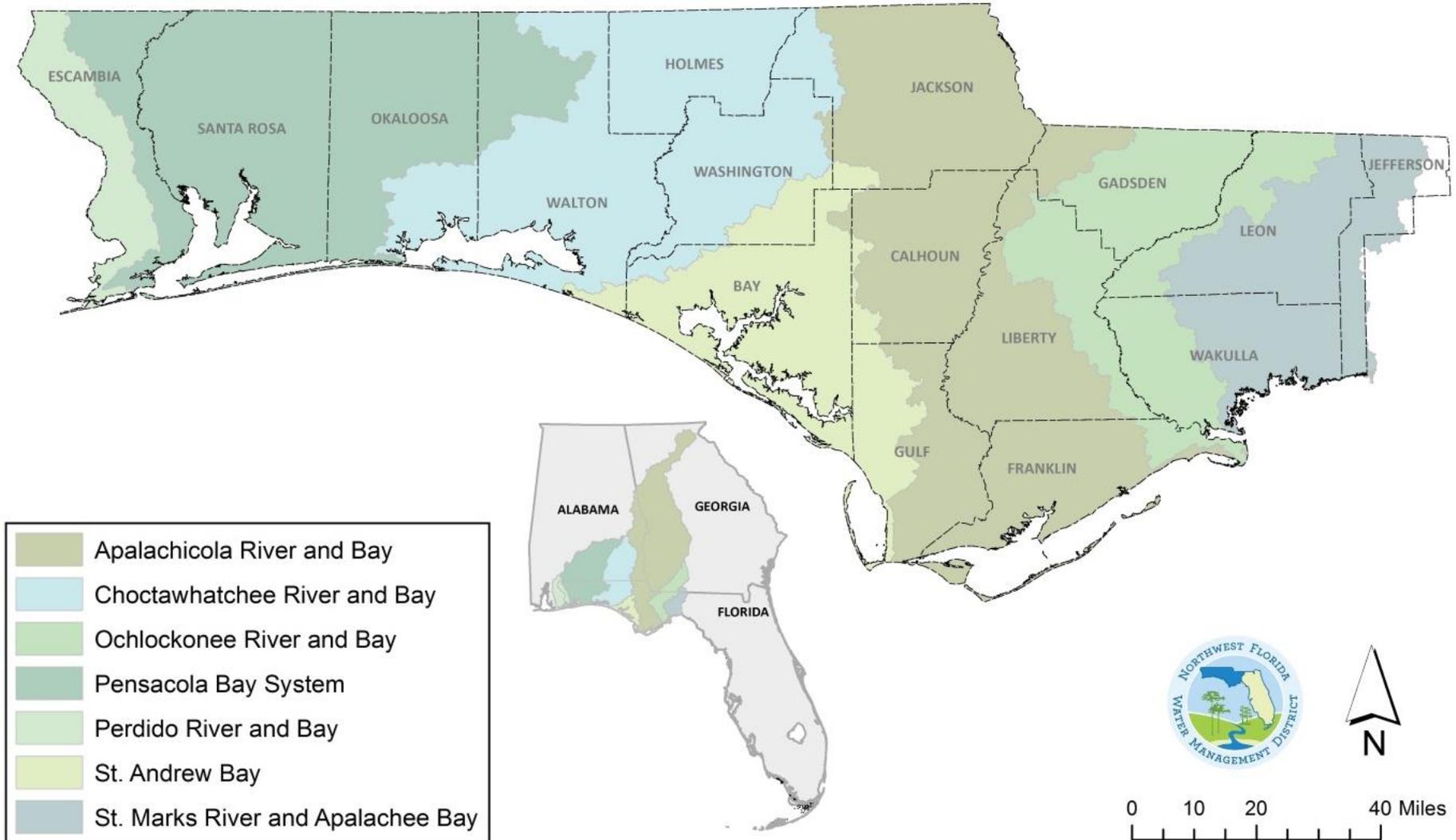
*Shoal River*

\*MFLs for Outstanding Florida Springs to be adopted by July 1, 2026.

\*\* Chapter 40A-2, Florida Administrative Code – Magnitude, duration and frequency of flows reserved for protection of fish and wildlife of the river, floodplain and Apalachicola Bay (*established 2006*)

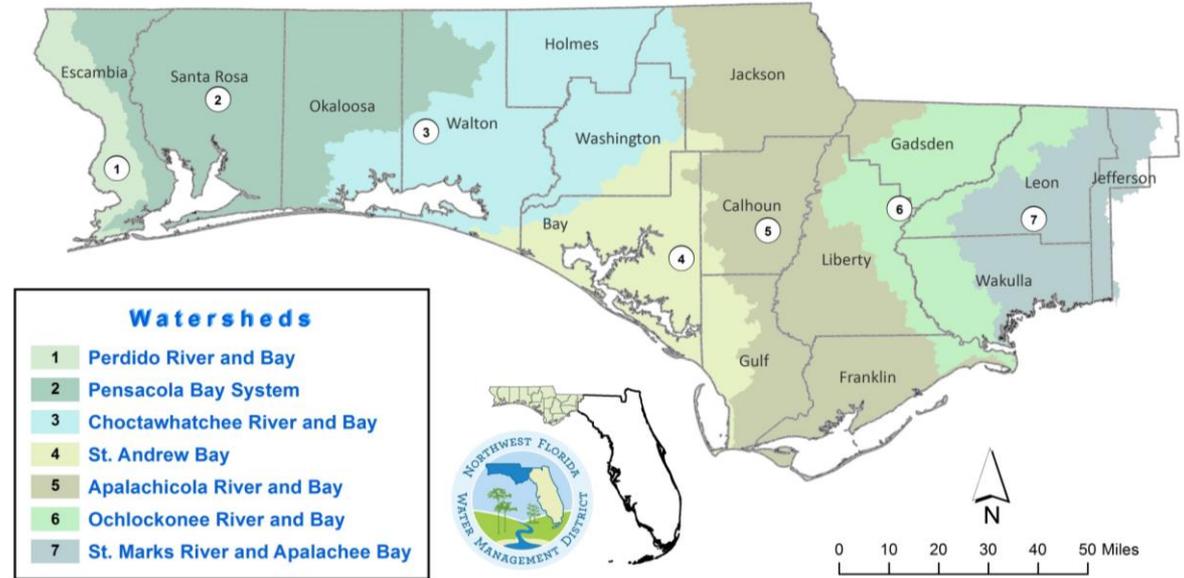


# Watershed Management



# Watershed Management

- Seven watershed plans
- Updated in 2017

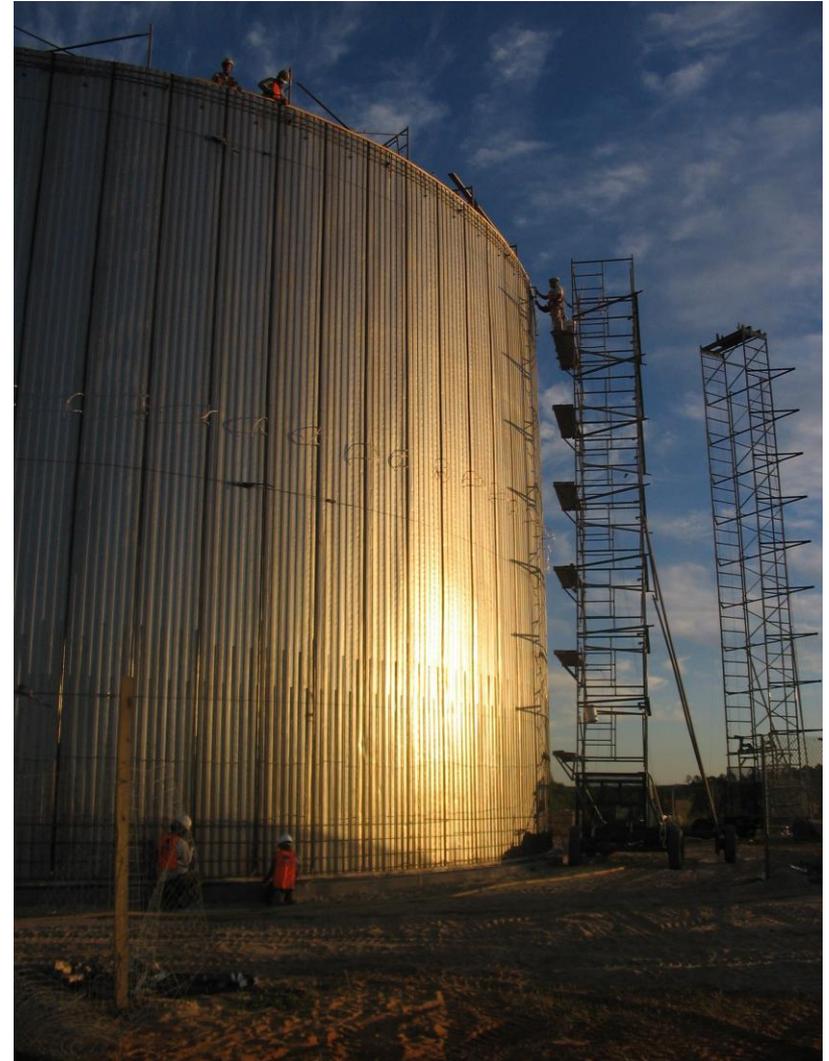


Pursuant to Florida's Surface Water Improvement and Management Act of 1987

(Sections 373.451-459, F.S.)

# Water Resource Grant Programs

- 88 grant-funded projects completed since 2012
- Over \$37 million in grants
- Over \$60 million leveraged in local, state, federal, and private funding
- Assisted 54 local governments and utilities
- \$9.8 million for agricultural BMP cost-share grants



# Springs Restoration and Protection

- **\$59.9 million** in grant funding (including projects in progress):
  - **\$10.5 million** for **agricultural BMPs** and supporting projects
  - **\$14.3 million** for **land acquisition**
  - **\$3.4 million** for **restoration**
  - **\$32.9 million** for **septic to sewer** projects
  - **\$1.5 million** for **advanced onsite systems**
- Over **\$28 million** matching funds



# Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Program

- **Program funding** (since 2013): \$9,857,597
- **87 projects** | 61 producers | 28,346 acres
- **89 percent of irrigated acres** within Jackson Blue BMAP area reached
- **Nearly 8 million gallons per day saved** since 2014
- **Over 668,000 lbs.** reduction in nitrogen



Center Pivot Retrofit



Variable Rate Irrigation System

# Watershed Restoration and Protection



- Water quality
- Flood protection
- Stormwater retrofits
- Reuse of reclaimed water
- Sedimentation abatement
- Best Management Practices

# Watershed Restoration and Protection



- Wetland restoration
- Hydrologic restoration
- Living shorelines
- Monitoring
- Assessment
- And more

# Regulation

## Water Use Permitting

Chapter 40A-2, Florida Administrative Code

## Well Construction

Chapter 40A-3, Florida Administrative Code

## Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels

Chapter 40A-8, Florida Administrative Code

## Agriculture and Forestry Surface Water Management

Chapter 40A-44, Florida Administrative Code

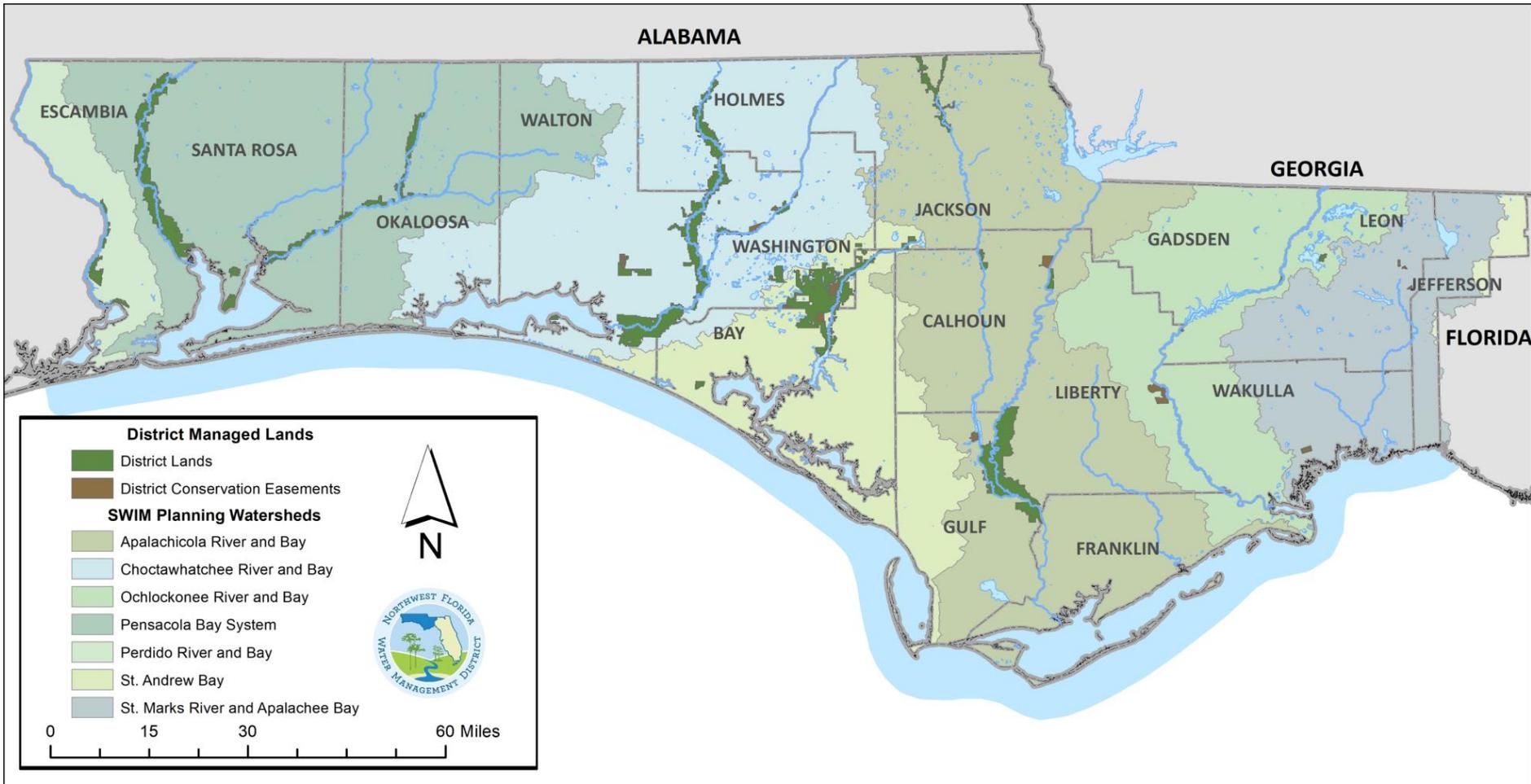
## Environmental Resource Permitting

Chapter 62-330 Florida Administrative Code

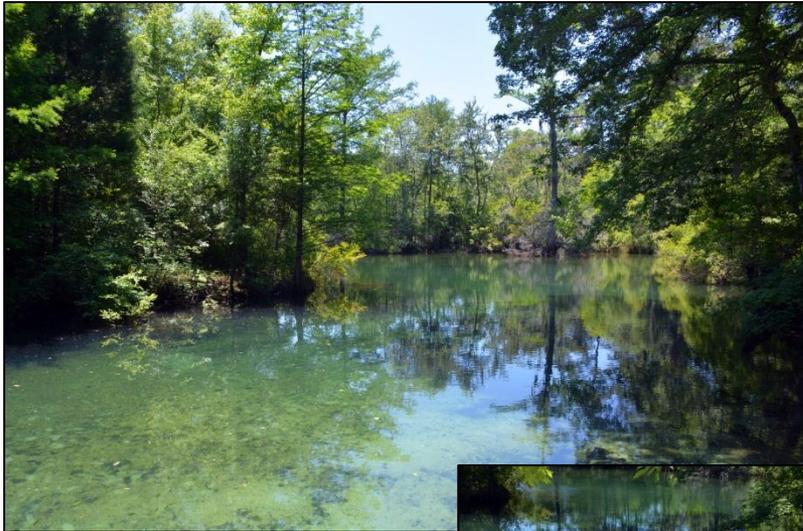




# Land Acquisition, Restoration, and Management



# Land Acquisition, Restoration, and Management



- Water resource and water quality protection
- Aquifer recharge
- Source protection



- Floodplain functions, long-term resiliency
- Habitat restoration

- Compatible public access, use, and recreation



**For more information:**

**Paul Thorpe**

Chief, Bureau of Environmental  
and Resource Planning  
Northwest Florida Water  
Management District  
(850) 539-5999

[Paul.Thorpe@nwfwater.com](mailto:Paul.Thorpe@nwfwater.com)  
[www.nwfwater.com](http://www.nwfwater.com)