

SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: John Good, P.E., Chief, Office of Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels

THRU: Tom Mirti, Deputy Executive Director, Water and Land Resources

DATE: September 30, 2020

RE: 2020 Priority List for Establishment of Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels

RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels 2020 Priority List and Schedule to be submitted to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection pursuant to subsection 373.042(3), Florida Statutes.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to subsection 373.042(3), Florida Statutes (F.S.), the District is required to identify priority water bodies for the establishment of Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels (MFLs) and those listed water bodies that have the potential to be affected by withdrawals in an adjacent district for which the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) adoption may be appropriate. The priority list and schedule for the establishment of MFLs must be submitted to the FDEP for review and approval by November 15 each year. Attached is the proposed 2019 priority list and schedule. A descriptive narrative showing the District's MFLs priorities beginning in calendar year 2020 is also attached.

A key part of MFLs is the assessment of water body status relative to existing water use. This determines the need for recovery from or prevention of impact for each water body. This must be done, initially, at the same time as MFL rule development for a waterbody (subsection 373.0421(2), F.S.). The District and the St. Johns River Water Management District collaborated on the development of the North Florida-Southeast Georgia Regional Groundwater Flow Model (NFSEG). The model will be used to assess the impact of regional withdrawals to date on the resource and to estimate potential impacts for a 20-year planning horizon.

The delay in finalization of the NFSEG model affected the evaluation of recovery or prevention, and thus the completion of technical efforts, and subsequent rule development on several important systems. However, during 2019 and 2020, technical progress continued on a number of MFLs, particularly the re-evaluation, per rule, of the Lower Santa Fe and Ichetucknee River systems.

The District is coordinating on the re-evaluation of the Lower Santa Fe and Ichetucknee River systems and continues coordination with FDEP on the planned initial adoption of MFLs on the Upper and Middle Suwannee River systems and associated priority springs.

JG/pf

Attachments