

Central Florida Water Initiative



An Overview

Background

Florida's water management districts are committed to finding new ways of meeting the demand for freshwater. Historically, the Floridan aquifer system has supplied the vast majority of the water used in the central Florida area. The boundaries of three water management districts — the St. Johns River Water Management District, South Florida Water Management District and Southwest Florida Water Management District — meet in the area. The three districts are studying whether the Floridan aquifer system is reaching its sustainable limits of use and exploring the need to develop supplemental sources of water.

In the past, the three districts worked independently to resolve water resource issues, but the decisions of one district can impact the water resources of another. Today, the districts are working collaboratively with other agencies and stakeholders to implement effective and consistent water resource planning, development and management through the Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI).

Partners for a Common Goal

The CFWI focuses on the Central Florida Coordination Area, which includes southern Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Polk counties. The three water management districts, along with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACs), regional public water supply utilities and other stakeholders are collaborating to develop a unified process to address central Florida's current and long-term water supply needs.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the CFWI are to:

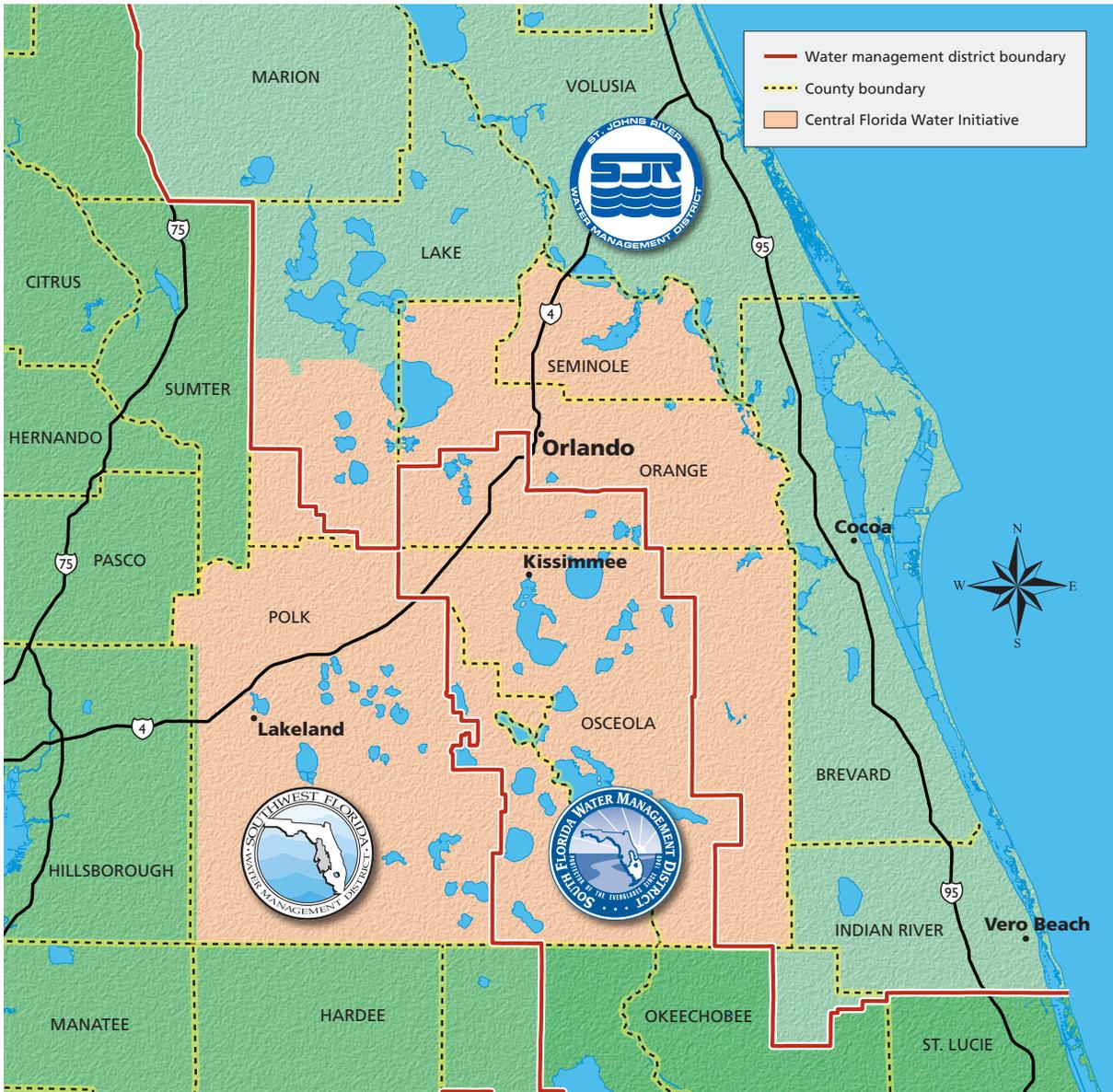
- Identify the sustainable quantities of traditional groundwater sources available for water supplies that can be used without causing unacceptable harm to the water resources and associated natural systems.
- Develop strategies to meet water demands that are in excess of the sustainable yield of existing traditional groundwater sources.
- Establish consistent rules and regulations for the three water management districts that meet their collective goals, and implement the results of the Central Florida Water Initiative.

Organizational Structure

A Steering Committee oversees the CFWI process and provides guidance to the technical teams and technical oversight/management committees that are developing and refining information on all aspects of central Florida's water resources. The Steering Committee includes a:

- Public water supply utility representative
- Governing Board member from each of the three water management districts
- Representative from DEP
- Representative from DACs

Technical and Management Oversight committees oversee technical teams, ensure coordination between the teams and identify policy issues that need to be



elevated to the Steering Committee as the process evolves. These two committees are comprised of representatives of the executive management teams from each of the water management districts, DEP and public water supply utilities.

Specialized Technical Collaborative Teams focus on specific issues, including:

- Hydrologic analysis
- Environmental measures
- Minimum flows and levels and water reservations
- Data, monitoring and investigations
- Regional water supply plan
- Groundwater availability

The work of the technical teams will result in one shared groundwater model, one process for establishing minimum flows and levels to protect water bodies, one coordinated strategy for recovery and prevention of harm to water bodies, and one regional water supply plan.

Public Input

Protecting central Florida's water supplies is a deliberative, thoughtful and science-based process. Public input is encouraged. Visit cfwiwater.com for additional information.