



## Agenda Item Summary

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**File #:** 24-00789

**Agenda Date:** [Publish Date]

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**Agenda Item Name:**

**Lower Santa Fe – Ichetucknee Rivers Min Flows and Levels Regulatory Strategy chair letter**

**Presenter:**

Stacie Greco, Water Resources Program Manager, Environmental Protection Department, 352-264-6829

**Description:**

The Water Management Districts and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) have been working on updating the Minimum Flows and Levels (MFL) and Prevention and Recovery Plan for the Lower Santa Fe and Ichetucknee Rivers since 2019. Staff has prepared a chair letter and detailed comments on the draft Regulatory Strategy for your consideration.

**Recommended Action:**

Approve chair letter and detailed comments

**Prior Board Motions:**

The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) listened to a staff presentation on this MFL process at the May 7, 2024 policy meeting.

**Fiscal Note:**

N/A

**Strategic Guide:**

Environment

**Background:**

The establishment of Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs) is required by state law under Subsection 373.042(2), Florida Statutes (F.S.). The MFLs are developed by the Water Management Districts and adopted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). MFLs set water levels and flows to prevent significant harm to the water resources or ecology from water withdrawals. MFLs protect non-consumptive uses of water that include water necessary for navigation and recreation, for fish and wildlife habitat, and for other natural resources in accordance with Chapter 62-40, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.).

Water Management and FDEP Staff are currently updating the MFL rule for the Lower Santa Fe and Ichetucknee Rivers and Springs, and it is anticipated that it will be submitted in 2026 for ratification. The draft Regulatory Strategy was shared with the public at a workshop in Live Oak on 7/31/2024.

Staff attended and provided brief comments but would like to submit the attached Chair Letter and detailed comments by the 9/30/2024 deadline.