The following includes detailed comments on the July 2024 LSFIR Regulatory Strategy. Text in italics represents Alachua County's public comment on this proposed language.

Page 3- "The Districts shall, in coordination with the Department, evaluate the status of the MFL Compliance Points periodically using the best available tools and data for each MFL Compliance Point and revise the status assessment of the MFL Compliance Points by rule, as needed."

Alachua County Comment: This timeline is very vague, since this current process was initiated in 2018 and we still don't have an updated rule in place it is challenging for the public to have faith in this process without firm deadlines. Replace "periodically" with "every five years."

Page 4-"Following the effective date of these rules, each District shall modify all applicable existing consumptive use permits with withdrawal points within the NFRWSP area by letter modification to be consistent with Rule 62-42.300(1), F.A.C.,"

Again this timeline is vague, suggest adding 6 months to a year for all permits to be modified.

Page 6- "Impacts to the MFL Compliance Points will be evaluated by comparing the existing natural system to the predicted post withdrawal conditions."

It appears that determining impacts will solely rely on modeling provided by the applicants. How will actual water level and water pumping data be used to verify compliance and actual site conditions? The February 2024 version had additional language and burden of proof required by the applicant. Suggest re-visiting that language and adding in additional measures to ensure adequate monitoring and safeguards.

*Page 6 "*All Existing Uses shall offset their proportionate share of BCWU impacts as calculated below. Such offset shall be accomplished as soon as practicable but in no case more than 20 years from effective date."

Again, soon as practicable is a very vague target and twenty years is too lenient of a timeframe. Suggest 5-10 year maximum. For longer term projects, they can seek a temporary permit as outlined in Section 4.0.

Page 7- "Permittees and applicants for New Uses Group A shall fully eliminate or offset their proportionate share of their BCWU and 100% of their authorized use in excess of their BCWU as soon as practicable and in no case more than 20 years from [effective date] unless a Temporarily Allocation is approved"

Again, this is too long of a time frame especially for new users, suggest decreasing to two years.

Page 10- Table 2 Impacts of 0.1 CFS greater at any MFL Recovery Points as of the BCWU-Impact Offset Plan Due Date- No later than two years after [*effective date*], or upon application for modification to increase allocation or renewal, or 10-year compliance review, whichever is sooner.

Ten years is too long. Suggest decreasing to 5 years. It also appears that permits with an impact less than 0.01 cfs will not have to submit a plan and thus will not have to offset their impact. Before adopting this rule please share with the public the cumulative impact of all of these impacts.

Page 11- Impact Offset Plan- A water conservation plan consistent with implementation of water conservation elements and reporting requirements unless previously submitted as required in section 5.0.

Even if a water conservation plan was previously submitted, a new and improved water conservation plan should be required. The current standards for water conservation plans are very low and lack meaningful, measurable, and enforceable water conservation requirements.

Page 11- Section 4.0 Temporary Allocations

It is my understanding that temporary allocations would allow for longer term projects to come to fruition. If this is the intent, then the temporary allocation time frame could be extended to ten years and the timeframes for all other sections should be decreased, as discussed above.

Page 12-13- Public Supply Water Conservation Requirements

It is absolutely time to maximize water conservation through meaningful and measurable water conservation plans for public water suppliers. This language can be improved by the following recommendations:

A. *For public supply water use permits, require utilities to include a condition on all future service agreements prohibiting landscape irrigation wells and Floridan aquifer well water use.*
B. *Remove "where environmentally, technically, and economically feasible" anytime this loophole language is used.*
C. *The current proposed residential per capita is too high at 75 gallons. This number includes multifamily customers, which drive down the average since they are not irrigating individual yards. Suggest a target goal of 50 and immediately building in a 5% reduction for each five-year increment for each utility until the goal is reached.*
D. *Clarify that outdoor water use audits are required for high water users, not just offered. There should also be provisions for further action utilities can take if recommendations are not implemented and water use is not reduced.*
E. *Advanced Metering Infrastructure should be required for all utilities within a specified time frame that allows them to utilize cost-share funding to implement this essential tool for targeting water conservation programming.*
F. *Specify that utilities and local governments can implement irrigation restrictions more protective than those adopted by the WMDs. Draft this language so it supersedes current rules and removes the barrier of an additional rule change to come to fruition.*

G. *Remove FFL principles as a standard until FDEP prohibits permanent irrigation as part of this program. This program currently does not include any measurement of water use.*
H. *For conservation rate structures to be successful, it is paramount to eliminate well water use for irrigation (see below).*
I. *Any existing water conservation plans should be updated, as most plans use boiler plate language and have not successfully reduced water use.*
J. *Identify how water conservation plans are going to be enforced by the district, and a timeline for additional actions required if water conservation goals stated in (B) above or project offsets are not satisfied.*

Page 17- Section 5.2 *"*An applicant or permittee with an authorized or requested water use allocation greater than 100,000 gpd shall implement the agricultural conservation measures in this section and subsequent subsections."

Water conservation measures should be required on all permits, regardless of size. In the portion of Alachua County that is within the SRWMD there were 30 active agricultural water use permits in 2019. 20 of these were under the proposed 100,000 gallons per day threshold. Their cumulative pumping is almost 800,000 gallons per day.

Page 20- "No new private residential irrigation wells used solely for irrigation shall be constructed in the Floridan aquifer after [*effective date*] where a lower quality water source is available for irrigation or public supply or reclaimed water is available at or immediately adjacent to the property boundary."

As currently drafted, the rule allows users to install irrigation wells and categorize them as domestic wells if they meet those parameters. Remove the words "private residential irrigation" and "solely" and revise the well permitting rules in tandem with this rule, if necessary. This language needs to be expanded to include landscape irrigation wells in common areas and commercial areas below the consumptive use permitting threshold. If the intent is to prohibit Florida aquifer well water use for irrigation where potable or reclaimed water public supply is available, this entire section can be simplified to state "No Floridan aquifer well water may be used for landscape irrigation where potable or reclaimed water public supply is available". We applaud this effort and agree it is time to end, once and for all, the well loophole that renders other conservation practices, such as tiered pricing, useless.

In addition to prohibiting irrigation wells where public supply is available, the following well regulations should be enforced on all other well permits (including General Permit by Rule) to accurately account for Floridan aquifer water us and ensure permitted use is not exceeded:

1. *Require metering for all new wells regardless of size and use(domestic, irrigation), or, at a minimum, all landscape irrigation wells.*
2. *Require leak detection technology be included on all commercial irrigation systems served by wells.*