

# RECOVERY STRATEGY AND NEW SWUCA II RULES APPROVED BY SWFWMD

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The Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA) encompasses a 5,100-square-mile area within 8 counties in the southern part of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). This area includes all of DeSoto, Hardee, Manatee, Sarasota, and portions of Charlotte, Highlands, Hillsborough and Polk counties (see map). SWUCA water resource concerns include depressed aquifer levels which cause saltwater intrusion and contribute to reduced flows in the upper Peace River and lowered lake levels in upland Polk and Highlands counties.

A Recovery Strategy and new rules (both subject to additional minor revision) relating to water resource management and regulation within the SWUCA were recently approved at the March 2006 SWFWMD Governing Board meeting and further changes were approved at the April Board. The proposed SWUCA II rules were published in the Florida Administrative Weekly on May 12, 2006. This notice triggered a timetable for parties to request a hearing to further address any issues they would like changed. Additional information on the SWUCA, including the March 2006 Draft Recovery Strategy (to be updated to reflect any substantive rule changes) and proposed SWUCA II Rules, is available online at the SWFWMD website at the following link: [www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/waterman/swuca/SWUCA.htm](http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/waterman/swuca/SWUCA.htm).

With respect to water use permitting, please keep the following in mind:

- Current plans call for implementation of the new SWUCA II Rules on January 1, 2007. Some details in the rules may change slightly before implementation.
- Significant changes (e.g., net benefit requirements) are expected to occur in the permitting process, and the permitting of additional water quantities above those currently permitted is likely to become more complex when the new rules are implemented.
- Water users in need of a WUP modification, WUP renewal, or a WUP for a new use should ensure that their permitting plans and schedule take into account the SWUCA Recovery Strategy and proposed SWUCA II Rules.

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