

## WATER RESOURCES UPDATE

By Thomas E. (Tom) Jackson, PG



**SWUCA.** New rules relating to water use and resource protection for the Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA) were implemented on January 1, 2007. The SWUCA encompasses a 5,100-square-mile area within eight 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. 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. SWUCA Rules were featured in the 3rd Quarter 2006 issue of CSI's Consultant's Update newsletter ([http://www.chastainkillman.com/downloads/articles/SWUCA\\_II.pdf](http://www.chastainkillman.com/downloads/articles/SWUCA_II.pdf)). Additional information on the SWUCA, including the latest Draft SWUCA Recovery Strategy and the new 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). Water users in need of a Water Use Permit (WUP) modification, WUP renewal, or a WUP for a new use should ensure that their permitting plans and schedule take into account the new SWUCA II Rules and the SWUCA Recovery Strategy.

**CFCA.** The Central Florida Coordination Area (CFCA) encompasses Polk, Osceola, Orange, and Seminole Counties. Beginning last fall, the South Florida, Southwest Florida, and St. Johns River Water Management Districts (WMDs) held a series of informational and rulemaking meetings to better coordinate water supply regulation and planning. It now appears likely that total overall groundwater withdrawals in the CFCA region will be capped at the projected year 2013 demonstrated need for water. As such, it is critical that water users who are likely to contend with adverse impact issues or who will need additional water quantities beyond projected 2013 demand identify alternative sources of water to meet future needs. Alternative water supply projects typically take 6 to 10 years before the projects become operational; therefore it is critical to initiate this complex process without delay. Up-to-date information on the CFCA activities, including meeting dates and the proposed CFCA-related rules can be found at the following websites:

SWFWMD: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/cfca/>

SJRWMD: <http://sjr.state.fl.us/programs/watersupply.html>

SFWMD: <http://www.sfwmd.gov/site/>

**10-Year Water Supply Facility Work Plans.** Nearly all local governments within areas of Florida that have Regional Water Supply Plans (RWSPs) are required to develop and submit their individual 10-Year Water Supply Facility Work Plans (Plans) to the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) within 18 months of adoption of RWSPs by their respective WMD. Additionally, the Plans must be incorporated into the applicable Comprehensive Plan by this deadline. The purpose of the 10-year Plans is to identify sources of water and funding of water supply projects to meet future needs concurrently with growth. For local governments within SWFWMD, these 10-Year Plans are due by May 30, 2008, which is rapidly approaching. Additional information is available from DCA. Of particular note is DCA's Guidance Document, which is currently being updated and should be available soon online at the DCA website ([www.dca.state.fl.us](http://www.dca.state.fl.us)). Funding information and planning-related FAQs are also available at [www.dca.state.fl.us/GrowthManagement2005/waterfaqs.cfm](http://www.dca.state.fl.us/GrowthManagement2005/waterfaqs.cfm).

**2007 Florida Springs Conference and Field Trips.** The technical community is continuing efforts to better engage the public, elected officials, and decision makers in critical water-related educational and resource protection efforts in hope of sustaining the precious natural resources and quality of life we enjoy. The third Florida Springs Conference is scheduled to take place at the Innisbrook Golf and Tennis Resort (near Tarpon Springs) on October 10-13, 2007, with three concurrent all-day field trips planned for October 10, 2007. Ann Tihansky (USGS-St. Petersburg) is planning a trip to Tampa's Sulphur Spring and nearby Curiosity Creek; and to Crystal Springs and the nearby Zephyrhills Bottled Water facility. Dave Dewitt (SWFWMD) is organizing a trip to Weeki Wachee Springs, including a canoe trip down the spring run to view and discuss the numerous karst features. Tom Jackson (Chastain-Skillman) plans to lead a field trip to the Tampa Bay Regional Reservoir, Lithia Springs, and Buckhorn Springs (all in Hillsborough County); and to the historic site of Kissengen Spring within the Upper Peace River Karst Area (Polk County). All trips will be led by Professional Geologists with considerable knowledge of these sites and related

resource issues. An understanding of the karst geology of west-central Florida is essential to water resource management and protection while addressing water supply, recreational, and environmental needs. We highly encourage the public and our decision-makers to participate and interact with the technical community on the field trips and at the Conference. Additional information, including registration forms, daily meeting agendas, and presentation abstracts, is available online at: [http://4d.cmc-associates.com/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/67.html?Action=Conference\\_Detail&ConfID\\_W=67&a](http://4d.cmc-associates.com/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/67.html?Action=Conference_Detail&ConfID_W=67&a).

Please contact us here at Chastain-Skillman if you have any questions or require assistance with water use permitting, 10-Year Water Supply Facility Work Plans, and for the identification and development of alternative water supplies.

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