

NOTICE OF INTENT TO SELL

Suwannee River Water Management District Governing Board has declared surplus a 320-acre tract of land in Section 13, Township 2 North, Range 10 South, Madison County, Florida. Persons interested in the possible purchase of this property should contact Ronnie Poole at Poole Realty, Inc. 386-362-4539.

2/16, 2/23, 3/2

■ SUWANNEE DEMOCRAT/LIVE OAK

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2011

## SRWMD newsletter goes digital

It's out with the old and in with the new for the Suwannee River Water Management District's RiverFronts newsletter. The monthly publication is converting from print format to an e-newsletter that will be posted on the District's website beginning this month.

For about 10 years, RiverFronts was printed and mailed to subscribers quarterly before production was temporarily suspended last year, due in part to budget constraints. Now, via its website, the District is able to offer timely information in an attractive newsletter format at no cost. The new electronic format is also a plus for readers who are accustomed to being able

to enlarge the size of type for easier readability.

The newsletter will present highlights of current District topics and events. Some of the features in the first edition include a list of hiking opportunities available to the public on District lands, answers to questions about current drought conditions and rainfall totals, and a reminder to resume to twice-a-week lawn irrigation with the start of Daylight Saving Time.

Readers can sign up to be notified by email when the newsletter is posted each month through the website's Notify Me feature, located under Quick Links on the homepage at [www.mysuwanneeriver.com](http://www.mysuwanneeriver.com).

MARCH 2 & 3, 2011

■ CLASSIFIED MARKETPLACE - [WWW.NFLAONLINE.COM](http://WWW.NFLAONLINE.COM)

Suwannee Chapter of the Florida Trail Association - second Monday; 7-9 p.m.; Suwannee River Water Management District, US 90 and CR 49, Live Oak; Info: Sam Bigbie, 386-362-5090; Don Neale, 386-362-4850; Sylvia Dunnam, 386-362-3256.

THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2011

THE JASPER NEWS, Jasper, FL —

## SRWMD Governing Board meeting

*Submitted*

On Tuesday, March 8, 2011, the Suwannee River Water Management District's Governing Board will meet at 9:00 a.m. at District Headquarters, 9225 County Road 49, Live Oak, Florida. The meeting is to consider District business and conduct public hearings

on regulatory and land acquisition matters. A workshop will follow the Governing Board meeting.

On Monday, March 28, 2011, 1:00 p.m., a Governing Board teleconference meeting will be held at District Headquarters in Live Oak, Florida.

All meetings, workshops, and hearings are open to the public.

Monticello News  
Wednesday, March 2, 2011

**SRWMD GOVERNING BOARD MEETINGS**

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3/2/11,c.

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COMMUNITY

## Suwannee water district irrigation rules to change

If you are living within the Suwannee River Water Management District, you will want to adjust something in addition to your clocks this weekend when daylight-saving time returns.

The time change at 2 a.m. Sunday also marks the time when more lawn watering will be allowed.

The district permits landscape irrigation twice a week during daylight-saving time, up from once a week during the rest of the year.

The irrigation rule went into effect last year as part of ongoing efforts to meet water needs in the district.

Officials said the rules apply to residential landscaping, public or commercial recreation areas, and public and commercial businesses that aren't regulated by a district-issued permit.

More information about the landscape irrigation rule can be found at [mysuwanneeriver.com](http://mysuwanneeriver.com).

— Karen Voyles

THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2011

THE JASPER NEWS, Jasper, FL

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*Submitted*

LIVE OAK, FL, March 4, 2011 – With the beginning of Daylight Saving Time on Sunday, March 13, residents and others within the Suwannee River Water Management District (District) may water their lawns and landscapes twice per week. Previously, watering was allowed once a week.

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The limits on landscape irrigation are part of an ongoing effort to help address water needs within the District. The rules apply to residential landscaping, public or commercial recreation areas, and public and commercial businesses that aren't regulated by a District-issued permit.

More information about water conservation and the landscape irrigation rule is available at [www.mysuwanneeriver.com](http://www.mysuwanneeriver.com).

# LEVY COUNTY JOURNAL

THE COUNTY PAPER • EST. 1923

Vol. 87, No. 36 March 10, 2011

[www.levyjournalonline.com](http://www.levyjournalonline.com)

50 cents

## SRWMD Water Rules Start with Daylight Saving Time

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# SRWMD employee recognized for 10 years of service

– Jerry Bowden, of the Suwannee River Water Management District (District), was honored for 10 years of outstanding service at a governing board meeting Feb. 8.

Bowden, a senior professional engineer, works in the Department of water supply and resource management. He inspects commercial and subdivision development projects to ensure they are in compliance with permitting requirements and assists with the implementation of drainage and alternative water supply projects.

Bowden joined the District in February 2001 and has 35 years of consulting and design experience in the areas of soil and water resources. Prior to employment with the District, he worked for 11 years as a consultant and 14 years as the president and owner of an engineering and construction company in Southwest Florida.



SRWMD Governing Board Chairman Don Quincey, left, and Jon Dinges, District director of water supply and resource management, right, present an award to Jerry Bowden for 10 years of service.

Jefferson County Journal

Friday, March 11, 2011

## Daylight Saving Time Allows Landscape Irrigation Twice Per Week

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## Curtis to serve as secretary, treasurer of SRWMD board

The Suwannee River Water Management District Governing Board held an election of officers on March 8. Donald J. Quincey Jr., will serve as chairman; Alphonas Alexander will serve as vice chairman; and Donald R. "Ray" Curtis III, will hold the positions of secretary/treasurer.

Gov. Charlie Crist appointed Curtis, of Perry, in March 2010. He represents the Coastal River Basin.

An attorney with Howard & Curtis, P.A., Curtis received his Juris Doctorate from Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville after earning

a Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration, with a minor in agricultural law, from the University of Florida.

Curtis serves as a member of the City of Perry Zoning and Planning Board and the City of Perry Board of Adjustment. Currently he is chair of the City of Perry Code Enforcement Board.

Quincey, a resident of Chiefland, was appointed by Crist in April 2008 to represent the Lower Suwannee River Basin. He earned an Associate of Arts degree from Santa Fe Community College in 1976. He is the owner and president

of Quincey Cattle Company and is currently the president-elect of the Florida Cattleman's Association.

Alphonas Alexander of Madison was appointed by Crist in March 2010 and he represents the Upper Suwannee River Basin.

Alexander holds a Bachelor of Science degree in animal science from Florida A&M University.

He serves as an independent contractor for The Forestry Company of Perry and is a member of the Forestry Stewardship program and the Florida Forestry Association.



New officers of the Suwannee River Water Management District Governing Board are pictured from left, Donald "Ray" Curtis, secretary/treasurer; Donald Quincey, chairman; and Alphonas Alexander, vice chairman.

# Water supply plan might be incomplete

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
Telegraph Editor

Paul Still from the Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District told the county commission last week he is concerned about how the water management district is addressing water issues and the impact that could have on the county.

The conservation district is considering sending a memo to the Suwannee River Water Management District, asking its governing board to direct staff to reevaluate its water supply assessment. That assessment considers the future availability of water based on current levels and projected trends.

According to Still, the plan is incomplete because it only evaluates the impact on water supply of drawing water from the aquifer. Still, however, said recharge has also been impacted by human activity. According to him, manmade ditches are draining water away from the county and not allowing enough time for the water to percolate back down into the aquifer.

"In Bradford County, since the late 1800s, we've been digging ditches to drain the county to make it dryer. Well, as a consequence, we have less water to recharge the aquifer," he said.

Still said another look at water supply could find drainage has impacted ground water levels as much or more than pumping water out of the aquifer. Reversing or modifying drainage could be key to addressing low ground water levels.

"If you only look at the use side, Bradford County will never get out of the hole that we're in," Still said.

Ultimately, how the water management district addresses water availability will impact agricultural, residential, and commercial development throughout the Upper Santa Fe Basin.

"Because of these impacts, we feel it essential that the information used to define the need for a Water Resource Caution Area is as accurate and complete as possible and that the remedies to address a water shortage be as complete as possible," Still wrote in a draft memo to the water management district.

Still also criticized what he said is the inadequacy of the information on geology, hydrogeology and hydrology of the basin, and said the water supply assessment also fails to consider the impact wetlands and lakes could play in addressing minimum flow and aquifer recharge.

Still had other objections, questioning the need and appropriateness of using a gauge at Graham to help set minimum flow levels for the upper Santa Fe River since the gauge is upstream from the Sampson River, which

is a more important source. The gauge could influence minimum flows in a way that restricts development in the county, he said. He also countered information presented on the water consumption at correctional facilities and questioned why they along with schools, churches and government offices were lumped in with commercial and industrial consumption.

The soil and water conservation board will consider forwarding Still's letter to the water management district at a future meeting. The county commission showed support for Still's concerns, and may address those concerns with the district in a workshop setting.

## District announces watering allowance

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# SRWMD Governing Board officers elected



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THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2011

THE MAYO FREE PRESS, Mayo, FL

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To add a comment, correction or clarification, [click here.](#)

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**ON A BUDGET?**



**THE 2011 LANDSCAPE EXPO**

THE 2010 LANDSCAPE EXPO WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

**Save the dates for 2011!**

**OCTOBER 12TH & 13TH**

LONG BEACH CONVENTION CENTER, CA



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**LAZARO ALEMAN**

*ECB Publishing  
Senior Staff Writer*

City Manager Steve Wingate is rightfully proud of a multimillion engineering feat that allows effluent from the city's treatment plant to be recycled for use by a plant nursery for irrigation purposes, both saving the city money and conserving water in the process.

Completed in late 2010 after nearly five years at a total cost of \$2.2 million, the water reuse/ reclamation project today is daily pumping 350,000 gallons of effluent to Simpson Nurseries, a county institution in itself.

Please See *Water Project* Page 13A

## Water Project

On a recent Friday morning, Wingate took this reporter on a tour of the new system. From the wastewater treatment plant, which itself received an \$800,000 upgrade as part of the total reuse project, the effluent is piped underground a mile or so to a pumping station and wet water storage facility off Goldberg Road.

Not unlike a large holding pond, the storage facility is designed to hold up to five million gallons of water during rainy periods, when spraying and irrigating of the nursery's plants and trees are not necessary.

"If it rains and the nursery can't take the effluent, the water comes here until they can take it again," Wingate explained, indicating the wet storage facility behind him.

Otherwise, he said,

the effluent is piped from the treatment plant to the Goldberg pump station and then directly to Simpson Nurseries, about four miles away.

Wingate said the treatment plant's maximum daily pumping capacity at present is 350,000 gallons, all of which Simpson Nurseries takes. He said when a new treatment plant is constructed, as city officials hope to do in the near future (the city has already applied for a combination grant/low-interest loan from the federal government for this purpose), the nursery will still be capable of taking the 800,000 or so gallons that the new facility will be capable of pumping.

At Simpson Nurseries, the piped effluent goes into two large ponds that the business then draws from to irrigate and

spray its extensive vegetative stock, consisting of millions of plants, shrubs and trees.

Before the new water reuse system was put in place, the city pumped the effluent to a manmade wetlands on Goldberg Road, where it was further purified by soil filtration, before being pumped to a 200-acre jurisdictional wetlands some eight miles away.

Fortunately, the jurisdictional wetland is adjacent Simpson Nurseries' land, so that the underground piping was already in place, Wingate said. But the marvel of the new system, he said, was that besides saving the city in permitting and testing fees (the city not long ago had to negotiate a settlement with the state over what could have been a costly penalty because of a poor

sampling taken at the constructed wetlands), the project also serves as a water conservation measure, dramatically reducing Simpson Nurseries' groundwater withdrawals.

Too, the system is electronically controlled, so that it can be remotely monitored and regulated by computer or laptop from anywhere, including the treatment plant, a vehicle, or the plant manager's home during week-ends. Wingate said city personnel can log on to the system at any time, check the pond levels, and stop or move the location of the flow at will.

The water reuse project was an outgrowth of a state initiative that several years ago encouraged the use of alternative and cost-effective water sources; as such, it was largely

financed by public funds.

The project's first phase, accomplished in early 2009, involved the replacement of the treatment plant's headworks, which function to remove the floatable objects and other solids that enter the facility in the waste stream. Typically, the headworks include grinders, screens, screening compactors and grit removal systems. The head-works also serve to ensure that the effluent leaving the plant meets the applicable environmental standards.

The second phase, entailing the construction of the wet water storage facility and associated components, started early last year and ended in December.

Funding for the project came from the Suwannee River Water Management District

(SRWMD), which contributed \$1,500,000; the Florida Department of Agriculture Consumer Services, which contributed \$150,000; the Legislature, which kicked in \$500,000; and the City of Monticello, which contributed \$50,000.

Simpson Nurseries, meanwhile, employs 135 fulltime employees and controls 1,300 acres just east of U.S. 19 and south of Monticello. Each year, the company plants about 20 acres of pecan trees and 60 acres of general field nursery stock. Additionally, the company uses 500 acres for the production of more than 1,000,000 shrubs and trees, ranging in size from one gallon to 15-gallon pots. The business, which dates from 1902, has been in the sole ownership of the Beshears family since 1995.

Monticello News Wednesday, March 23, 2011

# Water Reuse Project Performing Per Plan

Cont. From Page 1

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# WATER SITUATION IMPROVES SLIGHTLY ACROSS SUWANNEE

**LAZARO ALEMAN**  
*ECB Publishing*  
*Senior Staff Writer*

Although the water situation generally improved across the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) in February, Jefferson County's rainfall was below average, and

certain areas of the district still registered significant deficits.

That's according to the latest hydrologic conditions report issued by the SRWMD on March 3.

The report shows that the average rainfall across the district was 3.85 inches in February,

just 0.02 inches short of the long-term average of 3.87 inches for the month.

"Accumulations of up to eight inches occurred in localized areas of Dixie, Levy, Gilchrist, and Alachua counties," the

Please See *Water Page 4A*

## Water

## Cont. From Page 1

report states. "Totals in Hamilton, Jefferson, Madison and Taylor counties were blow normal."

Meanwhile, the 12-month district average of 52.99 inches was 1.69 inches below the historical 12-month average of 54.68 inches.

"However, the upper Aucilla, Santa Fe, and Suwannee basins had significant deficits of 10 to 20 inches," the report states.

Jefferson County received 2.78 inches of rainfall during February, compared with the February average of 4.65 inches. The county has received 10.02 inches of rainfall during the last three months and 46.93 inches during the last 12 months.

Madison County, meanwhile, received 2.82 inches during February, compared with the February average of 4.36 inches. Madison County has received 10.57 inches during the last three months and 49.05 inches during the last 12 months.

River levels across the district tended to fluctuate during the month, with some rivers improving to normal conditions and then falling below normal by the end of the month, and others reaching their highest levels since August but still remaining below their normal levels. Lakes levels generally improved during the month, with an average rise of 0.4 feet.

Groundwater levels also generally improved, rising an average of 0.7 feet in 79 percent of the monitored wells in the upper Floridan Aquifer.

"Average conditions across the district using monthly statistics rose to the 30<sup>th</sup> from the 26<sup>th</sup> percentile in January (based on records beginning no earlier than 1976)," according to the report. "Conditions based on the entire period of record rose to the 34<sup>th</sup> percentile. Average conditions in the Suwannee and Santa Fe basins improved slightly but remained below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of all

observations."

The SRWMD monitors agricultural water use on 106 overhead irrigation systems. It reports that the average daily application rate in February was 0.02 inches.

Meanwhile, the districtwide phase 1 water shortage advisory that the SRWMD governing board issued on Dec. 14, 2010 remains in effect. The advisory urges users to reduce water consumption voluntarily. The U.S. Geological Survey still categorizes the Suwannee River and its tributaries as below level.

The SRWMD compiles the hydrologic conditions report using water resource data collected from radar-derived rainfall estimates, groundwater and surface water levels, and river flows, among other variables.

The district encompasses all or parts of 15 counties in north-central Florida, including Madison County and the eastern half of Jefferson County.

## Commission Declares April Water Conservation Month

LAZARO ALEMAN  
ECB Publishing  
Senior Staff Writer

In recognition of the continuing drought conditions and at the specific request of the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD), officials here have declared April as Water Conservation Month in Jefferson County.

The resolution, which the Jefferson County Commission adopted on Thursday, March 17, aims to raise public awareness about the importance of water conservation, particularly at the present.

"This is an opportunity for Jefferson County to promote water conservation as a means of pro-

tecting our rivers, springs and other groundwater and surface water resources," David Still, executive director of the SRWMD, wrote in his request to commissioners for the proclamation.

Still noted in his letter that the SRWMD declared a phase 1 water shortage advisory effective January of the current year "in response to drought conditions that are expected to continue at least through spring." A phase 1 water shortage advisory urges residents to adopt voluntary measures to reduce water consumption. The notice is a step short of a phase 2 advisory, which imposes mandatory water restrictions.

As it is, the district has in place a permanent, year-round landscape irrigation rule that limits the use of such water to certain times and days of the week.

"Due to the likelihood of future droughts and water supply shortages throughout our region, it is important that

Please See Water  
Page 6A

## Water

citizens become aware of these watering rules, and that they develop lifelong water conservation habits," Still wrote.

The resolution, which takes effect April 1, essentially aims to educate citizens to the preciousness of water as a potentially depletable resource. It further recognizes that April has traditionally been designated as Water Conservation Month in Florida because it is typically a dry month when water demands are most acute.

The commission adopted the measure with little comments, except for those offered by David Hall, a citizen who objected to the proclamation.

Hall accused commissioners of being "out of line" if they adopted

the resolution, given their previous claims of having no jurisdiction over water-related issues that he had brought to their attention, he said.

"It's not your business, you've told me that time and time again," Hall said, referring to complaints he's made of a plantation that allegedly uses 10 million gallons of water daily to flood its ponds for duck hunting purposes. "You've declared on previous times that this is not your business. If you pass this proclamation, I will bring other proclamations to you that are not your business."

What's more, the proclamation applied only to the eastern side of the county that was under the jurisdiction of the SRWMD, Hall said. It

## Cont. From Page 1

didn't apply to the western half, which was under the jurisdiction of the North West Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD). And in fact, if one checked with the NFWFMD, no drought conditions existed, Hall said. Indeed, the two districts didn't even communicate with each other, he said.

If the commission was going to adopt a resolution, it should apply countywide, Hall said. As it was, however, the commission didn't even enforce the water conservation measures in its own Land Development Code, he said.

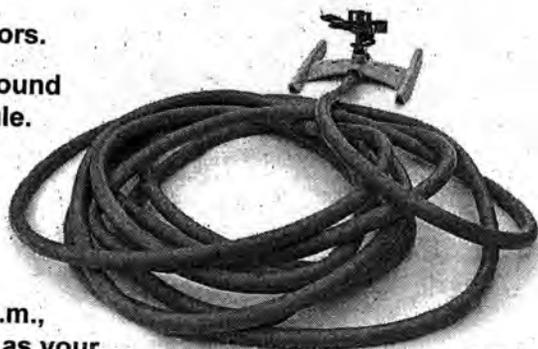
"You don't set a good example," Hall said.

The board proceeded to adopt the resolution unanimously.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2011 ■ SUWANNEE DEMOCRAT/LIVE OAK

## April is Water Conservation Month

- ◆ Please conserve water, both indoors and outdoors.
- ◆ Please follow the year-round Landscape Irrigation Rule. In spring and summer, choose no more than two days per week to water your landscape, but not between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., and water only as much as your landscape needs.



To learn more visit [www.mysuwanneeriver.com](http://www.mysuwanneeriver.com)

**Thursday, March 31, 2011**

### Local governments proclaim April as Water Conservation Month

LIVE OAK, FL, March 29, 2011 – The Suwannee River Water Management District (District) has joined with hundreds of local governments and agencies throughout Florida in adopting proclamations proclaiming April as Water Conservation Month.

The District adopted its proclamation earlier this month and recognizes the following local governments for encouraging wise water use in their communities by adopting their own Water Conservation Month proclamations: Counties – Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette and Suwannee; Cities and towns – Archer, Branford, Brooker, Chiefland, Horseshoe Beach, Lake City, Monticello, Perry, Starke and Waldo.

The proclamations call upon residents, businesses and visitors to protect our precious water resources by practicing and promoting conservation measures both indoors and outdoors.

The District reminds all citizens within its boundaries to follow the mandatory, year-round landscape irrigation rule which allows lawn and landscape watering once per week during Standard Time (fall/winter) and twice per week during Daylight Saving Time (spring/summer), but not between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Residents may choose up to two days of the week to water, but should water only as often as needed.

Landscape irrigation accounts for the largest percentage of household water use in Florida. Therefore, the greatest amount of water savings can be achieved by reducing outdoor irrigation and following other Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles.

Ways to save water indoors include checking for leaks; installing low-flow, water efficient showerheads, faucets and toilets; and purchasing water-efficient appliances such as clothes washers and dishwashers when shopping for new ones.

For information about the water conservation rule, visit [www.mysuwanneeriver.com](http://www.mysuwanneeriver.com). Visit [www.floridayards.org](http://www.floridayards.org) for information about Florida-Friendly Landscaping™.

## SRWMD Proclaims April as Water Conservation Month

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## SRWMD launches e-newsletter

It's out with the old and in with the new for the Suwannee River Water Management District's RiverFronts newsletter. The monthly publication is converting from print format to an e-newsletter that will be posted on the District's website beginning this month.

For about 10 years, RiverFronts was printed and mailed to subscribers quarterly before production was temporarily suspended last year, due in part to budget constraints. Now, via its website, the District is able to offer timely information in an attractive newsletter format at no cost. The new electronic format is also a plus for readers who are accus-

tomed to being able to enlarge the size of type for easier readability.

The newsletter will present highlights of current District topics and events. Some of the features in the first edition include a list of hiking opportunities available to the public on District lands, answers to questions about current drought conditions and rainfall totals, and a reminder to resume to twice-a-week lawn irrigation with the start of Daylight Saving Time.

Readers can sign up to be notified by email when the newsletter is posted each month through the website's Notify Me feature, located under Quick Links on the homepage at [www.mysuwanneeriver.com](http://www.mysuwanneeriver.com).

# Happy trails in Lafayette County

## R.O. Ranch Equestrian Park an opportunity for all

Joyce Marie Taylor

joycemarie.taylor@gaffnews.com

The Rotary Club of Mayo held their weekly meeting at the newly constructed Visitors Center at R.O. Ranch Equestrian Park on Wednesday, March 23.

Located at 1954 S.E. CR 357 in Mayo, about 11 miles south of town on Highway 51, it encompasses 2,500 acres of land. Brian Kauffman, facility director for Suwannee River Water Management District, was the guest speaker before this group of busi-

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Continued From Page 1A

ness leaders from the town of Mayo.

Much has already been written about this monumental venture since before the grand opening in April 2007, but for many of the Rotarians it was their first time seeing the property in person and they were duly impressed. The project began when Frank "Red" and Olive Schulte gave a \$3.5 million endowment to fund the ranch's operation back in July 2006.

The park is currently under development in north central Florida at the southwestern end of Lafayette County and is open for day use at the present time. Many groups, including the Lafayette County 4-H Club have already held events at the park.

The new visitor's center at the equestrian park is a 3,300 square foot building with a 2,700 square foot full wrap-around covered porch.

There will also be cultural heritage exhibits on display and educational programs. The center and other facilities at the park can also be reserved for special events.

The theme of the entire park is Florida cracker style circa 1920. All the buildings yet to be built will be reminiscent of that era with white board siding and tin roofs.

The park will specialize in equestrian activi-

ties. However, other recreational opportunities can include wildlife viewing, fishing and hiking. Kauffman referred to an artist's rendering that showed the long-range plans of the entire park.

"We have about 15 to 20 miles of trails currently open to the public and one main trail comes right by the visitor's center," Kauffman said. "Within the next month or so we're hoping to open the campground in the back, so people will be able to come here for overnight use. Within the next 6 to 8 months we'll have the road open going out to Highway 51."

Horse stables, barns and grandstands, along with a covered arena are in the long-term plans for the park, but Kauffman said, "an open air riding arena should be ready in a year-and-a-half."

Currently there are 32 camping sites with water and electric already in place, along with a dump station. Another area is set aside for cabins.

While digging the retention pond, Kauffman stated that he used that soil to level up an area about 150' X 350' for the arena that will be just beyond the visitor's center.

On April 16 the American Competitive Trail Horse Association will be holding a competition ride at the park.

Kauffman said that the people from Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park

are looking at R.O. Ranch as an opportunity for them and not a competition. It will in essence be a boost to tourism for the area and potentially draw visitors to the springs and other parks in the region, thereby being beneficial to everyone. He also said that it would benefit Cook's Hammock General Store since visitors to the park will need to buy food and supplies.

Kauffman explained that all the funds used for capital improvements to the property have been from timber sales from land owned by SRWMD, mostly from the Steinhatchee tract.

"We had a house built originally for the managers to reside on site, but after recent organizational changes, we decided to use it as a rental, so you can rent it by the day or by the week," Kauffman said.

The house, located on the south end of the property, has three bedrooms and 2 1/2 baths and it is built cracker style with an open floor plan. It has been landscaped and furnished to make it user-friendly for visitors and it can be rented for events or for the weekend.

A campground map is in the development stages and Kauffman said they are looking for sponsors from the business community to put ads on the map, which would be a good way to advertise your business.

# April is Water Conservation Month

## *Cut back with different ways for irrigation*

By ADA LANG

news@cedarkeybeacon.com

Cynthia Barnett, author of "Mirage," the 2007 Florida Gold Medal winner for Nonfiction, says, "U.S. water consumption has been on the decline for 30 years" and "the average per capita use in 2000 was lower than it had been since the 1950s."

That same year, "total freshwater withdrawals were less than in 1975, despite population growth, Barnett said.

However, not in Florida, where "per-person consumption and total withdrawals are on the upswing." That is why the State of Florida chose April - one of the driest months of the year - to be "Water Conservation Month."

Cedar Key is surrounded by water so does it matter that we save any? The short answer is "yes."

Water is pumped at the Cedar Key Water and Sewer District's off-island wells, treated, piped under the bridge and distributed to customers. Some is for residential use, some for commercial and, much for irrigation. It is expensive to acquire, treat and distribute and most importantly, the source is not finite.

With irrigation consuming so much water, the Suwannee River Water Management District has had irrigation rules in place since January 2010, however they are not widely publicized. It is this simple:

- During Daylight Saving Time which begins in March, residents may irrigate two days a week.

- After the first Sunday of November,

only water one day a week.

- No matter the time of year, you may never water between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

For more information, visit the District website, [mysuwanneeriver.com](http://mysuwanneeriver.com).

The regulations apply to: "residential landscaping, public or commercial recreation areas, and public and commercial businesses located in the 15 counties within the Suwannee River Water Management District."

It goes on to say, "certain units of local government, in cooperation with Suwannee River Water Management District, have adopted ordinances limiting lawn and landscape irrigation," however Cedar Key does not have their own set of rules.

Jack Hotaling, manager of the CKWSD, said the local board "discourage the use of potable water for irrigation", however, a homeowner may put in a well for such purposes. That means residents must still follow the SRWMD guidelines for irrigation. The CKWSD is working on a resolution allowing for special meters for irrigation systems, when the well water is not suitable for irrigation. You can find more information at [ckwater.org](http://ckwater.org)

Other ways to save on water during irrigation is to collect rain water (when we have rain) and store it for use when we don't. It can be as simple as a gutter and downspout filling a barrel or barrels, and gravity-flowing the water to the plants via a drip irrigation system.

**See Water continued on page 5**

### **Water continued from page 3**

It can be as elaborate as a gutter system on a building with a metal roof that drains into large cisterns generally made of plastic or metal and pumped around a property to irrigate plants and lawns. The cisterns can be buried underground or placed under a house or deck and screened from sight. Massive amounts of water can be gathered from the roof - probably more than can be reasonably stored.

Best of all, use plants in the garden that require less water. Native plants are the best way to meet that goal, since most Florida native plants are well adapted to local soils and rainfall.

For those who just can't live without a soft, green, grassy lawn, consider faux "grass". No, it is not the bright green astro-turf of a past generation used under the carport

or in front of a camper. Today's faux "grass" will fool the eyes and feet.

It is more expensive than sod, initially, however, it does not need to be mowed, irrigated, fertilized or edged. And there's no worry that during an extra high tide the grass will be dead before the tide goes out or about sending chemicals into the Gulf of Mexico when the tide recedes.

Admittedly, there's no longer have an excuse to buy the latest manly yard implement but there will be time to relax or work on the "honey-do" list, and that is a bargain at twice the price.

*(Go to [cedarkeybeacon.com](http://cedarkeybeacon.com) to see a list of resources and see next week's Beacon for a continuation of the April Water Conservation Month Series and tips on how you can save money and water.)*