

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Hart Springs Restoration



**The restoration of Hart Springs completed fall 2015.**

Live Oak, FL, November 24, 2015 — Hart Springs a 2<sup>nd</sup> magnitude spring is flowing stronger thanks to a successful restoration project undertaken by Gilchrist County and the Suwannee River Water Management District (District). This collaborative partnership between the County and District, along with help from volunteers, has improved the health of the spring and the experience for visitors.

Over time sediment and portions of the retaining walls washed into the spring vents which significantly blocked the spring flow. In recent years Gilchrist County replaced the deteriorating retaining walls, constructed controlled access points to the spring and spring run and stabilized erosion issues around the springs. The County's partnership with the District removed significant amounts of debris blocking the vents resulting in improved spring flow.

Noah Valenstein, District executive director said, "The restoration of Hart Springs accomplished three significant tasks. This project reinvigorates the local economy, provides a source of recreation and protects a priceless natural resource."

"The joint efforts of Gilchrist County and Suwannee River Water Management working together for a common goal has helped preserve the future of Hart Springs," Said Bobby Crosby, Jr., Gilchrist County Administrator. "Thanks to the Suwannee River Water Management District, senators and representatives of Florida for seeing the importance of the natural springs and providing funding for preservation of the springs."

Collective actions have restored the spring, and removed hazards, improved water quality and quantity as well as the safety of the spring for all to enjoy.

The District contributed \$76,700 towards the restoration project and the County provided in-kind services towards the Hart Springs restoration.

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