

# Understanding Minimum Levels

Minimum levels protect lakes, wetlands and aquifers. Minimum flows protect springs, spring runs, streams and rivers. These “MFLs,” required by Florida law, set limits on how much water can be withdrawn from various water resources to prevent significant harm.

## How are MFLs determined?

- examination of meteorological, hydrological, and ecological data
- historical range of flows, drought and flood conditions
- public and state agency review before adoption by District Governing Board

## What do MFLs impact?

- decisions affecting permit applications and requests for water withdrawals
- declarations of water shortages
- assessments of water supply sources
- development of recovery or prevention strategies when a water body does not or will not meet an established MFL

MFLs are designed to limit impacts from water withdrawals for use by agriculture, public utilities and industry. Other programs address restoration efforts and water quality.



# Maintaining Our Lakes and Wetlands

Florida aims to find the balance between meeting regional water supply needs while maintaining the healthy natural systems essential to Florida's economy and quality of life. Each water body needs a certain amount of water to properly function and retain its intrinsic economic, ecological and aesthetic value.



Lake is high enough to utilize docks

Adequate depths for skiing, boating and other recreation

Sufficient inundation to maintain cypress and hardwood swamps, and their thick organic soils.

Sufficient saturation to sustain hydric soils, such as peat or muck

Water levels to support aquatic plants such as duck potato, pickerel weed, and water lilies.



**SUWANNEE RIVER**  
WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT