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CONTACT: Office of Communications  
Suwannee River Water Management District  
386-362-1001 or 800-226-1066 (FL)

## **SRWMD approves tentative millage rate and budget**

LIVE OAK, FL, July 16, 2010 – The Suwannee River Water Management District (District) Governing Board on July 13 approved a tentative budget of \$61.6 million for Fiscal Year 2010-11. The board also approved a proposed ad valorem millage of 0.4934.

The proposed millage rate represents an increase of 0.0535 of a mill over the current fiscal year. Those who own property with a taxable value of \$100,000 will see an increase of \$5.35 in property taxes paid to the District. The owner's tax bill to the District will be \$49.34. Owners of property with a taxable value of \$150,000 will have an increase of \$8.02 for a District tax bill of \$74.01.

If the proposed millage rate is adopted, this will be the first time in more than 20 years the District has raised the tax rate.

The tentative millage rate increase is earmarked to fund the District's Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs) Program. This will offset funding reductions from the state that have paid for the establishment of MFLs in the past.

MFLs are benchmarks that show the District how much water is available for issuing water use permits. MFLs will help protect our springs, rivers, and groundwater resources while ensuring there is an adequate water supply for all users.

"We are facing critical times concerning our water supply," said District Executive Director David Still. "MFLs have shown us that groundwater levels are diminishing in some areas within our District. Without the adoption of MFLs District-wide, other areas remain vulnerable."

Taxes paid to the District also fund numerous public services, including protection of rivers and springs, water monitoring programs, water resource development and water supply planning.

The District will hold two budget hearings – Sept. 14 and Sept. 28. Both meetings will take place at 5:30 p.m. at the District’s headquarters in Live Oak at the corner of U.S. 90 and CR 49. The final budget and millage rate will be adopted at the Sept. 28 hearing. The public is invited and encouraged to attend. For more information call 800-226-1066 (FL only) or 386-362-1001.

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