

2025 Suwannee River Water Management District Land Management Plan



SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

The District Land Management Plan (DLMP) establishes the general policies that will guide the management of all fee title lands held by the District; the Board approves the DLMP before it is implemented. This updated management plan is consistent with previous plans in that it was developed using Florida Statutes, Directives and previous Board policy as guidelines. It provides land management objectives and goals to District Land Acquisition and Management Department staff to adequately manage lands titled to the Board.

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Introduction

The Florida Water Resources Act of 1972 (WRA) (Chapter 373, F.S.) granted Florida's five water management districts broad authority and responsibility. The Suwannee River Water Management District (District) is one of five regional water management districts in Florida. The responsibilities of all five districts encompass four broad categories: water supply (including water allocation and conservation), water quality, flood protection, and natural systems management.

The five water management districts, established by the State Legislature and recognized in the State Constitution, are set up largely on hydrologic boundaries. The water management districts are funded in part by ad valorem taxes which emanate from a constitutional amendment passed by Floridians in 1976. Each water management district is governed by its governing board, whose members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. There is also general oversight at the state level by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). The Governing Board (Board) of the District is comprised of nine members.

The District Land Management Plan (DLMP) establishes the program and operational policies that guide the management of all fee title or less than fee lands held by the District. It provides land management goals and objectives for managing District-owned lands. The most recent DLMP was adopted by the Board in 2018. This 2025 DLMP revision was developed using Florida Statutes, Program Directives, and Board policy as guidelines.

Through land acquisition the District strives to acquire and manage District lands to preserve, protect or improve exceptional water resource values and related natural systems. Strategies to achieve this program initiative are as follows:

- Manage District lands to achieve the highest natural resource value possible, leading the region in quality of public lands, while still generating sustainable revenue streams from the properties.
- Maximize the water resource values of District-owned property by identifying opportunities to restore hydrologic function on current properties; and by analyzing the ability of all future acquisitions to contribute to the District's missions to protect and enhance the area's water quantity and quality, aquifer recharge, and flood protection.
- Surplus District lands that are not needed for conservation or water resource development projects, investing revenue back into the District's natural systems programs.
- Identify and foster partnerships to assist in acquiring and managing lands that preserve and restore Outstanding Florida Springs, priority water bodies, natural systems, and provide flood protection.
- Develop land conservation programs that assist in preserving the unique connections between the area's economy and natural resources, while achieving the District's core missions.

Lands titled to the District are managed under a multiple-use policy that emphasizes water resource protection, maintenance and restoration of the land's natural state and condition, and provisions for public access and recreation. Planning land management activities and uses at the ownership level allow for efficient and effective implementation of Governing Board priorities and achievement of goals.

Location and Description

The DLMP is broad in scope because it directs land management across natural communities at the ownership level. The District owns land and property rights within 13 North-Central Florida counties. The District’s jurisdictional boundary is approximately 7,640 square miles across all or part of 15 North-Central Florida counties (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Suwannee River Water Management District



The District holds both fee-simple title and conservation easements and other less-than-fee interests. The majority of these lands are located along rivers, springs, headwaters, and water recharge areas which provide the following natural resource benefits:

- Preserving floodplain areas to maintain storage capacity, attenuate floodwaters, and prevent inappropriate development;
- Preventing groundwater contamination by maintaining low intensity land uses within the floodplain and high recharge areas;
- Preserving and/or restoring spring areas to improve surface and ground water;
- Preserving and/or restoring natural plant communities throughout the area to support or enhance populations of game, non-game, and federal/state listed plant and animal species;
- Preserving aquatic buffer zones from high impact uses that have a high potential to degrade surface water quality; and
- Supporting water resource development initiatives.

District Land Management Plan - Goals

Within the District Land Management Plan (DLMP), several goals have been developed to help guide land management decisions, provide the resource benefits listed above, and provide opportunities for public access and recreation. Goals within the DLMP include the following five categories:

- **Natural Resource Protection** – Protect, enhance or restore natural and cultural resources on lands owned by the District.
- **Road and Hydrologic Infrastructure** – Maintain road and hydrologic infrastructure on District lands to a level that successfully facilitates all resource protection and public use objectives.
- **Public Use** – Provide the public with high quality, natural resource compatible, recreation and education opportunities.
- **Stakeholder Engagement** – Coordinate with both public and private stakeholders in the management of District lands.
- **Fiscal Responsibility** – Protect resources and manage District lands in an efficient manner within limits of the District’s annual budget.

Within each of these goal categories, a set of corresponding objectives and metrics has been developed to help ensure a level of excellence is achieved in all land management activities. These parameters are beneficial in many ways and can be used to help track and quantify the implementation of land management activities, provide a format for reporting information to stakeholders, and create a mechanism for using adaptive management as needed.

Because many of these parameters are quantifiable, they can also be used as assessment tools in conjunction with statutorily required Land Management Review Team (LMRT) evaluations (section 373.591, F.S.). In this process, participants have the ability to evaluate and score the District on whether land management activities were deficient, meeting, or exceeding the goals listed in the DLMP. The LMRT process also scores the District on determining whether actions comply with state statutes (section 259.036, F.S.).

Listed below are the five land management goal categories along with corresponding objectives and metrics.

I – NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION

Goal - Protect, enhance or restore natural and cultural resources on lands owned by the District.

This DLMP goal has been divided into six separate resource protection areas with their own specific objectives and metrics. These areas include water resources, forest resources, vegetation management, invasive/exotic plant management, rare species resources, and cultural resources. Resource management is most effective when the objectives of all these resource protection areas are addressed in an integrated manner. This is due to the complex and interrelated functions each resource and process has on the others. Managing a spatial scale that incorporates the similarities and interconnectedness of the resources is a holistic and effective approach to land management. When resources are managed correctly following the objectives listed below, visitors will also have a more enjoyable experience, take away a better opinion of District management activities, and obtain a firsthand understanding of the District's message regarding natural resource stewardship.

Listed below are the six resource protection areas and their corresponding objectives and metrics that can be used to help meet this DLMP goal.

1) Water Resources

The objectives listed below will help protect water resources such as river floodplains, wetlands, springs, lakes, etc. District lands have been acquired for a variety of purposes including protecting the 10-year and 100-year floodplains, mitigating flood impacts, flood abatement, water resource protection, spring-shed protection, water recharge protection, and local and regional water resource projects. Lands acquired to protect floodplains also highlight the District's emphasis on non-structural floodplain management wherever practical.

Objectives - Water Resources

- Minimize structural floodplain management on District-managed lands.
- Prevent water resource degradation when conducting all land management activities by implementing Florida's Silvicultural Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- Design water resource projects or install/maintain water control structures that protect or enhance water resources.

Metrics - Water Resources

- Number of acres purchased that provide protection for water resources.
- Number of projects completed to reduce erosion near springs, rivers, or waterways.
- Provide compliance report results of bi-annual BMP audits conducted on District lands by the Florida Forest Service.

2) Forest Resources

Forested lands serve as habitat for many game, non-game, and federal/state listed plant and animal species. When managed properly, these lands also benefit water resources by facilitating more efficient water infiltration and reducing evapotranspiration and surface water runoff. This process in turn benefits aquifers and allows for a slower release of water into streams, rivers, and downstream coastal estuaries. The District strives to maintain healthy, sustainable forests. Sustainable forest management means that current practices and the attainment of short-term goals should not compromise the capacity of the forests to deliver ecosystem services and economic products in the future. In its simplest terms, this is

accomplished by limiting harvesting so that the rate of removal does not exceed the rate of growth.

The District follows the concepts of ecological forestry in order to retain and/or enhance natural community heterogeneity and complexity; therefore, silvicultural operations will incorporate natural stand development and disturbance patterns.

The District will maintain a Forest Management Standard which guides staff in planning, implementing, and overseeing silvicultural operations such as timber harvests, site preparation, and reforestation. All silvicultural operations are intended to improve or maintain the DFC and forest health of historically pine dominated natural communities. Professional forestry consultants will be utilized as needed to meet forest management goals.

To help meet natural community and forest protection objectives listed in the Forest Management Standard, one of the keystone silvicultural operations implemented on District lands is pine timber harvests. These operations are used to improve pine forest health and vigor while generating revenue. Pine stands with offsite species, overly stocked stands, growth stagnation, or older stands with large volumes of timber are potentially unhealthy and may be prone to insect or disease infestations. At a minimum, the District will implement timber harvests to protect the pine forest assets and the public investment. Commercial harvests will be conducted to provide a reliable source of revenue generation while considering timber markets and forest industry insight when making harvest decisions. Timber security measures and suitable performance bonds will be implemented on all timber harvests to protect public investment and potential financial returns.

Objectives - Forest Resources

- Manage forest resources to work towards or meet Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) natural community descriptions.
- Protect water quality and certain wildlife habitat values by utilizing BMPs when conducting forest management work.
- Manage forest resources for stand or landscape level heterogeneity to help protect against catastrophic loss from environmental factors such as insects, disease, storms and wildfire
- Manage forest resources for stand or landscape level heterogeneity to attain a multi-aged and vertically diverse forests, including retaining dominant and/or old growth trees.
- Ensure that commercial timber harvests provide financial returns that are methodical and reflective of District revenue needs.
- Maintain accurate and current forest resource inventory data based on designated inventory schedules.
- Reforest using techniques that maximize seedling survival and minimize damage to other natural resources.

Metrics - Forest Resources

- Acres meeting the forest management standard guidelines to work towards or maintain the FNAI natural community descriptions.
- Acre ratios of young, intermediate, mature and old growth timber stands.
- Acres with multi-aged and vertically diverse forests, including retaining dominant and/or old growth trees.
- 5-year trend line of operational revenue generated from timber harvests.
- Percentage of acres inventoried that meet the forest management standards.

- Number of acres reforested that meet seedling survival guidelines.

3) Vegetation Management

The District's primary vegetation management objective is to maintain structurally diverse and naturally functioning natural plant communities that provide habitat for a wide variety of game, non-game and federal/state listed plant/animal species while also protecting forest resources from the damaging effects of wildfire. To help meet this objective, the District uses natural plant community Desired Future Condition (DFC) parameters to help guide corresponding vegetation/forest management work. These guidelines consist of measurable parameters that can be incorporated into the planning, implementation, and reporting processes when conducting natural resource management and restoration work.

Natural community Desired Future Condition guidelines are included in the Vegetation Management standard and include the main communities where the District conducts the majority of its natural resource management work. The DFC guidelines outline natural community structure, dominant plant species assemblages, and disturbance intervals for listed natural communities. The information included in these DFCs is based on region and is documented in published literature and historical references

Although prescribed fire is the most important land management tool, both ecologically and economically, used to help maintain and restore natural communities to designated DFC parameters, alternative tools like groundcover restoration and mechanical/chemical treatments can also be used to help maintain or move these communities closer to listed DFC vegetation objectives. These alternative tools are often used in areas where groundcover is deficient, smoke management issues or heavy fuel loading is a concern, or in any area where timber resources need protection from potential damage caused by the use of prescribed fire.

Objectives – Vegetation Management

- Implement management practices that promote structurally diverse, naturally functioning plant communities as designated in DFC guidelines to the extent practicable.
- Restore/maintain designated Disturbance Intervals for natural plant communities following DFC guidelines.
- Enhance native ground cover resources with local stock where needed to help achieve ecosystem functionality.

Metrics – Vegetation Management

- Number of acres that are within their designated DFC Disturbance Interval.
- Number of acres where prescribed fire is being successfully used as the main tool to maintain natural communities.
- Number of acres where mechanical or chemical vegetation management work is being conducted to help maintain or move natural communities closer to DFC parameters.
- Number of acres where groundcover restoration work was conducted.

4) Invasive Exotic Plant Management

There are a wide variety of non-native plant species that inhabit the natural communities of Florida. Sustainable management of natural communities requires District staff to take an active role in controlling and preventing the spread of these species. The District maintains an Invasive Exotic Plant Management Standard that provides details on how this process is implemented. The District's management strategy is a multi-faceted approach that directly affects invasive exotic plant infestations and provides mechanisms to prevent their persistence and spread to

surrounding areas. The District actively monitors and controls all category I and II invasive exotic vegetation as published by the Florida Invasive Species Council (FISC). To further protect District-managed lands from the potential spread of exotic invasive vegetation staff utilizes a “Come Clean, Leave Clean” standard for all contractual work. Contractors working on behalf of the District may unknowingly import noxious weed material from outside areas or take weed material off District lands and infest other locales.

Objectives – Invasive/Exotic Management

- Annually monitor and treat active infestations on District lands
- Conduct invasive plant surveys on newly acquired lands or District lands that currently contain no records.
- Maintain or update Invasive Plant GIS database and make it available to District staff.
- Metrics – Invasive/Exotic Management
- Percent of active infestations monitored and treated each fiscal year.
- Number of new invasive plant surveys conducted.
- Document if the Invasive Plant GIS database has been maintained or updated and made available to District staff.

5) Rare Species Resources

District lands provide habitat to numerous native plant and animal life, some of which are classified as rare species. The District relies on the following lists to classify a species as rare:

- Listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as federally threatened or endangered; or
- Listed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) as threatened or endangered; or
- Listed by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry as threatened, endangered, or commercially exploited.

One of the main directives of the District’s resource protection goals is to restore, enhance, or maintain natural communities to the highest degree possible using the best information and tools available. Through the implementation of this process, high quality habitat will also be created for a wide variety of plant and animal species including rare species. While activities that improve natural communities may increase the abundance of rare species, activities that degrade these communities, either in the short or long term, could potentially lead to a decline or loss of a rare species.

To prevent the degradation of natural communities and potential negative impacts on rare species populations, it is important to know both the location and management guidelines associated with these communities and species populations. By using the District’s Rare Species Standard, Florida’s Forestry Wildlife Best Management Practices for State Imperiled Species, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s and other scientific land management guidelines, the District intends to maintain or improve rare species habitat on lands designated as restoration areas. On restoration areas, the following objectives will ensure the District is protecting or improving rare species resources.

Objectives - Rare Species Resources

- Delineate natural plant communities on newly acquired properties, or on properties where natural community data is incomplete or in question.
- Monitor existing rare plant and animal populations on District restoration areas,

- Conduct rare plant and animal surveys on District restoration areas to gather population and location data that can be used to guide land management practices.
- Maintain/Update natural community and rare species GIS layer files for staff use to help guide management practices.
- Research scientific improvements to land management activities and techniques intended to improve rare species habitat.

Metrics - Rare Species Resources

- Number of acres of natural plant communities delineated.
- Number of known rare plant and animal occurrences monitored, number observed, population trends, etc.
- Number of acres or populations where rare species surveys were conducted.
- Document that the Rare Species GIS layer has been maintained/updated to provide staff with the most current rare species locations and status.
- Ensure District staff has the most current information on how to best manage specific rare species found on District lands.

6) Cultural Resources

Artifacts and remnants of past human inhabitants are part of the land's natural history. The District's goal is to protect and minimize damage to these important resources during all land management activities.

Objectives - Cultural Resources

- Monitor the condition of all cultural and historical resources sites on District-managed lands that are classified as significant sites by the Florida Department of State, Division of Historic Resources.
- Document location of new cultural and historical resources on District-managed lands and share this information with the Florida Department of State, Division of Historic Resources.
- Monitor known cultural artifact looting sites and document any new sites that are discovered. This work will be done to determine the size/extent of these impacted areas and provide law enforcement with location information and activity status.
- Provide District staff with the GIS layer file from the Florida Department of State, Division of Historic Resources that identifies cultural/historical sites located on District lands to help guide management practices. Maintain and update this information on a regular basis.

Metrics – Cultural Resources

- Number of significant cultural/historical sites monitored.
- Number of new cultural/historical sites located on District lands. A number of these sites were reported to the Florida Department of State, Division of Historic Resources.
- Number of known cultural resource looting sites monitored, number of new sites located, number of sites reported to law enforcement.
- Document that GIS layer file identifying the location of cultural/historical resources on District lands has been maintained or updated and made available to District staff, based on credible project need, to help guide management activities.

II – ROAD AND HYDROLOGIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal - Maintain road and hydrologic infrastructure on District lands to a level that successfully facilitates all resource protection and public use objectives.

The maintenance of road and hydrological facilities on District lands is an integral part of meeting many of the District's resource protection and public use objectives. Both the District's Road/Hydrological Maintenance Standard and Road Mowing Standard provide detailed information regarding the implementation of this work. These standards contain information regarding road classification, road use, road/hydrological installation and maintenance guidelines, and road mowing guidelines. Roads will be inspected and maintained to a level compatible with their listed use classification, and hydrologic facilities will be inspected and maintained to ensure their continued functionality.

District roads are designated into categories which determine development and maintenance standards. The three main road categories are public, secondary, and administrative. Roads classified as public or secondary are open to the public. Most road/hydrological maintenance work will occur on the three main road categories listed above. However, under some circumstances, work may occur on some roads classified as abandoned. This may happen on a one-time, temporary basis if designated by District staff. This could include circumstances such as the need to access timber resources, facilitate the use of prescribed fire, or conduct hydrological maintenance work.

Guidelines for the installation and maintenance of hydrologic facilities are incorporated into the Road/Hydrological Maintenance Standard because most District-managed hydrologic facilities are located along District roads. Additionally, roads have a high potential to degrade water quality unless properly built or maintained. District staff shall maintain roads and hydrologic facilities at a level compatible with their designated use.

Listed below are Road and Hydrologic Infrastructure objectives and metrics that can be implemented to help meet this DLMP goal.

Objectives – Road/Hydrological Maintenance

- Inspect all public, secondary, and administrative roads on a periodic basis to determine if their condition is compatible with listed road standards.
- Conduct road maintenance work as needed to ensure road conditions are maintained at a level compatible with listed road standards.
- Inspect all hydrologic facilities on a periodic basis to determine if they are functioning correctly and meet all listed standards.
- Repair or replace hydrologic facilities as needed to ensure their continued functionality and compatibility with the listed standards.
- Mow all public, secondary and administrative road corridors two times each fiscal year or as directed by District staff.
- Daylight all public, secondary and administrative road/ditch-edge areas on a 5-year rotational basis or as directed by District staff.

Metrics – Road/Hydrological Maintenance

- Miles of public, secondary, and administrative roads inspected and maintained.
- Number of hydrologic facilities inspected and maintained/replaced.
- Miles of public, secondary and administrative road corridors mowed.
- Miles of public, secondary and administrative road/ditch-edge areas daylight.
- Number of tracts with access.

III - PUBLIC USE

Goal - Provide the public with high quality, natural resources compatible, recreation and education opportunities.

The vast majority of District lands are open to the public. Planning for public use on these lands includes evaluating aspects such as: sensitivity of the site to potential natural resource degradation, the proximity of similar recreational opportunities, the time and financial requirements to provide the use, and public demand for the site.

The District maintains a set of individual Public Use Standards that provide detailed information on many parts of the public use program. These standards provide information on aspects such as public and recreational use classifications, the Special Use Authorization (SUA) program, tract closure procedures, recreation development standards, recreation site maintenance standards, public outreach procedures, camping, recreation facilities, and construction and maintenance procedures. When implemented, these standards are designed to provide a safe, aesthetically pleasing, outdoor environment for public use while minimizing potential negative impacts to the surrounding natural resources. Although the District's goal is to provide the public with high quality, compatible resource-based opportunities, it is not intended to match the level of access or facilities offered at state or county parks.

Objectives – Public Use

- Inspect all public use and recreational facilities on a periodic basis to determine if their condition is compatible with their listed public and recreational use classification and standard.
- Conduct maintenance/repair work as needed to maintain all public use and recreational facilities to a level compatible with their listed use and standard.
- Provide Special Use Authorizations (SUA) for compatible public use activities.
- Follow Governing Board Directives 25-0003 and 24-0004 for exclusive use requests.
- Provide hunting and fishing opportunities on District lands.
- Coordinate with law enforcement agencies to enforce Florida statutes and administrative rules on District-managed lands.
- During emergency situations staff will assist persons in danger and communicate response with appropriate agencies.

Metrics – Public Use

- Number of public use and recreation facilities inspected including type/location.
- Number of public use and recreation facilities maintained and/or repaired including type/location.
- Number of SUA's issued.
- Number and type of exclusive use requests initiated.
- Number of tracts/acreages currently open to hunting; number tracts/acreage of new hunting opportunities developed.
- Number of enhanced patrol hours recorded.

IV – STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Goal - Coordinate with both public and private stakeholders in the management of District lands.

Communication is a vital tool needed to help meet this DLMP goal and provide the public with awareness of all the unique natural systems and water resources within the District's

jurisdiction. To encourage and promote the use of District lands, all applicable modes of communication, including but not limited to print materials, press releases, outreach activities, social media, website, and other electronic applications should be used to help achieve this goal.

At the end of each fiscal year, the District generates an Annual Land Management Report that provides the Governing Board, stakeholders, and members of the public with information regarding land management activities that were accomplished that year. The report summarizes objectives of the approved DLMP and generally follows its organizational format addressing key topics that provide information as to whether District lands are being managed for the purposes for which they were acquired and in accordance with stated land management goals and objectives. It provides details of the five DLMP goal areas including Resource Protection, Road and Hydrological Infrastructure, Public Use, Communication, and Fiscal Responsibility.

The District is also required by statute to conduct Land Management Review Team (LMRT) evaluations (section 373.591, F.S.). In this process, participants have the ability to score the District on whether land management activities were deficient, meeting, or exceeding the goals and objectives listed in the DLMP. The LMRT process also scores the District on determining whether actions comply with state statutes (section 259.036, F.S.).

The LMRT is composed of a diverse group of professionals and citizens who volunteer their time to comment on the District's land management activities and procedures. The group meets at least annually, at which time District staff provides an overview of management objectives and recent activities. LMRT participants are asked to provide an assessment as to whether District lands are being managed for the purposes for which they were acquired and whether District staff is following established management plans as represented on the properties that they inspect. Participants' assessments and any additional comments are then summarized and presented to the District Governing Board for its consideration and response of any potential corrective actions.

Objectives – Stakeholder Engagement

- Use multiple forms of media to communicate with stakeholders to provide information about District land management goals, objectives, and accomplishments.
- Provide opportunities for stakeholders to evaluate, critique, and score the District's overall land management process.

Metrics – Stakeholder Engagement

- Number of press releases regarding District lands.
- Number of social media posts with statistics.
- Number of presentations regarding District lands.
- Number of alerts/notices regarding land management activities.
- Document scores submitted by stakeholders in conjunction with the statutorily required Land Management Review Team process.

V – FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Goal - Protect resources and manage District lands in an efficient manner within the limits of the District's annual budget.

Fiscal responsibility requires staff to manage and protect resources on District lands in an efficient and effective manner within the limits of an annual budget. Land management

expenses are met from a variety of funding sources. However, the District's annual budget is primarily funded through a combination of District revenues and state appropriations.

Revenues derived from District lands are the result of operations conducted to achieve land management objectives. Any funds generated will be used to offset land management costs or for capital improvements on District lands. The District does not charge user fees for general recreation on fee-simple lands under District management. Other agencies may impose fees if the District leases the tract to that agency, such as the Florida Park Service. Hunting and fishing licenses administered by FWC are required for those activities on tracts where hunting and fishing are an approved recreational use.

When the District acquires private property, the land becomes public property, and the parcel is taken off the county tax roll. To minimize the impact this removal would have on county government tax revenues, Florida Statutes has established a payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) system for lands acquired by water management districts. If sufficient funds are available, the District is required to make PILT payments to qualifying counties and local governments located in eligible counties.

Objectives – Fiscal Responsibility

- Minimize structural operational management approaches wherever practical.
- Use the most cost effective and experienced firms to complete land management activities
- Coordinates with other land management agencies and organizations to complete land management activities at reduced cost or no cost to the District.
- Locate and obtain grants to help fund land management projects on District-managed lands.
- Implement a Surplus Lands Program which disposes or conveys lands that are no longer needed for resource protection and redirects these funds to higher value, water-resource lands.
- Make PILT payments to qualifying counties or local governments as directed by Florida statute.

Metrics – Fiscal Responsibility

- Report examples of where management costs were minimized.
- Document examples of where the District coordinated with other agencies or organizations to reduce costs.
- Document the number of grants obtained to help fund land management projects.
- Document the amount of acreage disposed of through the District's Surplus Land Program.
- Document the amount of PILT payments made to counties or local governments.
- Document the opportunities pursued for revenue generation.
- Identify opportunities for continuous improvement with fiscal responsibilities.

Appendix A: Desired Future Conditions – Operational Natural Communities

Natural Community Description	Shrubs (% cover)	Graminoids (% cover)	Herb/Woody (% cover)	Burn Regime	Hydroperiod
Maritime Hammock (MR): Closed-canopy evergreen forests on stabilized coastal dunes. These communities are xeric to mesic, with excessively drained soils, but litter layer and closed canopy maintain higher relative humidity.	Dense or open *Yaupon, tough bull, wax myrtle, saw palmetto	Sparse to absent	Sparse to absent	Infrequent to None	None
Mesic Flatwoods (MF): Open canopy forest of widely spaced trees with little or no understory but a dense ground cover of herbs and shrubs. Occur on relatively flat, moderately to poorly drained terrain. Soils are typically acidic sands overlying an organic hardpan. Without fire it will succeed into hardwood dominated forests whose closed canopy can eliminate the ground cover. Associated with and often grade into WF, DP, or SCF.	30-50% *Runner oak, saw palmetto, gallberry, huckleberry, fetterbush, wax myrtle, staggerbush, blueberry	10-25% *Wiregrass, yellow-eyed grass, cutthroat grass	10-25% *Gopher apple, tar flower, bog buttons, blackroot, flase foxglove, white-topped aster	2-8 yrs	Saturated and/or briefly inundated during wet season.
Mesic Hammock (MH): An open or closed canopy forest dominated by live oak with cabbage palms found as a co-dominant. The mid- and ground story are not especially diverse. Soils are typically dry and are a combination of sand and organic matter. This community is found as isolated pockets or along the fringes of water bodies and mesic habitats. Can be found in somewhat xeric to almost hydric soils. Associated with and grades into MH, PH, HH, FM.	Dense or Open *saw palmetto, beautyberry, holly, gallberry, sparkleberry, plum, persimmon, blueberry, laurelcherry, yaupon, wax myrtle	Sparse to patchy	Sparse to patchy	Infrequent to None	Infrequent
Sandhill (SA): A forest of widely spaced trees with a sparse understory of deciduous oaks and a fairly dense ground cover of grasses and herbs on rolling hills of sand. Occur on hilltops and slopes of gently rolling hills. Soils are composed of deep, marine-deposited, yellowish sands that are well-drained and relatively sterile. Associated with and grade into SC, SCF, MF, UPF, or XH.	10-30% *Sparkelberry, runner oak, persimmon, winged sumac	25-50% *Wiregrass, pinewoods dropseed, Indian grass	10-30% *Buckwheat, queen's delight, yellow foxglove, bracken fern, partridge pea, gopher apple, golden-aster	2-5 yrs	None
Scrub (SC): Closed or open canopy of sand pine with dense clumps or vast thickets of scrub oaks and other shrubs dominating the understory and very sparse ground cover with open patches of barren sand. Occurs on sand ridges along former shorelines of well washed brilliant white sands. Associated with and grade into SA, SCF, and XH.	30-75% *Myrtle oak, Chapman's oak, saw palmetto, rosemary, rusty lyonia, scrub palmetto, staggerbush	0-10% *Various Poaceae species	0-25% *Beak rush, milk peas, ground lichens	10-50 yrs *however, scrub is a fire-maintained community. Fire regime based on scrub type or other ecological needs	None
Scrubby Flatwoods (SCF): Open canopy forest of widely scattered trees with a sparse shrubby understory and numerous areas of barren white sand. Occupy broad transitions or ecotones between SC and MF. Associated with and often grade into MF, SC, DP, or SA.	30-75% *Chapman's oak, myrtle oak, saw palmetto, staggerbush, rusty lyonia, huckleberry, runner oak	5-25% *Wiregrass and various other Poaceae species	5-25% *Ground blueberry, gopher apple, tar flower, golden-aster, lichens, goldenrod, pinweeds	8-25 yrs	None
Upland Hardwood Forest (UHF): Well-developed, closed canopy forests of upland hardwoods on rolling hills. UHF generally lacks the northern species and is generally more common in northern and central peninsular Florida. UHF is more common in the northern panhandle of Florida. Occur on rolling hills that often have limestone or phosphatic rock near the surface and occasionally as outcrops. Soils	10-50% *Bumelia, sparkleberry, Hercules' club, beautyberry	5-15% *Various Poaceae species	10-30%	25-100 yrs Fire will rarely carry through although could be indirectly	None

Natural Community Description	Shrubs (% cover)	Graminoids (% cover)	Herb/Woody (% cover)	Burn Regime	Hydroperiod
are generally sandy-clays or clayey sands with substantial organic and clacareous components. Associated with and grade into UPF, SA, or XH and are considered climax communities.			*Partridgeberry, greenbriars, trillium, beech drops, passionflower, bedstraw, silverbess, caric sedges	exposed on the edges from adjacent communities.	
Upland Mixed Woodland (UMW): Open to partially closed canopy over an open understory of mixed herbs and scattered shrubs. Occurs on loamy soils on drier sites than UHF and is often found in the ecotone between upland hardwood forest and frequently burned SA or UP where fires burn into the hardwood forest edge. Its dominant hardwood species are more resistant to fire than are those in the UHF and less resistant than those of the sandhills. Associated with and grade into UP, UHF, or SA and are considered climax communities.	*Dogwood, sparkleberry, rusty blackhaw, sassafras, hawthorns	*Various Poaceae species	*New Jersey tea, poison ivy, poison oak, Buckwheat, twinflower	2-10 yrs Allow fire from adjacent communities burn into UMW but will likely not completely carry through	None
Upland Pine (UP): Widely spaced trees with few understory shrubs and a dense ground cover of grasses and herbs. Soils are sand with variable amounts of clays that help retain soil moisture creating mesic conditions. Associated with and grades into UMF/UHF. It may be confused with SA but can be differentiated by soil characteristics and plant species composition.	20-50% *Runner oak, gallberry, huckleberry, dangleberry, twinflower, winged sumac, blueberry	25-50% *Wiregrass, Indian grass, broomsedge, and various other Poaceae species	25-50% *Goldenrod, partridge pea, dog fennel, snakeroot, golden-aster, yellow jessamine, bracken fern, greenbriar	3-5 yrs	None
Wet Flatwoods (WF): Open canopy of scattered trees with thick shrubby understory and sparse ground cover or sparse understory and dense ground cover of hydrophytic herbs and shrubs. Occur on relatively flat, poorly drained terrain. Cabbage palms will occur on neutral soils underlain by marl, while pines occur on acidic soils. Associated with and grade into HH, MF, WP, or BS.	25-50% *Wax myrtle, gallberry, titi, saw palmetto	10-30% *Bluestem and various other species	10-30% *Spikerush, beakrush, sedges, deer tongue, gay feather, greenbriar, pitcher plants	3-10 yrs	30-90 days
Xeric Hammock (XH): Occur on xeric soils dominated by oaks and often considered to be an advanced successional stage of scrub, scrubby flatwoods, or sandhill resulting from the long-term exclusion of fire. Associated with and grade into SC, SA, UMF, SF.	10-50% *Staggerbush, saw palmetto, sparkleberry, beautyberry, Chapman's oak	0-10% *Various Poaceae species	0-20% *Various forbs and vines	20-100 yrs	None