



SUWANNEE RIVER

WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Seven Springs Permit

Updated December 09, 2019

Current Status

- District staff sent a third request for additional information (RAI) on November 25, 2019. The additional information is requested by February 25, 2020 (90 days).
- Currently, the permit is not scheduled to go before the board. A staff recommendation will go before the board once the permit review is complete.

Overview

- Seven Springs Water applied for a 5-year renewal of water use permit 2-041-218202-3 on March 18, 2019, requesting no change to the 1.1520 million gallons per day (mgd) groundwater allocation. The application for the renewal is currently incomplete and still under review.
- For the application to be deemed complete, the applicant must document the demand for the requested allocation, provide a water budget for the bottling facility, and submit an analysis showing the requested allocation will not harm the water resources of the area.
- Permits must meet the “three-prong” test:
 - Reasonable and beneficial use
 - Must not interfere with existing legal use
 - Must be consistent with the public interest
- Seven Springs initially received the permit in 1995 for five years with a groundwater allocation of 1.1520 mgd. A permit modification was requested in 1999 to add a 10 inch well with no increase in groundwater allocation and extend the permit duration to 20 years.
- Seven Springs sells their water directly to Nestle Waters North America to be bottled.
- District staff reviews the application for completeness and whether the proposed use meets the conditions for issuance set forth in rule 40B-2.301, Florida Administrative Code and the established Minimum Flows and Minimum Water Levels for the Lower Santa Fe Basin in Chapter 62-42, Florida Administrative Code.
- The current MFL rule and recovery plan strategy will be applicable to the Seven Springs Permit application.
- Governing board has the authority to accept or deny the staff recommendation.
- The applicant is requesting a 5-year permit duration as is required by the current Lower Santa Fe River/ Ichetucknee River MFL Recovery Strategy, which limits a renewal applicant with a water allocation that demonstrates a potential impact to the MFL waterbody to a 5-year duration unless the impacts can be eliminated or offset.
- The public can submit comments or receive notifications of the permit renewal by visiting the District’s e-permitting website. Residents and visitors can also attend the Governing Board meetings and participate in the public comment section of the meeting.
- District has received over 15,000 comments regarding the permit.

Lower Santa Fe Ichetucknee Minimum Flow and Minimum Water Level

- The re-evaluation of the Lower Santa Fe Ichetucknee (LSFI) minimum flow minimum water level (MFL) and associated priority springs (including OFS) is nearing completion.
- In instances where water use in one area can impact another area, the MFL is considered a “cross boundary MFL” and can be set by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.
- The LSFI MFL is a cross boundary MFL and set by FDEP. Although set by FDEP, each district provides data and technical expertise to determine the MFL.
- Once the MFL is determined, a status will be assessed. If the system (river or associated springs) is determined to be in prevention or recovery a plan must be created to recover the water needed to reach the MFL.
- The MFL technical document is set to be released for peer review in early December, at which time the document will be available to the public as well.
- A Notice of Rule Development for a rule addressing the re-evaluated MFL will be issued by FDEP. Additionally, FDEP will notice any public meetings/workshops associated with the MFL.
- The District will host a workshop regarding the MFL at the December governing board meeting on December 10, 2019.