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## GOALS AND POLICIES

### PRIORITY 1:

#### *Protection of the Region's Surface Water Resources.*

#### **GOAL 1: Protect the surface water resources within the Region.**

##### *Indicators:*

- *Increase in the number of water management plans adopted and implemented.*
- *Improved quality of the Region's surface waters.*

**Policy 1.1:** Prevent the introduction of hazardous toxins and chemicals into the Region's surface water system by business, industrial, and private interests.

**Policy 1.2:** Prohibit development activities that structurally impair or reduce the flow of the Region's rivers, creeks, branches, streams and standing water such as ponds and lakes.

**Policy 1.3:** Coordinate local and regional planning Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program plans and studies and "Water Management Plans" to maintain surface water quality and drinking water quality and quantity.

**Policy 1.4:** Protect all surface waters from pollution and degradation, with particular emphasis on SWIM priority waterbodies, Class I and II waters, Outstanding Florida Waters, and State Aquatic Preserves.

**Policy 1.5:** Protect wetlands from pollution and unnatural degradation due to development.

**Policy 1.6:** Restrict the channelization, diversion, and damming of natural riverine systems to prevent loss of habitat and changes in water velocity and volume that would adversely impact downstream habitats.

**Policy 1.7:** Require buffer zones around water bodies, landscaping techniques that minimize erosion, and proper maintenance of onsite domestic waste treatment facilities so as to protect water quality.

**Policy 1.8:** Develop area-wide stormwater management plans to protect the surface water resources.

**Policy 1.9** Implement intergovernmental coordination and interlocal agreements for cost-sharing in the planning and construction of new area-wide wastewater treatment and solid waste facilities, where feasible.

**Policy 1.10:** Utilize agricultural and silviculture Best Management Practices (BMP) to minimize runoff and protect surface systems.

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**Policy 1.11:** Implement stormwater utilities, special districts and other alternative programs to finance infrastructure needed to manage stormwater in accordance with state and federal regulations.

**Policy 1.12:** Around Deer Point Lake and areas that discharge into DPL, restrict use of individual household septic tank systems or other alternative individual household domestic waste treatment systems in areas where potable water supplies have demonstrated contamination or can be expected to be contaminated by this waste disposal method.

**Policy 1.13:** Adopt and implement standards for agricultural activities and other development in areas around Deer Point Lake to protect water quality of the lake.

**Policy 1.14:** Prohibit all construction, except for piers, docks, and landscaping, within 100 feet of the mean high water mark of Econfina Creek.

**PRIORITY 2:**

***Protection of the Region's Ground Water Resources.***

**GOAL 1:** Manage the Regional water supply to provide for all recognized needs on a sustainable basis and protect water recharge areas and existing and future well sites.

***Indicators:***

- *Change in number of regional water authorities.*
- *Change in the use of reclaimed water.*
- *Change in groundwater supply identified by the Northwest Florida Water Management District.*
- *Change in the number of stormwater management systems.*

**Policy 1.1:** Continue the consumptive use permitting program.

**Policy 1.2:** Establish regional authorities pursuant to Chapter 373.1962 F.S., and have interlocal agreements to develop and coordinate water supply.

**Policy 1.3:** Allow the use of reclaimed wastewater for irrigation.

**Policy 1.4:** Identify and protect water recharge areas and existing and future well sites through comprehensive land use planning and land development regulations.

**Policy 1.5:** Investigate the development and use of alternative sources of water in areas where currently used sources are steadily declining and develop and implement strategies for use of alternative water supplies.

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**Policy 1.6:** Protect groundwater supply identified in groundwater basin resource inventories prepared by the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

**Policy 1.7:** Prohibit or require mitigation for all developments that have the potential to cause or increase salt water intrusion, interfere with legal water users or damage important ecosystems.

**Policy 1.8:** Develop and annually update a twenty-five year growth and capital improvement plan for all public water supply systems.

**Policy 1.9:** Prevent all development activities that would structurally impair the function of high volume recharge areas, or reduce the availability and flow of good quality water to those recharge areas.

**Policy 1.10:** Adopt and enforce conservation ordinances that call for the installation of water conservation devices in new structures and retrofitting in renovated structures.

**Policy 1.11:** In water resource caution areas, public water systems should provide incentives such as reduced connection fees and service charges for customers who use effective water and/or wastewater saving devices, and disincentives such as escalating water rates for those who do not.

**Policy 1.12:** Coordinate with the Northwest Florida Water Management District to adopt and implement a regional water shortage plan.

**Policy 1.13:** Expand the present regional water quantity monitoring network to better develop detailed estimates for water supply and demands.

**Policy 1.14:** Expand public awareness regarding the need for management of regional water resources.

**Policy 1.15:** Prohibit the mining of water, where use exceeds historical recharge.

**Policy 1.16:** Prohibit any activities that would introduce wastes or other by-products into the groundwater system via recharge areas.

**Policy 1.17:** Continue to disseminate information on proper storage, use and disposal practices, for users of hazardous substances.

**Policy 1.18:** Coordinate with HRS public county health units to ensure required upgrading of defective septic tank systems or tie-in to central sewer to meet state regulations.

**Policy 1.19:** Amend septic tank zoning and permitting procedures to prohibit the construction of septic tanks in 100-year floodplains.

**Policy 1.20:** Develop criteria for the provision of future landfill sites in the comprehensive planning process.

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**Policy 1.21:** Where conditions are inadequate to support alternative wastewater disposal systems require that an adequate sewer system is in place or will be in place by the time a subdivision is ready for occupancy before subdivision permitting occurs.

**Policy 1.22:** Identify areas served by septic tanks and develop plans to provide sewer service within a twenty year period.

**Policy 1.23:** Expand public awareness regarding the need for the protection of regional water resources from contamination.

**Policy 1.24:** Coordinate land use and infrastructure development with watershed management plans.

**PRIORITY 3:**

***Protection of Coastal and Marine Resources.***

**GOAL 1:** Protect beach and dune systems from the undesirable affects of development.

***Indicators:***

- *Change in the number of nonwater-dependent uses in the coastal area.*
- *Change in the number of dune walkovers on the coast.*

**Policy 1.1:** Require site design standards that preserve the integrity and stability of beach and dune systems.

**Policy 1.2:** Land use plans for shoreline areas shall give priority to water-dependent uses over other uses.

**Policy 1.3:** Regulate development in unique areas of the coast and areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive estuarine systems so that the effects of development can be adequately buffered and mitigated.

**Policy 1.4:** Provide incentives for the construction of dune walkovers to provide beach access.

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**GOAL 2: By the year 2000, 50% of eroded beaches and dunes shall be restored and stabilized to reestablish a functioning dune system.**

***Indicators:***

- *Increase in amount of dune restoration activity.*

**Policy 2.1:** Prohibit development that accelerates or has the potential to accelerate erosion of shoreline.

**Policy 2.2:** Target most severely eroded beach and dune areas first and assist landowners to take measures to restore and stabilize beach and dune systems.

**Policy 2.3:** Local governments should prevent any development of structures that are (1) seaward of the Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL); or (2) within the Coastal High Hazard Area that are not able to meet the most current code for being able to withstand hurricane wind and storm surge damage.

**Policy 2.4:** Require building owners to plant native beach plants and use wind breaks to help establish the plants in areas where erosion of the beaches and/or dunes is occurring on the property.

**Policy 2.5:** Restore the primary dune system where it is damaged, and discourage activities that would destabilize the system.

**Policy 2.6:** Publicly owned land should be maintained for the establishment and/or maintenance of intact dune systems.

**Policy 2.7:** Replace damaged or deteriorating seawalls with a sloped, vegetated revetment system.

**Policy 2.8:** Local governments shall only permit the construction of shore hardening structures as a last resort for residential and non-urban waterfronts. All permitted structures shall be consistent with the Department of Environmental Protection Coastal Armoring Policy.

**GOAL 3: Protect coastal land and water systems from inappropriate development and human activities determined to be intrusive or damaging to natural resources and/or water quality.**

***Indicators:***

- *Change in development patterns in coastal areas.*
- *Change in regulations adopted to protect coastal land and water systems.*

**Policy 3.1:** Pursuant to Chapter 376.071, Florida Statutes, marine operators of regulated vessels should develop and adopt oil spill contingency plans and have an onboard spill officer responsible for training and spill response.

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**Policy 3.2:** All ports, waterfront industries, oil companies, and county civil defense departments should participate in the Florida Spillage Control Association, Inc.

**Policy 3.3:** All coastal communities should establish siting procedures for marina and other water dependent land uses that prohibit development in sensitive estuarine areas, require mitigation of unavoidable habitat losses at a ratio of 4:1 and limit discharge of waste materials.

**Policy 3.4:** Coastal communities should adopt and implement regulations that limit stormwater and wastewater discharges into estuaries.

**Policy 3.5:** Coastal communities shall avoid public expenditures in coastal high hazard areas that would accommodate higher density and shall relocate public facilities to locations outside the coastal high hazard area whenever possible.

**Policy 3.6:** Activities that would degrade or eliminate any type of approved shellfish harvesting area classification shall be prohibited.

**GOAL 4: Protect and manage marine fisheries habitat.**

**Indicators:**

- *Change in the amount of seagrass beds in the Region.*

**Policy 4.1:** Identify sensitive estuarine environments and develop and implement management techniques that will preserve the functioning of these systems.

**Policy 4.2:** Require all developments adjacent to marine, aquatic, and estuarine areas to include structural and/or nonstructural facilities for treatment of stormwater and domestic waste that are sufficient to eliminate any chance of degradation of these areas.

**GOAL 5: Include specific measures to protect marine resources when issuing offshore drilling permits**

**Indicators:**

- *Change in permitting requirements for offshore drilling.*

**Policy 5.1:** Review of off-shore exploration permits shall continue to include review of impacts upon marine resources.

**Policy 5.2:** Exploration and development of mineral resources shall be prohibited in unique marine, aquatic, and estuarine areas including waters adjacent to or designated as Outstanding Florida Waters and Aquatic Preserves.

**GOAL 6: By the year 2000, restrict all development in all coastal high hazard areas in order to provide adequate evacuation of coastal residents in the event of major storms or hurricanes.**

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**Indicators**

- *Change in evacuation clearance time in the coastal high hazard area.*

**Policy 6.1:** Limit development in coastal areas to support the population that can be safely evacuated in times of emergency.

**Policy 6.2:** Coastal local governments should limit future development in coastal high hazard areas.

**Policy 6.3:** The coastal high hazard area shall be defined by 9J5-.003. When areas have no Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL), this shall be substituted with the Coastal Construction Setback Line.

**Policy 6.4:** Redevelopment of coastal high hazard areas (seaward of the Coastal Construction Control Line) shall be consistent with the Beach and Shore Preservation Act (ss. 161.011-161.212).

**Policy 6.5:** Local governments shall limit public expenditures for future development or redevelopment in coastal high hazard areas.

**Policy 6.6:** Local governments should prohibit development permits to developments that do not have flood insurance or are in an area that is not protected by the National Flood Insurance Program.

**Policy 6.7:** Emergency management evacuation procedures should include assistance for all handicapped or elderly residents of coastal areas who notify the authorities that they require assistance.

**PRIORITY 4:**

***Protection of Natural Systems.***

**GOAL 1: Continue to protect the Region's functioning natural systems.**

**Indicators:**

- *Change in amount of wetlands in the Region.*
- *Change in amount of land acquired or designated for conservation.*

**Policy 1.1:** Protect surface water quality and hydrologic and ecologic functions of regional estuarine systems by restricting development in these areas to compatible land uses.

**Policy 1.2:** Require land development applications to establish buffer zones around estuarine systems, wetlands, and unique uplands that protect these areas from degradation by adjacent land uses, where feasible.

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**Policy 1.3:** Local governments should strengthen existing land development regulations to protect and conserve the natural functions of wetlands, unique uplands, flood plains, bayous and other important wildlife habitats during development and provide incentives for the restoration of areas where degradation has occurred.

**Policy 1.4:** Require land development applications to include detailed inventories of the natural systems present, assessments of impacts of the proposed development, and method to be used to protect the natural functions of the systems.

**Policy 1.5:** Direct land acquisition efforts toward the protection of important habitats, wildlife, and natural systems.

**Policy 1.6:** Local governments shall protect the biota, hydrology, aesthetics, and other natural features of state park lands and lands acquired through development impact mitigation by requiring use of buffers, leash laws, deed restrictions, covenants, easements, transfer of development rights, and/or regulation of adjacent development.

**Policy 1.7:** Use mitigation bank funds for resource restoration or management projects on public lands acquired for resource protection purposes.

**Policy 1.8:** Local governments should utilize the Department of Environmental Protection greenline maps to review development plans and permit applications that may affect state park lands.

**PRIORITY 5:**

***Protection of Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Species.***

**GOAL 1: Protect native species in the Region that are on the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission list of endangered, threatened, and rare species of Florida.**

***Indicators:***

- *Change in the number of endangered, threatened and rare species.*

**Policy 1.1:** Identify habitats of threatened or endangered plant and animal species throughout the Region.

**Policy 1.2:** Local land development regulations should mitigate development activities that adversely affect threatened or endangered species.

**Policy 1.3:** Adopt landscaping ordinances that use native plants, including threatened or endangered species and use landscaping to provide habitat for wildlife native to the area.

**Policy 1.4:** Prohibit the use and introduction into the environment of non-native species of plants and animals on publicly owned lands.



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**Policy 1.5:** Provide education concerning Florida wildlife and ecology in elementary, middle and high school curricula.

**Policy 1.6:** All local government comprehensive plans, land use and development plans, and land development review processes must address the protection and enhancement of rare and fragile plant and animal communities native to the Region, particularly those species that are endangered, threatened, or of special concern.

**Policy 1.7:** Local governments should coordinate the protection and enhancement of rare and endangered species and species of special concern critical habitats through the adoption of interlocal agreements.

**Policy 1.8:** Use agricultural and existing silvicultural best management practices that provide habitat for native species of flora and fauna.

**Policy 1.9** Provide incentives for the protection of sensitive natural areas within developments.

**Policy 1.10:** Provide incentives for landowners to keep unique land in its natural condition.

**Policy 1.11:** Require disturbed lands, particularly sites no longer used for sand, gravel, or clay mines, to be reclaimed and revegetated with native vegetation.

**Policy 1.12:** Local land development regulations should prohibit destruction of threatened and endangered species and species of special concern and critical habitat for these species.

**Policy 1.13:** All levels of government should establish programs for the acquisition through purchase and the maintenance of land containing habitats of threatened and endangered species and species of special concern.

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PRIORITY 6:

*Land Management and Use.*

**GOAL 1:** By the year 2000, public and private lands will be managed and land resources used according to comprehensive, economic and environmental principles, especially critical areas including, but not limited to coastal lands, wetlands, flood plains, margins of estuarine nursery areas, and locally important agricultural lands.

*Indicators:*

- *Number of wildlife corridors established.*
- *Change in land development regulations to manage the use of environmentally sensitive land.*

**Policy 1.1:** Purchase for public ownership scenic vistas, natural corridors, environmentally sensitive lands, land adjacent to rivers, functioning wetlands, inholdings within or adjacent to state forests and natural wildlife corridors.

**Policy 1.2:** Conserve and protect the natural functions of soils, wildlife habitat, floral habitat and wetlands.

**Policy 1.3:** Provide for the protection of wildlife natural systems in the development approval process.

**Policy 1.4:** Protect state or federally owned ecologically sensitive lands from land uses that would impair or destroy the important habitats and plant and animal species occurring on those lands.

**Policy 1.5:** Give priority to water dependent industries and other land uses over non-water dependent developments proposed for the coasts.

**Policy 1.6:** Implement "best management practices" techniques on lands used for agricultural and silvicultural production that integrate good wildlife management practices with economical agricultural and timber management practices.

**Policy 1.7:** Prepare and implement multiple-use management plans for publicly owned lands.

**Policy 1.8:** Land uses on developed lands adjacent to publicly held conservation areas should be compatible with wildlife management practices.

**Policy 1.9:** Local government comprehensive plans should include policies for the conservation and preservation of natural functions of soils, wildlife habitat and wetlands.

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PRIORITY 7:

***Parks and Recreation.***

**GOAL 1: Protect environmentally, historically, and culturally significant land.**

***Indicators:***

- *Change in amount of land designated for passive recreation, conservation or historical preservation.*

**Policy 1.1:** The development review process should evaluate the impact of the proposed development on environmentally, historically, or culturally significant land.

**Policy 1.2:** State and local governments should landscape parks under their jurisdiction using native plants and employing every energy conservation method practicable for the particular site.

**Policy 1.3:** State and regional agencies and local governments should identify unique historical, cultural, geological, and ecological and environmentally sensitive sites for protection and use as recreational facilities.

**Policy 1.4:** Support and participate in the conversion of abandoned railways to recreation facilities throughout the "Rails to Trails" program.

**Policy 1.5:** State agencies shall increase the outdoor opportunities, the number of recreational users visits and compatible, non-consumptive public uses in state forests.

**Policy 1.6:** All levels of government should minimize the direct land purchase cost by developing parks as multi-purpose governmental expenditures.

**Policy 1.7:** Acquisition of outdoor recreation lands, particularly shoreline areas and seashores, should be given priority over development of new facilities.

**Policy 1.8:** Expand efforts to provide recreational opportunities to urban areas, including the development of activity-based parks by local governments.

**Policy 1.9:** User access should be identified when proposing and developing park sites by all levels of government.

**Policy 1.10:** Coordinate public and private resources to meet recreation demands through joint ventures, tax incentives, and other cooperative relationships.