

E. AQUIFER RECHARGE SUB-ELEMENT

GOAL I-5: PROTECT AND MAINTAIN THE FUNCTIONS OF NATURAL GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREAS WITHIN THE COUNTY

Objective I-5.1: Aquifer Recharge Protection: Walton County shall ensure that all new development and redevelopment maintains aquifer water quality and water quantity to ensure enough recharge to sustain projected groundwater requirements for natural systems and future populations of the county.

Policy I-5.1.1: Walton County, through its Land Development Code (LDC) provisions, shall protect groundwater recharge water quantity and water quality by regulating land uses, stormwater treatment and management throughout the county.

Policy I-5.1.2: The County LDC shall include regulations to protect open spaces so that rainfall may reach the aquifer through infiltration to minimize the transport of contaminants to the aquifer.

Policy I-5.1.3: The County establishes a 500-foot radius wellhead protection zone around all public potable water wells, as defined in Rule 62-521.200, F.A.C., to ensure protection of the wellheads and zones of influence from potential contamination. The first 200-foot radius is established as a zone of exclusion where no development or redevelopment will be permitted unless approved by the utility provider. Within the remainder of the wellhead protection area, land uses will be regulated to prohibit the use, sale, storage or generation of hazardous material or waste on the Florida Substance List. Other polluting materials as well as wastewater treatment plants, percolation ponds, mines, and the excavation of waterways or drainage facilities that intersect the water table will also be prohibited. The County will prohibit development or redevelopment that would not maintain the quality and quantity of the supply of ground and surface water contributing to the recharge areas.

Policy I-5.1.4: The County shall continue to work with the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) to delineate and field verify existing areas of high groundwater contribution to surface waters and high recharge areas for the Floridan Aquifer System within Walton County. Land uses that discharge substances that could contaminate or degrade the ground and surface waters in these areas shall be prohibited.

Policy I-5.1.5: Industries and other businesses that use, sell, trade or generate hazardous waste or materials shall be sited, designed, operated and monitored to ensure that no hazardous materials or waste degrade groundwater or surface waters. Each business of this type shall prepare a spill containment, cleanup and reporting plan as required by state or federal law. Reporting must be undertaken immediately to appropriate county and state officials. Furthermore, such businesses shall not be located in floodprone areas, in areas of high or moderate aquifer recharge potential, areas within 1,000 feet of a karst spring, or within 500 feet of an existing or planned potable water well as identified in a public supply system's master plan. Areas of "high or moderate aquifer recharge potential" shall be defined as those areas that are shown as the Floridan Aquifer High Recharge Area on the West Florida Regional Planning Council maps of Regionally Significant Resources (1996).

Policy I-5.1.6: No new development within the wellhead protection area shall be approved unless the water quality and water quantity of the supply of groundwater and surface water inflow to the zone of

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influence are maintained. The level of treatment for stormwater discharge from an area where herbicides and pesticides have been applied, or petroleum hydrocarbons or sanitary sewer effluent exist or have existed, must ensure that the water quality of the zone of influence for wellhead and recharge areas are not degraded.

~~Policy I-5.1.7: Septic tanks shall not be permitted within the wellhead protection area or within 500 feet of a karst spring unless the septic tank system is an advanced treatment system such as a performance based septic system.~~

~~Policy I-5.1.8: Walton County shall regulate solid waste activities to minimize the possibility of contamination to the Floridan aquifer.~~

~~Policy I-5.1.9: Prior to issuance of a development order for an activity or structure that involves the use or storage of hazardous materials, the County shall require the applicant to provide evidence of permitting by all regulatory agencies having jurisdiction.~~

~~Policy I-5.1.10: Walton County shall prohibit inappropriate development within high recharge areas as identified such as heavy industrial and intensive commercial uses like mining and solid waste disposal facilities. Walton County will direct incompatible land uses away from high recharge areas through the plan amendment review and approval process.~~

~~Policy I-5.1.11: Walton County shall use Best Management Practices developed by Northwest Florida Water Management District and performance standards to maximize open space, limit impervious surfaces and turf grass areas, promote protection of natural vegetation, promote the use of pervious parking areas, and treat stormwater to protect water quality.~~

~~Objective I-5.2: Walton County shall establish a water quality protection strategy for the springsheds.~~

~~Policy I-5.2.1: Walton County shall develop protection strategy for springsheds through the following actions:~~

~~(A)~~

~~Coordinate with the Northwest Florida Water Management District to develop county design criteria for stormwater management practices that minimize the leaching or discharge of nutrients or contaminants within the springsheds. The County will use karst area requirements set forth in Protecting Florida's Springs: Land Use Planning Strategies and Best Management Practices (November, 2002);~~

~~(B)~~

~~Seek funding for the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods program to inform the public about proper lawn and landscaped area fertilization and irrigation;~~

~~(C)~~

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~~Incorporate the principles of the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods program into local landscaping ordinances;~~

~~(D)~~

~~Coordinate water conservation programs with public, and private non-profit water suppliers;~~

~~(E)~~

~~Inform the public about the proper operation and maintenance of septic tanks. Assist the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) local septic management program to assure that these systems are regularly inspected, pumped out, and brought up to current standards;~~

~~(F)~~

~~Promote the local stewardship “adopt a spring” program; other incentive and volunteer springshed awareness and protection programs; and~~

~~(G)~~

~~Pursue grant funding from regional, state, and federal agencies for the acquisition, restoration, protection, and management of springsheds.~~

~~GOAL I-6: WALTON COUNTY SHALL DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A WATER SUPPLY FACILITIES WORK PLAN; COORDINATE WITH THE NORTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT, AND OTHER LOCAL, REGIONAL, STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EFFECTIVE TRADITIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE WATER SUPPLY PROGRAMS, INCLUDING AQUIFER RECHARGE PROJECTS; AND IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EFFECTIVE LINKAGES BETWEEN WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT IN THE COUNTY.~~

~~Objective I-6.1: Walton County shall develop and maintain a Work Plan for a minimum of a five-year planning period addressing traditional and alternative water supply sources, facilities, and issues necessary to serve existing and future development within Walton County.~~

~~Policy I-6.1.1: The Work Plan shall identify traditional and alternative water supply projects that the County may use to meet existing and projected water demands. These alternative water supply projects will be selected from the Water Management District’s Regional Water Supply Plan or otherwise proposed by the County, public and private non-profit utility companies in cooperation with NWFWMD.~~

~~Objective I-6.2: When updating or maintaining the Work Plan, Walton County shall utilize any sources of water and treated wastewater to recharge the aquifers in an effort to help offset the effects of existing and future water demands.~~

~~Policy I-6.2.1: The County will partner with the Northwest Florida Water Management District, public and non-profit private utilities, in developing efficient, cost-effective, and technically feasible water~~

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sources that will meet future demands without causing adverse impacts to water quality, wetlands, aquatic systems, or the environment.

~~Policy I-6.2.2: The County, the public and nonprofit private providers will continue to participate in regional educational forums regarding development of alternative water sources to support the growing permanent and seasonal populations.~~