

**A RESOLUTION OF TAYLOR COUNTY, FLORIDA,
OPPOSING THE INTERBASIN TRANSFER OF WATER
AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTRAL
REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR WATER RESOURCES
SUPPLY DEVELOPMENT**

WHEREAS, the Florida Senate Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation has recently released an interim report containing finds and recommendations to the Governor, the President of the Florida Senate, and the Speaker of the Florida House regarding the water needs of the State in interim report 2010 -114 entitled, Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, Water Resources; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Senate Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation interim report recommends that the “local sources first” policy currently in state statute be reviewed and that a central regulatory commission that oversees Florida’s water resources and supply development be created; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 186.502(1)(4), Florida Statutes, specifically states that regional planning councils are recognized as Florida’s only multipurpose regional entity that is in a position to plan for and coordinate intergovernmental solutions to growth-related problems on greater-than-local issues; and

WHEREAS, the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan is consistent with the State Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan maps identifies Natural Resources of Regional Significance coastal and marine resources including but not limited to the Big Bend Salt Marsh and the Big Bend Seagrass Beds; groundwater resources included but not limited to the Floridan Aquifer and areas of high recharge potential to the Floridan Aquifer; private and public lands held for conservation and resource-based recreation purposes; water bodies identified in Suwannee River Water Management District Surface Water Improvement Management program; surface water systems including but not limited to coastal freshwater wetlands, upland freshwater wetlands, lakes, the Suwannee River, and springs (hereafter referred to as “Natural Resources of Regional Significance”); and

WHEREAS, Regional Policy 2.4.3 of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan states, “Conserve the region’s Natural Resources of Regional Significance as economic as well as natural resource assets;” and

WHEREAS, Regional Goal 4.2 of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan states, “Maintain an adequate supply of high-quality groundwater to meet the needs of north central Florida residents, in recognition of its importance to the continued growth and development of the region;” and

WHEREAS, Regional Policy 4.2.1 of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan states, “Ensure that state policy is adopted which would require water shortage areas to establish

other alternatives, such as desalinization, prior to the interbasin transfer of water to serve their needs;" and

WHEREAS, Regional Policy 4.2.3. of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan states, "Continue to increase the region's knowledge of the relationship between ground and surface waters, the surface water needs of native species and natural systems, including minimum flows necessary to the survival of native species and natural systems," and

WHEREAS, Regional Goal 4.6 of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan states, "Maintain the quantity and quality of the region's surface water systems in recognition of their importance to the continued growth and development of the region;" and

WHEREAS, Florida Statutes requires water management districts to develop water supply plans which identify water needs for the next 20 years; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, requires local governments to include in their comprehensive plan potable water elements a work plan, covering at least a 10-year planning period, for building water supply facilities that are identified in the element as necessary to serve existing and new development, and for which the local government is responsible; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Council reviews and comments on local government comprehensive plans and plan amendments regarding potential adverse impacts to Natural Resources of Regional Significance and recommends modifications to protect said resources from adverse impacts as per Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, to further the implementation of the goals and policies of the regional plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Council reviews and provides recommendations to local governments with regards to potential adverse impacts to Natural Resources of Regional Significance as a result of Developments of Regional Impact and recommends modifications to protect said resources from adverse impacts as per Chapter 380.06 Florida Statutes, to further the implementation of the goals and policies of the regional plan; and

WHEREAS, the minimum flows and levels of all water-dependent Natural Resources of Regional Significance have not yet been determined; and

WHEREAS, the water consumption needs of North Central Florida for the next 100 years have not yet been forecasted; and

WHEREAS, changes to the existing "local sources first" state policy and the interbasin transfer of water is inconsistent with the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan as adopted by the Planning Council, specifically Policy 2.4.3, Goal 4.2, Policy 4.2.1, Policy 4.2.3 and Goal 4.6; and

WHEREAS, any discussion of regional water transfer is premature until minimum flows and levels are established for all water-dependent Natural Resources of Regional Significance to assure the continued economic growth and development of the region for the next 100 years without significant adverse impacts to said water-dependent Natural Resources of Regional Significance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Taylor County Board of County Commissioners, that:

- 1) The Taylor County Board of County Commissioners recognizes that the interbasin transfer of water may cause permanent, irreparable harm to Natural Resources of Regional Significance.
- 2) Water conservation, re-use, and construction of desalination plants under the current water supply planning process are a better alternative than the interbasin transfer of water.
- 3) The process of establishing minimum flows and levels for all water-dependent Natural Resource of Regional Significance combined with clearer legislative direction to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection with regards to its responsibility in ensuring an adequate water supply statewide is a better alternative than the establishment of a central regulatory commission to oversee water resources supply and development.
- 4) The existing state policy of "local sources first" combined with the protection of minimum flows and levels for natural resource protection and future economic growth and economic development as the most appropriate approach to statewide water supply planning and consumption.
- 5) The Board of County Commissioners supports the fundamental principles of Florida Water Law which require a showing that a proposed use of water is a reasonable, beneficial use, will not interfere with an existing legal use of water, and is consistent with the public interest.
- 6) The Board directs the County Administrator to distribute copies of this Resolution to the Governor for Florida, the President of the Florida Senate, the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, our local Legislative Delegation, the Executive Director of the Suwannee River Water Management District, the Executive Director of the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, and to other interested citizens and organizations.

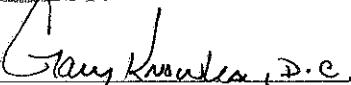
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution is placed in the minutes of this Board and that a copy is forwarded to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

PASSED in regular session this 5th day of April 2010.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
TAYLOR COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY: 
MARK WIGGINS, CHAIR

Attest:

for ANNIE MAE MURPHY, CLERK