

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR MEETING

SCHOOL BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

372 WEST DUVAL STREET

March 05, 2026 at 9:30 AM

ADDITIONS

Opportunity for public comment shall be in accordance with Rule 4.704. Each person who wishes to address the Commission regarding the Consent Agenda or any Discussion and Action Agenda Item shall complete one comment card for each item and submit the card or cards to County staff in the front of the meeting room. Cards shall be submitted before the meeting is called to order.

Rules of decorum and rules for public participation are attached to the agenda handouts.

(1) Water First Florida (p.1)



**COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM**

The Board of County Commissioners meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month in the Columbia County School Board Administrative Complex Auditorium, 372 West Duval Street, Lake City, Florida 32055. The first meeting of every month is at 9:30AM while the second meeting of every month takes place at 5:30PM. All agenda items are due in the Board's office one week prior to the meeting date.

Today's Date: 3/4/2026 Meeting Date: 3/5/2026

Department: Commissioner District 3

1. Nature and purpose of agenda item:

Water First Florida

2. Recommended Motion/Action:

Approve

3. Fiscal impact on current budget.

This item has no effect on the current budget.

District No. 1 - Kevin Parnell
District No. 2 - Rocky Ford
District No. 3 - Robby Hollingsworth
District No. 4 - Everett Phillips
District No. 5 - Tim Murphy



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS • COLUMBIA COUNTY

March 5, 2026

Suwannee River Water Management District
9225 CR 49
Live Oak, Florida 32060

Subject: Opposition to the Water First North Florida Project

To Whom It May Concern,

The Columbia County Board of County Commissioners formally opposes the proposed Water First North Florida project. We believe the project poses unacceptable risks to the long-term welfare of our county and region. Our key concerns are as follows:

1. **Environmental Impact**

Our springs and rivers are already under stress. Additional withdrawals or impacts could cause irreversible damage. We need clarity on which contaminants are monitored and what treatment wetlands cannot remove.

2. **Public Health and Water Security**

Residents have expressed uncertainty about the safety of purified reclaimed drinking water. Protecting the reliability of local wells and public water systems remains essential.

3. **Economic Consequences**

Our economy depends on healthy natural resources, including eco-tourism, agriculture, and recreation. Any harm to spring systems could impose significant financial costs. We request clear evaluation of these risks.

4. **Lack of Local Benefit**

Current documentation shows limited benefit to our community while placing disproportionate risk on Columbia County. We cannot support a project that may compromise local resources without clear, direct value to our residents.

For these reasons, the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners opposes the Water First North Florida project in its current form. We urge reviewing agencies and decision-makers to pursue sustainable alternatives that protect the long-term health of our water resources.

Sincerely,

Tim Murphy, Chair

On behalf of the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners