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Water Management District Issues Water Shortage Warning

Havana, Florida—The Northwest Florida Water Management District Governing Board issued a water shortage warning effective June 5, 2007. This applies to all water users from western Jefferson to Escambia counties, urging them to voluntarily reduce water use.

Fifteen months of below normal rainfall have resulted in low surface water levels throughout the District with a number of monitored sites at or near record daily low flows. These include the Ochlockonee, Chipola and Shoal rivers and the Choctawhatchee River at Caryville. Ground water levels also continue to decline and moderate to extreme drought conditions continue across the northwest.

“Due to continuing rainfall deficits, we are urging everyone to voluntarily reduce water use and maximize conservation,” said Douglas Barr, District Executive Director. “Also, because meteorological forecasts predict below normal rainfall for the next several months, it is likely that localized upconing of

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Add 1—Water Management District Issues Water Shortage Warning

salt water may occur in some wells. Sufficient water resources may not be available to meet all demands, especially at peak times.”

Residents and businesses are urged to follow these guidelines:

- Limit landscape irrigation to no more than two days per week; water only during the low evaporation hours of 4 p.m. to 10 a.m.

- Golf courses are encouraged to limit hours of irrigation.

- Water based recreation should be reduced if it requires pumping, diverting or otherwise using natural water supply for recreation—such as filling duck ponds.

- Aesthetic uses of water that are primarily decorative (such as fountains), should be voluntarily discontinued.

These voluntary restrictions do not exempt water users from complying with mandatory restrictions placed on public supply utility customers due to capacity problems with water supply facilities.

The Water Shortage Warning and a weekly drought report can be found on the District’s web site, www.nwfwmd.state.fl.us/. Also, the “Publications” link leads to several water conservation brochures: *3 R’s of Water*, *50 Ways to Save Water*, *An Indoor Water Audit*, *Watering Wisely*, *Retro-Fit-It*, *Xeriscape Guide* and *Waterwise: Florida Landscapes*.

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