

WATER POLICY



Florida Spring Initiative

What the General Public Should Know

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The Florida Spring Initiative (FSI) is a comprehensive and coordinated program of the state of Florida established by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to protect more than 700 freshwater springs in the state. In the Initiative, it provides funding for research, monitoring, education, and landowner assistance to improve spring water quality and flow.

Important Items

Definition of a spring: A spring is a point where groundwater flows out of the ground, and is thus where the aquifer surface meets the surface of the earth. With more than 900 freshwater springs, Florida has one of the largest concentrations of springs on Earth. Most of the springs are located in northern and central Florida.

Importance of springs: Florida has one of the largest concentrations of freshwater springs in the world. Florida springs have provided immeasurable natural, recreational and economic benefits for residents and visitors and also provide habitats to wildlife.

Threats to springs: The health of springs depends largely on the activities in the spring basin and at the spring itself. The people closest to the spring can have the biggest impact on a spring's health. Three major threats to springs are listed by the FDEP: Lawn care, human consumption, and recreational activities.

Sources of pollutants: Pollutants impacting water quality include pathogens, nutrients, sediment, and metals. Currently, the major pollutants found in Florida are nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus, through leaching and runoff.

Best Management Practices: BMPs are the most effective, practical means of preventing or reducing pollution from nonpoint sources.

Water quality monitoring: Since water quality decrease can be influenced by seasonal climate and human activities, water quality should be monitored continuously to ensure water use safety.

For more information visit www.piecenter.com/pep.

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