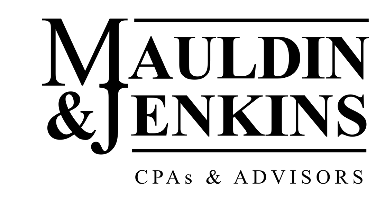
**Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District**

**Performance Review – Draft Report**



Prepared for:

**The Florida Legislature’s**

**Office of Program Policy Analysis**

**and Government Accountability**

**(**

**OPPAGA**

**)**

June 17, 2024

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# Key Takeaways

* Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District’s Board of Supervisors is highly active, typically meeting twice per month.
* Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District monitors local water levels and water quality; conducts trials of low-cost conservation techniques; and performs conservation education, outreach, and advocacy activities.
* Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District does not have any staff and is funded entirely by an annual allocation from the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners.
* Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District’s operations are not currently guided by a strategic plan or other goals and objectives, and the District does not evaluate its performance using performance measures and standards.

# I. Background

Pursuant to s. [189.0695(3)(b),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0100-0199/0189/Sections/0189.0695.html) *Florida Statutes*, Mauldin & Jenkins (“M&J”) was engaged by the Florida Legislature’s Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to conduct performance reviews of the State’s 49 independent soil and water conservation districts. This report details the results of M&J’s performance review of Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District (“Bradford SWCD” or “District”), conducted with a review period of October 1, 2020, through April 30, 2024.

(The document appears to use two different Review Periods October 1, 2020, through April 30, 2024 and October 1, 2020, through December 31, 2024. The term review period is also used without dates.)

## I.A: District Description

#### Purpose

Chapter [582](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0500-0599/0582/0582ContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2023&Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%20582) of the *Florida Statutes* concerns soil and water conservation within the State of Florida. The chapter establishes the processes for creation, dissolution, and change of boundaries of districts; the qualifications, election, tenure, and mandatory meetings of District Supervisors; the oversight powers and duties of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (“FDACS”); and the powers and purpose of the districts. The District’s statutory purpose, per s. [582.02,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.02.html) *Florida Statutes*, is “to provide assistance, guidance, and education to landowners, land occupiers, the agricultural industry, and the general public in implementing land and water resource protection practices. The Legislature intends for soil and water conservation districts to work in conjunction with federal, state, and local agencies in all matters that implement the provisions of [ch. [582,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0500-0599/0582/0582ContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2023&Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%20582) *Florida Statutes*].”

The District’s website states that “the mission of the Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide the administration of programs to conserve soil and improve water quality and quantity on private lands in Bradford County.” Does the BSWCD want to suggest this be changed?

#### Service Area

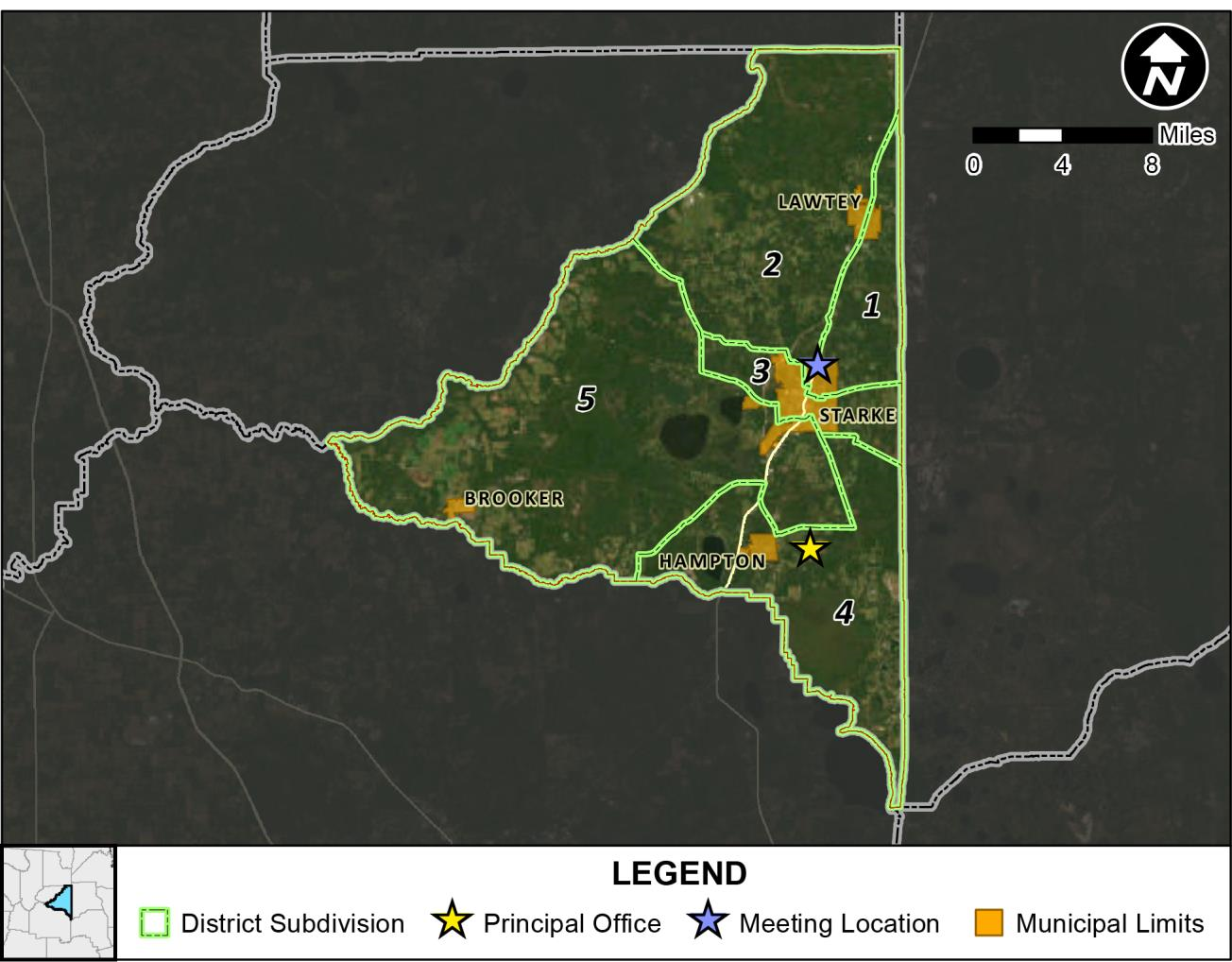
When the District was established in 1950, the service area included the entirety of Bradford County and the current borders and territory remain the same. The District’s service area includes unincorporated Bradford County; the County’s three cities and one town;[[1]](#footnote-1) and part or all of Graham Conservation Area, New River Conversation Area, and Santa Fe Swamp Conservation Area. The District is bounded on the north by Baker County, east by Clay County, south by Alachua County, and west by Union County. The total area within the District is 300 square miles, with 294 square miles of land and six square miles of water.

The District’s registered address is located at 14167 Southwest 101st Avenue, Starke, Florida 32091. The District meets at 2266 North Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida 3201 – the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension office in Bradford County.

Figure 1 is a map of the District’s service area, based on the map incorporated by reference in Rule [5M20.002(3)(a)3.,](https://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?title=Soil%20and%20Water%20Conservation&ID=5M-20.002) *Florida Administrative Code*, showing the District’s boundaries, electoral subdivisions, municipalities within the service area, the District’s principal office, and the District’s meeting location.

The star for the principal office is not correct in the following map

**Figure 1: Map of Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District**



*(Source: Bradford County GIS, Florida Commerce District Profile)*

#### Population

Based on the Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research population estimates, the population within the District’s service area was 27,389 as of April 1, 2023.

#### District Characteristics

Bradford SWCD is located in north central Florida and is home to a diversified economy with significant mining, corrections, transportation and logistics, and manufacturing industries.[[2]](#footnote-2) The United States

Census Bureau reports that over 98% of the District’s land area is rural. Per the United States

Department of Agriculture’s 2022 Census of Agriculture, the District’s small agricultural sector is mainly composed of hay and forage, aquaculture, and cattle production. Forestry represents the most significant agriculture activity in Bradford County.

The District is located within the Northern Highlands physiographic province and slopes downward from Trail Ridge, which runs along the District’s eastern border, to the Santa Fe River Valley in the District’s ~~west~~ south. Trail Ridge is an extended series of quartz sand hills that run north-south from South Georgia into north-central Florida and is home to highly valuable heavy mineral sands that are a source of titanium and rare earths. The mild slopes that characterize the central part of the District’s topography produce numerous slow-flowing streams, large swampy areas, and shallow lakes that may contribute to flooding in the area during heavy rains or hurricanes. In the District’s south and west, the Santa Fe and New Rivers have carved valleys into the District’s clay/sand soils. The District’s geology ~~creates~~ includes a ~~series of highly productive~~ intermediate aquifers and the Floridan Aquifer that feed several springs on the Santa Fe River ~~just~~ downstream of the District’s western border,[[3]](#footnote-3) including Santa Fe Springs, Hornsby Spring, and the Santa Fe River Rise.[[4]](#footnote-4) Mining and processing of mineral sand deposits on Trail Ridge produces waterborne byproducts that, if not properly managed, may impact the District’s water resources and can contribute to flooding during major rain events.

## I.B: Creation and Governance

Bradford SWCD was chartered on March 13, 1950, as the Bradford Soil Conservation District, following a successful referendum of local landowners and subsequent petition to the Florida State Soil

Conservation Board.[[5]](#footnote-5) The District was created under the authority of the State Soil Conservation

Districts Act (herein referred to as “ch. [582,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0500-0599/0582/0582ContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2023&Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%20582) *Florida Statutes*”).8 The Florida Legislature amended ch. [582,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0500-0599/0582/0582ContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2023&Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%20582) *Florida Statutes*, in 1965 to expand the scope of all soil conservation districts to include water conservation, which renamed the District to the Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District.[[6]](#footnote-6)

In interviews, a Supervisor asserted that the District ~~was previously dissolved~~ was inactive with no voters filling supervisor positions for a number of years but was restarted ~~subsequently reformed~~ ~~i~~In 2005 and 2006 ~~by~~ the director of the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension service in Bradford County found candidates for Supervisors positions to run in the ~~, with its~~ first elections ~~being~~ held in 2006. ~~The District has not provided M&J with documentation detailing the District’s dissolution or reformation.~~

The District is governed by a Board of Supervisors. Supervisors are unpaid, nonpartisan public officials elected by the voters within the service district. M&J analyzed the Supervisors’ elections, appointments, and qualifications within the in-scope period pursuant to applicable *Florida Statutes*.[[7]](#footnote-7)

Prior to the upcoming 2024 elections Supervisors ran for seats were to be elected county wide. Since 2006 there has been no contested BSWCD seat so no Supervisor has been on a ballot. The Statue change that requires Supervisors to live in the Commission District in which they reside has required existing Supervisors to change the number of the Area they represent to the number of the District where they live. Because two Supervisors lived in the same District but were assigned different Area numbers there will be a vacant position starting in January 2025. One siting Supervisor will have to be appointed to the District where he resides.

As of this report, the District has five Supervisors. M&J has reviewed affidavits affirming that the

Supervisors from seats 2, 3, 4, and 5 meet the qualifications for office established in s. [582.19(1),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.19.html) *Florida Statutes*. The Bradford County Supervisor of Elections was not able to provide the District with a similar affidavit prepared by the Supervisor currently occupying seat 1. During the review period (October 1, 2020, through April 30, 2024), there have been five vacancies on the Board, as illustrated in Additional assessment of the District’s electoral patterns is detailed in section II.D: Organization and Governance of this report.

.

The District has only had five supervisors in office on four occasions during the review period: from

February 2021 to April 2021, from July 2021 to August 2021, from April 2022 to January 2023, and from November 2023 to the present. Additional assessment of the District’s electoral patterns is detailed in section II.D: Organization and Governance of this report.

**Figure 2: Supervisor Terms**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Seat** | **FY21** | | | | | | | |  | **FY22** | | |  | **FY23** | | | **FY24** | | | |
| **Q1** | | **Q2** | | **Q3** | | **Q4** | | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** | **Q1** | | **Q2** | **Q3** |
| **1** | **S.M.** | | **Tom Germano** | | | | | | |  | | |  |  |  |  |  | **Walt Westcott** | | |
| **2** | **Janice Morton** | | | | | | |  |  |  | **Tara Singletary** | |  | **Sherman Carnes** | | |  | | | |
| **3** | **Paul McDavid** | | | | |  | **Oksun Burks** | | |  | | |  |  | | |  | | | |
| **4** | **P.W.** |  |  | **Amy Morie** | | | | | |  | | |  |  | | |  | | | |
| **5** |  | | **Paul Still** | | | | | | |  | | |  |  | | |  | | | |

#### **Legend for FY21**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Steven Milligan (S.M.)** |
|  | **Pam Whittle (P.W.)** |

*(Source: Bradford County Supervisor of Election records, Board of Supervisors meeting minutes)*

During the review period, the District met 53 times[[8]](#footnote-8) and met the mandatory meeting requirement of s.

[582.195,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.195.html) *Florida Statutes*, to meet at least once per calendar year with all five Supervisors for both 2022 (May and October) and 2023 (December). M&J has determined that the District did not properly notice Board meetings. Given the newspaper clippings provided on 6/19/2024 and the FAR notices is the previous statement correct.

Neither Bradford County nor the in-district municipalities have adopted any local regulations for the District.

## I.C: Programs and Activities

The following is a list of programs and activities conducted by the District within the review period (October 1, 2020, through April 30, 2024), along with a brief description of each program or activity. The District’s programs and activities will be described in detail in section II.A: Service Delivery of this report.

* Water Level Monitoring and Advising o The District collects water level measurements at selected locations in waterways throughout its service area to evaluate floodwater management practices.
* Water Quality Monitoring o The District collects water quality measurements at selected locations in waterways throughout its service area to monitor the impact that Trail Ridge mining operations may have on the District’s water resources.
* Invasive Plant Management Trials

o The District carries out invasive plant management activities on a plot of publicly owned land in the City of Starke and monitors the resulting impact to evaluate the effectiveness of low-cost mechanical methods of managing invasive plant infestations.

* Conservation Educational Programs o Conservation Educational Programs provide natural resources conservation-related elementary, secondary, and adult education within the community.
* Outreach Events o The District uses community events as an opportunity to provide outreach to local landowners and agricultural stakeholders by explaining the programs and services offered by the United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, Suwannee River Water Management District, and other organizations that fund conservation practices.
* Conservation Advocacy o The District uses the water level and water quality data that it collects to advocate for various conservation-related causes, including calling for improvements to how the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners and Suwannee River Water Management District manage floodwaters in the District’s service area and engaging with applications for the issuance and renewal of mining permits on Trail Ridge.

## I.D: Intergovernmental Interactions

The following is a summary of federal agencies, State agencies, and/or public entities with which the District interacts, including the means, methods, frequency, and purpose of coordination and communication.

#### Bradford County Board of County Commissioners (“BBoCC”)

The District’s primary source of funding is an annual allocation that it receives from BBoCC. The District submits an annual funding request as part of BBoCC’s budget process and receives the funds in a single check each BBoCC fiscal year. BBoCC representatives attend District Board of Supervisors (“Board”) meetings on rare occasion, averaging approximately once per year during the review period.

United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (“NRCS”)

The District is involved with outreach events to promote NRCS conservation cost sharing programs and other programs to fund agricultural conservation improvements in the District’s service area. NRCS staff occasionally attend District Board meetings, having attended 17 of the 53 meetings held by the District during the review period. NRCS staff keep Supervisors informed regarding NRCS activity in the District’s service area and update Supervisors about changes to NRCS program availability.

University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension Service in Bradford County (“UF/IFAS Extension”)

The District holds meetings and stores records at the UF/IFAS Extension facilities in Starke. The District occasionally collaborates with UF/IFAS Extension staff on outreach or educational events, but UF/IFAS Extension staff rarely attend Board meetings.

#### Suwannee River Water Management District (“SRWMD”)

The District is involved with outreach events to promote SRWMD conservation cost-sharing programs and other programs to fund agricultural conservation improvements in the District’s service area. SRWMD staff occasionally attend District Board meetings to update Supervisors about relevant activities and changes to SRWMD policies, averaging less than once per year during the review period.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services’ Florida Forest Service (“FFS”)

The District is involved with outreach events to promote FFS conservation cost-sharing programs and other programs to fund silvicultural improvements in the District’s service area. FFS representatives attended District meetings once during the review period to update the District on FFS activities relevant to the District’s mission. The District does not regularly work with FFS to provide any programs or promote any services.

#### Starke City Commission

The District has requested funding from the Starke City Commission several times during the review period but has not received an allocation. The District operates invasive plant management operations in parcels of land owned by the Starke City Commission.

## I.E: Resources for Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023

The following figures quantify and describe the District’s resources for Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023 (October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023, herein referred to as “FY23”). Figure 3 shows the total amount of revenues, expenditures, and long-term debt maintained by the District in FY23. Figure 4 shows the number of paid full-time and part-time staff, contracted staff, and volunteers by employer. Figure 5 shows the number and type of vehicles, number and type of major equipment, and number and type of facilities owned, leased, and used by the District.

The following appear to be Tables not Figures. To demonstrate staffing there needs to be a table for volunteers with estimated hours of service.

**Figure 3: FY23 Finances**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Revenues** | **Expenditures** | **Long-term Debt** |
| **Total for Year** | $5,000 | $5,016 | $0 |

*(Source: District financial records)*

**Figure 4: FY23 Program Staffing**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Full-time Staff** | **Part-time Staff** | **Contracted Staff** | **Volunteers** |
| **Districtemployed Staff** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Board of County Commissionersemployed staff** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** |

*(Source: Written communications and interviews with Supervisor)*

**Figure 5: FY23 Equipment and Facilities**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number** | **Ownership Status** | **Type(s)** |
| **Vehicles** | 0 |  |  |
| **Major Equipment** | 0 |  |  |
| **Facilities** | 2 | 1 owned by the  University of Florida’s  Institute of Food and  Agricultural Sciences extension; 1 is a private  residence | 1 meeting space / record storage space; 1  registered address /  small equipment storage  space |

*(Source: Written communications and interviews with Supervisor)*

What is include in Major Equipment? If it is Capital items the BSWCD had the following items followed by their purchase cost a mower, a tiller, and a chipper

# II. Findings

The Findings sections summarize the analyses performed, and the associated conclusions derived from M&J’s analysis. The analysis and findings are divided into four subject categories:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| • Service Delivery • Resource Management | * Performance Management * Organization and Governance |

## II.A: Service Delivery

#### Overview of Services

M&J has identified the following programs and activities that the District has performed during the review period (October 1, 2020, through April 30, 2024):

*Water Level Monitoring and Advising*

The District collects water level measurements at selected locations in waterways throughout its service area, including around the Lake Samson ~~Dam~~ Water Level Control Structure and at the Suwannee River Water Management District (“SRWMD”) drainage project at Alligator Creek, to evaluate floodwater conditions. The District uses the water level measurements to evaluate the performance of various flood management programs and flood control infrastructure projects located throughout the District’s service area.

*Water Quality Monitoring*

The District collects water quality measurements from selected waterways throughout its service area to monitor the impact that Trail Ridge mining operations may have on the District’s water resources. The District is particularly focused on measurements of uncommon pollutants that may be released by mining operations, such as iron. The District uses the measurements to evaluate the efficacy of pollutant management practices utilized by mining companies.

*Invasive Plant Management Trials*

The District carries out invasive plant management activities on a plot of publicly owned land in the City of Starke and monitors the resulting impact to evaluate the effectiveness of low-cost methods of managing invasive plant infestations. The District is currently in its third year of invasive plant management activities at the study site. The District’s management practices primarily consist of manual mechanical removal~~,~~ ~~with occasional herbicide use for particularly resilient species~~.

*Conservation Educational Programs*

The District commonly partners with the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural

Sciences Extension service in Bradford County (“UF/IFAS Extension”), 4-H, and the Bradford County Agricultural Fair to provide its conservation educational programs. These programs are designed to provide natural resources conservation-related early childhood education, elementary and secondary education, postsecondary education, special education, job training, career and technical education, and/or adult education, usually administered by an education agency or institution.[[9]](#footnote-9) M&J has identified the following Conservation Educational Programs carried out by the District during the review period:

##### Bradford County Agricultural Fair Youth Competition Sponsorships

The District sponsors youth educational competitions held by the UF/IFAS Extension and 4-H at the annual Bradford County Agricultural Fair. The District sponsors overall operations of the youth competitions as well as specific competitions for swine, cattle, goat, and small animal production.

##### National Association of Conservation Districts (“NACD”) Poster Contest

The NACD Poster Contest provides students with a chance to compete and have their art displayed nationally. The contests are open to kindergarten through 12th grade students from the District’s service area, separated into two- or three-grade divisions. These contests use a common conservationrelated prompt set by NACD. The winners of the District-level contests advance to compete at the regional, State, and national levels. The District has not offered the competition since FY21.

##### Community Agriculture Education Programs

The District works with the UF/IFAS Extension to provide programs that support community agriculture programs in a historically African American community in the City of Starke. The services provided include a community garden, access to home and garden composting systems, and access to rain barrels for collecting water for use to irrigate the community garden and home gardens.

*Outreach Events*

The District uses community events as an opportunity to provide outreach to local landowners and agricultural stakeholders by explaining the programs and services offered by the United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, SRWMD, and other organizations that fund conservation practices. During the review period, outreach events hosted or participated in by the District include:

* Bradford County Agricultural Fair
* Interagency Cost-Share Workshops

*Conservation Advocacy*

The District uses the water level and water quality data that it collects to advocate for various conservation-related causes. The District uses the water level data that it collects to evaluate the flood control performance of the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners (“BBoCC”)-operated Lake Samson ~~Dam~~ Water Level Control Structure and SRWMD’s drainage canal project at Alligator Creek and propose changes to the relevant water management practices. The District also uses its collected water quality measurements to evaluate the impact that mining operations on Trail Ridge has on waterways across the District’s service area. The District has discussed using negative water quality evaluations as the basis of comments on and/or objections to mining permit applications and renewals.

#### Analysis of Service Delivery

The District’s delivery of water level monitoring, water quality monitoring, and invasive plant management trial programs align with s. [582.20(1),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.20.html) *Florida Statutes*, which permits soil and water conservation districts to “conduct surveys, studies, and research relating to soil and water resources.” The District’s invasive plant management trial programs also align with s. [582.20(2),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.20.html) *Florida Statutes*, which permits soil and water conservation districts to “conduct… projects for the conservation, protection, and restoration of soil and water resources.” The District’s conservation education programs align with s. 582.20(7), *Florida Statutes*, which permits soil and water conservation districts to “provide, or assist in providing, training and education programs” that support the District’s conservation efforts. The District’s outreach events align with the soil and water conservation district purpose statement established in s. [582.02(4),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.02.html) *Florida Statutes*. The District’s water level monitoring, water quality monitoring, and invasive plant management trial programs are highly reliant on the time and skills of a single Supervisor. This one Supervisor is the primary person responsible for measuring water levels, collecting water samples, running water quality analyses, conducting invasive plant management activities, and compiling the data produced by these programs. Alternative service delivery models, such as distributing the District’s workload across the other Supervisors, recruiting volunteers to assist with service delivery, or partnering with another organization to carry out some of the District’s tasks, may improve the quality of service delivered by the District by reducing the District’s reliance on a single individual. Adopting an alternate service model that distributes the District’s workload across a group of individuals may also improve the District’s service delivery by increasing redundancy and helping mitigate the risk to the District’s data collection process resulting from a single Supervisor performing the most critical data collection and processing tasks.

A Supervisor stated to M&J that the District’s lack of staff makes it difficult for the District to effectively seek out grant funding while complying with all provisions of the Florida Sunshine Law.[[10]](#footnote-10) Obtaining staff support, even part-time staff support, may grant the District access to new funding sources to support the introduction of new programs and expansion of existing District programs. The grant notice, application drafting, award, and delivery can take two to three years. Bills passed and proposed in recent years by Florida Legislators that would abolish are significantly alter the form of Soil and Water Conservation Districts make applying for grants difficult because there can be no certainty that the District will be able to complete the required grant work products.

The conservation advocyacy activities that the District undertook during the review period, which are limited to evaluating and commenting on BBoCC and SRWMD flood management practices, align with ss. [582.20(1)](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.20.html) and [582.02(4),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.02.html) *Florida Statutes*.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider modifying its processes for providing its water level monitoring, water quality monitoring, and invasive plant management trial programs to reduce these programs’ reliance on the labor of a single Supervisor. The District could consider partnering with a local university, college, or community college with a conservation-related program to provide opportunities for students to participate in community-based conservation programming.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider developing a staffing model that allows the District to access low-cost staffing resources to support the District’s pursuit of grant funding opportunities. Potential staffing models include working with neighboring soil and water conservation districts to split the costs of an employee, working with BBoCC to gain part-time use of a BBoCC employee with the requisite skills, or identifying interns from relevant programs at a local institution of higher education.

#### Comparison to Similar Services/Potential Consolidations

SRWMD monitors and reports water levels and water quality measured at monitoring stations located on several rivers and lakes throughout the District’s service area. SRWMD provides the collected data to water managers, researchers, and the public through its website. Much of SRWMD’s process of recording and preparing water level and water quality measurements is automated. The District’s water level and quality monitoring efforts largely focus on specific features of particular interest to the District, such as waterways that are smaller than those typically monitored by SRWMD, ~~although several of the District’s water level and quality monitoring locations are duplicative of SRWMD’s water level quality and monitoring stations.~~ The District’s water quality monitoring efforts focus on water quality features of particular interest to the District that are not reported by SRWMD, such as dissolved iron levels.

While the District’s collection of these focused data is useful and informs the District’s activities, the District does not currently have an automated method of providing data to the public, such as a portal on the District’s website. As SRWMD already has created tools for communicating water level and quality data on its website, the District may benefit from partnering with SRWMD to distribute the data that the District collects on conditions of interest within the District’s service area. ~~Additionally,~~ ~~t~~The District ~~may benefit from utilizing~~ uses existing SRWMD data where it is available ~~and utilizing some of the automations that SRWMD has implemented in its water level and quality data collections processes~~.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider developing a partnership with SRWMD that allows the District to use or adapt SRWMD’s existing tools for reporting water level and water quality data to provide the public with access to water level and water quality data collected by the District.

Additionally, the District should consider working with SRWMD to explore how the District may be able to benefit from water level and water quality data collection automation methods that SRWMD has implemented. Additionally, the District should review its current water level monitoring locations to take advantage of data already reported by SRWMD and reduce duplicative water level monitoring.

## II.B: Resource Management

#### Program Staffing

The District has not had any employees (full-time or part-time), or contract staff, ~~or regular volunteers~~ during the review period. One Supervisor volunteers 20 to 40 hours a week to carry out the District’s programs and management. Other Supervisors volunteer to hours a month.

#### Equipment and Facilities

*Vehicles*

The District has not owned or operated any vehicles during the review period.

*Facilities*

The District has held meetings and stored records at the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension office in Starke (“UF/IFAS Extension”) for the entirety of the review period. The District does not have an agreement with the UF/IFAS Extension for this use of meeting and record storage space. However, this does not appear to be an issue at this time.

The District’s registered address is the home address of one of the District’s Supervisors. The District also stores its small equipment at this Supervisor’s residence. The equipment a DR walk behind mower, a ATV tiller and a chipper were purchased in 2011 with funds from a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Pulling Together Grant. The equipment was sold in 2024 via Govdeals.com for $ 1,515 in May 2024. The funds received were placed in the BSWCD Reserve fund. The District ~~is currently assessing disposition means for this equipment, and~~ has not indicated any plans to purchase additional equipment. As such, M&J does not see the current storage means as an issue at this time.

**Figure 6: Ownership Status of District Facilities by Type**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Facility Type** | **Ownership Status** | | |  |
| **FY21** | **FY22** | **FY23** | **FY24** |
| **Registered**  **Address /**  **Small**  **Equipment Storage** | Private residence used by the District at no cost | Private residence used by the District at no cost | Private residence used by the District at no cost | Private residence used by the District at no cost |
| **Meeting**  **Space /**  **Record**  **Storage** | Office owned by  UF/IFAS Extension and used by the  District at no cost | Office owned by  UF/IFAS Extension and used by the  District at no cost | Office owned by  UF/IFAS Extension and used by the  District at no cost | Office owned by  UF/IFAS Extension and used by the  District at no cost |

*(Source: District Board meeting minutes, Florida Department of Commerce profile, Interview with Supervisor)*

*Major Equipment*

The District has not owned or operated any major equipment during the review period.

#### Current and Historic Revenues and Expenditures

The District’s primary source of revenues during the review period was its annual allocation from the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners (“BBoCC”). The District reports a small reserve funded through minimal revenues from other sources, including interest and sales of wire compost bins produced by a District ~~staff~~ Supervisor, although receipt of these revenues is outside of the review period. District Board of Supervisors (“Board”) meeting minutes, District financial records, and the District’s Annual Financial Reports, as reported to the Florida Department of Financial Services, suggest that non-BBoCC revenues likely did not total more than several dozen dollars from the start of the review period through December 31, 2023. Figure 7 shows the District’s recorded revenues during the review period.

**Figure 7: Revenues by Source and Fiscal Year**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Revenue Source** |  | **Total Revenues** | |  |
| **FY21** | **FY22** | **FY23** | **FY24**  **(through 12/31/2023)** |
| **BBoCC** | $2,870 | $5,000 | $5,000 | $5,000 |

*(Source: District financial records)*

The District prepares a budget request for BBoCC during each budgeting cycle and receives its annual allocation in a check. The District does not have any intergovernmental agreements with BBoCC that govern the allocation process or establishes reporting requirements. The District uses its annual BBoCC allocation to pay all expenses, including costs of delivering the District’s programs, operating expenses, travel costs, and dues and fees. Figure 8 details the District’s expenditures by program and fiscal year.

**Figure 8: Expenditures by Program and Fiscal Year**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Total Expenditures** | | |  |
| **Program or Activity** | **FY21** | **FY22** | **FY23** | **FY24**  **(through 12/31/2023)** |
| **Operating Expenses** | $417 | $1,766 | $2,430 | $571 |
| **Water Level Monitoring** | $802 | $812 | $361 | $120 |
| **Water Quality Monitoring** | $345 | $356 | $456 | $235 |
| **Invasive Plant Management Trials** | $31 | $686 | $490 | $71 |
| **Education Programs** | $50 | $130 | $30 | $331 |
| **~~Education Programs~~**  Fair Youth Support | $1,250 | $1,250 | $1,250 | ~~$1,250~~ $1,000 |
| **Total Expenditures** | **$2,895** | **$5,000** | **$5,017** | **~~$2,578~~ $2328** |

*(Source: District financial records)*

**Recommendation:** The District should consider reviewing its currently established policies and procedures governing the recording of financial assets and financial transactions to ensure all transactions are properly recorded. The District should consider maintaining a ledger that includes the starting balance of the District’s bank account each fiscal year and all record debits and credits to that account over the course of the fiscal year. The District’s ledger should be used to ensure the Annual Financial Reports are complete and consistent before submission to the Florida Department of Financial Services each fiscal year.

#### Trends and Sustainability

The District’s BBoCC allocation increased from $2,870 in FY21 to $5,000 per year for the remainder of the review period. Per Board meeting minutes, BBoCC increased the District’s allocation at the District’s request. The District’s total expenditures have closely tracked its revenues throughout the review period, increasing from FY21 to FY22 to match the increased BBoCC allocation and remaining nearly unchanged from FY22 to FY23. Figure 9 shows the District’s revenues and expenditures across the review period. As annual revenue is received one time at the beginning of the fiscal year, all anticipated FY24 revenue is recognized at the beginning of the fiscal year.

**Figure 9: Revenues vs. Expenditures**

$0.00

$1,000.00

$2,000.00

$3,000.00

$4,000.00

$5,000.00

$6,000.00

FY21

FY22

FY23

FY24

(

through

12/31/2023)

Total Revenues

Total Expenditures

*(Source: District financial records)*

The District relies almost exclusively on its BBoCC allocation for funding and maintains only a small reserve. Per the District’s financial records, its reserve stood at $624 on March 1, 2024, which is only enough to cover the District’s current level of expenditures for a few months. So long as the District continues to receive a BBoCC allocation similar to the one that it currently receives, the District will have sufficient revenues to pay its current level of expenditures. Changes to BBoCC’s financial state or funding priorities pose a serious risk to the District’s ability to continue to deliver services. Given the District’s low level of reserves, even a significant delay in the processing of BBoCC’s allocation may deplete the District’s reserves and interrupt the District’s ability to fund its activities in the short term.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider identifying and pursuing funding opportunities from additional funding sources to reduce its reliance on its BBoCC allocation. Additional funding sources may include the Starke City Commission and grants from the United States Department of Agriculture,

National Association of Conservation Districts, or other public or private conservation-related entities.

## II.C: Performance Management

#### Strategic and Other Future Plans

Per the District’s Board of Supervisors (“Board”) minutes from the review period and interviews with a Supervisor, the District does not currently have a strategic plan.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider developing and then adopting a strategic plan that builds on the District’s purpose and vision. The strategic plan should not simply describe the District’s current programs, but rather reflect the District’s long-term and short-term priorities based on the needs of the community and in response to changing land use patterns within the District’s service area.

#### Goals and Objectives

Per the District’s Board meeting minutes from the review period and interviews with a Supervisor, the District does not currently maintain written or unwritten goals and objectives.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider writing and then adopting a set of goals and objectives that align with the District’s statutory purpose, as defined in s. [582.02(4),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.02.html) *Florida Statutes*, and the Board’s vision and priorities as established in the District’s strategic plan. The goals and objectives should contemplate measurable progress, capturing the results of the District’s efforts and ensuring a consistent direction forward for the District’s future prioritization of programs and activities.

#### Performance Measures and Standards

Per the District’s Board meeting minutes and interviews with a Supervisor, the District does not currently track performance measures or evaluate the District’s performance against standards.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider identifying performance measures and standards as part of the development of a new strategic plan. The District should then track the identified performance measures against established standards and use the collected data to monitor the District’s performance, evaluate progress towards the goals and objectives that the District adopts, and support future improvements to the District’s service delivery methods.

#### Analysis of Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures and Standards

The District does not have any goals or objectives and does not track any performance measures or standards. The District’s lack of goals and objectives inhibits the Supervisors’ ability to develop District policy based on a clear, agreed-upon future state. The District’s lack of performance measures and standards limits the District’s ability to analyze its performance in an objective fashion and prevents outside individuals or organizations from adequately evaluating District activities. The lack of goals, objectives, performance measures, and standards may pose a particular challenge to new Supervisors, who do not have access to the resources needed to fully understand the factors guiding the Board’s past decisions and to develop an understanding of the of the District’s current operations. As stated earlier in this section of the report, M&J recommends that the District consider writing and adopting a set of goals and objectives and identifying and tracking performance measures and standards.

#### Annual Financial Reports and Audits

The District is required per s. [218.32,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0200-0299/0218/Sections/0218.32.html) *Florida Statutes*, to submit an Annual Financial Report to the Florida Department of Financial Services within nine months of the end of each fiscal year (*i.e.*, June 30, or nine months after September 30). The District submitted its FY21 and FY22 Annual Financial Reports to the Florida Department of Financial Services within the compliance timeframe.

The District has not yet submitted its FY23 Annual Financial Report to the Florida Department of Financial Services. The deadline for the District to submit its FY23 Annual Financial Report to the Florida Department of Financial Services is nine months after the close of the fiscal year, or June 30, 2024.

Per s. [218.39,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0200-0299/0218/Sections/0218.39.html) *Florida Statutes*, the District is not required to submit an annual financial audit report, as its annual revenues and combined expenditures and expenses are below the $50,000 threshold for each year of the review.

#### Performance Reviews and District Performance Feedback

Per the District’s Board meeting minutes from the review period and interviews with a Supervisor, the District has not conducted any performance reviews or collected any feedback from District stakeholders during the review period.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider implementing a system for collecting feedback from local partner agencies and residents of the District’s service area with whom the District has worked, and creating a process to systematically review feedback. The District should consider using the findings from the review of feedback to refine the District’s service delivery methods.

## II.D: Organization and Governance

#### Election and Appointment of Supervisors

Supervisors are required by s. [582.19(1)(b),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.19.html) *Florida Statutes*, to sign an affirmation that they meet certain residency and agricultural experience requirements. These signed affirmations are required of both elected and appointed Supervisors.”

M&J reviewed election records on the Bradford County Supervisor of Elections’ ("BCSoE") website, candidate records provided by BCSoE in response to a public records request, Board of Supervisors (“Board”) meeting minutes, and a District-created Supervisor list to assess the District’s Supervisor eligibility to hold office. All five Supervisor positions came up for election in 2022, as required. A new Supervisor in seat 2 and the incumbent Supervisors in seats 3, 4, and 5 were elected in the 2022 election, while seat 1 was left vacant. All four candidates elected in the 2022 election filed affidavits affirming that they met the eligibility requirements established in s. [582.19(1),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.19.html) *Florida Statutes*. A new Supervisor was appointed to fill the seat 1 vacancy in November 2023. M&J requested an eligibility affidavit from the Supervisor appointed to seat 1 as part of a public records request to the BCSoE, but this affidavit was not provided. As a result, M&J cannot verify whether the Supervisor appointed to seat 1 meets the eligibility requirements established in s. [582.19(1),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.19.html) *Florida Statutes*.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider collaborating with the Bradford County Supervisor of Elections to ensure that appointed Supervisors complete the affidavits necessary to document each Supervisor’s compliance with the requirements of s. [582.19(1),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.19.html) *Florida Statutes*.

#### Notices of Public Meetings

Section [189.015,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0100-0199/0189/Sections/0189.015.html) *Florida Statutes*, requires that all Board meeting minutes be publicly noticed in accordance with the procedures listed in ch. [50,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0000-0099/0050/0050ContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2023&Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%2050) *Florida Statutes*. This chapter has been amended twice during the review period, and M&J reviewed for compliance with the governing statute in effect at the time of each meeting date and applicable notice period.

In interviews, a Supervisor for the District reported that the District consistently submits a notice to the editor of the local newspaper ~~advertises notice~~ of District Board meetings in a local newspaper. The District ~~did not~~ provided copies of the published notices on ~~records evidencing the publication of meeting notices in a local newspaper.~~ M&J searched floridapublicnotices.com, the State of Florida’s designated repository for public notice records, and identified meeting notices posted in the *Bradford Telegraph*, a local newspaper, for two of the 53 meetings held during the review period.

The District provides a list of its meeting dates to the Association of Florida Conservation Districts, which works with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services’ Office of Agricultural Water Policy to post meeting notices in the *Florida Administrative Register*. M&J identified notices posted in the *Florida Administrative Register* for 15 meetings scheduled during the review period, including eight meetings that M&J can confirm were held and seven meetings for which M&J requested but has not received confirmation that they were held. (Can this request be submitted again) The District inconsistently provides notice of its meetings on the District website, although the notices posted on the website are not consistently kept up to date.

M&J’s review concluded that the District notices did not meet the requirements of the version of ch. [50,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0000-0099/0050/0050ContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2023&Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%2050)

*Florida Statutes*, in effect at the time of each meeting date and applicable notice period. Prior to January 2023, ch. [50,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0000-0099/0050/0050ContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2023&Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%2050) *Florida Statutes*, required any board located in a county with a county-wide newspaper to publish meeting notices in that newspaper. The District did not meet this requirement for meetings held in 2021 and 2022, as not all meetings were published in the county-wide newspaper. Since January 2023, ch. [50,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0000-0099/0050/0050ContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2023&Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%2050) *Florida Statutes*, has permitted publication of meeting notices on a publicly accessible website (such as the Florida Administrative Register) as long as the board publishes a notice once a year in the local newspaper identifying the location of meeting notices and stating that any resident who wishes to receive notices by mail or e-mail may contact the board with that request. The District did not meet this requirement for meetings held in 2023 and 2024.

Failure to provide appropriate notice in full accordance with ch. [50,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0000-0099/0050/0050ContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2023&Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%2050) *Florida Statutes*, may deny the public an opportunity to attend meetings and participate in District business. Violation of this chapter of the Florida Statutes may subject District Supervisors and staff to penalties, including fines, fees, and misdemeanor charges, as outlined in s. [286.011,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0200-0299/0286/Sections/0286.011.html) *Florida Statutes*. Additionally, business conducted at such meetings may be invalidated.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider reviewing its meeting notice procedures to verify compliance with s. [189.015](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0100-0199/0189/Sections/0189.015.html) and ch. [50,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&amp;URL=0000-0099/0050/0050ContentsIndex.html&amp;StatuteYear=2023&amp;Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%2050) *Florida Statutes*. The District should retain records that document its compliance with applicable statutes.

#### Retention of Records and Public Access to Documents

The District was able to provide all records requested in accordance with s. [119.021,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0100-0199/0119/Sections/0119.021.html) *Florida Statutes*.

While some District financial records and Board meeting minutes and agendas are posted on the District’s website, minutes and agendas are not consistently posted and financial information is not regularly updated.

**Recommendation:** The District should consider updating its procedures for maintaining the District’s website to help ensure that meeting minutes and agendas are regularly posted, financial records are kept up-to-date, and other pages are updated as needed.

# III. Recommendations

The following table presents M&J’s recommendations based on the analyses and conclusions in the Findings sections, along with considerations for each recommendation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recommendation Text** | **Associated Considerations** |
| The District should consider modifying its processes for providing its water level monitoring, water quality monitoring, and invasive plant management trial programs to reduce these programs’ reliance on the labor of a single Supervisor. The District could consider partnering with a local university, college, or community college with a conservation-related program to provide opportunities for students to participate in community-based conservation programming. | * Potential Benefits: Adjusting the District’s service delivery methods to reduce its reliance on a single Supervisor’s labor and expertise will make the District’s ability to deliver services more resilient to changes in the District’s Supervisor makeup, changes in Supervisor priorities, and changes in Supervisor availability. * Potential Adverse Consequences: Adopting alternative service delivery methods may result in less experienced Supervisors or volunteers performing District work for a period of time, which may reduce the District’s efficiency or output quality until the new workers gain additional experience in their roles. * Costs: None * Statutory Considerations: None |
| The District should consider developing a staffing model that allows the District to access low-cost staffing resources to support the District’s pursuit of grant funding opportunities. Potential staffing models include working with neighboring soil and water conservation districts to split the costs of an employee, working with the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners to gain part-time use of a Bradford County employee with the requisite skills, or identifying interns from relevant programs at a local institution of higher education. | * Potential Benefit: Finding a way to obtain staff resources with the District’s limited budget would allow for the District to pursue grant funding sources to fund new programs and/or the expansion of the District’s current programs. * Potential Adverse Consequences: None significant * Costs: None * Statutory Considerations: Depending on the staffing model selected, Supervisors may need to approve intergovernmental agreements with other soil and water conservation districts or with the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recommendation Text** | **Associated Considerations** |
| The District should consider working to develop a partnership with  Suwannee River Water Management  District (“SRWMD”) that allows the District to use or adapt SRWMD’s existing tools for reporting water level and water quality data to provide the public with access to water level and water quality data collected by the District. Additionally, the District should consider working with SRWMD to explore how the  District may be able to benefit from water level and water quality data collection automation methods that SRWMD has implemented.  Additionally, the District should review its current water level monitoring locations to take advantage of data already reported by SRWMD and reduce duplicative water level monitoring. | * Potential Benefit: Partnering with SRWMD to take advantage of its existing data reporting and collection tools would allow the District’s efforts to reach a significantly wider audience of researchers, regulators, and citizens than it currently does and may allow for the District to conduct its water level and quality monitoring activities in a more efficient manner. * Potential Adverse Consequences: None significant * Costs: Potential costs of integrating the District’s data collection tools with SRWMD’s reporting systems and/or implementing SRWMD’s data collection automation tools * Statutory Considerations: The Supervisors may need to approve an intergovernmental agreement or other contract with SRWMD governing the District’s use of SRWMD tools and access to SRWMD systems. |
| The District should consider reviewing its currently established policies and procedures governing the recording of financial assets and financial transactions to ensure assets and transactions are properly recorded. The District should consider maintaining a ledger that includes the starting balance of the District’s assets each fiscal year and all increases or decreases to that balance over the course of the fiscal year. A ledger can range from utilizing sophisticated accounting software to maintenance of an Excel spreadsheet, with a new tab for each fiscal year. The District’s ledger should be used to complete the Annual Financial Reports with appropriate clarity before submission to the Florida Department of  Financial Services each fiscal year. | * Potential Benefit: Recording transactions in a ledger will help ensure that the District has a complete understanding and record of its financial activities, is transparent, can easily prepare required financial reports, and can respond to records requests regarding finances as needed * Potential Adverse Consequences: None significant * Costs: If the District chooses to implement a commercial accounting software system, the District would have costs related to use of that software package * Statutory Considerations: None |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recommendation Text** | **Associated Considerations** |
| The District should consider identifying and pursuing funding opportunities from additional funding sources to reduce its reliance on its BBoCC allocation. Additional funding sources may include the Starke City  Commission and grants from the  United States Department of  Agriculture, National Association of Conservation Districts, or other public or private conservation-related entities. | * Potential Benefit: Pursuing additional funding sources will reduce the District’s reliance on its BBoCC allocation and allow the District to continue to function in the event that BBoCC decides to reduce the District’s allocation or if there are delays in processing the District’s BBoCC allocation. Additionally, acquiring additional funding will allow the District to fund additional programs and/or expansion of its current programs. * Potential Adverse Consequences: None significant * Costs: None * Statutory Considerations: None |
| The District should consider developing and then adopting a strategic plan that builds on the District’s purpose and vision. The strategic plan should not simply describe the District’s current programs, but rather reflect the District’s long-term and short-term priorities based on the needs of the community and in response to changing land use patterns within the District’s service area. | * Potential Benefit: Developing and adopting a strategic plan will require the District to consider and define an organized, cohesive set of plans for the coming years and will provide a document that the District’s current and potential future Supervisors and staff can reference to guide the District’s operations over the coming years. * Potential Adverse Consequences: None significant * Costs: None * Statutory Considerations: Supervisors will need to adopt any strategic plan. |
| The District should consider writing and then adopting a set of goals and objectives that align with the District’s statutory purpose, as defined in s. [582.02(4),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.02.html) *Florida Statutes*, and the Board’s vision and priorities as established in the  District’s strategic plan. The goals and objectives should contemplate measurable progress, capturing the results of the District’s efforts and ensuring a consistent direction forward for the District’s future prioritization of programs and activities. | * Potential Benefit: Developing, writing, and adopting a set of comprehensive goals and objectives will help the District’s current and future Supervisors and staff to better understand the District’s intentions and will help to prioritize projects. * Potential Adverse Consequences: None significant * Costs: None * Statutory Considerations: Supervisors will need to adopt any goals and objectives. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recommendation Text** | **Associated Considerations** |
| The District should consider identifying performance measures and standards as part of the development of a new strategic plan. The District should then track the identified performance measures against established standards and use the collected data to monitor the District’s performance, evaluate progress towards the goals and objectives that the District adopts, and support future improvements to  the District’s service delivery methods. | * Potential Benefit: Identifying performance measures and establishing performance standards will enable the District to objectively evaluate the performance of its various programs, enhancing the Supervisors’ ability to oversee and manage the District’s service delivery. The District can also use collected performance measures to refine its service delivery models to improve the level of service that it is able to provide or reduce costs. * Potential Adverse Consequences: None significant * Costs: Implementing this recommendation may cause the District to incur minor data collection and storage fees. * Statutory Considerations: None |
| The District should consider implementing a system for collecting feedback from local partner agencies and residents of the District’s service area with whom the District has worked, and creating a process to systematically review feedback. The District should consider using the findings from the review of feedback to refine the District’s service delivery methods. | * Potential Benefit: Implementing a system to collect feedback from partner agencies and residents will give the District an additional source of information to use in evaluating the performance of the District’s programs and may help the District to identify and/or evaluate potential improvements to the District’s service delivery methods. * Potential Adverse Consequences: None significant * Costs: Implementing this recommendation may cause the District to incur minor data collection and storage fees. * Statutory Considerations: None |
| The District should consider collaborating with the Bradford County Supervisor of Elections to ensure that appointed Supervisors complete the affidavits necessary to document each Supervisor’s compliance with the requirements of s. [582.19(1),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.19.html) *Florida Statutes*. | * Potential Benefit: Working with the Bradford County Supervisor of Elections to collect eligibility affidavits from all elected and appointed Supervisors will help ensure that the Supervisors are in compliance and have documented their compliance with the eligibility criteria set in s. [582.19(1),](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.19.html) *Florida Statutes*. * Potential Adverse Consequences: None * Costs: None * Statutory Considerations: None |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Recommendation Text** | **Associated Considerations** |
| The District should consider reviewing its meeting notice procedures to verify compliance with s. [189.015](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0100-0199/0189/Sections/0189.015.html) and ch. [50,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&amp;URL=0000-0099/0050/0050ContentsIndex.html&amp;StatuteYear=2023&amp;Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%2050) *Florida Statutes*. The District should retain records that document its compliance with applicable statutes. | * Potential Benefit: Implementing proper meeting notice policies will help ensure that the District is compliant with s. [189.015](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0100-0199/0189/Sections/0189.015.html) and ch, [50,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0000-0099/0050/0050ContentsIndex.html&StatuteYear=2023&Title=%2D%3E2023%2D%3EChapter%2050) *Florida Statutes*, which protects Supervisors and staff from potential consequences of violating notice requirements established in s[. 286.011,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0200-0299/0286/Sections/0286.011.html) *Florida Statutes*, and protects actions taken during meetings from being invalidated on procedural grounds related to meeting notice. Properly noticing meetings also promotes increased public engagement with District operations. * Potential Adverse Consequences: None significant * Costs: Properly noticing the District’s meetings will require the District to pay to run public notice statements in the local newspaper * Statutory Considerations: None |
| The District should consider updating its procedures for maintaining the District’s website to help ensure that meeting minutes and agendas are regularly posted, financial records are kept up-to-date, and other pages are updated as needed. | * Potential Benefit: Ensuring that meeting minutes, meeting agendas, financial records, and other relevant information on the District’s website are kept up-to-date will ensure that members of the public have easy access to District records and can participate in the District’s activities and decision-making process. * Potential Adverse Consequences: None significant * Costs: None * Statutory Considerations: None |

# IV. District Response

1. Cities: Hampton, Lawtey, Starke. Town: Brooker. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. North Florida Economic Development Partnership. n.d. "Bradford County Major Employers." *North Florida Economic Development Partnership website.* Accessed May 17, 2024.

   https://nflp.org/images/properties/Bradford\_County\_Major\_Employers.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Rupert, Frank R. 1987. *Geology of Bradford County, Florida.* Geological Report, Tallahassee: Florida Geological Survey. https://original-ufdc.uflib.ufl.edu/UF00001016/00001/13x. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Florida Department of Environmental Protection. n.d. "Map of Florida's Springs Categorized by Magnitude." *Florida Department of Environmental Protection.* Accessed May 7, 2024.

   https://floridadep.gov/fgs/fgs/media/map-floridas-springs-categorized-magnitude. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Florida State Soil Conservation Board. 1951. *Biennial Report of the State Soil Conservation Board: January 1, 1949 - December 31, 1950.* Biennial report, Tallahassee: Florida State Soil Conservation Board. 8 s. 582, *Florida Statutes* (1939), available online as ch[. 19473,](http://edocs.dlis.state.fl.us/fldocs/leg/actsflorida/1939/LOF1939V1Pt2%20GeneralLaws%20(Pt2).pdf) *Laws of Florida*

   [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ch. [65-334,](http://edocs.dlis.state.fl.us/fldocs/leg/actsflorida/1965/LOF1965V1Pt1Ch288-586.pdf) *Laws of Florida*. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Including s. [582.15,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.15.html) *Florida Statutes,* s[. 582.18,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.18.html) *Florida Statutes*, s[. 582.19,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0500-0599/0582/Sections/0582.19.html) *Florida Statutes*, Rule[. 5M-20.002,](https://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?title=Soil%20and%20Water%20Conservation&ID=5M-20.002) *Florida Administrative Code*, and Ch[. 2022-191,](https://laws.flrules.org/2022/191) *Laws of Florida*. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Meetings occurred in January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, November (x2), and

   December 2021; January (x3), February, March (x2), April (x2), May, June (x2), July (x2), August, September (x2), October (x2), November, and December (x2) 2022; January (x2), February, March, April, May (x2), June (x2), July, August (x2), September (x2), October, November, and December (x2) 2023; and January and February 2024. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Adapted from [34 CFR § 99.3 (](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-A/part-99/subpart-A/section-99.3)2024) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. s. [286.011,](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0200-0299/0286/Sections/0286.011.html) *Florida Statutes et seq.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-10)