

**Ichetucknee Alliance, Inc.**  
**P. O. Box 945 • High Springs, Florida • 32655-0945**

May 22, 2014

Ann Shortelle, Executive Director  
Suwannee River Water Management District  
9225 County Road 49  
Live Oak, FL 32060

  
Dear ~~Ms. Shortelle~~:

The Ichetucknee Alliance enthusiastically supports the proposed Ichetucknee Springs – Columbia County Water Conservation Initiative that is currently being advanced by the Suwannee River Water Management District.

That project—a program targeted at local businesses to replace existing toilet fixtures and retrofit faucets with aerators with WaterSense labeled products—has the potential to save an estimated 32 million gallons of water a year. We believe that such savings would benefit the Ichetucknee River and its associated springs.

The Alliance's vision is for a healthy Ichetucknee River System that is preserved and protected for future generations. Our strategy for manifesting this vision involves a three-pronged approach that uses science, ethics, and partnerships to accomplish our goals. The Ichetucknee Springs – Columbia County Water Conservation Initiative fits into all three of these categories because:

1. The Initiative is grounded in the science that informs us that water use in the Ichetucknee springshed, including the Lake City area, affects the water supply that is available to the river and springs.
2. The Initiative reinforces an ethic of water conservation that encourages us to “work together to use less and less rather than fight each other to grab more and more,” one of award-winning writer Cynthia Barnett's five guidelines for a Florida water ethic.
3. The Initiative creates a model for future water conservation projects by bringing partners together to work for a common cause on behalf of the river and the springs.

North Florida has the highest concentration of freshwater springs in the world, but our springs are under siege—damaged by pollution and overpumping of the Floridan Aquifer that supplies our drinking water in addition to feeding our springs.

Preserving the flows, water quality, and biological health of our springs is critically important for North Florida because springs are important economic drivers of our local economies; they provide a vast array of recreational opportunities that create jobs and provide tax revenues for our region. To save our springs and, in turn, to preserve the vitally important Floridan Aquifer, we must have effective springshed management in which all sectors of our economy cooperate to improve water quantity and quality.

The Ichetucknee Alliance is dedicated to the success of Ichetucknee Springs - Columbia County Water Conservation Initiative and looks forward to working with the Suwannee River Water Management District as the project advances.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John D. Jopling', with a large loop at the start and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John D. Jopling

President

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