CITY OF WINTER HAVEN ONE WATER MASTER PLAN

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The City of Winter Haven is located within the Peace Creek watershed and has 50 lakes inside and adjacent to the city limits. It is known as the "Chain of Lakes City" and depends on these natural systems for quality of life. Winter Haven operates a public water supply system for the benefit of approximately 37,500 customers and a population of 74,700. Winter Haven provides wastewater service to approximately 23,740 customers and a population of approximately 56,100. Winter Haven also provides reclaimed water service to 12 major users and has a stormwater system comprised of conveyances that capture surface water runoff with discharge to retention/detention storage ponds or, more often, directly into lakes.

Winter Haven faces many challenges: rapid population growth, land use change, scarcity of traditional fresh groundwater supplies, escalating water supply costs, impaired lakes water quality and levels, and impacted watershed hydrology. If Winter Haven were to address each of these challenges independently, it would be very costly and take a long time to resolve. Winter Haven has embarked on an initiative to address these challenges within an integrated, holistic One Water approach to ensure affordable outcomes within a reasonable timeframe. By engaging the One Water approach, water resource issues and challenges can be addressed together to ensure objectives are coordinated and do not compete. The outcome is efficient and effective planning that will give Winter Haven a well-communicated plan that is understood across all stakeholders.

The result of implementing the One Water Master Planning approach will be restored hydrology and natural systems, long-term affordable water supply, a sustainable growth and economy, and improved connectivity with parks and natural systems, all leading to excellent quality of life. Communities across Florida, particularly in water-stressed regions, could greatly benefit from implementing this innovative approach to water resources planning and management.