

Goal- Green Infrastructure

The Regional Green Infrastructure is an interconnected system of natural and built infrastructure undeveloped lands and incorporates natural resource areas, recreational lands, and working lands. The Region recognizes the value of the Regional Green Infrastructure, and consistent with the spirit of green infrastructure, incorporates commercially viable forest land, cropland, natural resources and recreational facilities into this category, which is an important part of the fabric and future of Northeast Florida. The Region encourages economic analysis of green infrastructure, and where appropriate, the evaluation of significant projects planned for the Region as to their impacts, including economic, on green infrastructure.

Policy

Using the input of subject matter experts, NEFRC will analyze and refine best available data including Critical Land and Waters identification Project (CLIP) data for the region. Based on analysis and input, NEFRC will define what areas should be considered Regional Green Infrastructure, so that the Region and local governments can consider what to preserve as priorities for development are set by local governments.

Measure

1. Annual assessment of the acreage included in the Region on the maps considered as green infrastructure.

Goals- Resource Adaptation

The Region, as it determines the impact of climate change on Northeast Florida, and if needed, devises plans to mitigate and adapt, will seek to achieve a balance that supports our people, protects our resources and takes advantage of our assets.

The Region supports innovation to lessen impact on resources, including utilizing alternative energy sources for power generation and transportation.

The Region uses its forest resources to create clean sources of energy, and supports using more carbon-free sources in the future.

The Region strives for balance by creating a synergy between the Region's need for food, and preserving agriculture sufficient to allow the region to supply many of its needs locally.

The Region maintains ecosystem services to preserve clean air, water, and habitat for wildlife populations, and to provide flood control.

Policies

- The Region supports maintaining forest cover and tree canopy.
- NEFRC and its partners will endeavor to educate the Region’s residents on the links between their homes, the services, forests, wildlife and habitats that they value, and the planning and practices that enhance sustainability and adaptation to climate change.
- The Region encourages development in areas outside Regional Green Infrastructure and, as such data becomes available, those likely to be impacted by sea level rise.
- Where appropriate, the Region supports the burying of utilities underground.
- The Region seeks to maintain or increase ecosystem services.
- NEFRC, through the regional atlas and data clearinghouse and with the help of its partners, will develop and maintain a regional carbon emissions database.
- The Region seeks to reduce carbon emissions in the Region. Strategies include reducing per capita consumption of fossil fuel-based energy, including industry and utilities, and diversifying energy sources.

Measure

2. Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita [33.9](#)

Goal: Land Use Patterns that Support Natural Resources and People

The Region strives for a civic climate where government leaders are consistent in their policy to guide public and private land use toward a regional land use pattern that creates a healthy job to housing ratio in mixed use growth centers in all seven Counties, increases transit ridership, reduces car dependency and maintains air quality.

The Region seeks to provide a healthy lifestyle with connections to regional recreation facilities, opportunities to access a high-quality education, housing in proximity to major employment centers, access to affordable housing and communities that are safe, walkable and pedestrian friendly.

Policies

- NEFRC and its partners support education on smart growth principles.
- The Region supports incentives to private landowners to maintain wise forestry practices and maintain ecosystem services on their lands.
- The Region seeks diversity of land use in the region.

- The Region supports local and regional efforts to ensure that the region’s residents have access to a healthy lifestyle. This includes using park and community design to ensure that recreation areas are accessible to all residents, and provide mobility and programmatic options so that all of our residents can get to recreation areas without the use of a personal vehicle. The Region promotes physical activity as a way to maintain and improve health, and strives to increase the proportion of trips of less than a mile that are accomplished by walking, and the proportion of trips of less than 5 miles that are accomplished by biking.
- The Region supports conservation of natural resources through public land acquisition to preserve ecosystem services.
- The NEFRC supports local government efforts to reduce impervious surfaces, encourage infill and redevelopment, and use low impact development practices in the Region.
- The Region encourages utilities to coordinate utility siting with local government land use planning to maximize efficiencies in resource distribution.

Measure

3. Heart disease rate[8.8%](#)

Goal- Healthy, Well-Functioning and Sustainable Natural Resources of Regional Significance

Northeast Florida recognizes that some resources have the potential to impact more than one jurisdiction, and their viability is of concern to the Region. NEFRC promotes the protection of these resources, as contained on the Natural Resources of Regional Significance list.

Policies

- The long-term health of Natural Resources on this list shall be considered by the NEFRC as it makes decisions and reviews projects that may impact them.
- NEFRC encourages local governments to consider impacts to these resources as they plan.
- Natural Resources of Regional Significance are shown at a scale of 1:100,000 on the maps in the following categories: Strategic Species Sites, Surface Waters, Ground Water Resources, Coastal and Marine Resources, Natural Systems and Planning and Resource Management Areas.
- Field verification, site surveys and other detailed analyses may be used to determine the exact boundaries of Natural Resources of Regional Significance. The maps generally depict location and connectivity.

Measure

4. Number of local governments that assess impact on the St. Johns River in land use decisions.

Goal- Water Quantity

The Region maximizes water conservation by domestic, agricultural, industrial, and commercial users. Residents of the region understand water conservation issues through education programs.

Policies

The Region supports:

- Reduction of gross and residential per capita residential water consumption.
- Development of a uniform comprehensive water consumption per capita tool that will clearly and consistently track usage annually.
- Reductions of agricultural runoff by increasing % of farms that have implemented both water table and nutrient Best Management Practices.
- Achieving 100% compliance with NPDES permits.
- Eliminating use of potable water for lawn irrigation by 2060.
- Maximizing use of reclaimed water.
- Diversifying sources of water.
- Tracking the percentages of water supply from each source.
- Educating the region on water consumption and conservation.
- Protecting recharge areas.

Measure

5. Average water use per capita in gallons per day..... [73.9](#)

Goal- Air Quality

The Region maintains good air quality by keeping carbon emissions low. The extension of the transit system, higher density developments and redevelopment along transit corridors are strategies that will help to reduce overall carbon footprint of the region.

Policies

The Region supports:

- Reducing vehicle miles travelled in the region.
- Increasing use of public transit.

- Increasing energy efficiency.
- Efforts to allow for carbon sequestration.
- Maintenance of air quality standards.

Measure

See Measure 2, above.

Goal- Water Quality

The Region strives for all water bodies to meet water quality standards. The integrity of eco-systems is considered as valuable to the Region as economic growth, as each depends on the other.

Policies

NEFRC, with its partners and through the regional atlas and data clearinghouse, provides access to information of best practices, technologies and tools help to maintain water quality standards and preserve the integrity of ecosystems. The Region supports:

- Reduction of discharge of nutrients and pollutants into surface and groundwater.
- Elimination of failing septic tanks.
- Expansion and improvement of data collection and evaluation for water quality, including better coordination among agencies.
- Protection of functioning wetlands.
- Maintenance of riparian and wetland buffers.
- Purchase of land and wetlands for water conservation purposes.
- Development of a uniform wetland database to measure loss/gain of wetland function.

Measure

- 6. Number of water bodies that are listed as impaired[146](#)