

# **Jackson Blue Springs BMAP Meeting**



# Issue

- The Jackson Blue Springs Basin makes up approx. 90,000 acres in Jackson County with a large percentage of it Agriculture.
- Nitrate levels in Merritts Mill Pond is the problem being addressed.
- The way the process of establishing the BMAP started out didn't work.



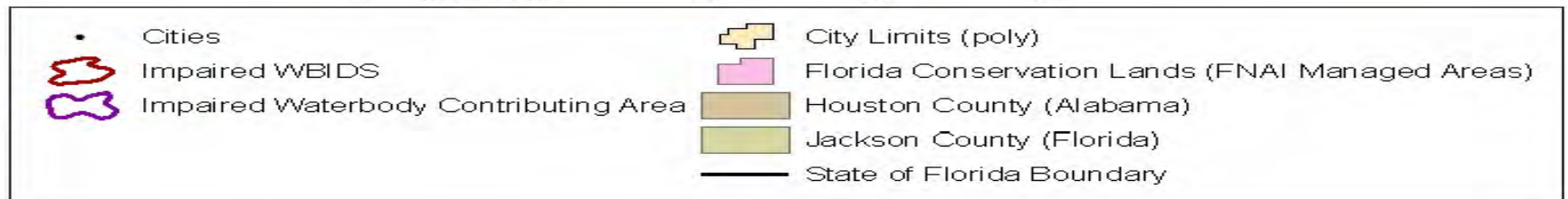
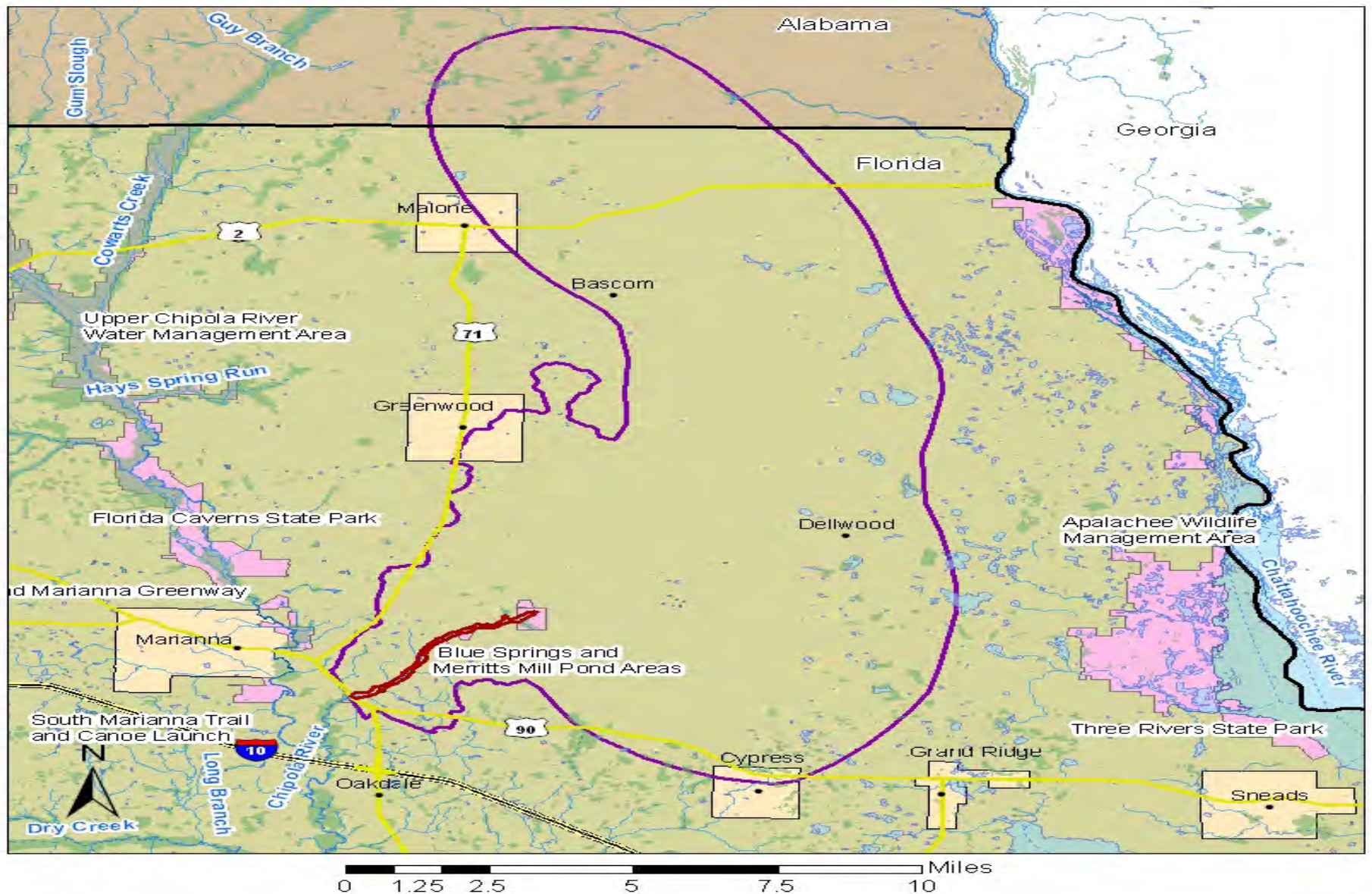


# Meeting

- **Goal**

To hold meeting for producers in the Basin, presenting facts and information that will help them make a good decision in the direction of their farming operation as it relates to the BMAP and BMP program.





# Pre meeting planning

- **Questionnaire**

I developed a questionnaire and had 14 producers complete.

- **News Releases**

Both County Newspapers had articles on front page of paper to announce meeting.

# Jackson Blue Springs BMAP Questionnaire

\*\*\*\* If you need more space for answers feel free to use back\*\*\*\*

1. Type of Operation? \_\_\_\_\_ (list all) i.e Row Crop, Cattle, Timber
2. Do you feel the BMAP process will affect your operation? Yes No Explain How?
3. Do you think you can change your operation to help improve water quality in ways that are cost effective and feasible? Yes No If so, How?
4. What idea(s) do you have where FDACS BMP Cost Share funding could help you implement changes in your operation to address water quality?
5. What questions do you have about the BMAP process? What could DEP and or FDACS do to help with this process? What questions do you have about the BMP program?
6. Do you currently have all of your operation enrolled in the FDACS BMP program? No Yes  
If no, why not?
7. Is all or part of your property in the Jackson Blue Springs Basin? Yes No



**BLUE SPRINGS  
BASIN MEETING  
AG CENTER  
JAN 26 530**



**BROADCAST CENTER**



**newspaper 980 west**

**90**

# Basin meeting for farmers is Monday

Deborah Buckhalter / Jackson County Floridan | Posted: Friday, January 23, 2015

6:00 pm



## Jackson Blue Springs Basin

Merritt's Mill Pond, part of the Jackson Blue Springs Basin.

Cattle ranchers, row-croppers and other farmers who operate in the Jackson Blue Springs Basin have an opportunity on Monday to find out more about the ongoing refinement of the state's plan to reduce the amount of pollution that runs off into the spring

# Farm Groups to Host Meeting on New State Regulations, Monday January 26

Saturday, 17 January 2015 19:52

Written by Bo McMullian







Outcome of  
meeting

# Reducing nitrates in the Millpond

Monday, 02 February 2015 16:33

Written by Bo McMullian



**FL Dept of Agriculture Rep Hugh Thomas Monday Night in Marianna - Photo by Bo McMullian**

“Agriculture gets the black eye, but we are all to blame,” says FDAG rep

A friendly but skeptical group of Jackson County’s growers and ranchers attended an informational meeting Monday night called by the Florida Farm Bureau which also featured representatives from the Florida Department of Agriculture and the Northwest Florida Water Management District. FFB and FDAG want to help farmers as the state and its Department of Environmental Protection roll out the new regulations concerning water quality, known as Basin Management Action Plans (BMAP) and Best Management Practices (BMP). DEP has been saying since 2013 that nitrate levels which cause algae and plant bloom in the Merritt’s Millpond--and back up to the source Blue Springs, are far too high and that farming must do its part to reduce the nitrogen contamination.

**DEP wants farmers in the Blue Springs Basin to sign up for compliance with state law (per the 1999 Florida Watershed Restoration Act) and begin using BMP manuals in their operations. But a question and answer session after the presentations showed that many farmers are not anxious to start signing up for BMPs anytime soon.**



# Farmers meet to discuss basin program

**Deborah Buckhalter / Jackson County Floridan | Posted: Tuesday, January 27, 2015 5:00 pm**



## Jackson Blue Springs

The state is trying to enlist farmers, homeowners and others in the effort to better protect Jackson Blue Spring from pollution. Visitors will be flooding through the gate to this prime recreation area this summer.

As Jackson County cattle ranchers and row-croppers digested the latest news on the state's attempt to clean up Jackson Blue Spring, by cleaning up the land that sheds water into it, they were also treated to something that went down a little easier.

As they listened for information that could affect them as stakeholders in the process, the farmers and landowners dined on hamburgers cooked up by the Jackson County Cattlemen's Association Monday night.

The meeting they attended was held at the Jackson County agriculture center on Penn Avenue in Marianna. The gathering was arranged by the Florida Farm Bureau Federation. Speakers from that organization, the Florida Department of Agriculture and the

**Questions?**