



Alachua County Springs Protection Behavior Change Projects

Stacie Greco, Water Resources Manager
Environmental Protection Department



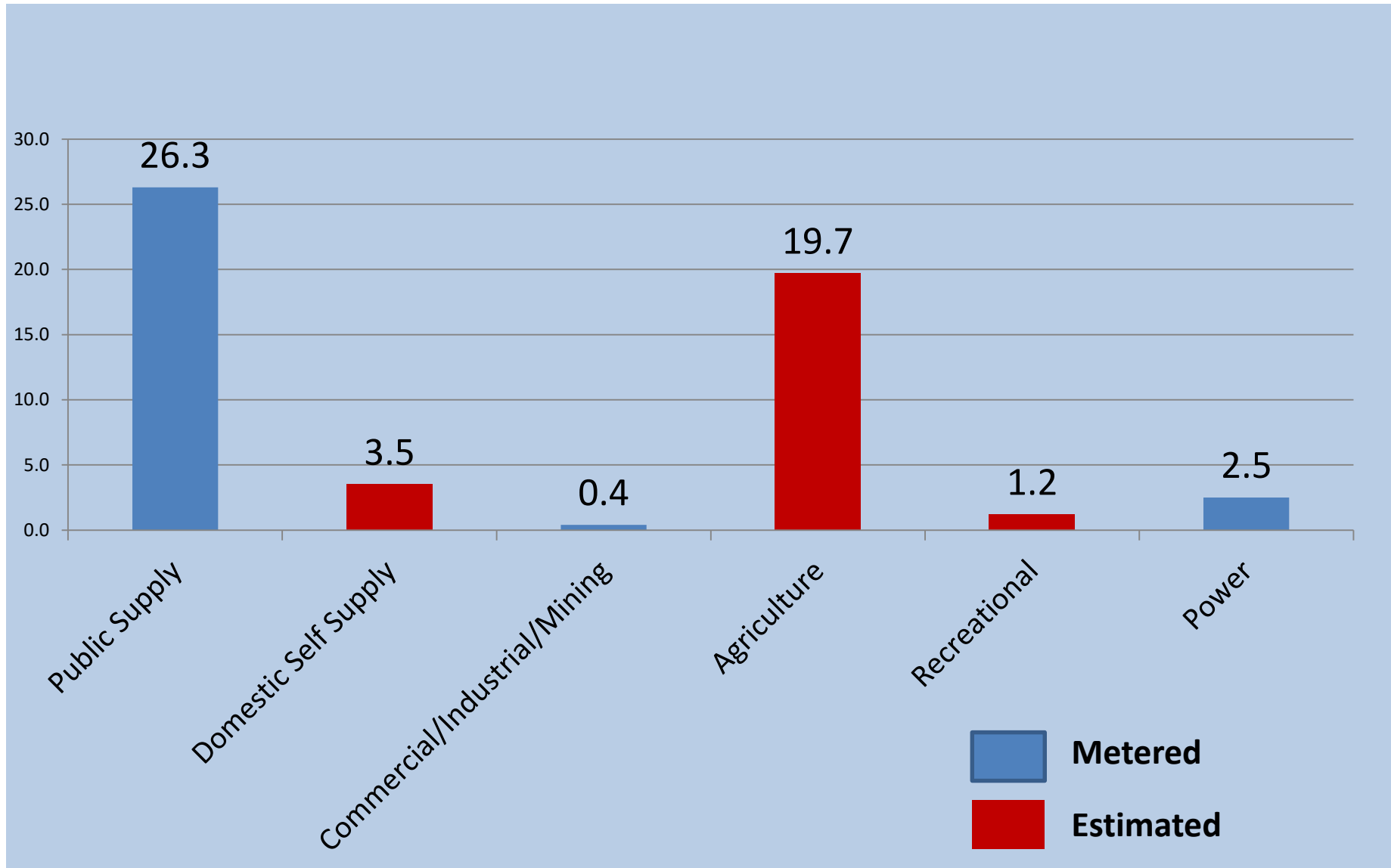
Outline

- Why Landscapes?
- Social Marketing Research
- Social Media
- Landscaping Preference Data
- Turf SWAP Program
- Fertilizer Outreach
- Aquifer Awareness Campaign
- General Stakeholder Engagement
- Septic Systems

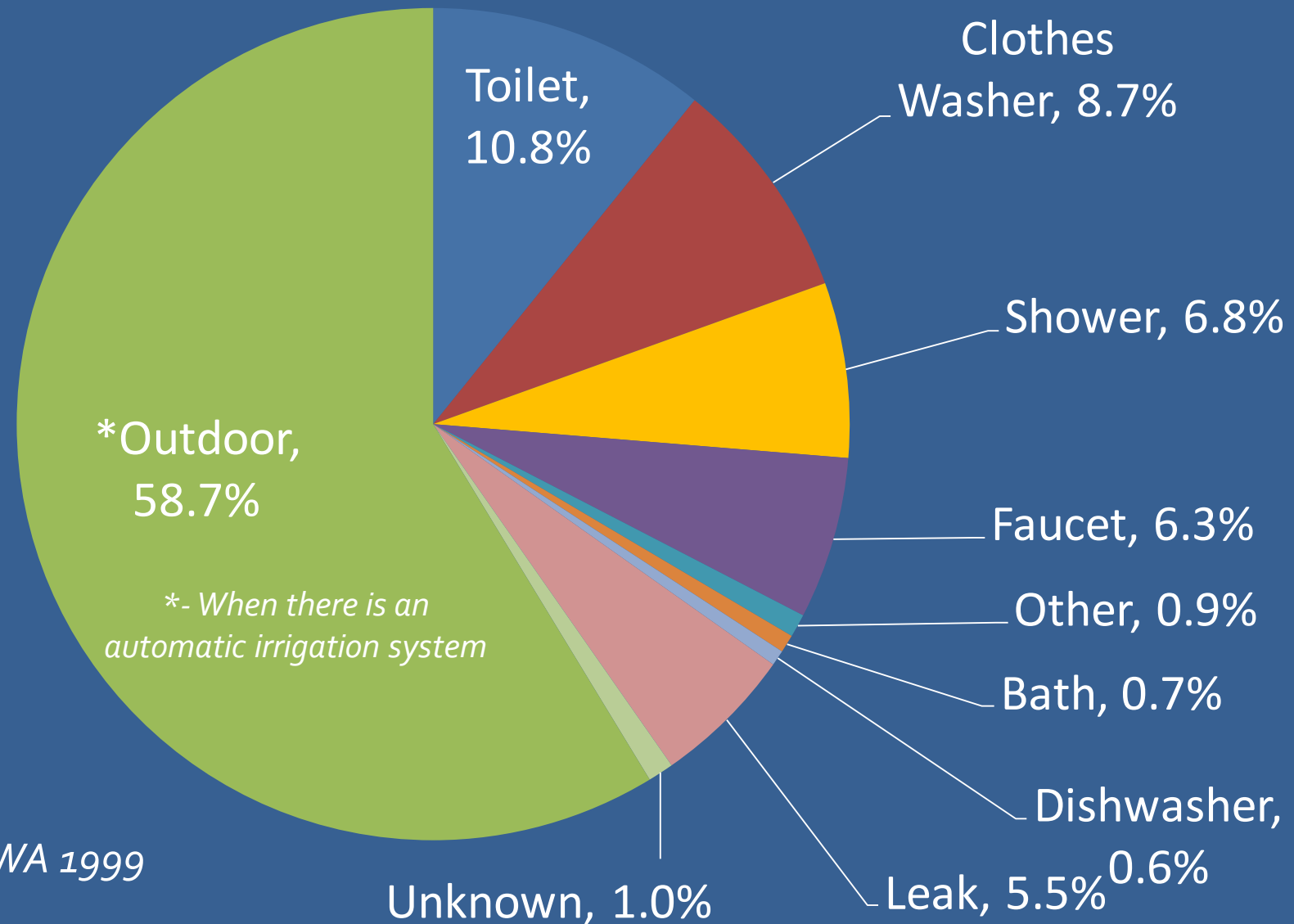


2010 Groundwater Pumping (MGD) in Alachua

(Marella 2014)



Residential Water Use



Source: AWWA 1999

Alachua County

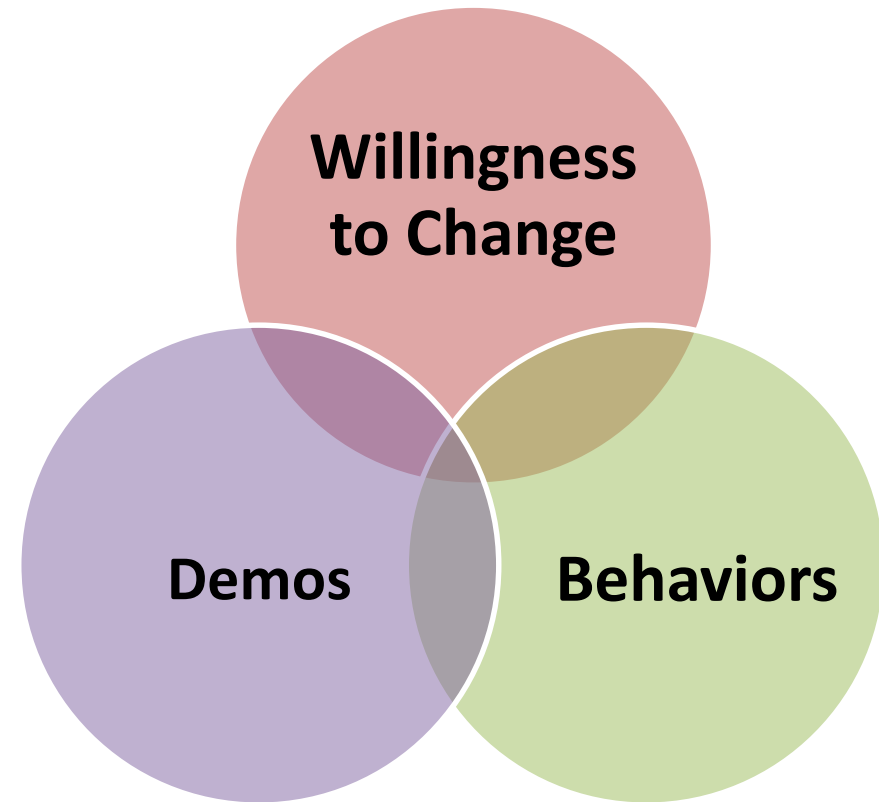
Landscaping Strategies

- Reducing Irrigation and Fertilizer Use (Regulatory)
 - Irrigation Efficiency Design Code
 - Irrigation Restrictions
 - Fertilizer Code
 - HOA FFL Code
- Shifting Landscaping Paradigm (Education)
 - Facebook Marketing
 - Television Commercials
 - Turf SWAP Rebate Program



Social Marketing

- The use of traditional marketing tools to influence behaviors for a greater good
- Identify a target audience for a focused behavior specific message (there is no “general public”)
 - Audience segmentation

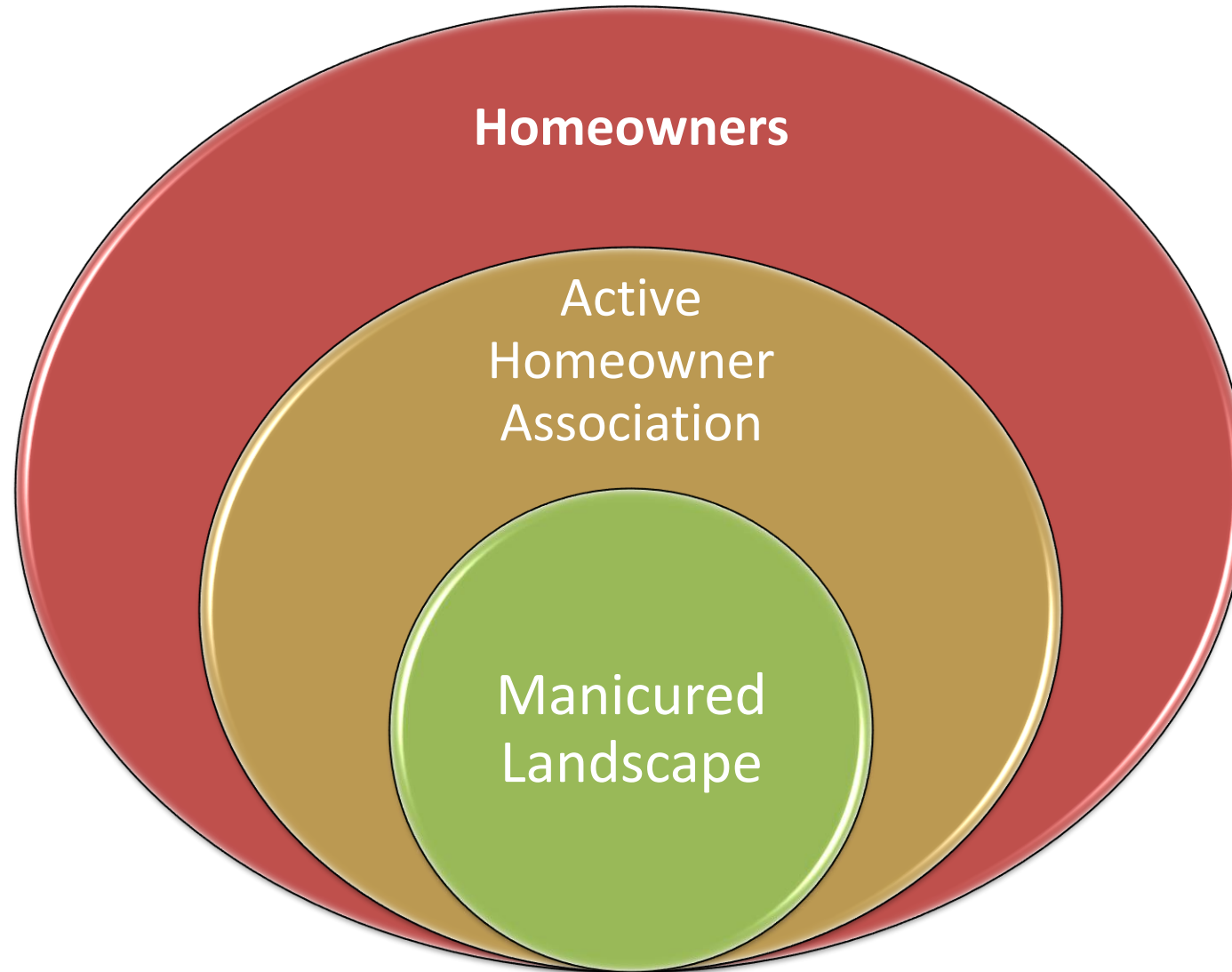


Social Marketing Research Example

- 2011 and 2012 Springs Tag Grants
 - Focus groups and interviews to determine how homeowners view the effects of their behaviors on the health of springs



Defining Our Target Audience



What Did We Learn?

- Many adults do not know the source of our drinking water
- Participants that were worried about not having enough water in the future often cited:
 - Dry lakes, springs, wetlands
 - Living in areas with extreme water shortages (Texas, Arizona, Atlanta, Caribbean, etc.)



What Did We Learn?

- An attitude that others are not doing their part, so why should they?
 - Nearby large cities, agriculture, industry, bottled water, etc.
- Participants wanted specific simple actions they could perform to do something to protect water resources



What Did We Learn?

- Unsuccessfully tried to recruit leaders to help educate neighbors and friends
- Successfully held neighborhood workshops
- Attend existing events and group meetings
- MyYardOurWater.org



It's all connected

A picture is worth 1,000 words *(or a lot of “likes”)*

- Trying to shift our perception of ideal yards
 - Facebook Photo contest of springs friendly yards
 - ~50,000 reached
 - 54 pictures with comments





Alachua County

Published by Bret Bostock [?] · November 3 at 2:04pm · 🌐

Don't get caught wasting water! Irrigation restrictions are reduced to one day a week starting November 6, because landscapes don't need much/any additional water during cooler months. Try turning your system off and only watering if grass blades start to fold.



Irrigation Restrictions

Watering is allowed before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m.

Location	Summer	Winter
	2 nd Sun in Mar - 1 st Sat in Nov	1 st Sun in Nov - 2 nd Sat in Mar
Odd House #	Wed and/or Sat	Sat
Even House #	Thur and/or Sun	Sun
Non-residential/ commercial	Tue and/or Fri	Tue

MyYardOurWater.org

Report Violations to 352-264-6800



34,716 people reached



[View Results](#)

👍 🤔 😬 257

53 Comments 202 Shares



[Like](#) [Comment](#) [Share](#)

New Homeowner Survey



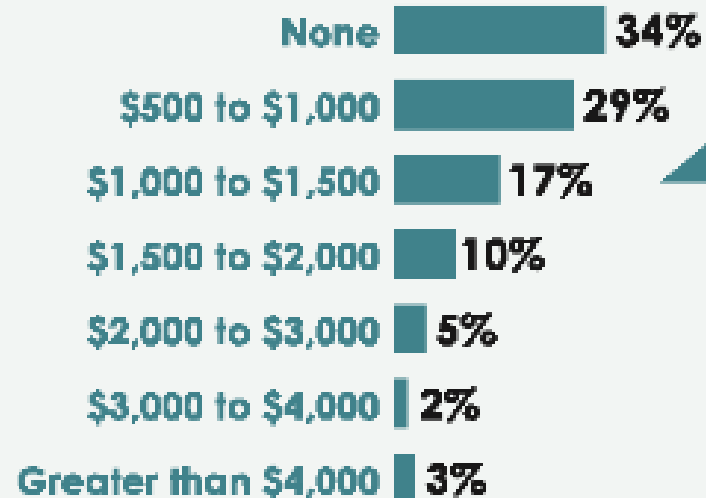
451 participants

145 participants

New Homeowner Survey

If you were purchasing a new home again, how much more would you be willing to pay for a lower water use landscape?

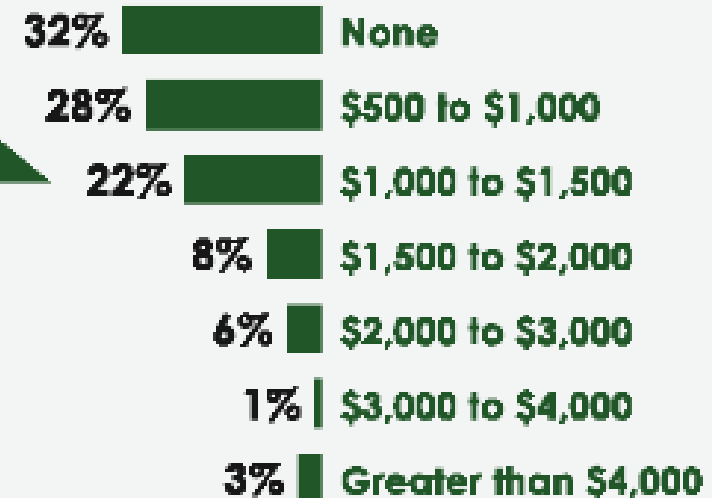
Residents who purchased homes since 2010



66%
WILLING
TO
PAY
MORE

451 people surveyed

Residents who purchased BRAND NEW construction



68%
WILLING
TO
PAY
MORE

145 people surveyed

New Homeowner Survey

If you were purchasing a new home again, what would you want to see in the landscape?

59%
More plants
that need
little water

48%
More grass that
does not need
irrigation
(i.e. Bahia/Centpede)

43%
More
hardscapes
(i.e. patios and decks)

29%
More
landscaped
beds/plants

17%
More
turf/grass
(St. Augustine/
Zoysia)

15%
Other

12%
Less
irrigation

13%
Less
turf/grass
(St. Augustine/
Zoysia)

11%
More
irrigation

7%
Fewer
landscaped
beds/plants

Data from homeowners
that purchased their
homes since 2010.

Turf SWAP Rebate Program

\$300,000 cost share funding

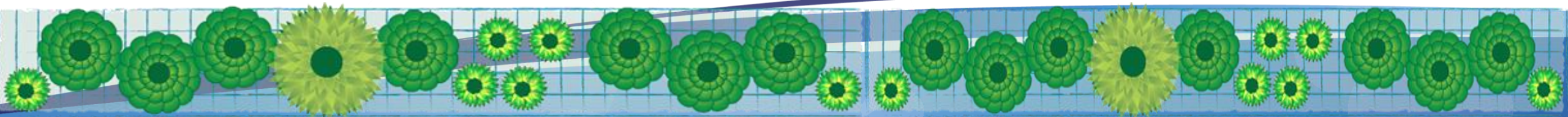
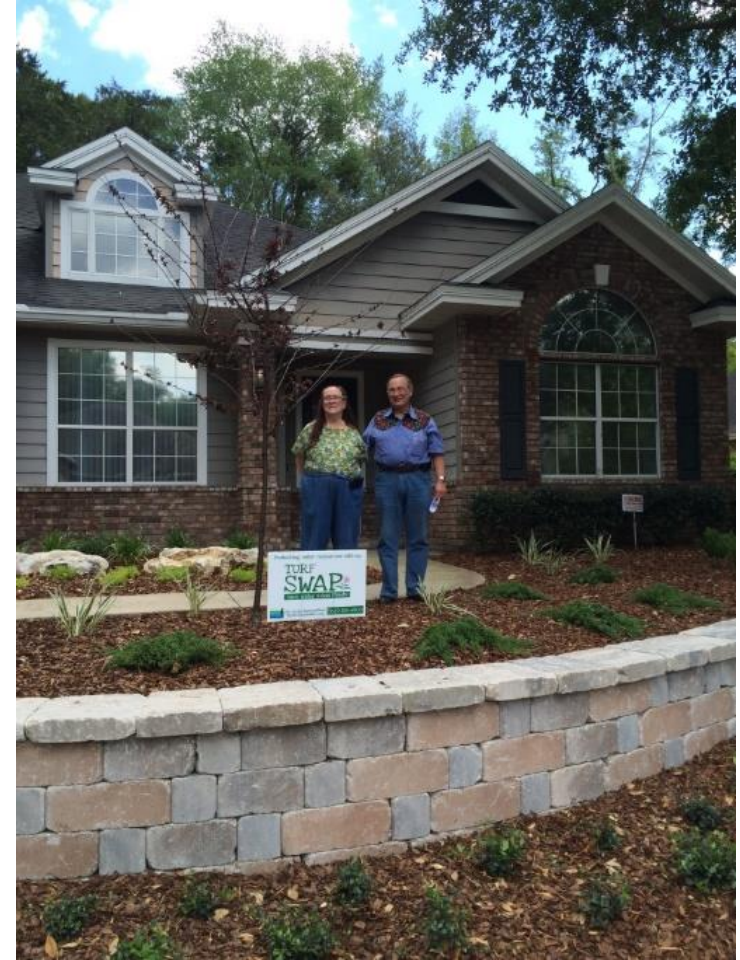
(Springs Protection funding from the state)

- 50% rebate, up to \$2,000, per property
- Ended 1/31/19, but applied for additional funding...



How it works

- 129 participants
- 1,8770 irrigation heads removed
- Almost 400,000 ft² high volume irrigation removed
- ~15.81 million gallons per year saved



Fertilizer Campaign-319 Education Funding

- Creating a research based campaign
 - Will focus on NOT fertilizing
- Billboards, social media, direct mailing, other....
- Quantify results and load reductions





**BACKYARDS ARE FOR BERRIES
AND BELLY LAUGHS
(NOT FERTILIZER).**



**56% OF ALACHUA
COUNTY RESIDENTS
SAY THEY DON'T USE
FERTILIZER AT ALL.**

**CAN YOU TELL THE
DIFFERENCE?**

OUR SPRINGS CAN.



My Yard
Our Water

It's all connected



A



G



Aquifer Awareness (total budget of \$12,000)

- Based on local survey data, less than 50% of residents know that their drinking water is groundwater from the aquifer.
 - Disconnect- “Use less water to save our springs”
 - One billboard near Archer Rd and SW 34th Street for July 2019
 - 4 million views
 - Social media yielded 92,000 impressions and 7,000 views of an educational video
 - \$10,000 grant to re-visit in 2020
- 

**THE
AQUIFER
IS OUR
WATER
SOURCE**

Our springs

Our water

It's all connected.



888-679-9886

**THE
AQUIFER
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Our aquifer

Our water

It's all connected.



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Signage in State Parks in the Santa Fe Basin



56 showers
24 stall doors
30 sinks

Stakeholder paddling trips

- 6 trips to engage stakeholders during informal and formal discussions
 - elected officials, Ag, developers, environmental community, landscapers, etc.
- One additional trip with 4H club



Springs Protection Forums

- Quarterly meetings to discuss springs issues and solutions
 - Great place to share results
 - Field trips
 - Presentations on Alachua County website
- Attendance is 40-70
- Next meeting is 12/19/20 in High Springs



Next Up- Septic Tank Ordinance

- Currently upgrading and monitoring 2 drainfields at Poe Springs Park
 - Considering nutrient reducing drainfields for.....
 - New construction
 - Retrofits
 - Within certain BMAP areas or buffers of watersheds
 - Need better pricing information and performance data
 - Hoping FDEP will extend rebate money to Alachua County so we can monitor retrofit systems
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Contact Information

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www.MyYardOurWater.org

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