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Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$305 Million in WIFIA Loans for Water Supply Sustainability in Central Florida

When combined with other funding sources, the WIFIA program has supported more than \$39 billion for America's water infrastructure

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Contact Information

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WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced two Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loans totaling \$305 million to the Polk Regional Water Cooperative in Polk County, Florida. This funding will support projects to sustain the local drinking water supply and alleviate the strain on the Upper Floridan Aquifer.

“In central Florida, strain on local groundwater is threatening the drinking water of 635,000 people. That’s why EPA is announcing \$305 million in WIFIA funding to help turn millions of gallons of brackish water into safe drinking water every day,” said **EPA Assistant Administrator Radhika Fox**. “Through WIFIA and \$50 billion under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, EPA is addressing water challenges across the country, strengthening communities, and advancing the Biden-Harris Administration’s vision for investing in America.”

Polk County relies on the Upper Floridan Aquifer as its primary source of water. This aquifer is projected to be unable to meet drinking water demand by 2035, and the Polk Regional Water Cooperative is proactively securing a sustainable water supply while protecting central Florida’s natural water resources

through the Alternative Water Supply Program. The Alternative Water Supply Program is a regional solution to help reduce strain on the Upper Floridian Aquifer constructing two new water production facilities that provide treatment for brackish water from the Lower Floridian Aquifer. Both facilities will have extraction and injection wells, as well as standalone reverse osmosis water treatment plants and distribution piping. Once complete, the Polk Regional Water Cooperative will produce 10 million gallons per day of new alternative water supplies with future expansion capability of up to 22.5 million gallons per day.

“Receiving these WIFIA loans is a game-changer for the residents of Polk County,” said **George Lindsey III, Chairman of the PRWC Board of Directors**. “The PRWC alliance formed between the county and its municipalities has strengthened our opportunity to seek federal and state funding that will have tremendous impact on future water supplies in Polk.”

EPA committed to this project early in its development and worked closely with the Cooperative to develop a strong financing agreement that will save approximately \$178 million. Investing in the region’s infrastructure will create approximately 2,000 construction and operation jobs.

Learn more about [EPA’s WIFIA Program](#) and water infrastructure investments under the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#).

Background

Established by the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014, the [WIFIA program](#) is a federal loan program administered by EPA. The WIFIA program’s aim is to accelerate investment in the nation’s water infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost supplemental credit assistance for regionally and nationally significant projects. The WIFIA program has an active pipeline of pending applications for projects that will result in billions of dollars in water infrastructure investment and thousands of jobs.

EPA is currently accepting letters of interest for WIFIA and SWIFIA loans. Learn more about [submitting a letter of interest for a WIFIA loan](#).

In addition to WIFIA loans, there are many federal funding resources available for communities and utilities to improve vital water and wastewater resources. President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is a once-in-a-generation investment in our nation’s infrastructure and competitiveness. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides a historic \$50 billion investment in upgrading critical water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure.

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