



## **NEWS RELEASE**

August 4, 2021

[mcoates@regionalwater.org](mailto:mcoates@regionalwater.org)

941-316-1776

### **Mike Coates Selected Executive Director, Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority**

The Board of Directors for the Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority selected Mike Coates, P.G., to be the next Executive Director. Mike succeeds Patrick Lehman, P.E., who has been at the Authority for 30 years, 25 as Executive Director.

Coates has been with the Authority for 15 years, serving initially as Water Resources Director and since 2012, Chief Operating Officer. He has 35-years of experience in Florida utility operations and management, resource evaluation, and water supply planning and development. That includes work for both the South and Southwest Florida Water Management Districts and Tampa Bay Water, the regional water authority for Tampa Bay.

Over the last several years, Coates has supervised acquiring a 50-year water use permit for the Peace River Authority and provided management oversight for the planning, design, and construction of water supply and transmission projects. These projects are instrumental to regional water security. Coates prepared budgets, secured financing, and identified grants to offset costs for member governments and their customers.

“The Authority is considered a model throughout the state for cooperation and successful water supply planning and development. Continuity is important to our continued success,” said Authority Chair Alan Maio.

“Mike will ensure we have a smooth transition and continue to move forward as we have in the past,” agreed Desoto County Commissioner Elton Langford.

“This operation is very complex and critically important to this region,” said Commissioner George Kruse.

As he made the motion to hire Coates, Commissioner Bill Truex noted that he understands the importance of continuity as a business owner. “I think Mike is an excellent choice,” he said.

Mike Coates is a member of the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA).

The Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority has provided water to its member governments, Charlotte, Desoto, Sarasota, and Manatee Counties, for more than 30 years.