

2016

Volusia County Wetland Ordinance Review



Volusia County
Environmental Management

The importance of wetlands

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- Wetlands filter pollution and help clean surface water.
- An acre of wetland can store and treat 1-1.5 million gallons of flood water
- 75% of commercially harvested fish and shellfish, and 90% of recreational fish in the U.S are dependent on wetlands for their reproductive cycle.
- One-half of all North American bird species nest or feed in wetlands.

Estimated economic value of wetlands

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Total annual economic value of wetlands in North America (in 2000 \$)

- ▣ Mangroves - \$30M
- ▣ Unvegetated sediment - \$550 M
- ▣ Salt/Brackish marsh – 30M
- ▣ Freshwater marsh – 1.7 M
- ▣ Freshwater wooded – \$64M
- ▣ **Total - \$677M**

Background

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- Since 1989, **all wetlands in Volusia County** have been protected through a minimum standard (Chapter 50), which requires:
 - ▣ Local government review of all wetland alteration permits
 - ▣ Avoidance and minimization of impacts
 - ▣ 25 foot upland buffers
- Current county implementing ordinance requires 50 foot upland buffers for NRMA and OFW (comp. plan designation of ECO)

Intent of review

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- The wetland minimum standard was adopted in 1989, last revised in 1996
- Concept is to provide the highest level of protection to the most important wetlands
- Improve water quality
- Reduce duplication where state requirements are sufficiently protective

Codifying existing practice

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- Definition of wetland is consistent with state definition
- Mitigation is assessed using a qualitative and quantitative method approved by the state (UMAM)
- Local governments will accept mitigation that is accepted by the state
- Mitigation is only required for loss of wetland or buffer function (no mitigation required for non-functioning areas)
- Local governments can adopt stricter standards

Review Areas

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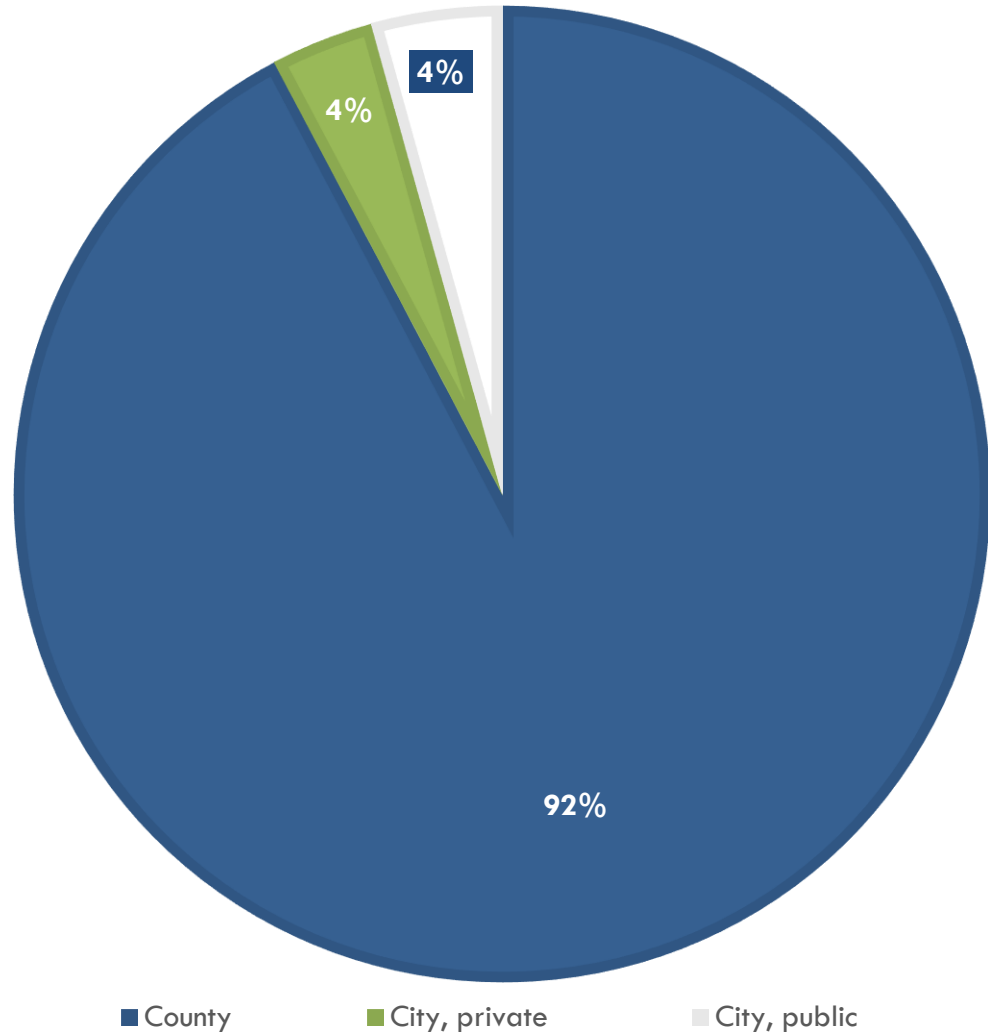
- Basic Review: urban and infill areas, primarily within municipalities
- Priority Review: NRMA, ECO, OFW, parcels adjacent to priority waters
- Intermediate Review: Areas other than basic and priority, all within unincorporated Volusia County

Important note: Review is based on the location of a parcel of land, permitting is based on actual wetlands, if any.

Priority Review Area

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- 192,292 acres in basic review area
- 73,131 acres in intermediate review



Standards in each review area

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Review Level	Location	Review and Permit Process	Buffer Location	Wetland Mitigation
PRIORITY WETLAND REVIEW	ECO, NRMA, OFW, Priority waters	Local Review Permit required for impacts	50 feet	Avoid and Minimize to the extent practicable
INTERMEDIATE WETLAND REVIEW	Not Priority or Basic Unincorporated areas only	Local Review Permit required for impacts	25 feet	Mitigation based on quality and function
BASIC WETLAND REVIEW**	Urban Areas Infill	No local review required	No local buffer requirement	No local mitigation required

** Cities may adopt stricter standards

Interactive map

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- www.volusia.org/wetlands
- web based map that shows parcel level detail and identifies:
 - Review areas
 - City boundaries
 - Priority waterways
 - Public lands

Progress to date

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- June 2015 - Concepts discussed with Smart Growth Policy Review Committee
- June 2015 - Presented to county council
- August-Sept. 2015 - Meetings with VCARD, environmental organizations, regulatory agencies
- December 2015 - Draft ordinance released
- February 2016 - Public meetings, comment period

Next Steps

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- **February 26, 2016**, comments due from cities and individuals
- **March 2016**, council review and discussion,
- **TBD**, council to adopt changes to minimum standard
- Pending approval, **January 2017**, cities to adopt standards or defer to county implementing ordinance

Questions/Discussion?

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