



# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF Environmental Protection

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Thank you for contacting the Northeast District of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection regarding our Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) program. This document contains useful information about the program in general and answers to frequently asked questions. If you have any further questions; please do not hesitate to contact us. This document is only considered to be a useful guide. Final determination of required actions or permits are determined by the Agency.

## OVERVIEW

The Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) Program regulates activities in, on or over surface waters or wetlands, as well as any activity involving the alteration of surface water flows. This includes new activities in uplands that generate stormwater runoff from upland construction, as well as dredging and filling in wetlands and other surface waters. Environmental Resource Permit applications are processed by either the department or one of the state's water management districts, in accordance with the division of responsibilities specified in [operating agreements](#) between the department and the water management districts. The ERP Program is in effect throughout the state.

In addition to the above regulatory permit programs, activities that are located on submerged lands owned by the state of Florida, otherwise called state-owned, or sovereign, submerged lands (SSL) also require a proprietary authorization for such use under Chapter 253, F.S., and Chapter 18-21, F.A.C. Such lands generally extend waterward from the mean high water line (of tidal waters) or the ordinary high water line (of fresh waters) both inland and out to the state's territorial limit (approximately three miles into the Atlantic Ocean, and ten miles in the Gulf of Mexico).

## APPLICATION SUBMISSION

To apply for a self-certification, exemption, general permit, or individual/conceptual permit online, please use the DEP [Business Portal](#) or go to <https://floridadep.gov/water/submerged-lands-environmental-resources-coordination/content/submitting-erp> for forms, rules and informational links.

There is a \$100.00 discount to apply using the DEP business portal for an individual/conceptual permit, and self-certification of single-family dock exemptions is free. If you choose not to apply through the DEP business portal, you may submit the forms along with any supplemental information either by email or paper mail.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- How do I determine if my property is located on a Wetland?

If you suspect that you have wetlands on your property, a good place to start is locating the property on the National Wetlands Inventory Wetlands Mapper. This is only an indication of potential wetland areas and the boundaries can often be inaccurate. You can access the National Wetlands Inventory map to view properties by clicking this link, <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html>

- Why are wetlands protected?
  1. Many animals depend on wetlands for some part of their life cycle.
  2. Wetland plants are productive and support a rich web of life, from simple molds to mammals.
  3. Wetlands provide food and shelter for fish, birds and other animals.
  4. Wetlands provide flood control by soaking up rainwater.
  5. Wetlands make the water clearer and filter out things that degrade water quality, such as chemical pollution.
  6. Wetlands help filter and retain stormwater runoff.
  7. Some wetlands provide a recreation for people (fishing, hunting, air boating, kayaking, canoeing, boating and bird watching)
- If my property is wetland, does that mean it is unbuildable?

No, DEP issues ERP permits every day for construction in wetland areas. It means that through the permitting review process, impacts must be eliminated or reduced by reducing the size of the house pad or foundation or relocating the project area to avoid wetlands to the greatest extent possible. It means that the unavoidable impacts must be offset by mitigation. It also means best management practices (erosion, sedimentation and turbidity controls) must be used during construction to avoid erosion and long term impacts to surrounding areas.

- What is Mitigation?

Mitigation is offsetting the loss of the functions of wetlands and other surface waters by restoring, enhancing, creating, or preserving wetlands and other surface waters somewhere else in a manner that replaces the lost functions. Mitigation cannot be considered until an applicant first reduces or eliminates adverse un-permittable impacts to the maximum extent practicable.

- Where can I find the answers to more questions regarding the Environmental Resource Program (ERP)?

For more answers to frequently asked question concerning ERP please click on the following link:[http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/dwrm/slerp/erphelp/mergedProjects/erphelp/Subject\\_Discussions/faq.htm](http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/dwrm/slerp/erphelp/mergedProjects/erphelp/Subject_Discussions/faq.htm)