

Miami-Dade County Options to Consider for Permitting of Agricultural Uses in Wetlands Continued

Miami-Dade County Wetlands Advisory Task Force

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Recording of Wetland Value Option

Would defer mitigation associated with wetland permits for ag. production by establishing the mitigation value of the wetland prior to farming operations, and require the wetland impacts to be compensated upon a change in land use in the future

Conditions

- Requires that the wetland function be established prior to impact
- Require that the land use and zoning be consistent with the proposed use
- Requires that the Ag site alteration not include the importation of any fill material to the site. Only leveling or rowing and furrowing of existing material
- For areas previously impacted, not high quality wetlands
- Mitigation would be paid in the future if converted to a non-ag. use

Delayed Mitigation through Recording of Wetland Value

Limitations/Concerns

- No guarantee that the wetland function will ever be replaced
- Mitigation options on-site/off-site/banks would require different functional scoring techniques, UMAM, WRAP, WATER
- Changes to mitigation rules over time complicate the issue, many changes have happened in the past 10 years
- Requires that the Ag site alteration not include the importation of any fill material to the site. Only clearing, leveling or rowing and furrowing of existing material
- Clouds the title potentially complicating sale

Limited Exemption Option

This would provided for a limited exemption for agriculture in lower quality previously impacted wetlands areas.

Conditions

- Requires that the area either have active agriculture or 90% or more exotic trees or shrubs such as BP or Ardesia
- Require that the land use and zoning be consistent with the proposed use
- Requires that the Ag site alteration not include the importation of any fill material to the site. Only leveling or rowing and furrowing of existing material
- A written confirmation of exemption must be issued prior to impact
- Allow for up to 10 acres under the exemption

Reduced Mitigation for Agriculture in previously Impacted Lower Quality Areas

Mitigation through a donation to a conservation land acquisition program - similar to “Preservation” in UMAM

- Impacts to typical lower quality wetlands may currently require \$25-40K at a mitigation bank. This option could reduce the mitigation cost per acre to as low as \$5-7K (Approx. 80% reduction) (1:1 ratio).
- This option would allow for the purchase of remote high quality wetlands to off-set an agricultural wetland impact at a ratio ranging from 1:1 to 4:1 depending on the quality of the wetlands. Savings of 50-80%
- Mitigation would be required at time of permitting, with no additional future mitigation provided that the land use does not change for a minimum of 5 years.

Summary of Options

- 1) Time lag only mitigation. This concept allows for paying the mitigation in increments over time.
- 2) Reduced mitigation through land donation. Degraded, previously impacted wetland dominated by exotic vegetation (>50%). The amount of donation to be related to the quality.
- 3) Delayed mitigation until a future land use through recording of wetland values
- 4) Limited Exemption when applicable for existing active farming or >90% exotic vegetation (up to 10 acres)
- 5) Normal permitting options

Summary of Options Table

| Option | Code Change | Covenant | Mitigation Cost | Concern with CDMP policies |
|---------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Time Lag | | | Pay over time | |
| Land Donation | | | Significant reduction | |
| Delayed mitigation | x | Future mitigation | Delayed until land use change | CON-7A |
| Limited Exemption | x | Remain in Ag. for 5 years | None | CON-7A |
| Normal Permitting Options | | | Current Mitigation Bank Rates | |

CON-7A limits degradation or destruction of wetlands to those highly disturbed or degraded areas where restoration of a wetland with an equal or greater value is feasible.