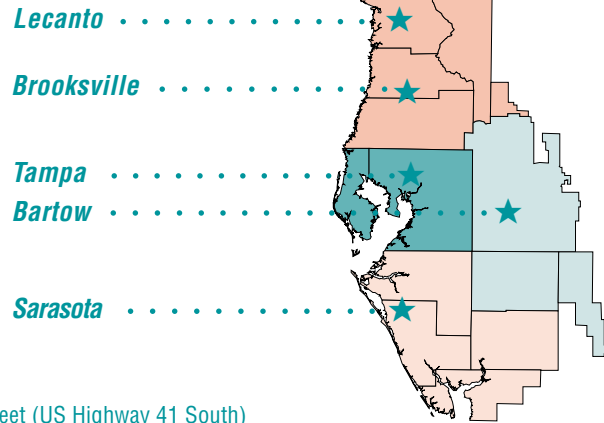


Regional District Service Offices



Brooksville

2379 Broad Street (US Highway 41 South)
Brooksville, FL 34604-6899
(352) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476* TDD 1-800-231-6301
This office handles permits for Hernando, Pasco, Citrus, Lake, Levy, Marion and Sumter counties.

Bartow

170 Century Boulevard (Corner of Century and Highway 60)
Bartow, FL 33830
(863) 534-1448 or 1-800-492-7862*
This office handles permits for Polk, Highlands and Hardee counties.

Lecanto

3600 W. Sovereign Path – Suite 226
Lecanto, FL 34461-8070
(352) 527-8131
This office does not process permits.
Applications are processed through the Brooksville office.

Tampa

7601 US Highway 301 North
Tampa, FL 33637-6759
(813) 985-7481 or 1-800-836-0797*
This office handles permits for Hillsborough and Pinellas counties.

Sarasota

6750 Fruitville Road
Sarasota, FL 34240-9711
(941) 377-3722 or 1-800-320-3503*
This office handles permits for Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte and DeSoto counties.

District Web Site: WaterMatters.org

Southwest Florida
Water Management District



Agricultural Ground and Surface Water Management

"Applied
Innovative Agriculture
as a Passive Alternative
to Permitting"



* 1-800 numbers are for Florida only

District Mission: The mission of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) is to manage the water and water-related resources within its boundaries. Central to the mission is maintaining the balance between the water needs of current and future users while protecting and maintaining the natural systems that provide the District with its existing and future water supply.

AGSWM Vision: The District envisions that successful, long-term agricultural regulatory compliance can and should be achieved through nonintrusive, incentive-based programs. The Agricultural Ground and Surface Water Management (AGSWM) initiative offers practical measures that can be used by agriculturalists to achieve sustainable food and fiber production without compromising the integrity of Florida's valuable natural resources.

The Evolution of AGSWM: Before 1991 the District recognized that various urban standards for surface water management permitting were inappropriate for farming. Utilizing representatives from the District's Agricultural Advisory Committee and others as a think tank, workshops were held by the District in conjunction with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to address those concerns. The District staff then developed special provisions for an agricultural exemption letter to satisfy surface water regulation (now called Environmental Resource Permitting, or ERP). In 1992 the District further categorized specific agricultural activities that could qualify for an exemption letter as Ordinary farming, Temporary farming, and Permanent farming. In 1995 the District expanded the Ag-Team regulation concept by including Water Use Permitting (WUP) reviewers to provide a holistic, agricultural regulatory review process.



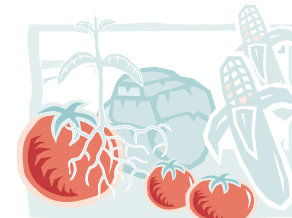
AGSWM Participation: To participate in the AGSWM program, the landowner and farmer can arrange an AGSWM pre-application meeting with the local District Ag-team staff. ***It is important that this meeting occur at the farming site before any construction begins.*** At this meeting, AGSWM staff can provide direction concerning the eligibility of the farming activity for an ERP agricultural exemption letter or a permit, if needed. Also, the operation may qualify for WUP “fast-track” permitting, a streamlined process that is reserved for small projects with few or no impacts to water resources. The District Ag-team staff can readily explain the kind of information that will be needed and identify any potential regulatory complications. This can save the farmer or landowner time and money by preventing delays.

AGSWM Technical Specialists: The following persons can help explain the major AGSWM program elements or they may refer you to the appropriate local service office technical staff for further action:

Regional Agricultural Engineer
Southwest Florida Water Management District
Technical Services Department
Sarasota Service Office
(941) 377-3722 or 1-800-320-3503 (FL only)

USDA-NRCS District Conservationist, working with the local Soil and Water Conservation District office, or
USDA-NRCS Palmetto Area Technical Service Team
(941) 729-6804

District Service Offices: Permit applications and other inquiries about water use, environmental and wetland resources, surface water management and well construction may be submitted to any regional District service office. Regulatory evaluation and field services for projects within the designated service areas will be conducted by the appropriate service office.



The District does not discriminate based on disability. Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation under the ADA should contact BJ Jarvis at (352) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476 (FL only); TDD only 1-800-231-6103.

NRCS's Role: Since 1991 the District has actively supported technical assistance by the NRCS that encourages agriculturalists to use Resource Management System (RMS) conservation planning and to practice good water management. NRCS specializes in RMS planning, which provides farmers with a viable alternative to the usual permitting procedures. AGSWM specifies that farmers who want an ERP exemption letter must utilize RMS planning, implement site-specific Best Management Practices and comply with the technical standards for the appropriate exemption category.

AGSWM Principle for Success:

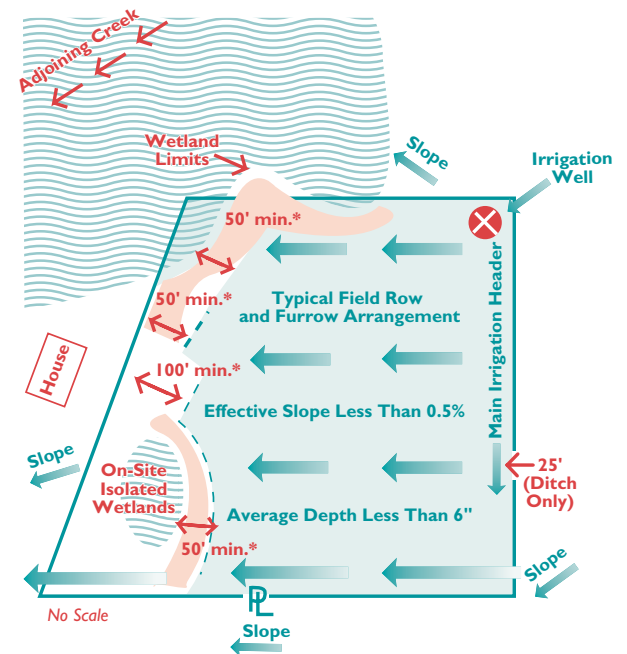
- District staff who are professionally oriented toward agriculture and understand the needs of the agricultural community.
- Landowners/Agriculturalists who are receptive to incentive-based regulation using natural science and engineering recommendations by consultants, District Ag-Teams and NRCS staff.
- All participants sharing a common goal of mutual cooperation.

AGSWM Benefits:

- Provides for on-site review by Ag-Team staff and fosters better understanding by the farmer of potential ERP- and WUP-regulation needs.
- Allows faster decisions and turnaround times by the District.
- RMS conservation planning assists farmers in understanding BMPs and their uses.
- Reduces enforcement action and related production delays and expense.
- Reduces construction costs by using more passive stormwater management in place of ponds.
- Reduces permit application fees and costs.



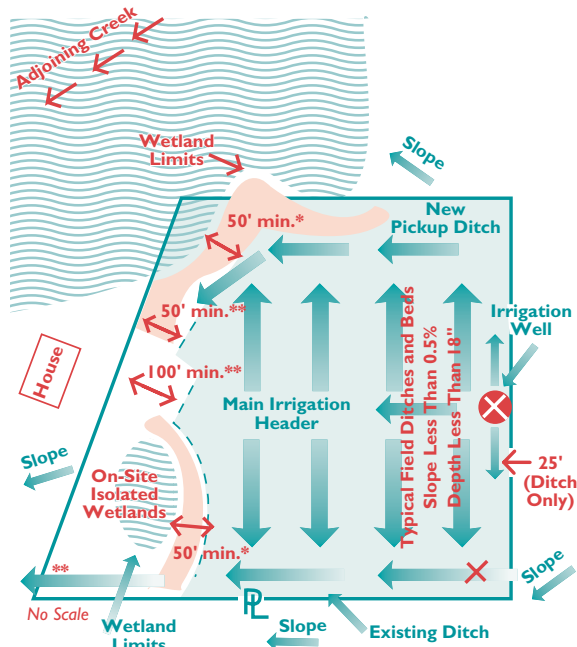
Ordinary Farming
Schematic Site Plan
 (Showing Minimum Setbacks for Exemption)



* Field discharge must resemble sheetflow.

- Typically involves citrus or row crops on moderate to well-drained soils
- Dispersed drainage features without ditches; furrows less than 6 inches deep
- Minimum 50-foot buffer at field edges and around wetlands
- Requires an approved RMS plan
- No underdrains
- Watersheds must be maintained

Temporary Farming Schematic Site Plan (Showing Minimum Setbacks for Exemption)

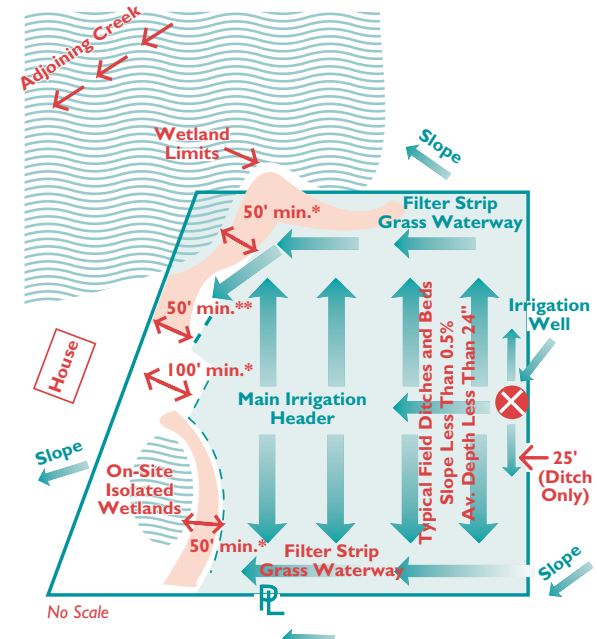


* All wetland limits and setbacks must be field-reviewed by the District before land clearing.

** Field setbacks at discharge points may be governed by needed filter-strip length.

- Typically involves row crops on flatwoods soils
- Drainage features/ditches less than 18 inches deep
- Minimum 50-foot buffer around wetlands
- Requires an approved RMS plan
- Must abandon the field and allow a fallow period when farming is finished

Permanent Farming Schematic Site Plan (Showing Minimum Setbacks for Exemption)



* All wetland limits and setbacks must be field-reviewed by the District before land clearing.

** Field setbacks at discharge points may be governed by needed filter-strip length.

- Typically involves citrus or row crops on moderately drained flatwoods soils
- Drainage features/ditches less than 24 inches deep
- No drainage pumps
- Minimum 50-foot buffer around wetlands
- Requires an approved RMS plan
- Watersheds must be maintained
- Grass waterways/filter strips required for water quality