St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD)

📐 Requirements to Build on Wetlands in the SJRWMD Region

🌿 1. Wetland Delineation (Mandatory First Step)

Before anything else, you must determine **exactly where the wetlands are** on your property.

- Must be done using Florida's official delineation methodology (Chapter 62-340, F.A.C.).
- Typically performed by a certified environmental consultant.
- Agencies evaluate **plants, soils, and hydrology** to confirm wetland boundaries.

📝 2. Environmental Resource Permit (ERP)

Any construction **in, on, or over wetlands** or that alters surface water flow requires an ERP.
This applies to:

- Building a home
- Filling wetlands
- Driveways, grading, or drainage changes
- Ponds, docks, retaining walls

The ERP evaluates:

- Wetland impacts
- Stormwater management
- Drainage patterns
- Water quality protection
- Wildlife and habitat concerns

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🛑 3. Avoidance & Minimization Requirements

SJRWMD and FDEP require you to show that:

1. **You avoided impacting wetlands where feasible.**
2. **You minimized impacts where avoidance wasn't possible.**

This often affects building footprint, driveway placement, and grading.

🌱 4. Mitigation for Wetland Impacts

If impacts are unavoidable, you must compensate through:

- **Mitigation banking credits**, or
- **On-site restoration or enhancement**

Mitigation plans must be approved as part of the ERP.

📏 5. Required Buffer Zones

Most jurisdictions require **25–50 ft buffers** between development and wetland edges.

- Buffers protect hydrology and habitat.
- Site plans must incorporate these setbacks.

💧 6. Stormwater & Drainage Design

You must demonstrate that your project will not:

- Increase flooding
- Alter natural wetland hydrology
- Degrade water quality

Typical requirements include:

- Low-impact design (LID)
- Swales or exfiltration systems
- Retention or biofiltration ponds

🏛️ 7. County-Level Requirements (St. Johns County Example)

If your property is in **St. Johns County**, additional rules apply:

- Upland buffers for wetlands
- Protected species review
- Tree preservation requirements (40 tree inches per acre)
- Land clearing permits

📌 Summary Checklist

To build on wetland-designated property in the SJRWMD area, you will need:

Requirement	Purpose
Wetland delineation	Identify exact wetland boundaries
ERP permit	Regulate construction, filling, and drainage
Avoidance/minimization analysis	Show efforts to reduce impacts
Mitigation plan	Offset unavoidable impacts
Buffer zones	Protect wetland edges
Stormwater design	Prevent flooding & pollution
County approvals	Local environmental & land-use compliance