Creating a Taxing District for Lake Management Services

Once a project is approved and funding arranged, residents and/or representative of the properties may need to apply for applicable permits from Orange County, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Water Management District and/or the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. A contractor may need to be hired.

Please contact the following agencies or visit their websites for more information:

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Northeast Regional District office
353-732-1225
myfwc.com/license/aquatic-plants
myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/invasive-plants/grass-carp

Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection, Central District Office
407-897-4100
www.dep.state.fl.us/central/Home/SLERP

St. Johns River Water Management District, Maitland Service Center
407-659-4800
www.floridaswater.com

South Florida Water Management District, Orlando Office
407-858-6100
www.sfwmd.gov

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What is a taxing district?

A taxing district, referred to as a Municipal Service Taxing Unit/Benefit Unit (MSTU or MSBU), is created by property owners in a defined geographical area who vote to levy a tax to support improvements to the area. The Orange County Environmental Protection Division (EPD) manages taxing districts that deal with local lake concerns such as aquatic plant management.

5. 66-2/3 percent of the affected property owners must approve establishing the MSBU before the process can continue. In order to get owner input, the Comptroller’s Office sends a ballot to all property owners with a letter of explanation giving them at least 14 days to respond. If the ballot method is unsuccessful, the owners may initiate on their own, a follow-up signature petition, whereby the Comptroller’s Office provides a list of all affected property owners.

As an alternative for aquatic plant management, residents can contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) for applicable permits, hire a private contractor, and collect funds from the residents without the assistance of the County. FWC permits must be obtained prior to any aquatic plant management on the lake, such as herbicide application (chemical treatment) or triploid grass carp stocking (biological control).

Determining the need for lake management:

EPD staff can assist your community with determining the need for lake improvements and the appropriate tools. Here are examples of management tools/projects for restoring and maintaining a healthy lake and good water quality, which might be funded through a taxing district:

- Invasive aquatic plant management
- Street sweeping
- Curb inlet filter baskets
- Baffle boxes
- Aerators
- Sediment phosphorous inactivation
- Stormwater projects
- Lake studies
- Community education

Helpful FWC Links:
http://myfwc.com/license/aquatic-plants
http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/invasive-plants/grass-carp