

Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM)

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History of Mitigation



Mitigation is required when a permit applicant proposes to fill wetlands as part of a development project

Prior to UMAM:

Mitigation Ratios

- 1 acre of impact = 2 to 5 acres of creation of wetlands as mitigation
- Separate ratios for melaleuca wetlands

Previous rule did not include a functional assessment of wetlands and mitigation

History of UMAM

- ❑ January 2000 – Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability (OPPAGA) found that mitigation ratios do not adequately address gains and losses of wetland functions
- ❑ In 2000 Legislature directed FDEP and WMD's to develop a functional assessment method
- ❑ Extensive public input over a 4 year rulemaking process to develop UMAM rule.
- ❑ DEP Rule 62-345 F.A.C. became effective in February 2004

Uses of UMAM

- ❑ Evaluates functions of all types of wetlands, surface waters, and benthic communities in all parts of the State
- ❑ Includes assessment of both direct and secondary impacts



Freshwater Communities



Mangrove/Salt Water Communities



Seagrasses/Benthic Communities



Uses of UMAM

UMAM Does Address:

Amount of mitigation needed to offset a wetland impact

UMAM Does Not Address:

- Reduction and elimination
- Appropriateness of mitigation
- Out-of-kind mitigation
- Cumulative impacts
- Mitigation for certain types of secondary impacts
(manatee speed zones, wildlife crossings)
- Whether all conditions for issuance have been met

UMAM Assessment and Scoring

Staff Process for UMAM Scoring



- ❑ Applicant submits site plans, wetland lines, and preliminary UMAM information
- ❑ District staff reviews hydrologic, land use, wildlife, soils and other technical information
- ❑ Most staff has extensive field experience in their geographic areas and in conducting UMAM assessments
- ❑ Staff conducts site visit and makes the final determination on UMAM scores

UMAM Scoring Categories

- Location & Landscape Support
- Water Environment
- Community Structure

Location and Landscape Support

- Position /Relationship with Offsite Habitats
- Adjacent Land Uses
- Wildlife access to other habitats
- Life history support for wetland species



Water Environment

- Hydrology - timing, frequency, depth and duration of inundation or saturation
- Flow patterns & water level indicators
- Water Quality effects on fish and wildlife habitat
- Soil moisture
- Hydrologic stress



Community Structure



- Plant Species and distribution
- Appropriate vegetation
- Vertical structure
- Vegetation Health
- Regeneration/ recruitment
- Microtopography

Benthic/Seagrass Communities

- Review associated with dock & marina projects
- Benthics include marine communities with no plant coverage. Evaluate type & number of benthic organisms
- Seagrasses located along shoreline in shallow waters
- Condition, regeneration & recruitment
- Structural features and spawning and nesting habitats



Wetland Calculation



Melaleuca wetland – 5 acres

Location/Landscape – 3

Water Environment – 2

Community Structure – 1

Total Function – 0.20

Loss = 5 x 0.20 = 1.0 units



Freshwater marsh – 5 acres

Location/Landscape - 10

Water Environment - 9

Community Structure - 9

Total Function = 0.93

Loss = 5 x .93 = 4.65 units

Secondary Impacts = 10.03 units

Mitigation Calculation



Melaleuca – 5 acres

Functional loss = 1.0 unit

Mitigation proposed – Restoration of existing melaleuca wetland to freshwater marsh

Mitigation requirement:

Melaleuca wetland – 1.14 acres



Freshwater Marsh – 5 acres

Functional loss = 4.65 units

Secondary impacts = 10.03 units

Freshwater Marsh = 16.73 acres

Summary

- **UMAM provides a framework for professional collaboration on wetland functions and mitigation evaluations**
- **UMAM provides a documented evaluation process for the agencies**
- **Ongoing training to ensure consistency between agencies and consultants**
- **Continued coordination with stakeholders (landowners/environmental organizations) regarding UMAM implementation**
- **Recent field visits with Audubon staff**



QUESTIONS?