

of environmental protection, proper drainage, flood control and water storage.

In addition, the State Water Quality Plan links the purposes of the Florida Water Resources Act with the purposes of the Florida Air and Water Pollution Control Act, Chapter 403, through its water quality standards. The net result is that the DER retains central responsibility for the collection of scientific data and information regarding water resources, with the central permitting responsibilities being assigned to WMDs.

The DER also retains direct regulatory power over:

- point source discharges,
- dredge and fill,
- groundwater discharges,
- solid and hazardous waste concerns, and
- leaking underground storage tanks.

In contrast, WMDs are largely responsible for issuing permits for various types of water use, and are the governmental bodies in charge of allocation and control of water resources for which there are many competing interests.

What can the WMDs tax?

Most indicative of their broad powers is the ability of WMD's to levy ad valorem taxes (property taxes). Ad valorem taxes are levied based on the value of the property in question. The Florida Constitution establishes a millage cap, and millage rates are additionally limited by statute.

Each WMD is different. Taxing authority is vested in the WMDs with basin boards. Basin boards may request that taxes be levied, but may not impose taxes themselves. As with other government tax provisions, failure to pay can result in a lien on the taxed property, including the homestead, and ultimately, the vesting of title by tax forfeiture in the state.

Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, (GFWFC), F.A.C. Title 39.

Overview

This agency was created by Article IV, Section 9, of the 1968 Florida Constitution. The purpose of the agency is the management, protection and conservation of wild animal life and fresh water aquatic life. Some of the agency's activities include:

- habitat improvement,
- research,
- inspection of construction and development projects,
- development of public recreational areas,
- running a conservation information service program,
- updating a list of threatened and endangered freshwater aquatic and land species.

The Department of Natural Resources has a list of marine species and the U.S. Department of Interior maintains a national list. (See Endangered Species Act Section). The Act makes the killing, harassment, or destruction of these animals or their nests or eggs illegal.

Although GFWFC has jurisdiction over any fresh running waters of the state, the DER is the agency primarily responsible for enforcement of water regulations. Jurisdictional directives in this area are overlapping, as many agencies have been granted the authority to address this concern.