

Spring Protection Zone



Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission

Section 327.45, Florida Statute

Establish Springs Protection Zones

- Purpose of protecting and preventing harm to the springs
- First, second and third magnitude springs and spring groups and their associated spring runs
- May restrict speed and operation
- May prohibit anchoring, mooring, beaching or grounding



Definitions

- Anchoring - Holding a vessel in place with a device attached to the vessel
- Mooring - Act of making fast a boat with lines or anchors
- Beaching – To run or drive ashore
- Grounding – Occurs when a vessel has hit bottom and can no longer move forward (when the draft on the vessel has exceeded the water depth)



Spring Protection Zones

- When developing a protection zone, the commission shall do so in consultation and coordination with the water management district, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the governing bodies of the county and municipality, if applicable, in which the zone is located.
- If the zone includes navigable waters of the United States, the commission shall additionally coordinate with the United States Coast Guard and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.



Florida Administrative Code

- 68D-24.0035 F.A.C. became effective February 7, 2022.
- Each Springs Protection Zone will be adopted by separate rule following Commission review of available evidence showing that the zone is necessary to prevent specified harms from being done by vessels to the spring, spring group, or spring run.



68D-24.0035 Protection Zones for Springs



- Requires substantial competent evidence of harm and that harm is caused by vessels.
- Any person may provide evidence to the Commission for use in evaluation
- May include carrying capacity studies, vessel traffic studies, water quality studies or any facts or data that are of a type reasonably relied upon by scientists, environmental professionals, or engineers.



68D-24.0035 Protection Zones for Springs

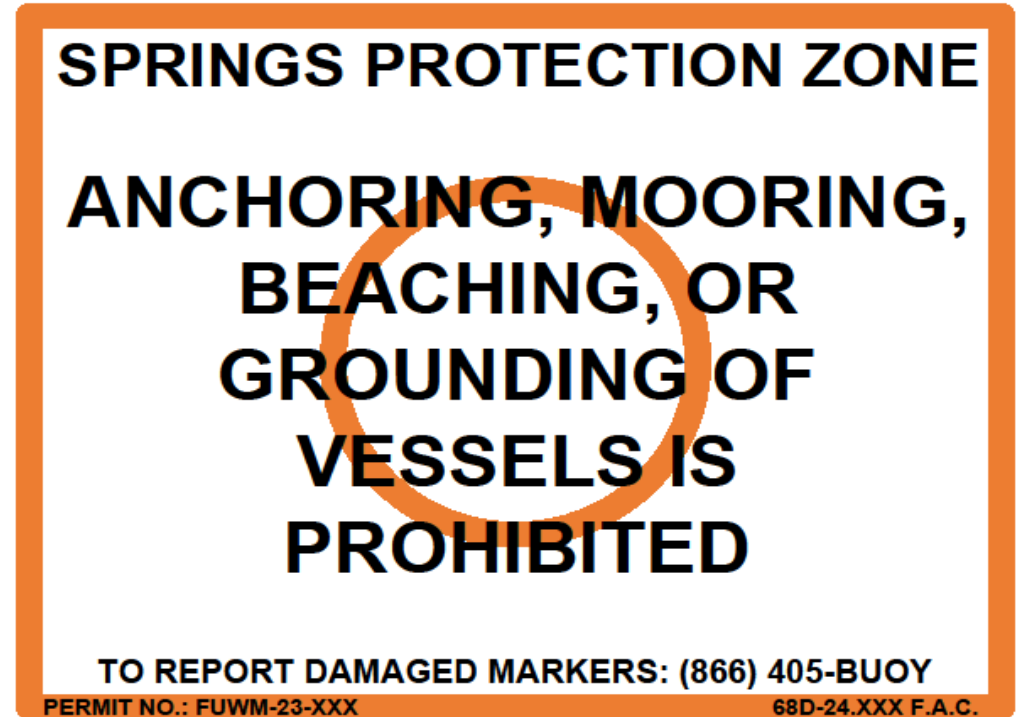
Springs protection zones shall be no larger than necessary to protect or prevent specified harm to springs, spring runs, and spring groups



Spring Protection Zone Requests

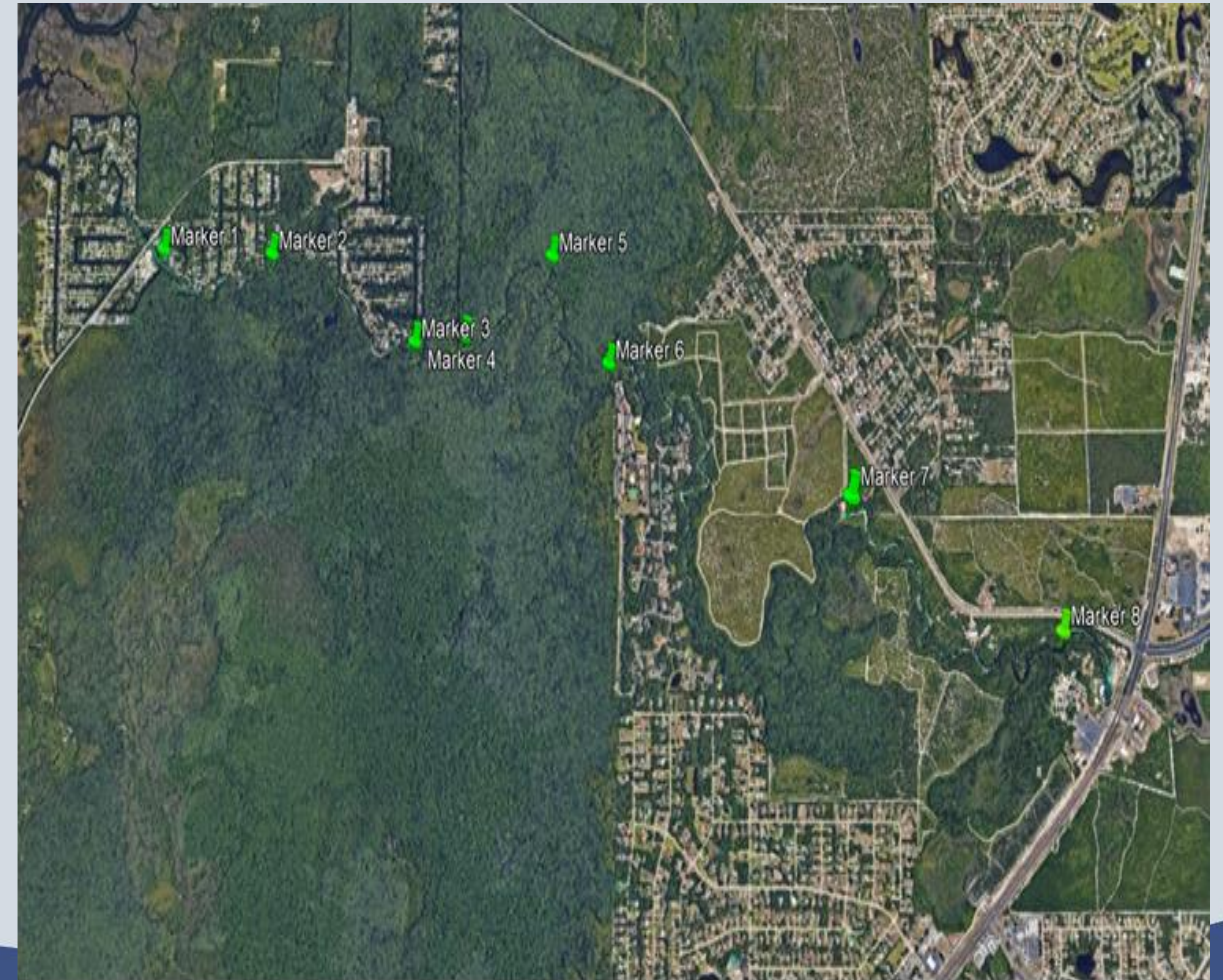
As of today, the Commission has received four requests to establish a Spring Protection Zone

Two zones have been approved



Status of Weeki Wachee SPZ

- Permit applications are in the process of being submitted by the contractor.
- There are 8 proposed sites where signage will be installed if construction proceeds as anticipated.



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