



DISTRIBUTED WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM (DWTS) OVERVIEW

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Focus on Change | 2026



AGENDA

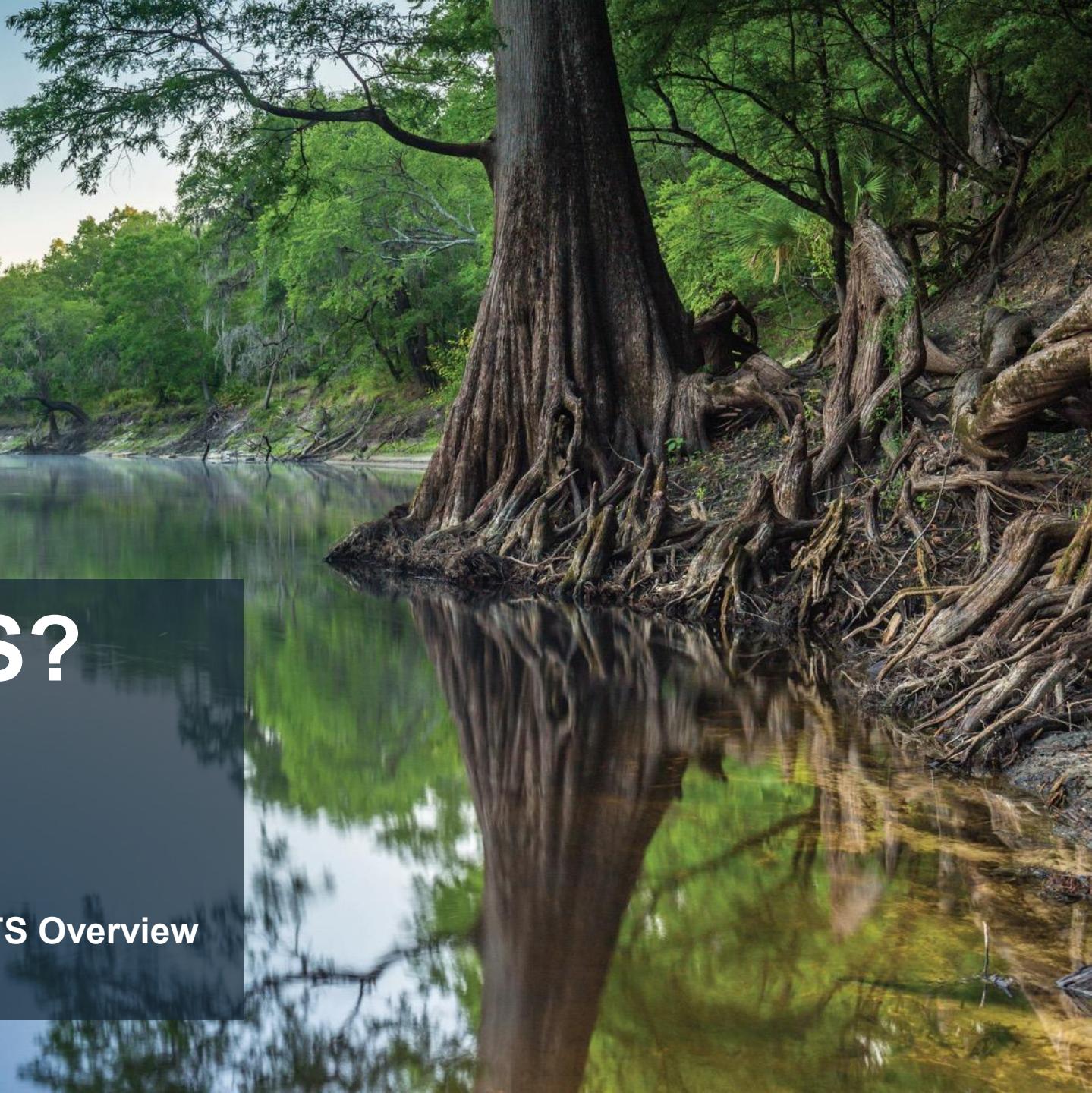
- What is a distributed wastewater treatment system (DWTS)?
- Senate Bill (SB) 796.
- Rulemaking.
- Existing DWTSs permits.





WHAT IS A DWTS?

DWTS Overview





WHAT IS A DWTS?

- **DWTS** – A “distributed wastewater treatment system” means an integrated system approach to treating wastewater consisting of one or more distributed wastewater treatment units (DWTU).
- **DWTU** – A “distributed wastewater treatment unit” means an advanced onsite closed-tank wastewater treatment system that is remotely operated and controlled by the permittee using an electronic control system and designed to achieve secondary treatment standards and a minimum of 80% total nitrogen (TN) removal before discharge to a subsurface application system.
- There are existing permits issued for DWTSSs in various districts.
- Recent legislation passed (SB 796 in the 2025 legislative session) that grants a general permit for the replacement of an existing onsite sewage treatment and disposal system (OSTDS) with a DWTS.



SYSTEM CONCEPT

The “system,” or DWTS, is comprised of:

- A group (e.g., one or more) of small, onsite treatment units with onsite subsurface disposal.
 - Units provide higher levels of treatment than traditional septic systems.
 - Units serve one or more houses or buildings.
- An electronic control system.
 - Monitors DWTU operation remotely.
 - Controls the operation of the DWTU remotely.
- DWTS permittee.
 - Responsible for the group of DWTUs in the DWTS.
 - Typically, a county, city or utility.





DWTS AND DWTU OPERATION

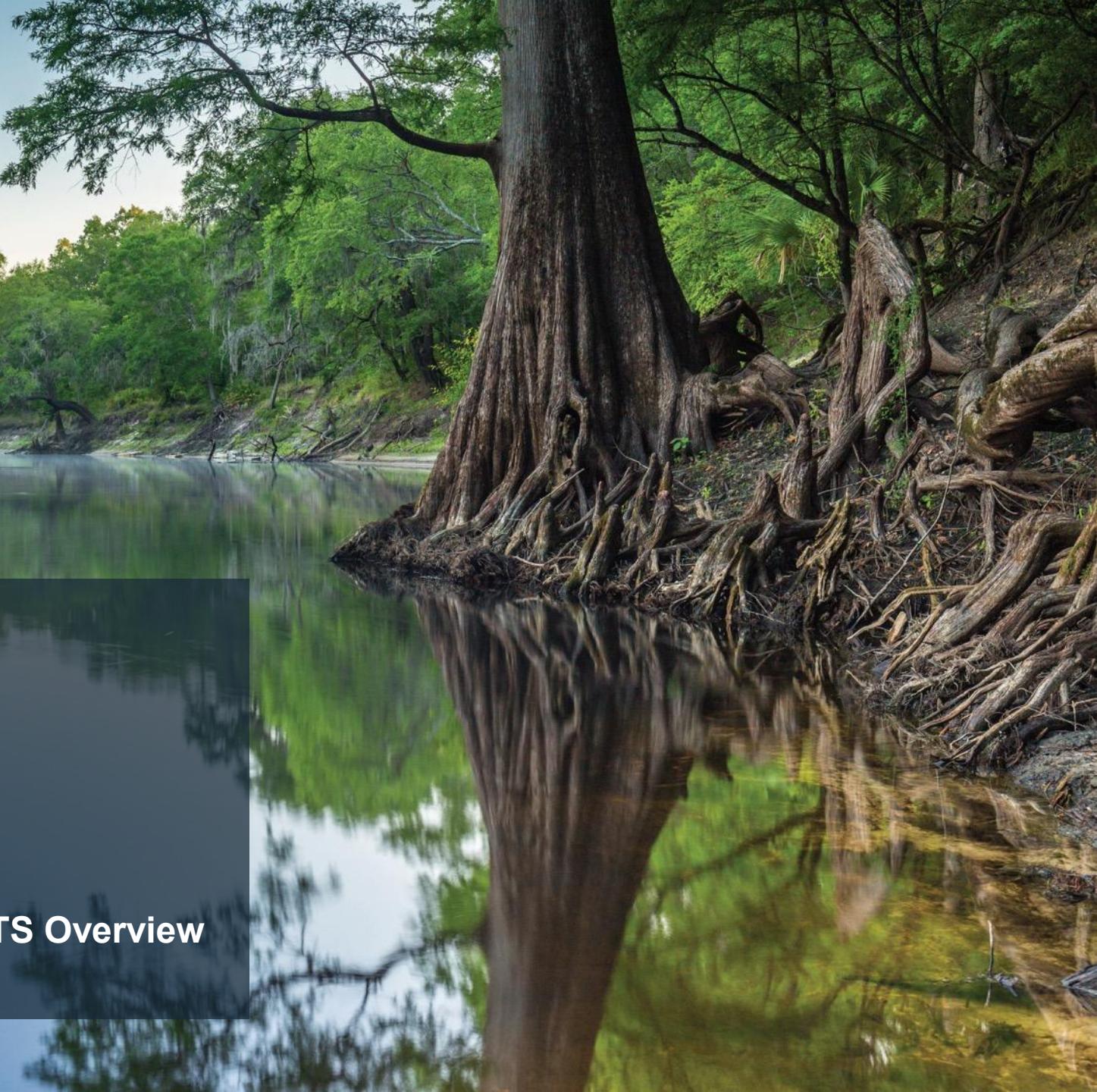
- Operated remotely by a certified operator using an electronic control system.
- Sampling is conducted monthly on a representative number of DWTUs.
- DWTS and DWTU “visits” are conducted remotely.
- Periodic inspections of DWTUs are conducted by the permittee.



A wide-angle photograph of a river or lake. The water is very calm, creating a perfect reflection of the dense green trees lining both banks. The sky is clear and blue. A large, dark rectangular overlay covers the bottom half of the image, containing text.

SB 796

DWTS Overview





SB 796 OVERVIEW

- 2025 Florida Legislative Session.
- Title - “General Permits for Distributed Wastewater Treatment Systems.”
- Passed by the Legislature; signed by Governor DeSantis with an effective date of July 1, 2025.
- Provides for:
 - A general permit is granted for the replacement of an existing OSTDS with a DWTS if the DWTS and DWTU are commonly owned and operated by the permittee.
 - Permittee submits notification to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) at least 30 days before installation (installation may proceed without further action by DEP).
 - DWTU designed by a Florida registered professional.
 - Design capacity of DWTU does not exceed 10,000 gallon per day (gpd) of domestic wastewater or 5,000 gpd of commercial wastewater.



SB 796 SYSTEM DETAILS

- Also provides for:
 - Definitions of DWTS and DWTU.
 - DWTS – system of treating wastewater using one or more DWTUs.
 - DWTU – advanced onsite closed-tank wastewater treatment system; remotely operated using electronic control system; designed to achieve secondary treatment and 80% TN reduction; and discharges to a subsurface application system.
 - DWTU may discharge without disinfection into a slow-rate subsurface application system and must maintain current separation, and in no case less than 12 inches of separation, between the bottom of the drainfield and water table elevation at the wettest season of the year (i.e., seasonal high water table).
 - Horizontal setback distances must be consistent with rules adopted under Chapter 403 and 381, Florida Statutes, e.g. Chapter 62-6, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.).



SB 796 OPERATIONAL DETAILS

- Also provides for:
 - Permittee has legal access to maintain and operate the DWTU and remove the DWTU in case of termination of service.
 - Permittee submits a plan for conducting monthly compliance sampling of a representative number of DWTUs; results may be aggregated to determine compliance.
 - Operation of a DWTU must not create saturated conditions on the ground surface; adversely impact wetlands or surface water; or cause or contribute to violation of state water quality standards.
 - Monthly reporting, annual inspections, recordkeeping, biosolids management.
 - Staffing and visitation by licensed operators; visitation may be conducted through an electronic control system.



RULEMAKING

DWTS Overview





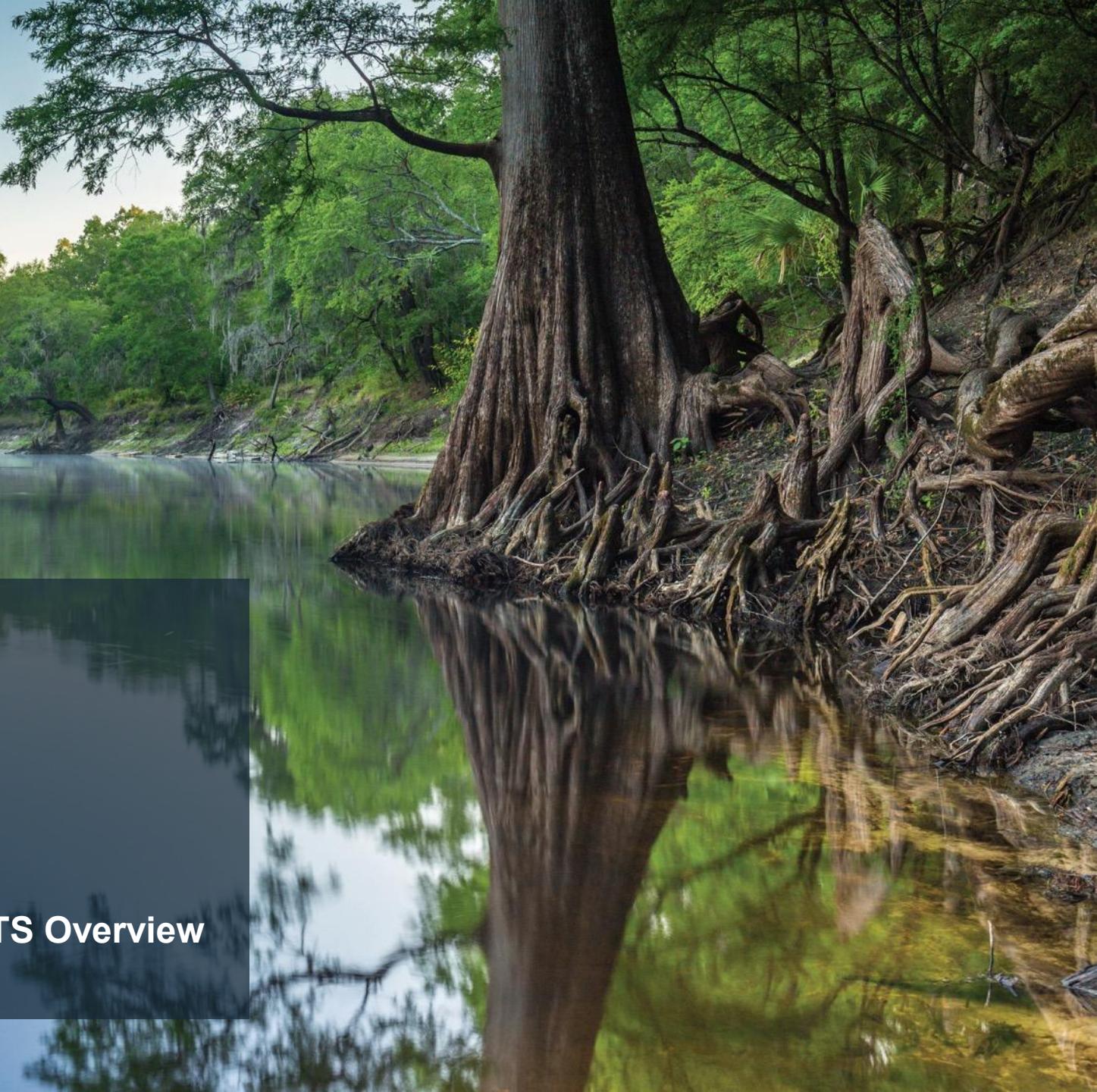
RULEMAKING

- Wastewater Management Program has initiated rulemaking to revise and add clarification on the inclusion of DWTS for domestic wastewater facilities and activities permitting.
- Notices of Rule Development (NORD) published March 27, 2025.
 - Chapter 62-620, F.A.C., Wastewater Facilities and Activities Permitting – minor updates.
 - Chapter 62-621, F.A.C., Generic Permits – no changes currently planned.
 - Chapter 62-699, F.A.C., Treatment Plant Classification and Staffing – minor changes for operator staffing; addresses DWTSSs.
- Chapter 62-600, F.A.C., Domestic Wastewater Facilities – NORD published June 6, 2025.
 - New Rule 62-600.707, F.A.C., proposed to specifically address new and replacement DWTSSs and DWTUs (design, capacities, setbacks, monitoring, parameter limits, recordkeeping, reporting, bill-related items and forms, etc.).



EXISTING DWTS PERMITS

DWTS Overview





EXISTING DWTS PERMITS

- Wastewater Facilities Regulation Permitting Application (WAFR PA) Permit Types:
 - DW1T – Domestic Wastewater Type I Satellite Treatment System Permit.
 - DW2T – Domestic Wastewater Type II Satellite Treatment System Permit.
 - DW3T – Domestic Wastewater Type III Satellite Treatment System Permit.
 - DW4T – Domestic Wastewater Type III (less than 10,000 gpd) Satellite Treatment System Permit.
- The “satellite treatment system” terminology was developed to accommodate the first planned DWTS permit.
- OCULUS – To search for DWTS permits, filter “Facility Type” field using the selection of “Satellite Treatment System.”
- A new permit type is being developed specifically for DWTS permits.



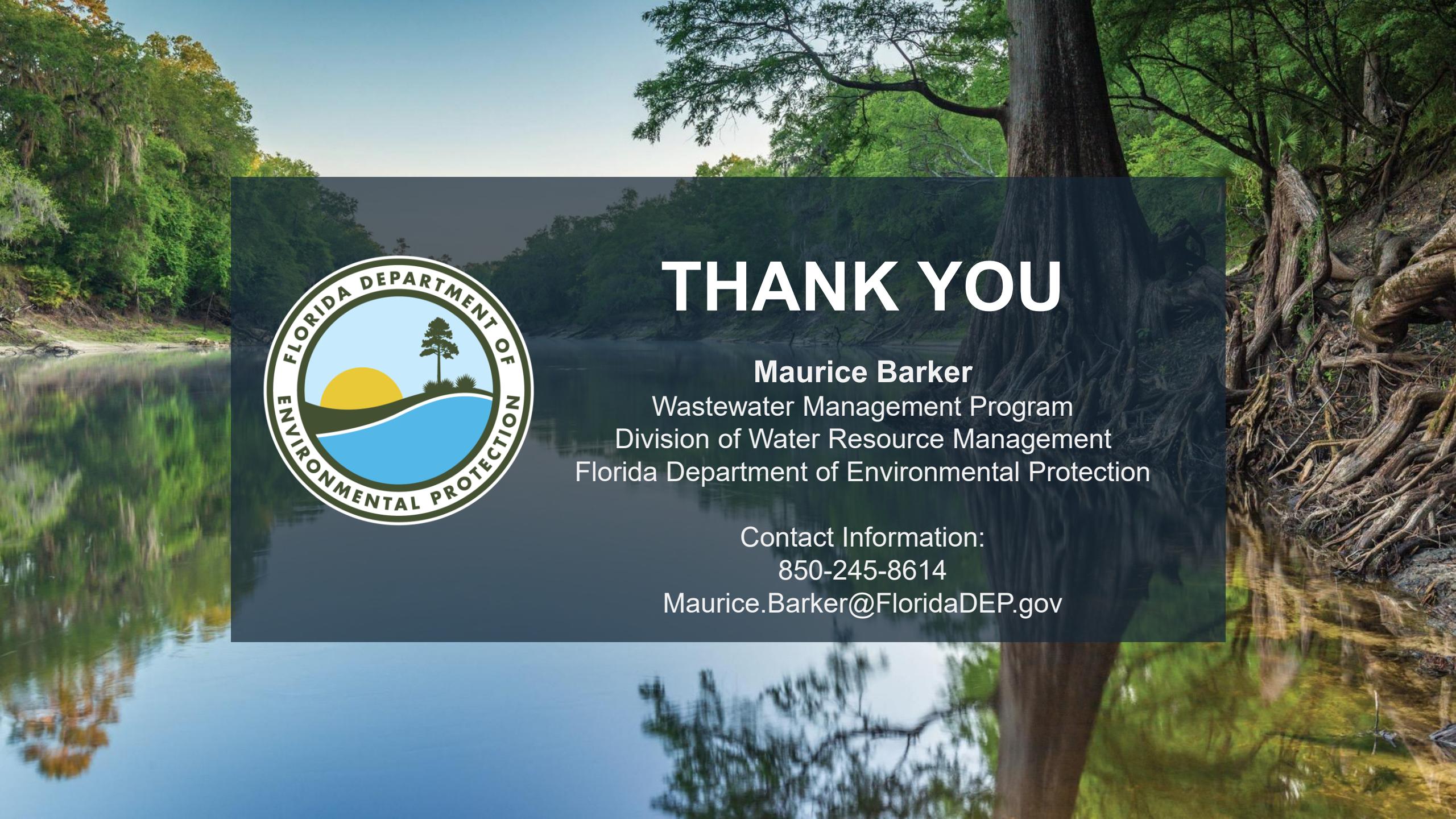
LISTING OF DWTS PERMITS FROM WAFR PA

Office	County	Application #	Facility/Site Name	Agency Action
CD	Lake	FLAB07156-002-DW3T	Lake Apopka Field Station On-Syte System	Issued
CD	Orange	FLAB07192-001-DW3T	City of Apopka DWTS	Issued
CD	Lake	FLAB07446-001-DW3T	Lake Nellie Crossing DWTS	Issued
CD	Seminole	FLAB07457-001-DW3T	Magnolia Townhomes DWTS	Issued
CD	Lake	FLAB07478-001-DW4T	Mount Dora Small Bay DWTS	Issued
NED	Gilchrist	FLAB07194-001-DW3T	Nature Coast Regional Water Authority DWTS	Issued
NED	Gilchrist	FLAB07195-001-DW3T	Pine Ridge RV Park WWTF	Issued
NED	Nassau	FLAB07137-003-DW3T	Dayspring Health	Pending
NWD	Santa Rosa	FLAB07404-002-DW2T	Santa Rosa County DWTS - Baxley Road Subdivision	Issued
NWD	Gulf	FLAB07501-001-DW3T	Wetappo Creek RV Park	Pending
SWD	Polk	FLAB07110-001-DW3T	Town of Lake Hamilton DWTU	Issued



QUESTIONS?

DWTS Overview



THANK YOU

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