Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ PROGRAM

SAVE LAKE WEIR WITH FFL

AMANDA MAREK, UF/IFAS EXTENSION MARION COUNTY

SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR LIFE

askifas powered by EDIS

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

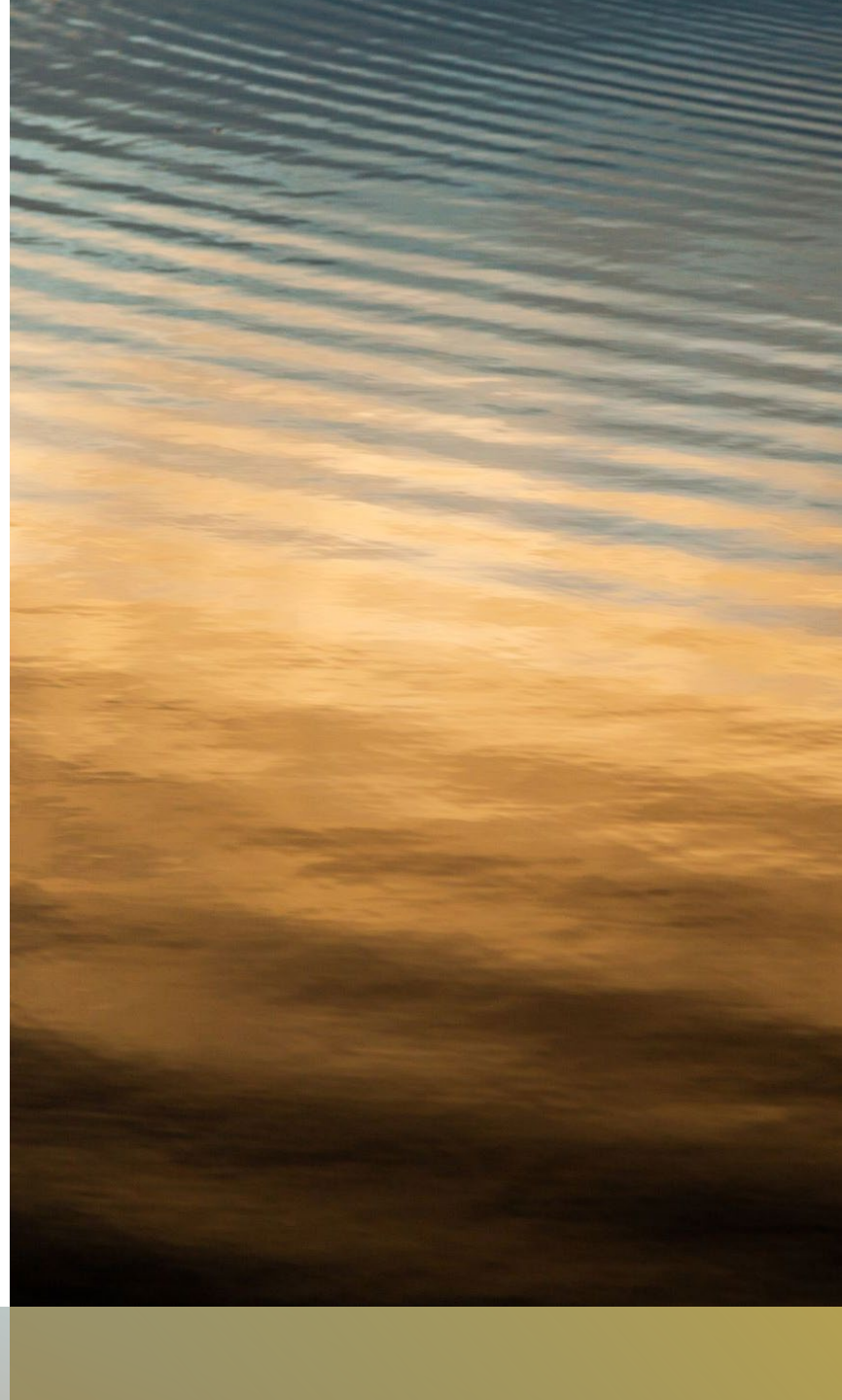
Marion County
FLORIDA
EXTENSION SERVICE

THE CHALLENGES

- One of Florida's greatest natural resources is its water
- Misuse of fertilizers and pesticides are big contributors to water pollution
- 60% of Florida's fresh water is used on landscape irrigation

St. Johns River Water Management District

Sources of Water Pollution
https://www.sjrwmd.com/education/water-pollution/#fertilizer-pesticides



1. Right Plant, Right Place
2. Water Efficiently
3. Fertilize Appropriately
4. Mulch
5. Attract Wildlife
6. Manage Yard Pests Responsibly
7. Recycle Yard Waste
8. Reduce Stormwater Runoff
9. Protect the Waterfront

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ PROGRAM

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ is an integrated, science-based approach to installing and maintaining attractive, low-maintenance landscapes that **conserve water**, **protect water quality**, and **provide wildlife habitat.**

RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE

Cornerstone of FFL Program

Plants selected for a specific site will require minimal amounts of water, fertilizer, pesticides and maintenance

Thorough planning will help you place plants where its needs and yours are met

Site conditions to consider

- Soil
- Space
- Light
- Climate

RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE

- Can be native (preferred for aquatics) or Florida-friendly, non-native
  - https://www.fann.org/
  - https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/
- Avoid invasives
  - https://floridainvasivespecies.org/
  - https://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/

Florida Association of FANN Native Nurseries

Florida Invasive Species Council

CENTER FOR AQUATIC AND INVASIVE PLANTS

RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE

- Choose a diversity of plants
  - Better wildlife habitat
  - Erosion control & nutrient uptake
  - Greater seasonal interest
  - Fewer pests & diseases

https://www.fann.org/plant-communities/detail/freshwater-marshes-zone-9

List of Freshwater Aquatic Plants for Florida

This list of Florida native plants will be helpful if you live on the lakefront, a freshwater water body, or are doing a rain garden in a wet spot in your yard. These plants are water loving and live in different zones on the shoreline. While there are many more species that are Florida-Friendly and suitable for wet areas, this list includes the most common species that are commercially available. Check www.fann.org to find Florida native plant nurseries.

Author Profile

Tia Silvasy

Tia is a Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Extension Agent in Orange County. She provides educational programming to help homeowners implement water conserving practices, strategies to recycle household and yard waste, and work towards more sustainable landscapes. ...

https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/orangeco/2022/02/14/list-of-freshwater-aquatic-plants-for-florida/

WATER EFFICIENTLY

- Efficient watering is key to a healthy Florida landscape, prevents waste, and reduces runoff
- Reduce lawn, add diverse plant beds

Comparing Landscapes

1000 ft^2 of Grass vs 1000ft^2 of Beds

Requires 12,000-22,000 gallons of irrigation water per year

Can conserve over 15,000 gallons of irrigation water per year

WATER AS NEEDED

- Water only when your lawn tells you it needs it
- Water less in cooler months - grass is dormant
    - Skip a week!
- Check and maintain system – clogs, leaks, rain shut-off device
- TURN OFF system during summer rainy season
- Bahia is the most drought tolerant turfgrass

FERTILIZE APPROPRIATELY

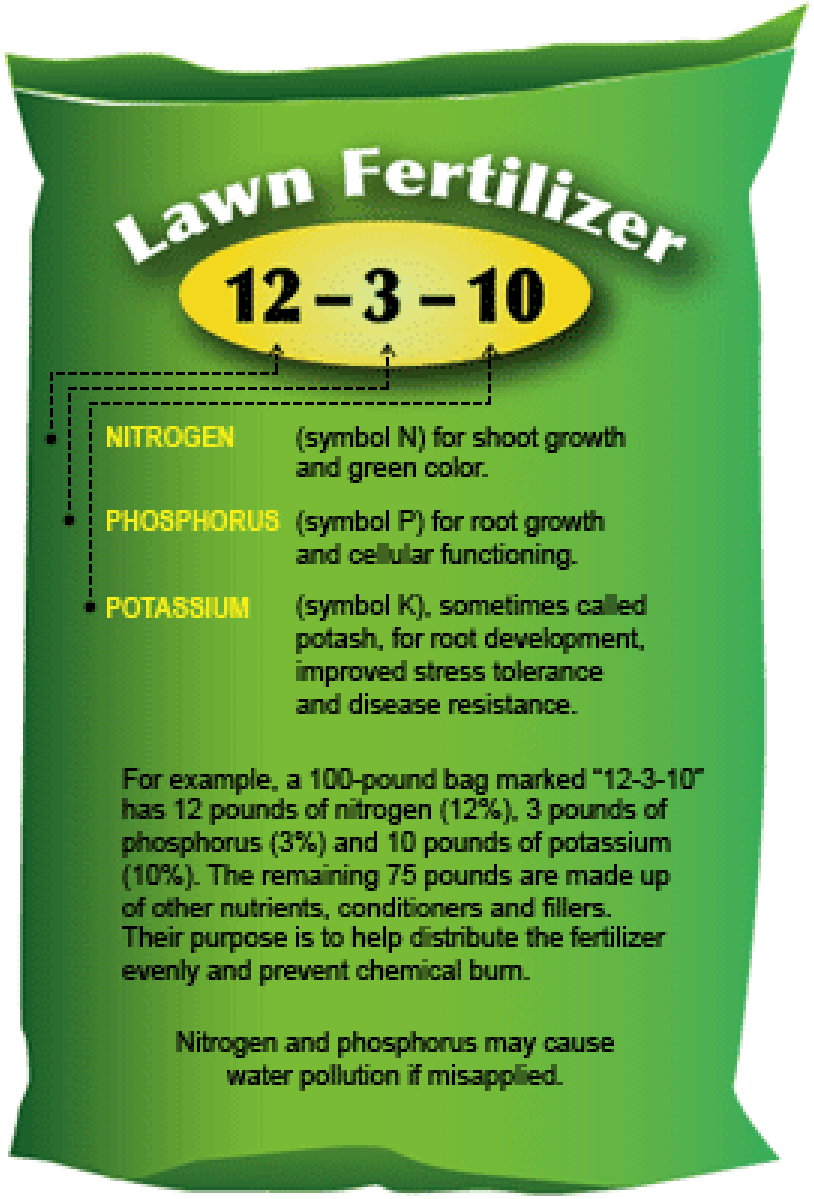
Don’t Guess, get a Soil test!

Apply only when grass is actively growing

Use slow-release N & P

FERTILIZE APPROPRIATELY

- No fertilizer within 75’ of the high-water line
- Use only 30%+ **slow-release** Nitrogen fertilizers
- Phosphorous is usually not needed for turfgrass
- Healthy plants don’t typically need to be fed
  - Right plant, right place
  - Avoid overwatering
  - Palms are an exception



MULCH

- Buffers soil temperature
- Retains moisture
- Inhibits weed germination and growth
  - Pine straw and bark are best
  - 2 – 3″ deep
- Protects plants from mechanical damage
- Adds nutrients to soil
  - Organic mulches only, not rock
- Avoid cypress mulch and rubber (toxic)!

ATTRACTING WILDLIFE

Urban areas rapidly increasing

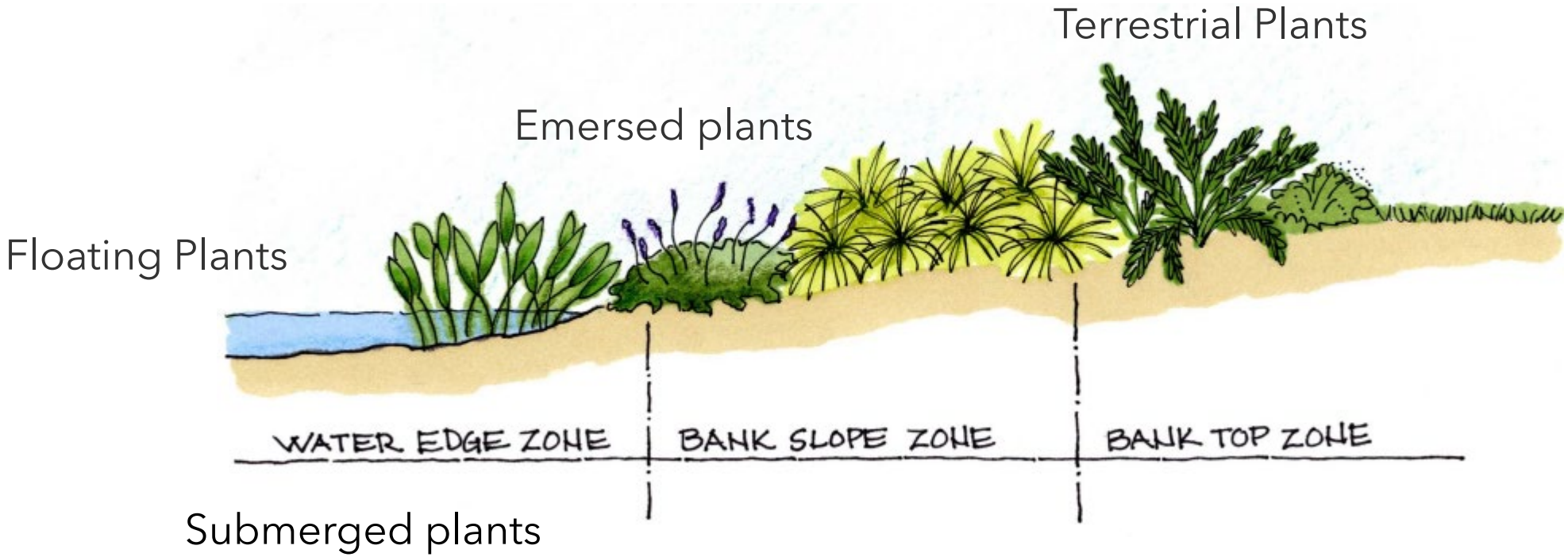
Development greatly affects local plant and animal communities

Plant diversity is key

ATTRACTING WILDLIFE

- Limit the amount of lawn
- Plant a variety of plants
    - Natives are particularly important!
- Avoid pesticides
    - Only spot treat with least toxic methods
- Use plants of varying height to create layers for shelter (ecotones)

ATTRACTING WILDLIFE



Credit: Hansen & Hu, University of Florida (2012)
https://orange.wateratlas.usf.edu/upload/documents/2012-Hansen-Guide-to-Selection-and-Installation-of-Stormwater-Pond-Plants.pdf

ATTRACTING WILDLIFE

https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/marionco/2021/09/24/littoral-vegetation/

Home » UF/IFAS Extension Marion County » Littorally...

Littorally...

This blog is intended to explain the function and importance of littoral vegetation in stormwater ponds and provide a reference for Florida-Friendly plant species that do well in each littoral zone.

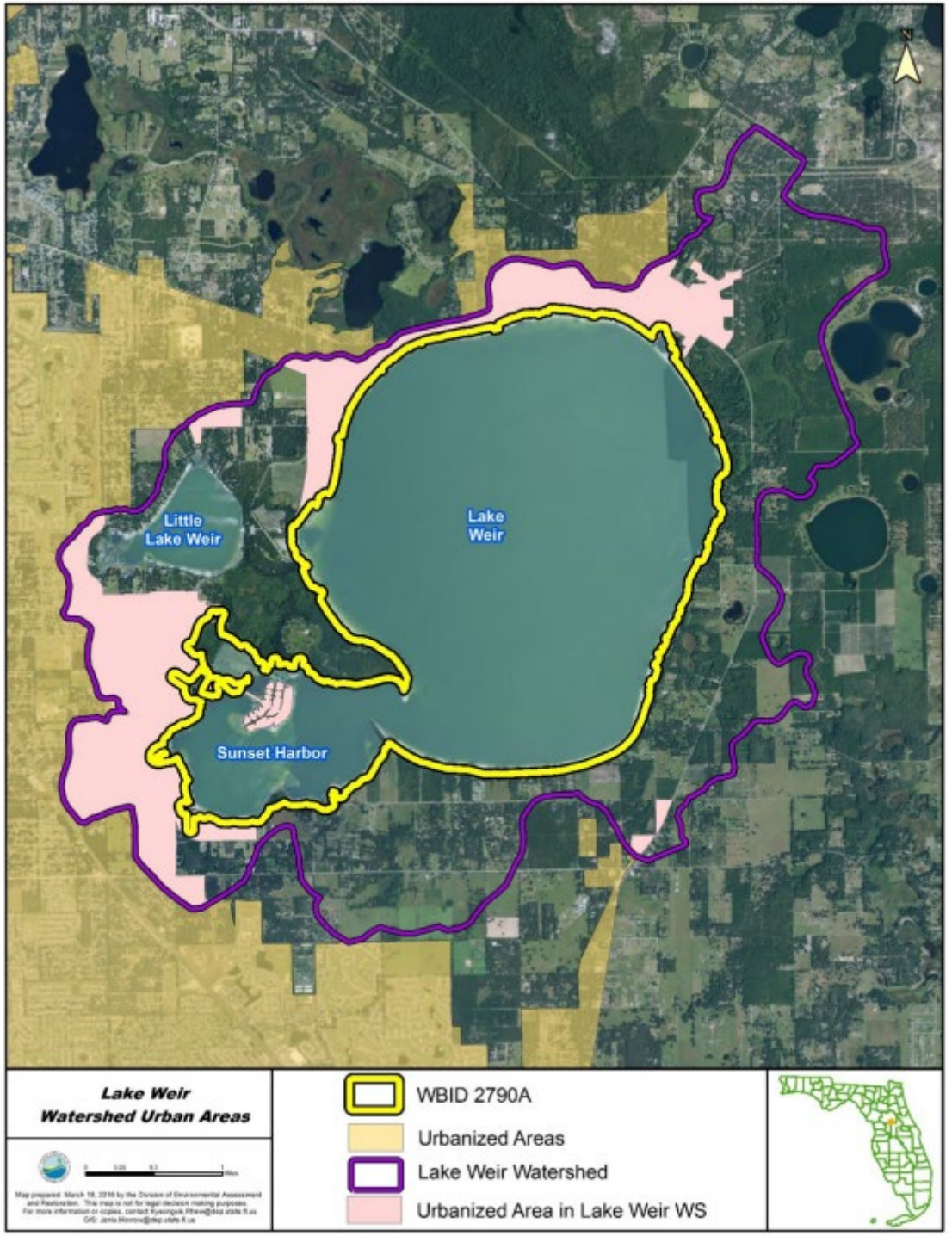
A stormwater pond's main function is to provide flood control for urban areas, and they are very effective at doing so

Author Profile

Gabriel Vicari

Gabriel is the UF/IFAS Extension Marion County Water Resources Agent. He has a background in environmental science, groundwater remediation, and water quality monitoring.

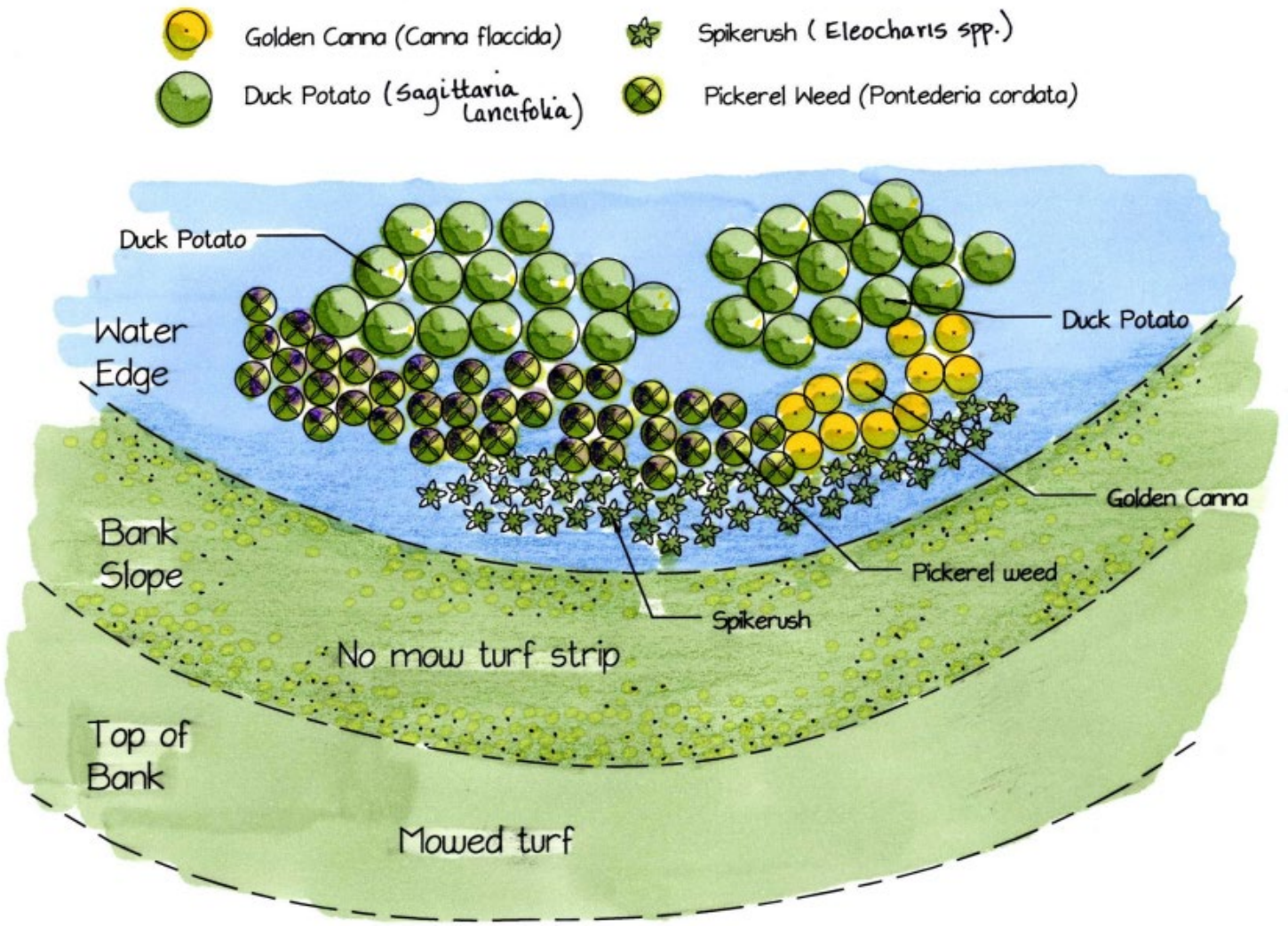
REDUCING STORMWATER RUNOFF



REDUCING STORMWATER RUNOFF

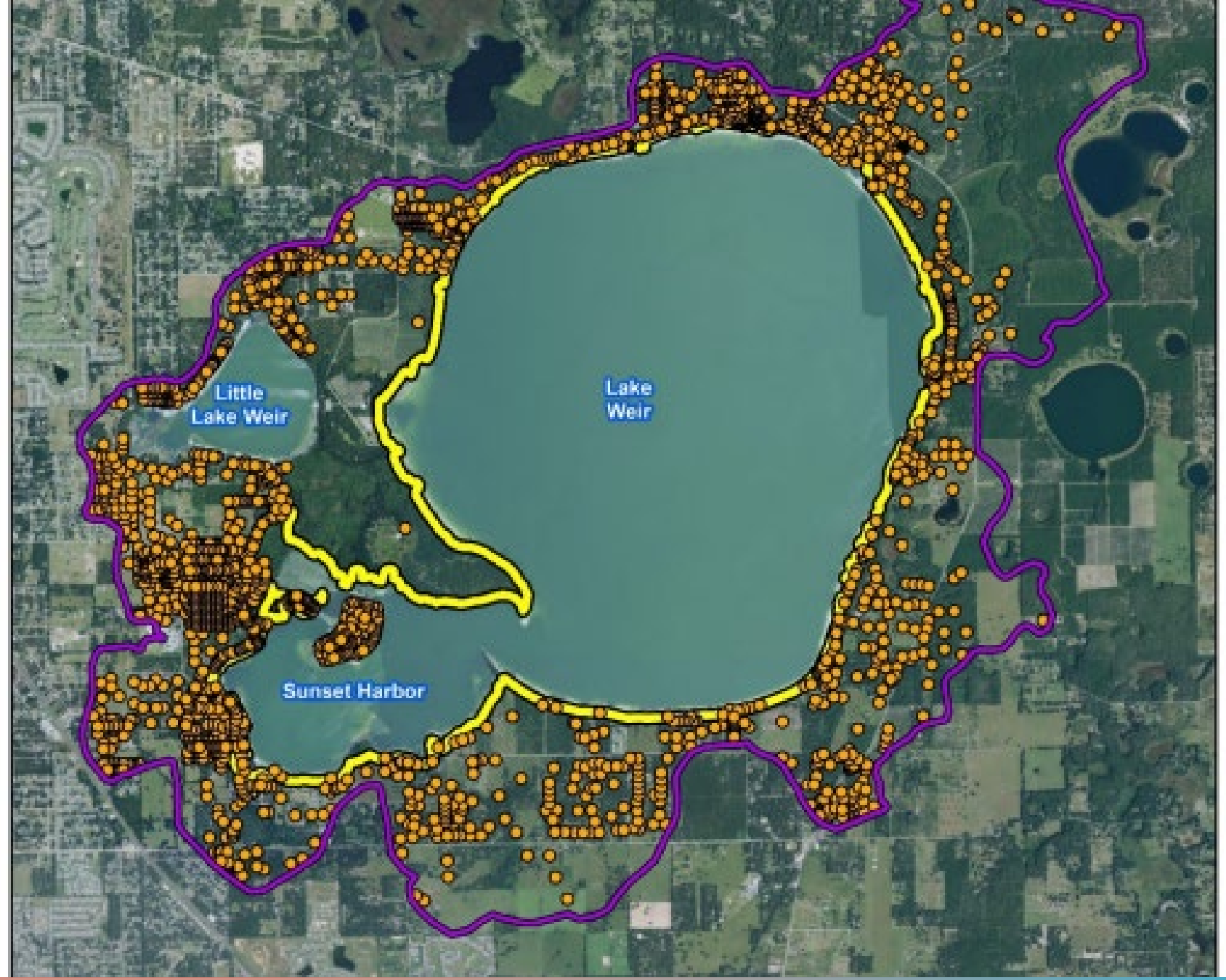
- Let only rain down the storm drain!
- Use mulch in landscape beds
- Use porous surfaces for walkways, patios, and driveways
    - Bricks, mulch, pavers, rock
- Direct downspouts and gutters to porous areas / yard

PROTECTING THE WATERFRONT



PROTECTING THE WATERFRONT

- Avoid invasive plants – natives only in waterbodies
  - https://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/manage/why-manage-plants/aquatic-and-wetland-plants-in-florida/
- Avoid overirrigation
- Management Free "Buffer" Zone (10 – 20ft)
  - Diverse native / FFL plants around shoreline
  - No mowing, No pesticides
  - No fertilizing within 75 feet
- Maintain your septic system



PROTECTING THE WATERFRONT

Septic tanks around Lake Weir (2017)

https://savelakeweir.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Weir2790A-NutrientTMDL_1.pdf

NATIVE FRESHWATER AQUATIC PLANTS

https://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/

OTHER RESOURCES

- FWC Aquatic Plant Management Permit (Free)
  - https://myfwc.com/license/aquatic-plants/
- St. Johns River Water Management District
  - https://www.sjrwmd.com/minimumflowsandlevels/lake-weir/
- Gardening Solutions
  - https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/
- UF Soils Lab – Landscape and Vegetable Garden Test
  - https://soilslab.ifas.ufl.edu/ESTL%20Tests.asp

QUESTIONS?

Thank you for having me!

Amanda Marek
Florida-Friendly Landscaping Agent
UF/IFAS Extension Marion County
2232 NE Jacksonville Rd.
Ocala, FL 34470

mandab@ufl.edu

352-671-8412

Gabriel Vicari
Water Resources Agent

gvicari@ufl.edu

352-671-8409

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ PROGRAM

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA