



FWC's Role in Minimum Flows and Levels

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



Florida Water Resources Act 1973

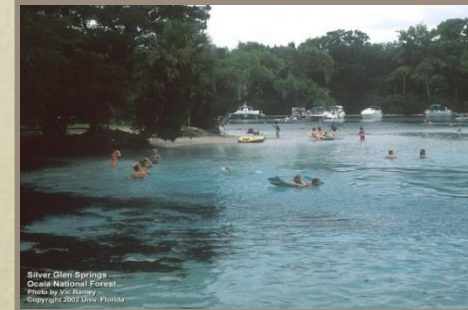
- Established five water management districts.
- Mandated water management districts regulate streams by setting “minimum flows and levels.”



Water Resources Implementation Rule

MFL Considerations FAC 62-40.473

- Recreation in and on the water
- Fish and wildlife habitats, & fish passage
- Estuarine resources
- Transfer of detrital material
- Maintenance of FW storage & supply
- Aesthetic and scenic attributes
- Nutrients and pollutants
- Sediment loads
- Water quality
- Navigation



Florida's Minimum Flows and Levels Statute (373.042 FS)

- Defines MFLs as “the limit at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area.”
- Calculated using “best available information.”
- * Although the F.S. states the word “minimum,” the Districts generally use multiple flows and levels (ecological flows) to arrive at a rule.

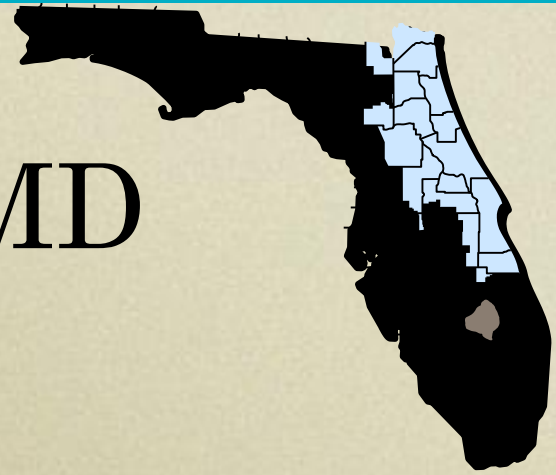


MFLs Overview

- WMD's prepare 5-year list of priority water bodies to DEP every year.
- Water bodies that have MFLs developed are subject to review every 5 years or as needed.
- All 5 WMDs use various methods to determine MFLs. However, all WMDs consider the natural hydrological patterns when establishing MFLs which includes the seasonality, magnitude, duration, and return interval of flows and levels.

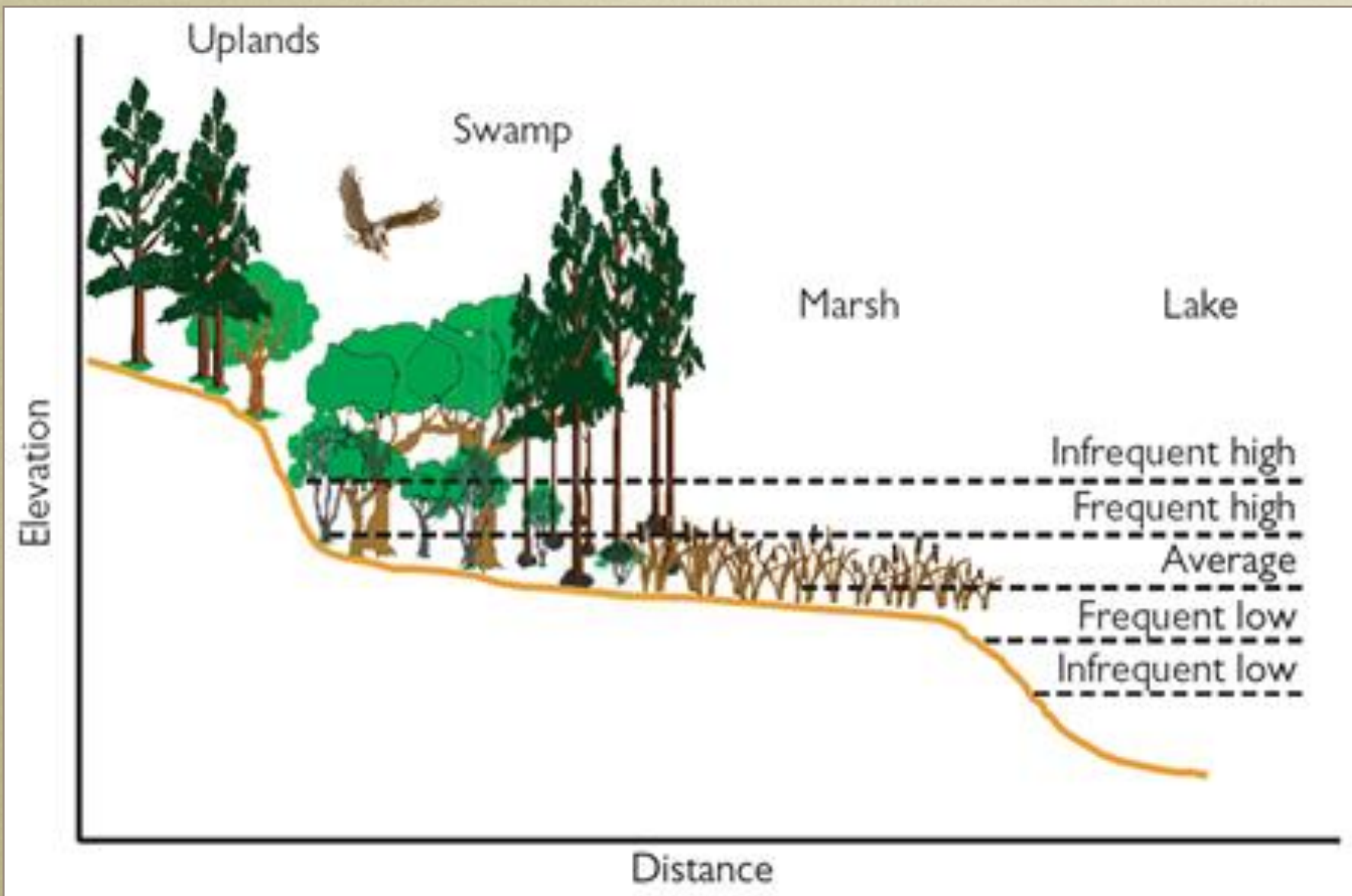


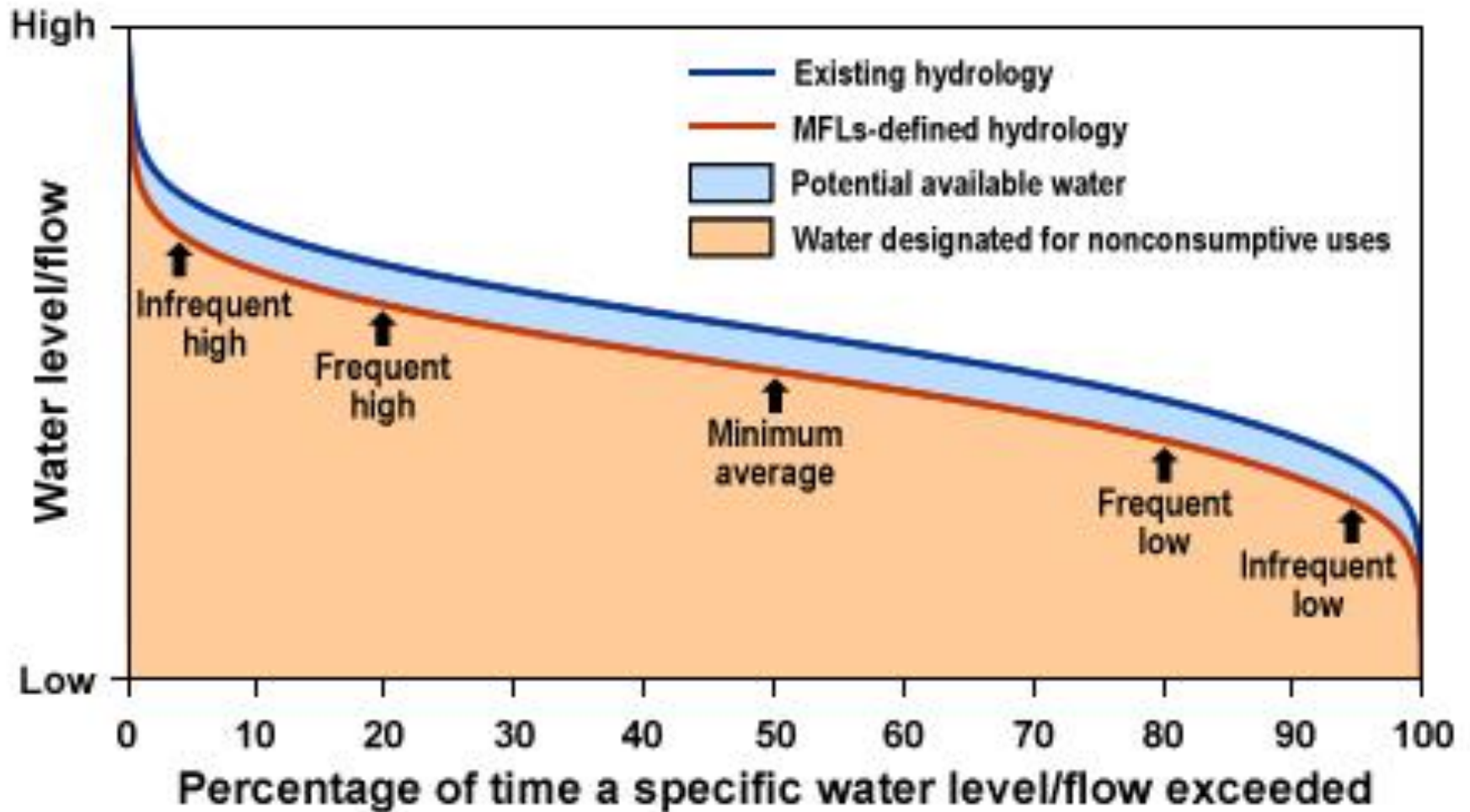
St. Johns River WMD



MFLs are determined based on evaluations of topography, soils and vegetation data collected within plant communities and other pertinent information associated with the water resource.







FWC's ROLE

- No statutory authority.
- Provide data.
- Review and comment upon proposed MFLs.
- Build partnerships during project design.

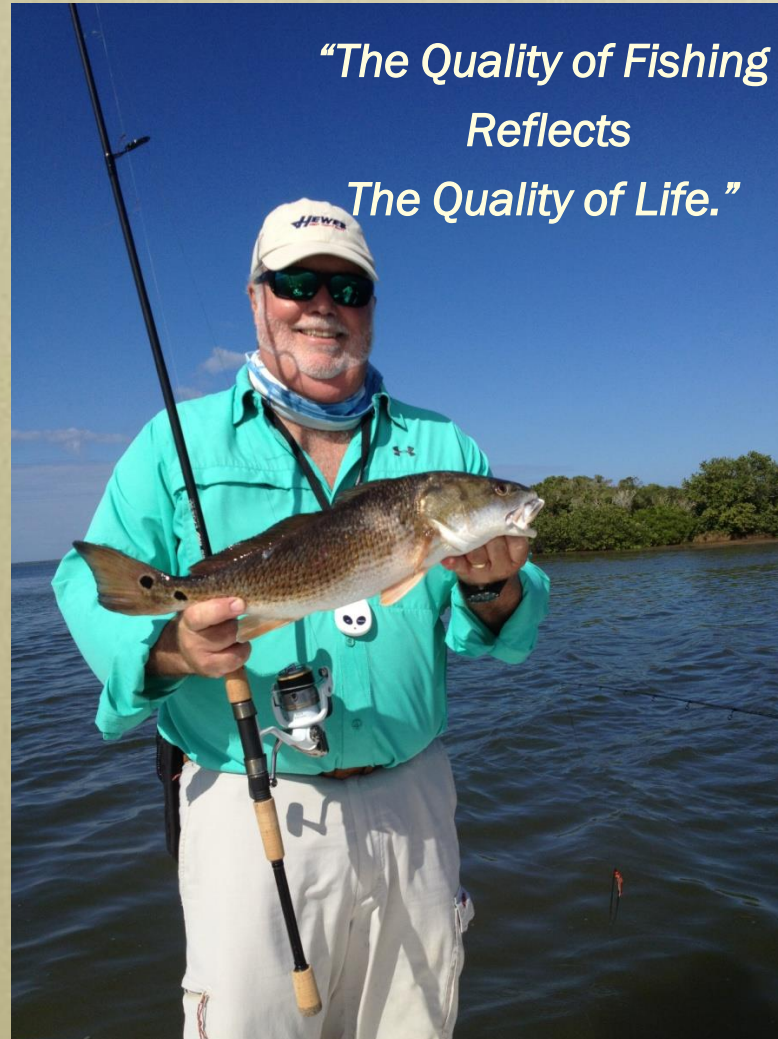


FWC's MFL POSITION STATEMENT

- The FWC supports flows and levels management of Florida's lakes, rivers and springs that will maintain the health, diversity and welfare of fish and wildlife communities in freshwater and estuarine ecosystems.
- The FWC encourages innovative measures for conservation and management of water resources that balance human and ecological needs.



Questions



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