

## **SECTION 4.4 "ESA" ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS**

### **4.4.1 DISTRICTS AND INTENT**

The "ESA" Environmentally Sensitive Area category includes three (3) zone districts: ESA-1, 2, 3. Lands in these districts are considered in need of special planning and treatment regarding land development regulation. These are not preservation districts, but land uses permitted within these districts are to provide mitigating measures to protect the natural functions of the County's environmentally sensitive areas as designated within the Comprehensive Plan, with a special emphasis on the planning and treatment of land development within the one-hundred (100) year floodplain of the Suwannee, Alapaha and Withlacoochee Rivers. These regulations prohibit intensive residential, recreational and agricultural uses and prohibit industrial and non-water-dependent commercial development within the 100 year floodplain of the areas designated as Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

### **4.4.2 PERMITTED PRINCIPAL USES AND STRUCTURES**

1. Non-intensive agricultural (see definition of intensive agriculture in Section 2.1) and forestry operations conducted in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Single family dwellings.
3. Mobile homes.
4. Homes of six (6) or fewer residents which otherwise meet the definition of a "community residential facility" (see section 4.2).
5. Public resource-based recreation facilities.

### **4.4.3 PERMITTED ACCESSORY USES AND STRUCTURES**

1. Uses and structures which:
  - a. Are customarily accessory and clearly incidental and subordinate to permitted or permissible uses and structures;
  - b. Are located on the same lot as the permitted or permissible principal use or structure, or on a contiguous lot in the same ownership; and
  - c. Do not involve operations or structures not in keeping with the intent of these land development districts.
2. Examples of permitted accessory uses and structures include:
  - a. Private garages.
  - b. Docks, ramps, piers and walkways for residential and water-dependent commercial uses (see Article 14).
  - c. Residential facilities for caretakers whose work requires residence on the premises or for employees who will be quartered on the premises.

### **4.4.4 PROHIBITED USES AND STRUCTURES**

Industrial and commercial uses, intensive agricultural uses (see section 2.1 for definition of intensive agriculture), private recreational uses and any use or structure not specifically, provisionally, or by reasonable implication permitted herein or permissible as a special exception.

4.4.5 SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS

(See also Articles 12 and 13)

1. Home occupations.
2. Campgrounds of less than one-hundred (100) campsites, provided that such campgrounds shall not be located within five (5) miles from another campground located within an Environmentally Sensitive zoning district and not more than twenty (20) percent of the natural vegetation on each campsite within such campgrounds shall be removed.
3. Privately owned resource-based recreation facilities, such as but not limited to boat rentals, fish camps, and hunting lodges.

4.4.6 MINIMUM LOT REQUIREMENTS

(area, width)

1. Single family dwellings and mobile homes:

ESA-1 Minimum lot area 40 acres  
Minimum lot width 775 ft.

ESA-2 Minimum lot area 10 acres  
Minimum lot width 400 ft. (5 acres if developed as a Planned Rural Residential Development in conformance with Policies I.1.6 and I.2.2 of the County's Comprehensive Plan and an overall density of one (1) dwelling unit per ten (10) acres is maintained on site)

ESA-3 Minimum lot area 5 acres  
Minimum lot width 275 ft.

Note: Minimum lot areas for any portions of the area designated as environmentally sensitive which is outside of the 100-year floodplain as designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Insurance Rate Map, shall conform with the minimum lot requirements of the district in which the portion is located.

2. All other permitted or permissible uses and structures (unless otherwise specified):

Minimum lot area 10 acres  
Minimum lot width 400 ft.

4.4.7 MINIMUM YARD REQUIREMENTS

(depth of front and rear yard, width of side yard) (See Section 4.2 for right-of-way setback requirements.)

1. All permitted or permissible uses and structures (unless otherwise specified):

Front 30 ft.  
Side 25 ft.  
Rear 25 ft.

Special Provisions: A minimum undisturbed, vegetated buffer of seventy-five (75) feet measured from the generally recognized river bank of any Outstanding Florida Water (Suwannee River), as classified by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and fifty (50) feet measured from the generally recognized river bank of all other perennial rivers shall be required. This buffer shall be maintained for all single-family residential uses and agricultural uses and silviculture activities.

All other permitted land uses shall conform with the variable buffer requirements contained in Chapter 40B-4.3030(4), Florida Administrative Code, as administered by the Water Management District. Exception shall be made for the provision of reasonable access to the river and resource-based recreational activities within buffer areas. Reasonable access shall mean the minimum amount of clearing necessary for access not to exceed twenty-five (25) feet in width.

4.4.8 MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF STRUCTURES: NO PORTION SHALL EXCEED:

35 feet as measured from the base flood elevation.

(see section 4.2 for exclusions from height limitation)

4.4.9 MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE BY ALL BUILDINGS

20%

Note: In addition to meeting the required lot yard, building height, lot coverage, landscaped buffering, and off-street parking requirements of this section, no structure shall exceed a 1.0 floor area ratio.

4.4.10 MINIMUM LANDSCAPED BUFFERING REQUIREMENTS

1. All permitted or permissible uses and structures (unless otherwise specified):  
None, except as necessary to meet other requirements as set out herein.

4.4.11 MINIMUM OFFSTREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS

1. Each residential dwelling unit: two (2) spaces for each dwelling unit.