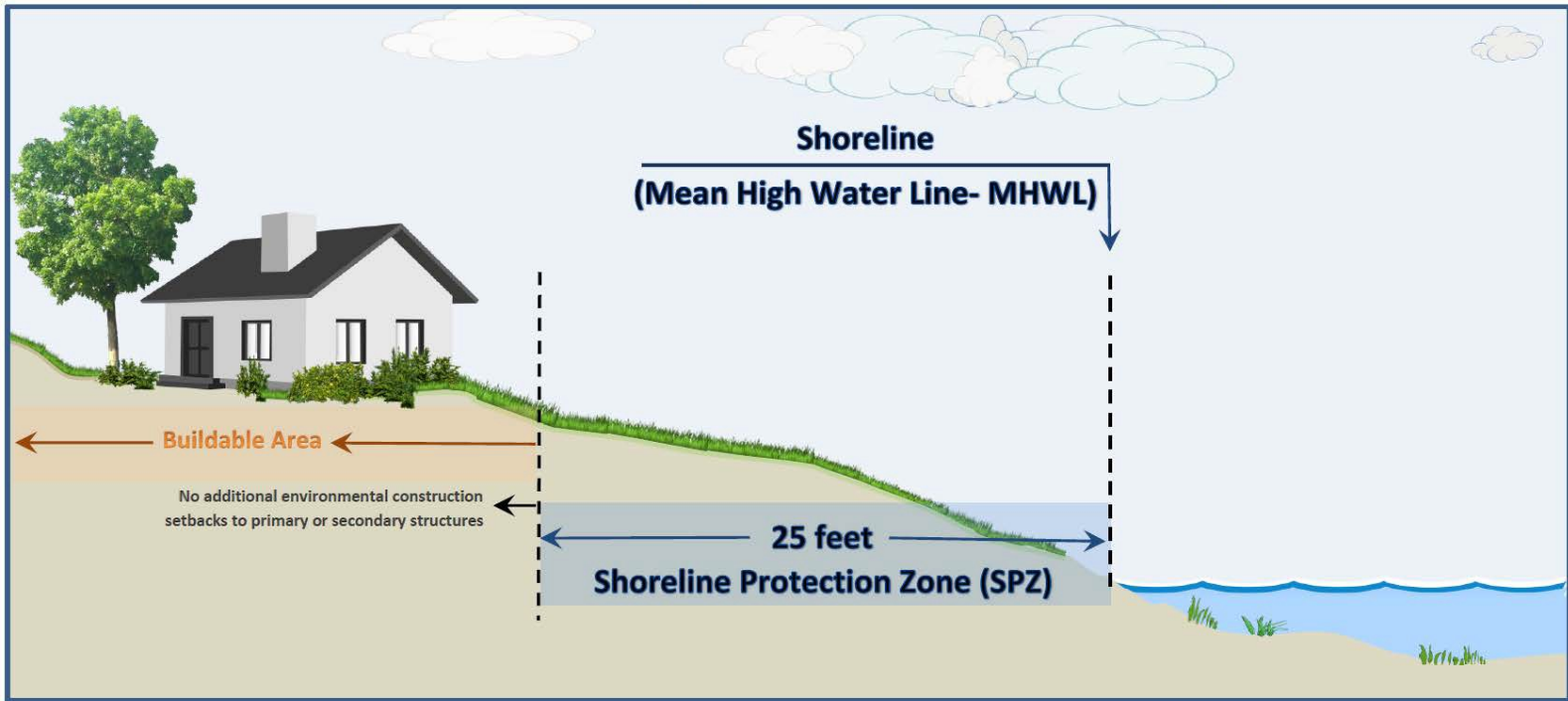
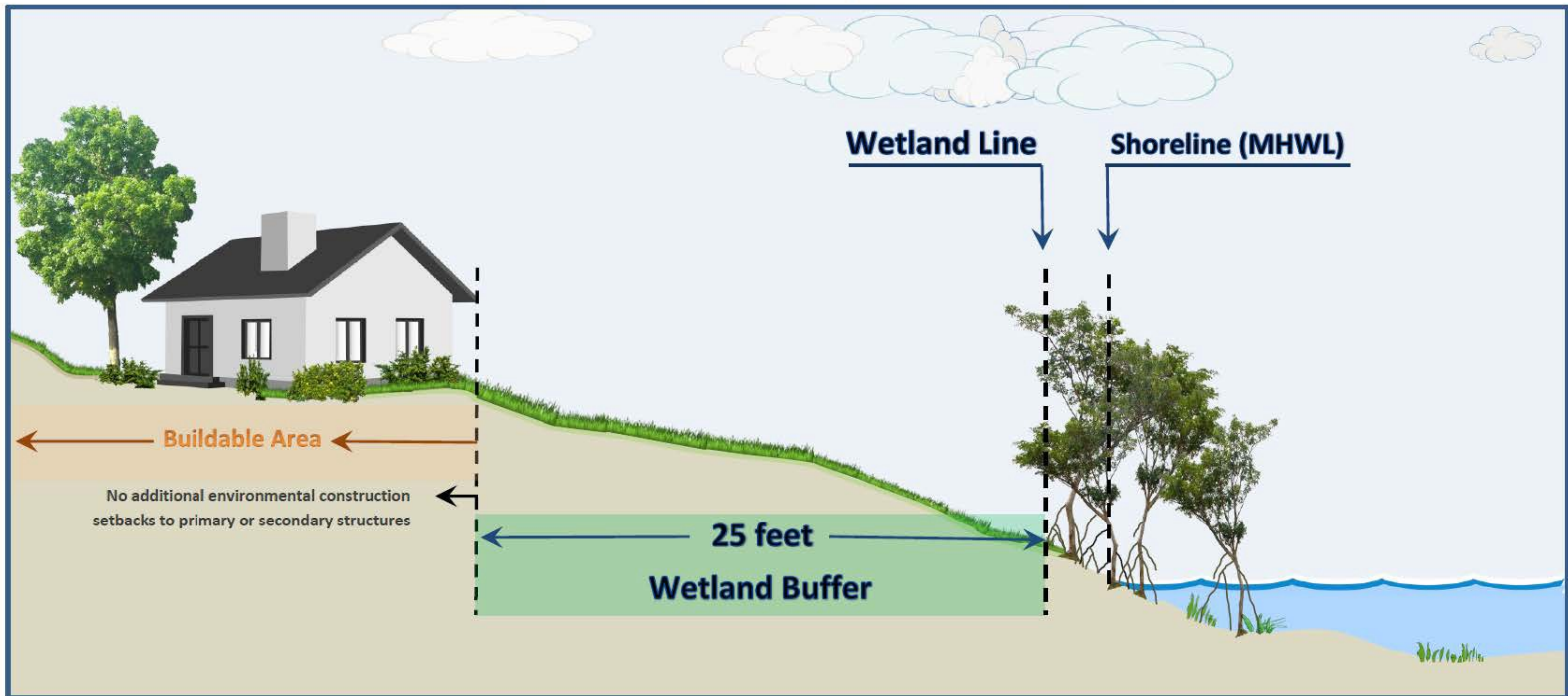


# SHORELINE PROTECTION – Requirements for Waterfront Lots of Record, 1 Acre or Less

## 1 Acre Lots (or smaller) With No Wetlands On Site, SPZ only



## 1 Acre Lots (or smaller) With Wetlands Above the Shoreline



### Waterfront Property – Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What are the setbacks for waterfront properties?
2. Is my property a "Lot of Record"? How do I find out?
3. Are there wetlands on my waterfront property?
4. Where can I build my home, pool or other building?
5. What can I build in the shoreline protection zone or wetland buffer?
6. What if my lot is over an acre?



## Waterfront Property – Answers:

1. **Setbacks.** Waterfront properties typically have a rear setback to the water. The setbacks for property are determined by the property's zoning designation or as provided on a development's site plan or plat when the development (e.g., residential subdivision, P.U.D. or commercial project) was approved.

SHORELINE PROTECTION ZONE (SPZ) – Also required for lots fronting navigable waters of the county. The SHORELINE PROTECTION zone along the water can act like a setback as well, but is subject to different regulations from zoning. These areas are called shoreline protection zones (SPZs), or where wetlands are on the property they are called “wetland buffers”. These requirements are different from zoning setbacks which may be granted a zoning variance by the Board of Zoning Adjustment. There are a limited number of environmental waivers to reduce the size of the required protection area, such as the example shown on the first page, an environmental waiver reducing the SPZ to 25 feet from the shoreline (Mean High Water Line).

2. A lot of record is defined as a lot that has been established as of April 1, 1982. This is the date that Martin County's first Comprehensive Plan went into effect, first establishing shoreline protection requirements. Lots that had been established before this date are eligible for environmental waivers that can reduce the SPZ down to 25 feet for certain lots of record. 25 feet is the minimum reduction allowed by environmental waivers.

The plat for a residential subdivision will have a recordation date to identify if the lot was created before or after 1982. Sometimes research is necessary for un-platted lots to determine when they were created, this may be determined by a legal description on the deed for the property. Platted or un-platted lots that have been split after 1982 are not lots of record.

Plats can be found by searching the [Martin County Clerk's website](#).

3. Wetlands on waterfront properties typically include mangroves that are present on the land above the shoreline. For the purpose of obtaining County permits, staff may be able confirm these wetland locations in the field when shoreline mangroves are surveyed and flagged as part of a building permit application. However, these and other wetlands may need to be located by an [environmental professional](#) for certain permit types.
4. Lots of record, 1 acre or less, may construct up to the edge of the 25 foot SPZ or wetland buffer. Care must be taken to protect the shoreline during construction, typically erosion control devices are installed to contain development and prevent run-off from discharging into the SPZ and protected waters.
5. Construction in the SPZ or wetland buffer is generally limited to structures to provide access to the water, such as boardwalks and accessways. Residential lots without wetlands are allowed an access up to 12 feet in width to the water. Residential lots with wetlands are allowed an access up to 6 feet in width, with access avoiding impacts to mangroves and other environmental resources where possible.

Native vegetation within the shoreline protection zone or wetland buffer is required to be protected.

6. Residential lots of record between 1-2 Acres may submit an application for an Environmental Waiver to establish a reduced Shoreline Protection Zone or wetland buffer, between 25- 75 feet. Lots over 2 acres are required to provide a 75 foot SPZ or wetland buffer with construction setbacks.

More questions? Email the Environmental Division: [env@martin.fl.us](mailto:env@martin.fl.us)