

Land-Use Restrictions Guide

The acres you can't build on — and who says so.

Total acres are not buildable acres. A large share of many parks can never be developed. Know which acres are off the table before you value any “expansion potential.”

What Takes Land Off the Table

- Wetlands — regulated by the Army Corps under the Clean Water Act; usually un-buildable. Requires a delineation.
- Floodplains — mapped by FEMA; building is restricted and costly.
- Buffers & setbacks — required distance from water, wetlands, and property lines.
- Shoreline protection, drainage paths, and steep slopes.
- Utility easements — you cannot build over them.
- Protected species habitat.

Two Things Every Buyer Does

- Get a wetland delineation and a FEMA floodplain map, then calculate NET buildable acres.
- Order a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment — environmental problems run with the land, and you inherit them at closing.

Don't cross the line. Filling a wetland or ignoring a buffer brings personal, six-figure federal penalties. The smart move and the right move are the same one.