

Golf Course-Basin Management Action Plan Requirements

The fertilizers used to maintain golf courses can be significant sources of nutrients in springsheds and watersheds that are impaired for nitrogen and/or phosphorous. To achieve the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) target(s), all nutrient sources need to reduce their nutrient loading.

Similar to other sources, golf courses located within a Florida Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) area are required to implement strategies to mitigate nutrient loading in compliance with the BMAP. BMAPs are adopted by Secretarial Order and are legally enforceable by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Golf Course BMP Certification, Implementation, and Reporting.

1. In areas with an adopted BMAP, all golf courses must implement the BMPs described in DEP's golf course BMP manual, *Best Management Practices for the Enhancement of Environmental Quality on Florida Golf Courses* (DEP, 2021).
2. At minimum, the superintendent for each golf course must obtain and maintain certification through the UF-IFAS Florida Golf Courses Best Management Practices Program. It is highly recommended that course managers and landscape maintenance staff also participate in the certification program to ensure proper BMP implementation and understanding of nutrient-related water quality issues and the role of golf courses in water quality restoration and protection. By no later than January 14, 2026, the golf course superintendents must confirm to DEP whether they have completed the certification. Certification must be completed by December 31, 2026. This certification must be renewed every four years.
3. All golf courses located within a BMAP are required to submit a nutrient management plan (NMP) that is designed to, while maintaining even plant growth, prevent nutrient losses to the Floridan aquifer and surrounding surface waters. A draft NMP must be submitted to DEP within one year of BMAP adoption and a final document is due two years after adoption.
4. Beginning in 2026, nutrient application records and management action updates (fertilizer, reuse, BMPs, etc.) must be submitted each year during the BMAP statewide annual reporting process.
5. Fertilizer rates should be no greater than the UF/IFAS recommendations to help prevent leaching (for more information refer to the *Best Management Practices for the Enhancement of Environmental Quality on Florida Golf Courses* (DEP, 2021)). This includes nutrients from reuse or any other source applied (ex. manure, compost). If a facility uses fertilizer rates greater than those in the BMP manual they are required to conduct water quality monitoring prescribed by DEP or WMD that demonstrates compliance with water quality standards. For more information refer to the *Best Management Practices for the Enhancement of Environmental Quality on Florida Golf Courses* (DEP, 2021).
6. Example golf course BMPs applicable to protecting water quality are listed below.
 - Use slow release fertilizer to prevent volatilization.
 - Use of lined media in stormwater features.
 - Use of denitrification walls.
 - Use of rain gardens.
 - Use of tree boxes.
 - Use of bioswales.

Please Read: Instructions for Completing and Submitting the Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)

This Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) form has been developed to help golf courses located within Florida's BMAP areas comply with requirements for nutrient reduction and water quality protection.

What to submit with your nutrient management plan package:

- ☐ Completed PDF Form.
- ☐ GIS shapefile detailing course areas.
- ☐ Completed nutrient application Excel spreadsheet.
- ☐ BMP verification documentation.*
- ☐ Monitoring/sampling results for Nitrogen and/or Phosphorous in:
 - Soil.
 - Tissue.*
 - Water Quality.*
- ☐ Pre- and Post- course development modeling and/or sampling reports.*

*Submit if available or required for your course

Note: If you own/manage more than one course which you think should go in one plan, or have any other questions, please reach out to your BMAP coordinator or BMAPPprogram@FloridaDEP.gov.

Submitting your completed NMP package

Gather required information

- Link to Secure FTP (SFTP) provided by DEP
- Log-in: **Username:** email **Password:** provided by DEP (a secondary unique password will be auto-generated- **do not share your unique log-in credentials**)

Upload your files to DEPs Secure FTP Server

- Navigate to the designated folder provided by DEP.
- Upload the required files (e.g., PDF form, GIS shapefile, Excel spreadsheet, lab reports).
- Verify that each file has successfully transferred.

Confirm submission- Once your files have been uploaded:

- Notify your DEP contact via email.
- Include the **file names, upload date/time, and your course name** in your confirmation email.

Course Identification and Contact Information

Course Name

Course Address

Best Point(s) of Contact

E-mail

Phone number

Address

Same as above

Superintendent

Same as point of contact

Has the superintendent obtained certification through the UF-IFAS Florida Golf Courses Best Management Practices Program? Yes No

Certification Date:

What BMAP(s) is this course located in?

The NMP must include the following:

a. A brief description of the goals of the nutrient management plan.

This should be a paragraph that describes the goals of your NMP. Talk about how you are managing for high quality turf and water quality. Remember your goal is to protect water quality while maintaining the golf course in premium condition.

b. Identification of areas where nutrient applications will be made including greens, tees, fairways and roughs.

Discuss the areas of the course where you plan to use fertilizer, and why. Also discuss the areas that do not need or get any fertilizer applications.

Include a GIS shapefile identifying all of these areas with your submission.

(This must be a zipped file.)

**Include the completed _____
practices with your submission.**

of tables detailing your nutrient application

Includes: Turf Details

Fertilizer Application

Reuse/Effluent Applied

Are any other sources of nutrients (i.e. manure, compost, etc.) applied to the grounds? If so, please detail in a table similar to the fertilizer and reuse tables.

c. *Current BMP implementation.*

Describe existing BMPs and other nutrient management actions here.

DEP has prepared a BMP Verification Helper Microsoft Excel file to assist stakeholders in providing project information. The first tab can be used to reference the earliest acceptable date for projects, by BMAP, and determine what kind of supporting documentation is required for verification of nutrient credits based on project type. Project types are organized by category in an easy-to-navigate table in the second tab.

Do you have any nutrient reducing BMPs? Yes No

Project Type Completion Date

Project Description

Verification Documentation Provided Yes No

Project Type Completion Date

Project Description

Verification Documentation Provided Yes No

Project Type Completion Date

Project Description

Verification Documentation Provided Yes No

Include required documentation for BMP credit verification with your submission. No reduction credit will be given if the appropriate required documentation is not provided.

d. *Soil sampling methods and results for each area receiving fertilizer applications. Areas receiving fertilizer applications shall be sampled once every three years. Soil samples shall be collected and analyzed according to UF-IFAS/DEP recommendations or standard industry practice. Soil samples shall be analyzed, at minimum, for:*

1. Nitrogen
2. Phosphorus

Describe existing soil sampling here. Describe your planned soil sampling schedule. Provide information about how long you have been soil sampling and what part of the course you are prioritizing.

If soil samples from areas of similar soil, fertilizer use and management are combined, describe the process and justify combining for a “representative” sample.

Include soil sampling results in your submission.

Keep all soil test results (or copies of them) in this file as part of your nutrient management plan. Please do not send them in to DEP individually. If you’ve been soil testing for years, remember to add copies of all those past results to your NMP file.

- e. Water quality sampling methods and results. Water quality sampling and analysis should be conducted in accordance with DEP’s Standard Operating Procedures. Water quality samples shall be analyzed, at minimum, for:*

1. Nitrogen
2. Phosphorus.

Describe existing water quality sampling. Describe your planned water quality sampling schedule. Provide information about how long you have been doing water quality sampling and what part of the course you are prioritizing.

Include water quality sampling results in your submission.

Keep all water quality test results (or copies of them) in this file as part of your nutrient management plan. Please do not send them in to DEP individually. If you’ve

been testing for years, remember to add copies of all those past results to your NMP file.

- f. Tissue sampling methods and results. Tissue samples shall be collected and analyzed according to UF-IFAS/DEP recommendations or standard industry practice.*

Describe existing tissue sampling plan here.

Include tissue sampling results in your submission.

Keep all test results (or copies of them) in this file as part of your nutrient management plan. Please do not send them in to DEP individually. If you've been testing for years, remember to add copies of all those past results to your NMP file.

- g. Soil, tissue and water quality sample results shall be maintained for a minimum of 5 years. Please provide records.*
- h. When developing new (or expanding) golf courses, pre and post monitoring should be implemented in accordance with UF-IFAS/DEP recommendations.*

Do you do have pre and post course development modeling and/or sampling? Yes No

Describe your pre and post course development modeling and/or sampling.

Include report(s) with your submission.