



# 2019 Water Forum

What do we do about Septic Tanks?

August 29, 2019

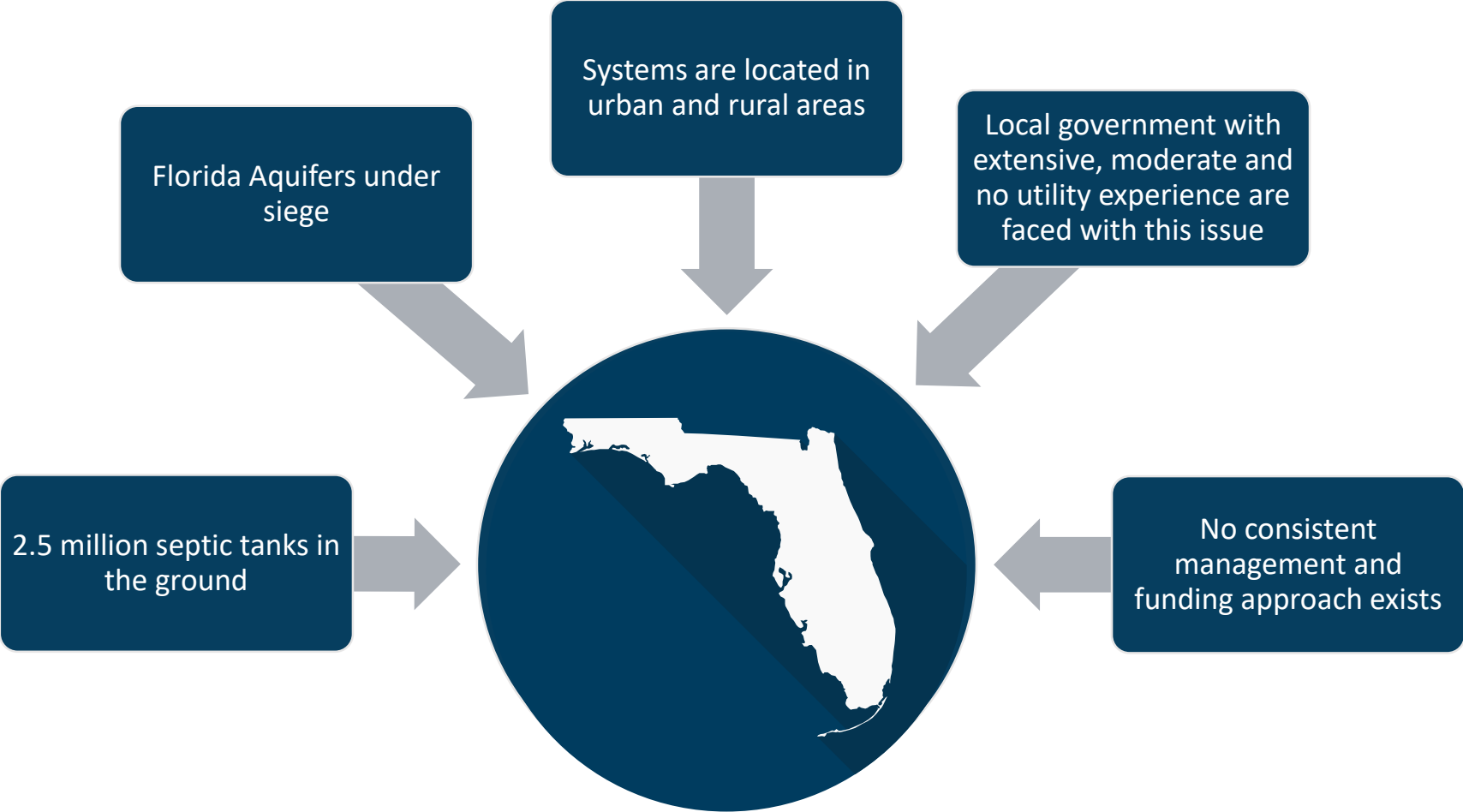


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# The Landscape of Florida



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- Not all “Public” septic tanks are reachable with conventional sewer systems (not cost efficient or timely)
- Many local governments, small and large, are not able or willing to provide utility services in outlying areas
- The State has defined the area of “high risk” system
- Because of diversity of local governments and their resources, an alternative approach will be helpful in addressing the septic tank challenge

# A Single Purpose Government (SPG)



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## Single Purpose Government

Created by two or more local governments to carry out a single mission

“Owning, operating, and financing septic tank replacement for its members”

SPG’s are authorized under section 163.01 (7)(g) 1, Florida statues (home rule)

Requires two or more local governments

It is established by interlocal agreements between the local governments

SPG is governed by a local government Appointed Board (elected vs non-elected)

Does not require any approval or oversight by State

# Advantages of a SPG



- Public entity created to achieve a “Public Purpose”
- Provides a dedicated focus on septic tank issues
- SCALE - brings regional scale and resources to the local governments
- Due to structure and focus, can bring greater efficiency and effectiveness
- Can finance infrastructure on a tax-exempt basis
- Eligible for SRF and USDA loans and state/federal grants
- Member local governments have control of SPG but do not incur any liability for debt or operations
- Operates in “The Sunshine”

# Political Advantages



- Provides alternative public entity option
- Provides DEP with a mechanism to leverage their dollars on a broader basis
- Local governments/stakeholders can structure interlocal agreement based on local policy preferences (one size will not fit everyone)
- The SPG, not local governments directly, regulate rates and service standards

# Moving Forward

## Create one or more SPG through the 163 process

Has been done successfully for water/wastewater utilities (FGUA)

Very flexible in that any local government can join by executing inter-local agreement or by inviting SPG to assist in addressing septic tank issues

SPG can change charter by amending inter-local agreement

State has no oversight in governance or operation

## Create a state-wide authority through a legislative action

Local governments lose control

Any change to charter or mission would go back to legislature for consideration

Timeframe (legislative process)



# Conclusion



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- 67 counties and 425 cities cannot address this issue individually
- The septic tank challenge will require government and management alternatives that do not exist today but can be created quickly
- New approaches will need to be created
- Creation of “Pilot Project”
  - Focused geographic area
  - Specific mission and time frame
  - Can be part of a total solution