



Florida's top state wetlands expert has been suspended after she refused to issue a permit on a controversial project — one that she said her boss was willing to bend the rules to approve.

The project: turning a North Florida pine plantation into a business that attempts to make up for wetlands that are wiped out by new roads and development. At stake: millions of dollars in wetland "credits" that can be sold to government and developers.

The problem, according to a May 9 memo from Department of Environmental Protection wetlands expert Connie Bersok, is that the owners want the DEP to give them lots of wetland credits for land that isn't wet.

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