Caloosahatchee River and Estuary and Everglades West Coast Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) Update Technical Meeting

Nov. 20, 2024 at 9 a.m. EST
South Florida Water Management District – Ft. Myers Office
1st Floor Large Conference Room
2301 McGregor Blvd.
Ft. Myers, FL 33901

Agenda

- Florida Department of Environmental Protection BMAP Presentation
- South Florida Water Management District Presentation
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Presentation
- Poster Session/Open Discussion
- Conclusion

Please note the FTP site for documents pertaining to the various BMAPs:
http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/DEAR/BMAP/
For more information, contact: Diana Turner, 850-245-8825, Diana.M.Turner@FloridaDEP.gov

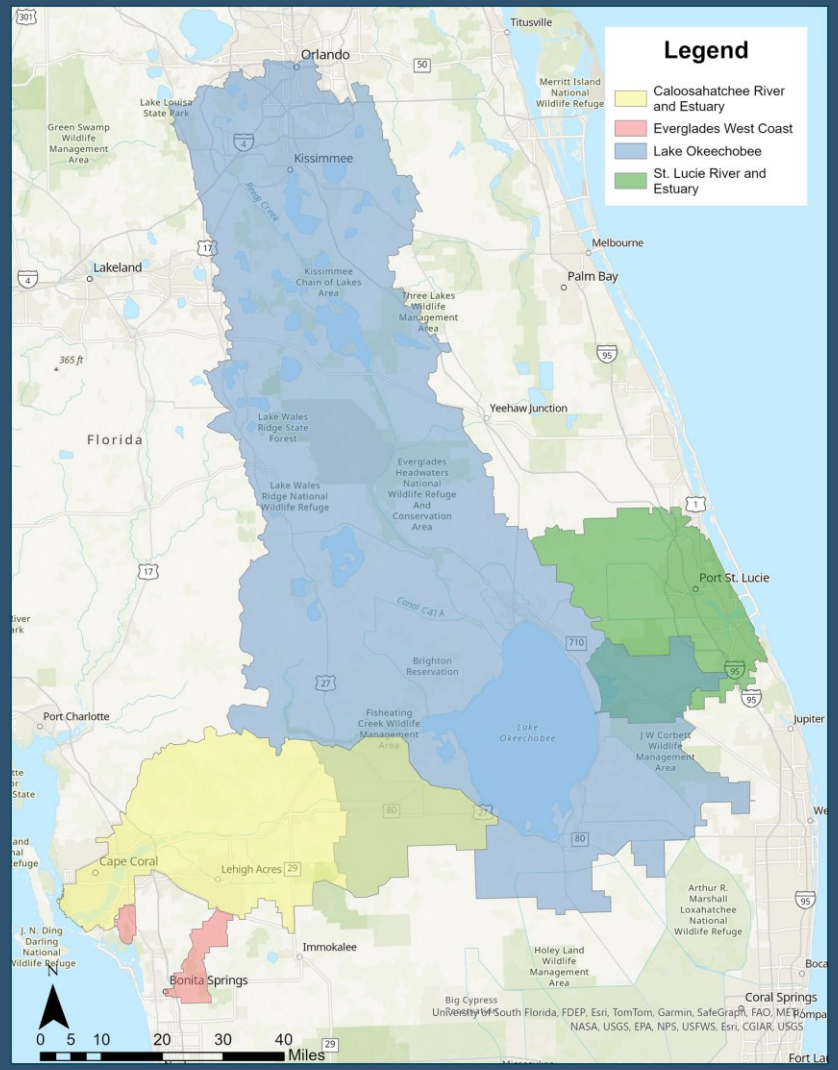
CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER AND ESTUARY AND EVERGLADES WEST COAST BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLANS (BMAPS) UPDATE TECHNICAL MEETING

Evelyn Becerra
Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration
Florida Department of Environmental Protection

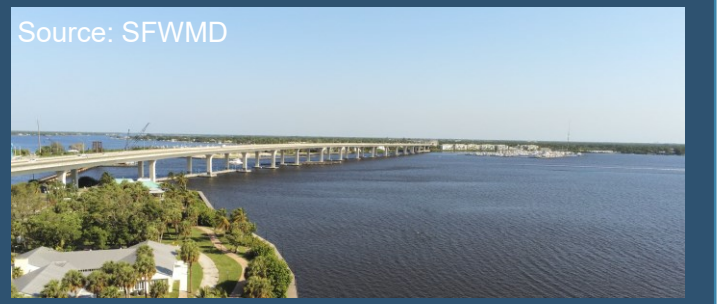
Ft. Myers, FL | Nov. 20, 2024

Source: South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)

BMAP UPDATE MEETING




Source: SFWMD


Source: SFWMD


Source: SFWMD

Agenda:

- Logistics.
- Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) Update Highlights.
- South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Watershed Protection Plans Highlights.
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) Update.
- Poster Session.

BMAP UPDATE COMPONENTS

- Recent legislative requirements:
  - Clean Waterways Act (2020).
  - Wastewater effluent limits changes.
  - Onsite Sewage and Treatment Disposal System (OSTDS) requirements for new systems on lots 1 acre or less.
- List of identified projects to meet five-year milestones.
- Regional projects.
- Hot spot analysis.
- Additional water quality analyses.
- Additional updates needed to the monitoring network.
- Recommendations from the Five-Year Review.


Source: SFWMD


Source: SFWMD


Source: SFWMD

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

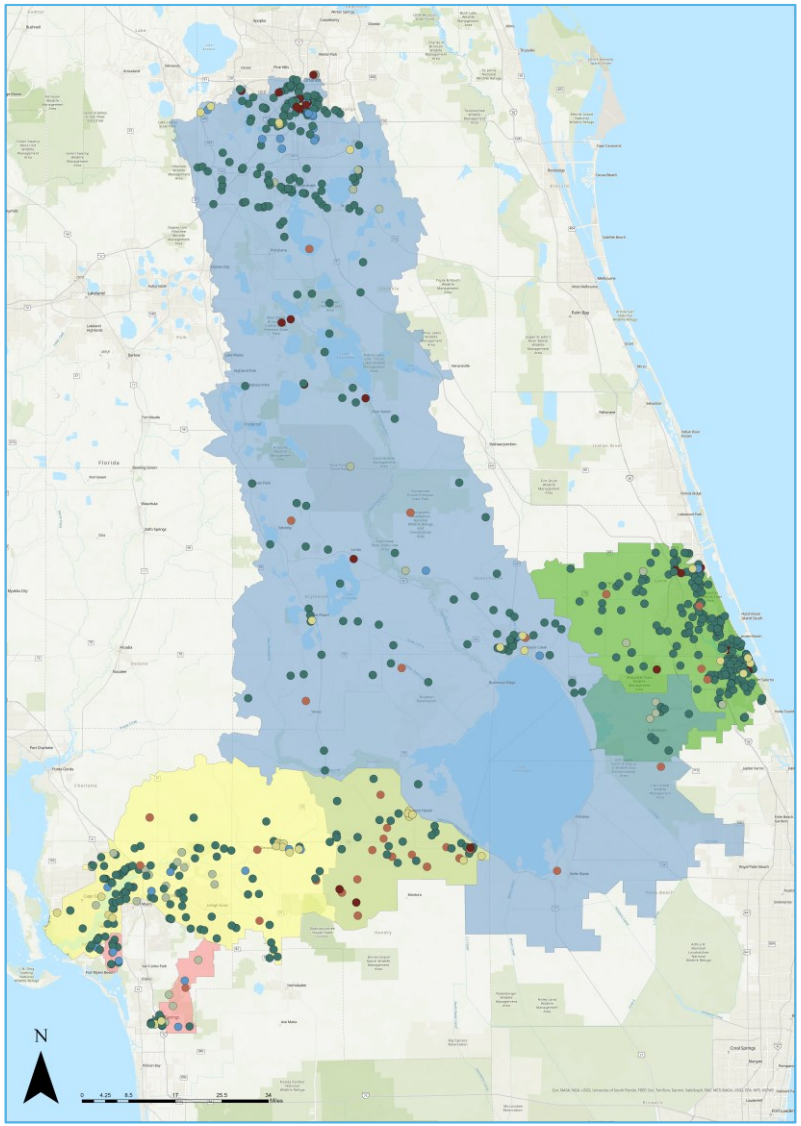
- Aug. 1, Final wastewater treatment plans and OSTDS remediation plans due.
- Nov. 18, Second Annual NEEPP Public Workshop.
- Nov. 19 - 21, Technical BMAP update public meetings.
- Jan. 2025, Draft BMAP update public meetings.
- Jan./Feb. 2025, Draft BMAP update comment period.
- July 1, 2025, Statutory deadline for updated nutrient BMAPs.

PROJECT PORTAL IS OPEN

- Portal will remain open through mid-January 2025 for annual reporting.
- Updates to existing projects and any newly input planned projects needed to reach next milestone have been submitted and are being compiled.


Winter Park Stormwater Retrofit


Rio/St. Lucie Stormwater Retrofit



THANK YOU

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Anthony Tomalewski
Caloosahatchee River and Estuary
Basin Coordinator

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Source: SFWMD

SFWMD Update

2025 Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) Update

Megan Jacoby, Bureau Chief

Everglades & Estuaries Protection Bureau

Caloosahatchee River and Estuary BMAP Meeting – Fort Myers

November 20, 2024

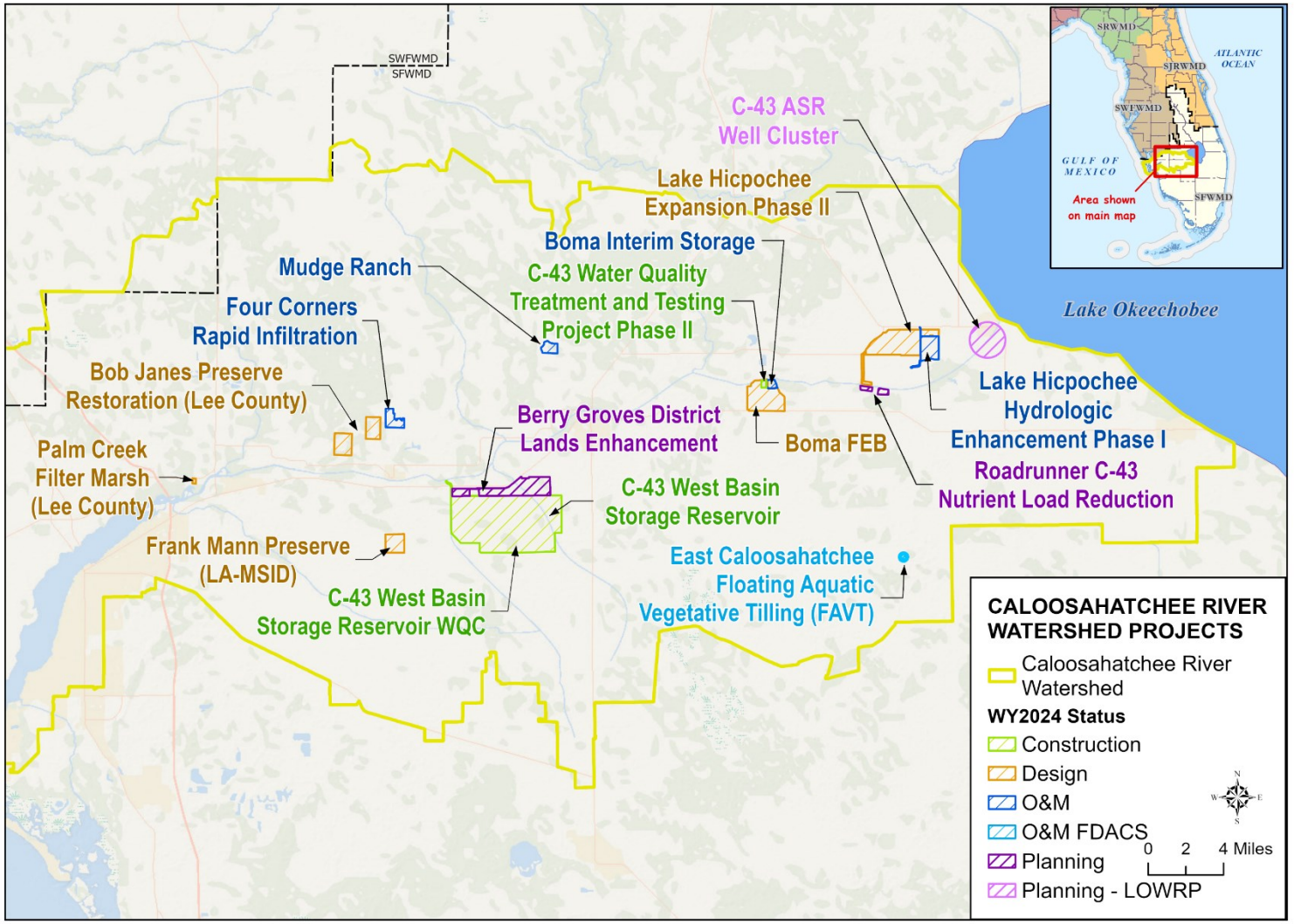
2025 Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection Plan Update – *5-Year Update*

- Since 2020, SFWMD completed annual Caloosahatchee River Watershed Construction Project (CRWCP) reviews, as part of the Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) reviews
- Annual reviews are important to:
  - Maintain transparency and accountability in BMAP process
  - Assist to progressively move toward achieving state's TMDLs
  - Consolidate into NEEPP annual progress reporting (South Florida Environmental Report, or SFER) per §373.4595(6), F.S.
  - ***Develop and update WPPs required every five years***
- Draft 2025 CRWPP Update (5-Year Update)
  - Project accomplishments through Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 (Oct. 1, 2023–Sept. 30, 2024); data evaluation/key findings through Water Year (WY) 2024 (May 1, 2023–April 30, 2024)
  - Draft 2025 SFER – Volume I, Chapter 8D (available at SFWMD.gov/SFER)

SFWMD Projects

- 2024 CRWCP Status:
  - 4 projects – planning/design
  - 3 projects – construction
  - 4 projects – operations

Inflow pumps at Four Corners Rapid Infiltration Project

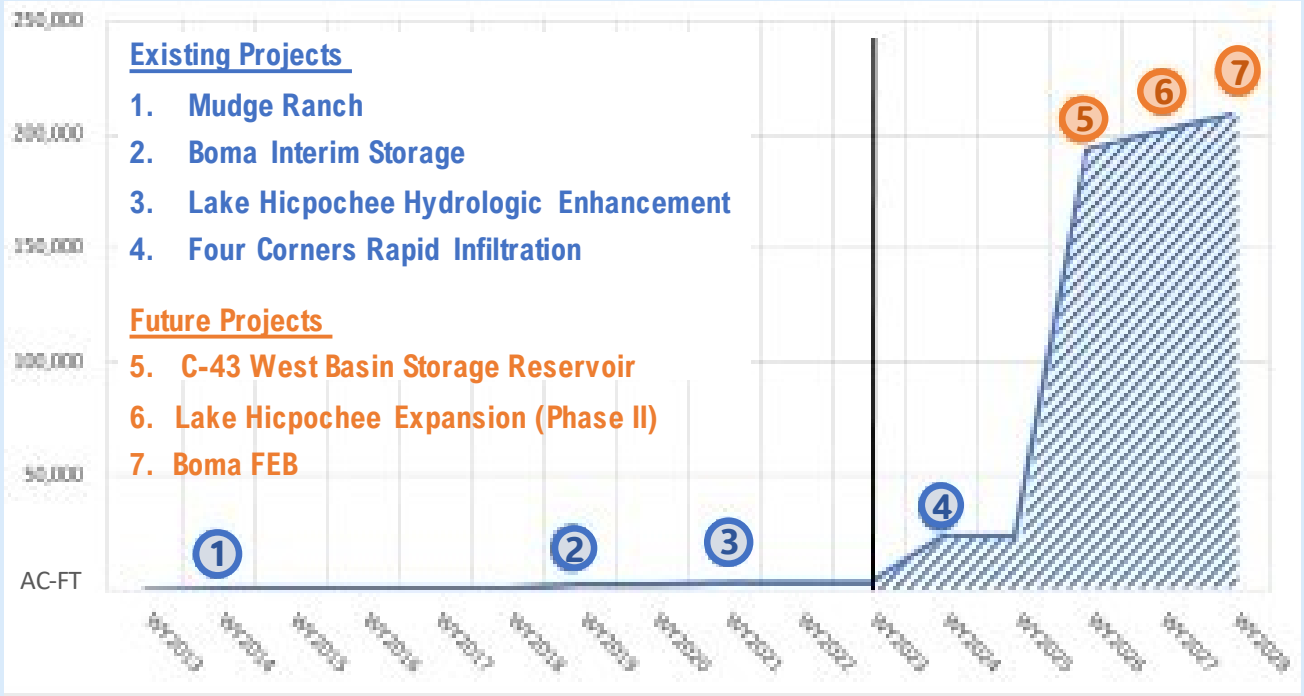


Water Storage Benefits

- Key DWM program benefits:
  - Reduces runoff/discharge to and stores/treats water in regional system
  - Promotes hydrologic enhancement, groundwater recharge, improves habitat
  - Avoids high cost of land purchase and keeps private lands on local tax rolls
  - Storage and/or treatment provided typically exceeds permit requirements
- During WY2024, 3 SFWMD-led operational projects provided 25,274 ac-ft of storage*
- Future projects are planned to add storage capacity of nearly 184,000 ac-ft over the next five years

** Note: WY2024 data does not include the Hicpochee Hydrologic Enhancement (Phase I) Project*

Increasing Water Storage in the Caloosahatchee River Watershed



NEEPP Model Update

- Original 2008/2009 storage targets for Northern Everglades watersheds have been confirmed to meet the NEEPP legislative goals
  - CRW storage target = 400,000 acre-feet per year
- **New!** 2025 NEEPP Regional Simulation Model Update
  - Evaluated hydrology using the Regional Simulation Model for Basins (RSMBN)
  - Current, future, and additional conceptual projects were evaluated for hydrologic performance across all three Northern Everglades watersheds
  - SFWMD is making progress toward the NEEPP storage goals—both realized and planned
- Now Underway: 2025 Update Reviews
  - Model overview poster today
  - Draft modeling results presented at upcoming NEEPP Public Workshop
  - Draft 2025 SFER – Volume I, Appendix 8A-1 for public review (SFWMD.gov/SFER)

Mark Your Calendars!


Caloosahatchee Estuary
Oyster Reef

AVAILABLE NOW

2025 CRWPP Update

Draft 2025 SFER – Volume I, Chapter 8D

Web Release Date: November 12, 2024
Public Comment Period: through December 17, 2024

For more information, visit:
SFWMD.gov/SFER

Presenter: Stacey Ollis

Contact Information

Megan Jacoby, Bureau Chief

Everglades & Estuaries Protection Bureau

South Florida Water Management District

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sfwmd.gov

Caloosahatchee BMAP & Everglades West Coast BMAP Public Meeting

November 20, 2024

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Office of Agricultural Water Policy

Jennifer Thera

Office of Agricultural Water Policy (OAWP)

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- **Matt Warren**; Environmental Administrator-Field Services Matt.Warren@fdacs.gov
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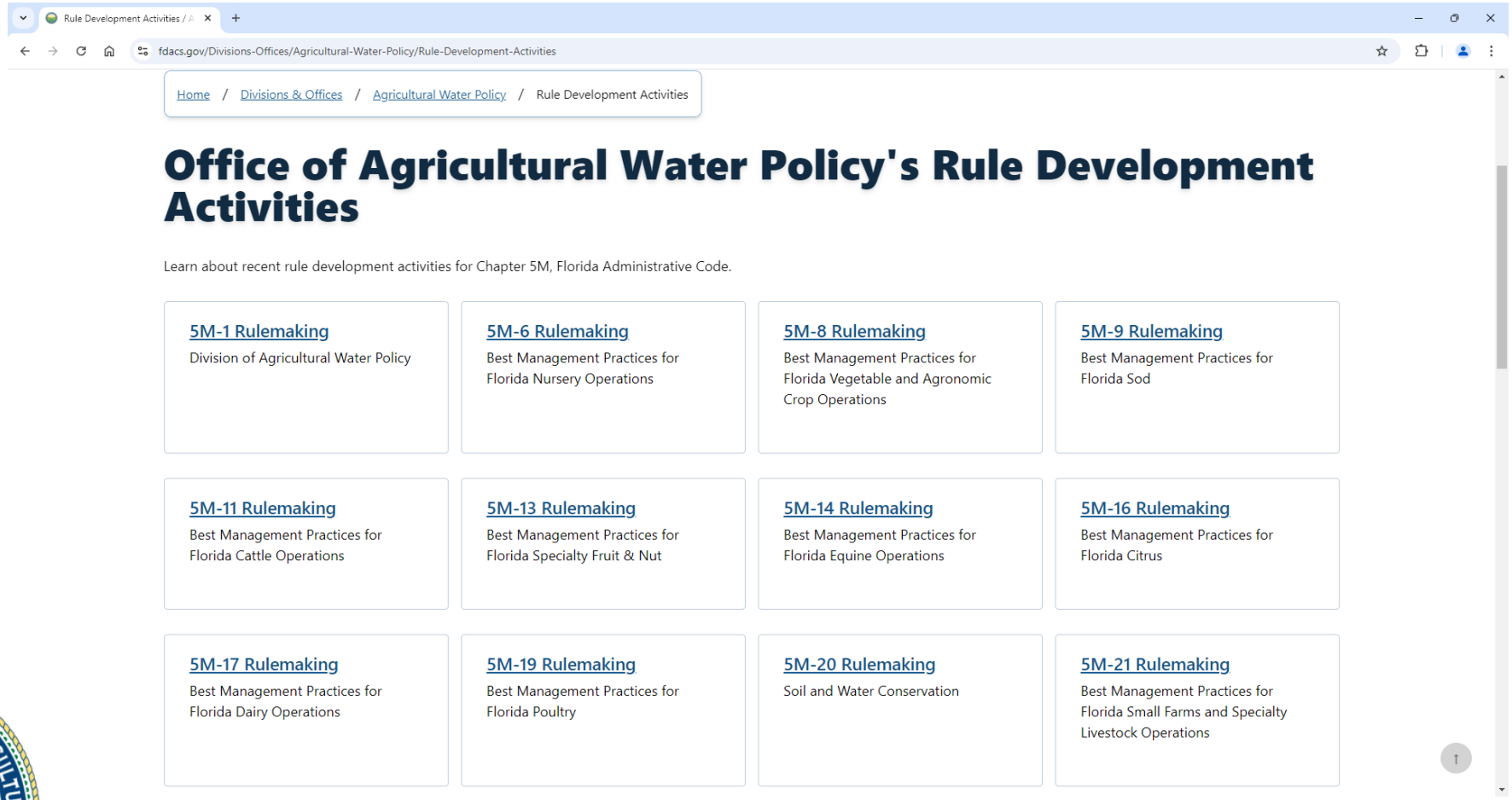
    - **Sheila Kitaif;** Environmental Manager-Field Services Sheila.Kitaif@fdacs.gov
- **Jessica Ferris;** Regional Project Coordinator Jessica.Ferris@fdacs.gov

Best Management Practices (BMP) Manual Updates

https://www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices/Agricultural-Water-Policy/Rule-Development-Activities



Cost Share

https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Water/Agricultural-Best-Management-Practices/BMP-Cost-Share-Program

On Website

- Producer Eligibility Requirements
- List of Project Types Eligible for Cost Share Funding
- Opportunity to apply for new types
- New Application Portal is active

BMP Cost Share Program

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' (FDACS) Office of Agricultural Water Policy (OAWP) administers the Best Management Practices (BMP) Cost Share Program to assist eligible producers or landowners with BMPs. Project funding is on a continuous basis until program funds are fully encumbered.

OAWP will prioritize awarding first-time participants in the BMP Cost Share Program and projects that will result in the highest level of nutrient reductions to help achieve basin management action plan (BMAP) goals and conservation of water use. Funding will be based on the submittal of the necessary information on the funding request. Completed requests will be reviewed in the order in which they are received. Review of each cost share funding request will be conducted by FDACS. Additional information from the producer, including a site visit, may be requested by FDACS before a funding decision is made.

FDACS will review completed requests based on the following minimum criteria:

1. Confirmation of producer eligibility.
2. Prioritization of projects taking place in a BMAP.
3. Confirmation that the project type is on the approved list, to be used for implementing a checklist item, has an adequate relative water quality benefit, and is appropriate for the size of the operation.
4. Justification and consideration of the water quality benefit or water quantity benefit and the relative size and scope of the benefit.
5. Confirmation that the project type is directly linked to the implementation of the producer's manual checklist item.
6. Confirmation that the project type has the necessary precision/technology features.
7. The level of data-reporting commitment from the producer and corresponding cost share percentage.

Producer Eligibility Requirements

When applying, producers must meet the following requirements for their funding request to be considered:

1. The property where the prospective project is located must be in production for at least one year prior to applying (regardless of ownership/lease).
2. The producer must have an active Notice of Intent to Implement Agricultural BMPs (NOI) for the property where the

Project Types Eligible for Cost Share Funding

Project types eligible for cost share funding are provided in the expandable lists below. FDACS will determine the suitability of the project type based on the cost/benefit of the project and the estimated water quality or water quantity benefit compared to the current practice.

- Nutrient Management Project Types
- Irrigation Management Project Types
- Water Resource Protection Project Types

New Project Types

Producers may request an item or project that is not currently on the list by submitting a request that:

1. Identifies the applicable BMP checklist item that will be implemented through the installation of the item or completion of the project.
2. Describes why the new project type is necessary to implement the BMP compared to the producer's current practices.
3. Quantifies the estimated water quality benefit compared to the current practice.
4. Provides justification or proof of the item having a water quality or water quantity benefit (e.g., case studies, research, demonstrations or field tests).

Project types that show potential but do not satisfy the four criteria above may be eligible for funding as "research or demonstration projects" for the purpose of becoming eligible in the future.

How to Request Project Funding or a New Project Type

To request project funding or a new project type, select the following button to create an account and sign into our BMP Cost Share Program portal:

Request Project Funding

Alternatively, you may download and complete the Funding Request Form [1.3 MB] and submit it to OAWPCostShare@FDACS.gov. **Please note:** Submitting a form may take more time to process and review.

Important: Do not begin work on a project prior to executing a cost share agreement.

Additional Funding Resources

FDACS works with multiple partners, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, water management districts, and soil and water conservation districts, to provide funding to assist producers in implementing Best Management Practices.

Agricultural Lands in the Caloosahatchee BMAP

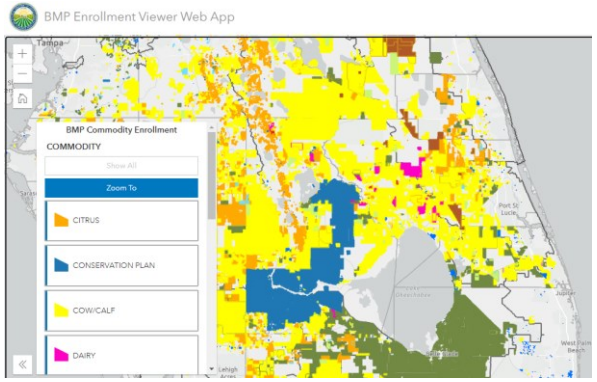
Location	Agricultural acres	Unenrolled - Unlikely Enrollable Acres	Agricultural Acres – Adjusted	Agricultural Acres Enrolled as of April 30, 2024	% Agriculture enrolled in BMP Program
C19	24,540	637	24,374	24,116	99%
East Caloosahatchee	194,582	10,606	192,099	175,636	91%
Lake Hicpochee	5,189	1,656	4,953	4,675	94%
Long Hammock	68,802	6,395	65,867	56,045	85%
S4	29,284	1,211	30,040	27,547	92%
Tidal Caloosahatchee	57,182	5,974	50,650	46,126	91%
Townsend	28,868	265	28,003	26,828	96%
West Caloosahatchee	180,758	8,670	167,128	153,026	92%

Agricultural Lands in the Everglades West Coast BMAP

Location	Agricultural acres	Unenrolled - Unlikely Enrollable Acres	Agricultural Acres – Adjusted	Agricultural Acres Enrolled as of April 30, 2024	% Agriculture enrolled in BMP Program
Hendry Creek	103	0	102	0	0%
Imperial River	9,091	2,316	6,607	4,977	75%

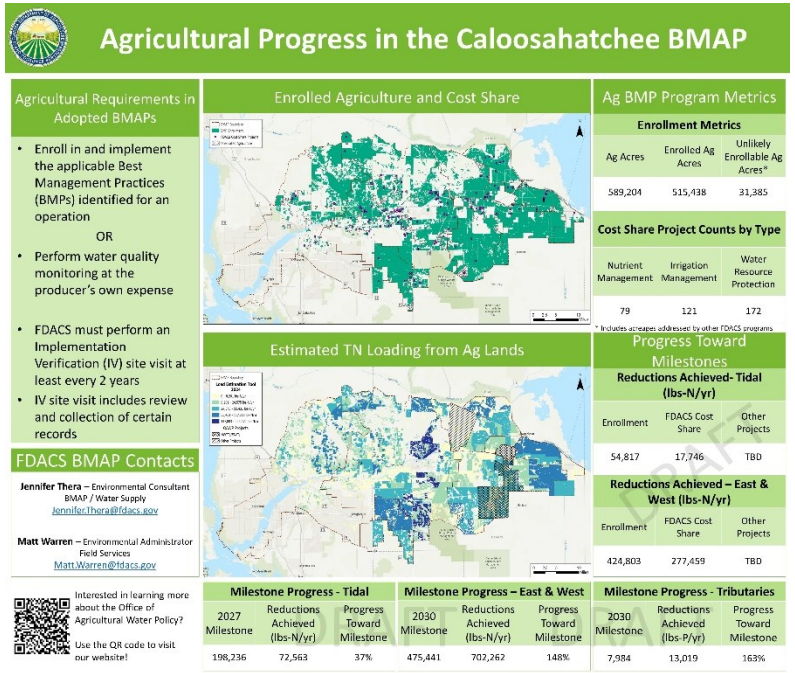
BMP Enrollment Viewer Web App:

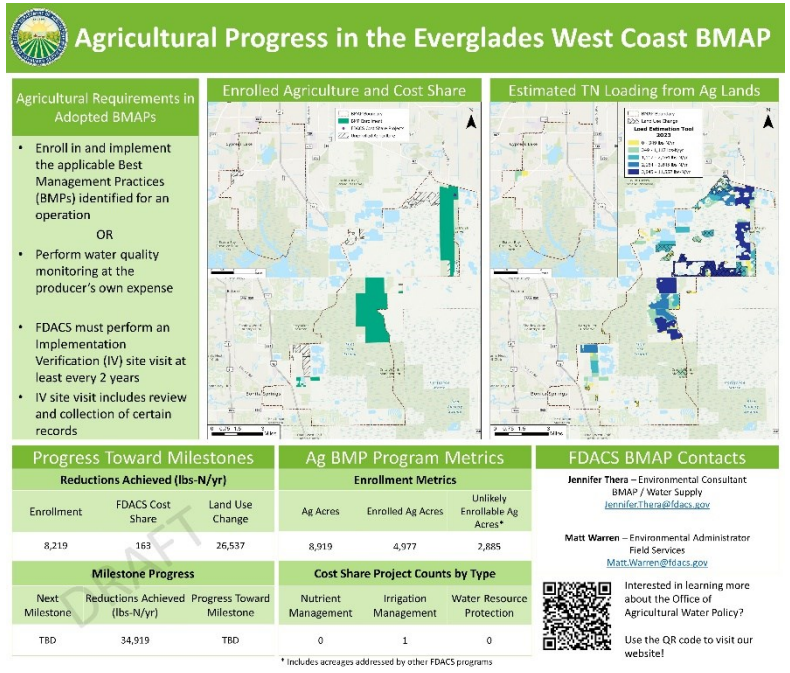
[Office of Agricultural Water Policy: BMP Enrollment Map (fdacs.gov)]

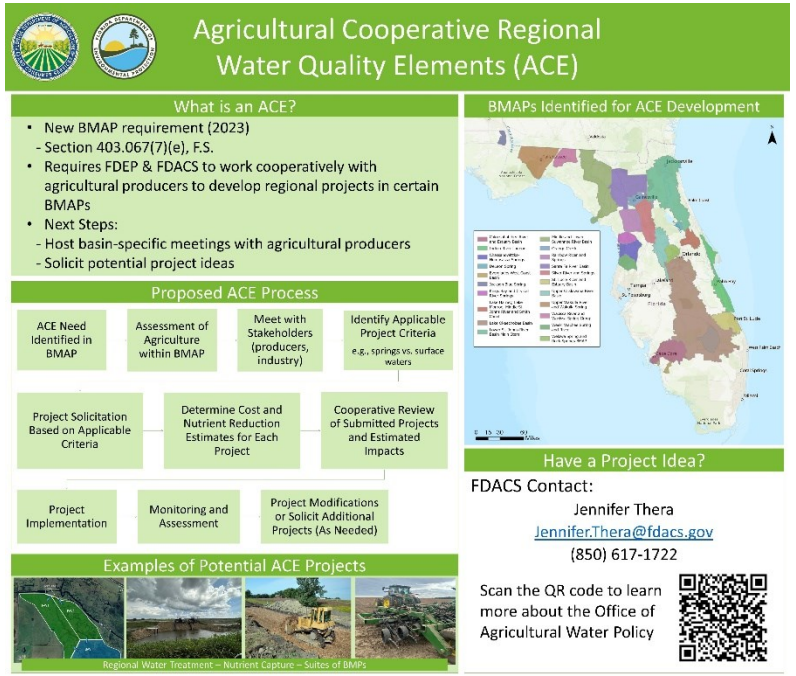


Poster #1 & 2 - BMAP Metrics

Poster #3 - Regional Projects/ACE







http://www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices/Agricultural-Water-Policy

Thank You!

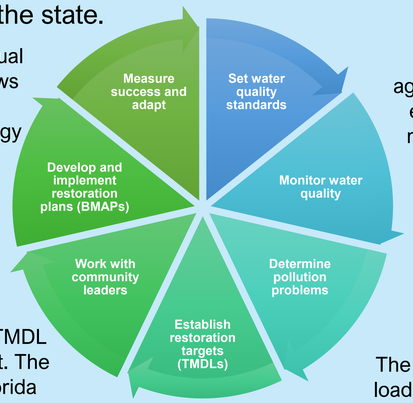
BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLANS (BMAPS)

SOUTH FLORIDA BMAPS

Water Quality Restoration Cycle

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration (DEAR) monitors and assesses Florida's surface water and groundwater quality across the state.

The Statewide Annual Report (STAR) shows project and management strategy implementation progress made in BMAPs.



DEP and partner agencies maintain and expand water quality monitoring networks.

BMAPs address a TMDL for a given pollutant. The BMAPs in south Florida target nitrogen and phosphorus.

The total maximum daily load (TMDL) is the water quality target

Statutory Requirements

Authority and responsibility comes from several Florida Statutes (F.S.), with some highlights described below:

Florida Watershed Restoration Act (Section 403.067, F.S)
- Cooperative implementation of plans to restore our waters, known as BMAPs.

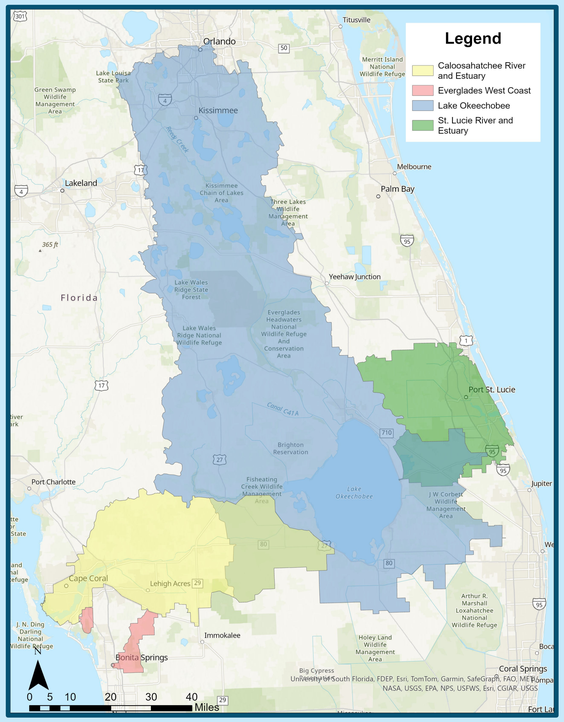
Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program (Section 373.4595, F.S.)
- Strengthens provisions for implementing the Lake Okeechobee, Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie BMAPs.
- Clarifies the roles and responsibilities, coordination, implementation and reporting efforts among DEP, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) and South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).
- Includes five-, 10- and 15-year measurable milestones and targets to achieve the TMDLs addressed by the BMAPs. If achieving the TMDL within 20 years is not practicable, the implementation plan must include an explanation of the constraints that prevent achievement, an estimate of the time needed to achieve the TMDL, and additional five-year measurable milestones.

Clean Waterways Act (2020)
- Promotes resilient wastewater infrastructure and utilities and looks at future growth.
- Requires local governments within a BMAP to develop wastewater treatment plans and/or onsite sewage treatment and disposal system (OSTDS) remediation plans to be incorporated into BMAP updates.

House Bill 1379 (2023)
- Requires BMAPs be assessed and updated every five years as needed to include implementation milestones and other requirements.
- Requires a list of projects and strategies that will achieve the five-year implementation milestones to meet TMDLs, as well as agricultural cooperative regional water quality improvement elements.
- Requires facilities discharging to a waterbody impaired for nutrients or subject to a BMAP or reasonable assurance plan (RAP) area to upgrade to advanced wastewater treatment (AWT) within 10 years.
- Requires applicants for new septic systems serving lots of 1 acre or less within BMAPs and RAPs must connect to central sewer if available, or if unavailable, to install an enhanced nutrient-reducing system or other wastewater system that achieves 65% reduction.
- Requires local governments to include BMAP projects in their comprehensive plans so these projects can be prioritized to achieve restoration benefits.
- Expands grant opportunities to accelerate project implementation.

House Bill 1557 (2024)
- Requires advanced treatment of reclaimed water within BMAPs.
- Requires facilities (including private) to provide information to local entities developing domestic wastewater treatment plans and OSTDS remediation plans within BMAP or other restoration areas.

South Florida BMAPs




Source: SFWMD; Caloosahatchee River


Source: SFWMD; Lake Okeechobee

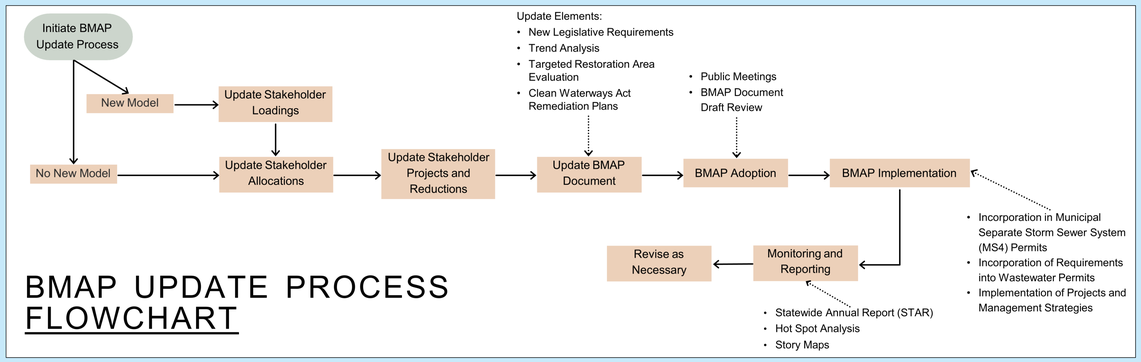

Source: SFWMD; St. Lucie Estuary


Source: DEP; Hendry Creek

BMAP Update Process

What is a Basin Management Action Plan?
- A BMAP is a framework for water quality restoration that contains a comprehensive set of solutions to achieve the pollutant reductions established by a TMDL.
- A BMAP is developed with local stakeholders and relies on local input and commitment for successful implementation.
- BMAPs are adopted by Secretarial Order and are legally enforceable.
- BMAPs use an adaptive management approach that allows for incremental load reductions through the implementation of projects and management strategies, while simultaneously monitoring and conducting studies to better understand the water quality and hydrologic dynamics.

Key Elements of a BMAP:
- TMDL(s) being addressed. These are the restoration targets.
- Physical description of the waterbody and contributing area.
- Description of the monitoring network and water quality.
- Identification of pollutant sources.
- Identification of responsible stakeholders.
- List of projects and strategies to reduce loading.
- Applicable legal requirements.



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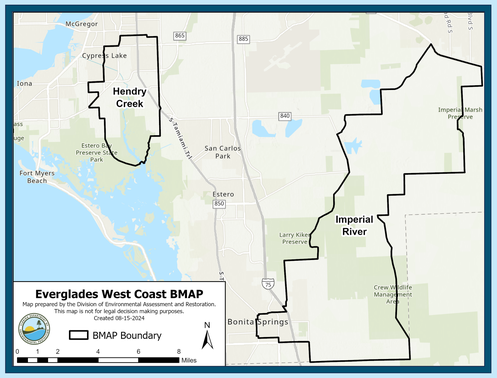
EVERGLADES WEST COAST BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN (BMAP)

WATER QUALITY ANALYSES

BMAP Background



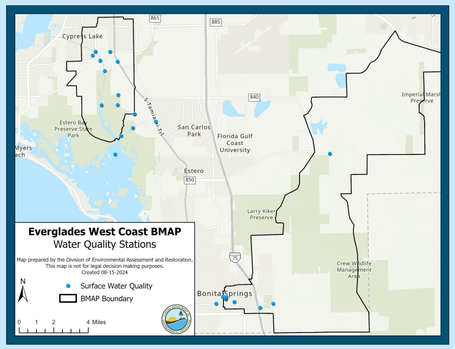
Everglades West Coast Total Nitrogen (TN) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) target was established in 2008:

TN: 0.74 mg/L.
mg/L = milligrams per liter.

BMAP adopted in 2012.

Includes the Hendry Creek and Imperial River subbasins.

Water Quality Monitoring Network



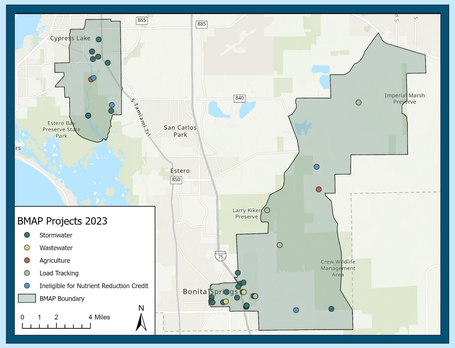
Water Quality Parameters Monitored		
Analyte	**Core Parameter**	**Supplemental Parameter**
Alkalinity		X
Ammonia (N)		X
Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	X	
Carbon - Organic		X
Carbon - Total		X
Chlorophyll-a (corrected)	X	
Color (only required in river proper stations)	X	
Dissolved Oxygen (DO)	X	
DO Saturation		X
Flow		X
Nitrate-Nitrite (N)	X	
Nitrogen - Total Kjeldahl (TKN)	X	
Nitrogen - Total		X
Orthophosphate (P)		X
pH	X	
Phosphorus - Total	X	
Specific Conductance/Salinity	X	
Temperature, Water	X	
Total Suspended Solids (TSS)		X
Turbidity	X	

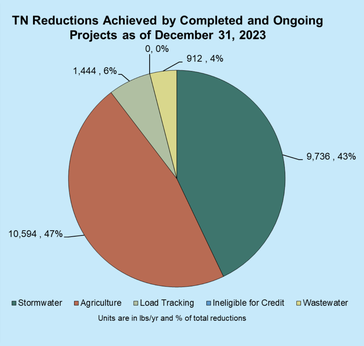
Water quality is monitored at 24 stations throughout the BMAP.


Source: DEP, Hendry Creek


Source: DEP, Estero Bay

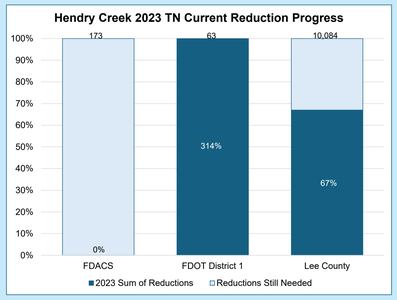
Statewide Annual Report (STAR) 2023

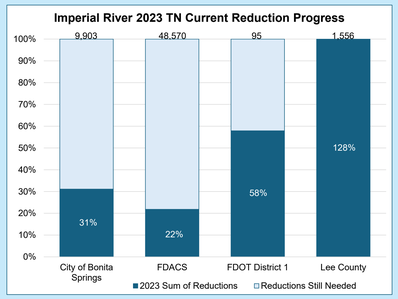




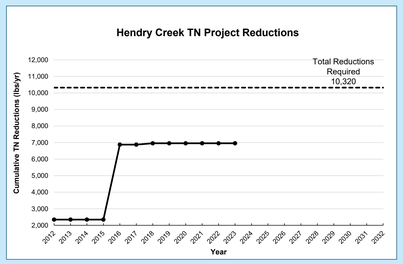
Lead Entity	Completed	Ongoing	Planned	Underway	Total
City of Bonita Springs	8	3	2	2	15
FDACS	0	2	0	0	2
FDOT District 1	8	4	0	0	12
Lee County	11	4	0	1	16
Total	**27**	**13**	**2**	**3**	**45**

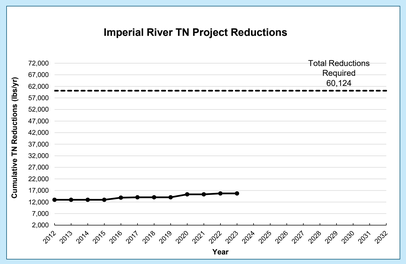
45 projects in the BMAP address stormwater and wastewater sources of pollution.





Entity TN reduction progress for completed and ongoing projects in lbs/yr as of Dec. 31, 2023.





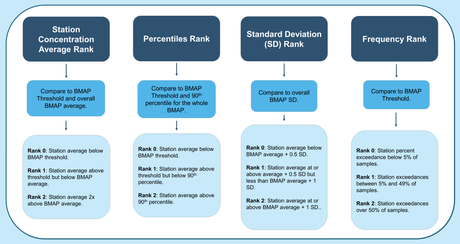
Completed and ongoing projects have achieved TN required reductions of 67% in Hendry Creek and 26% in Imperial River.

Upcoming BMAP Update

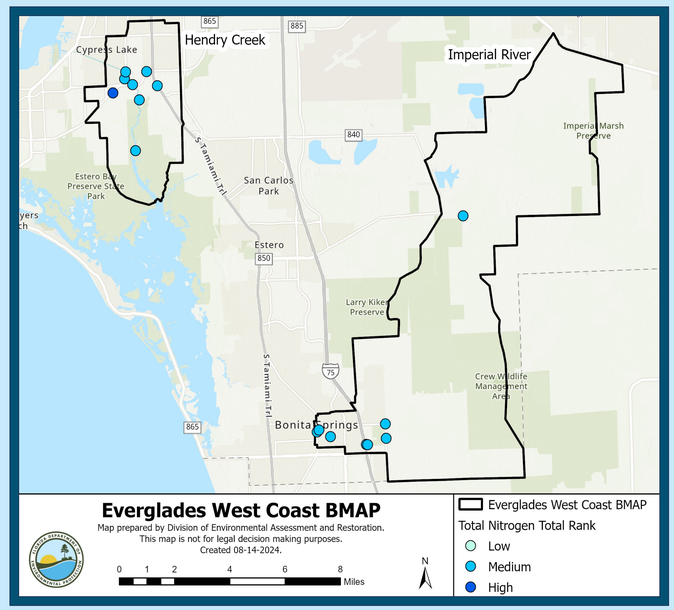
- Load estimation tool update.
- Evaluation of current TN milestones.
- Identification of additional projects.
- Incorporation of legislative requirements identified during the 2020, 2023 and 2024 Legislative Sessions.

Hot Spot Analysis

Analysis method for prioritization at a local scale.



Rank 0 = Least Concern.
Rank 8 = High Concern.



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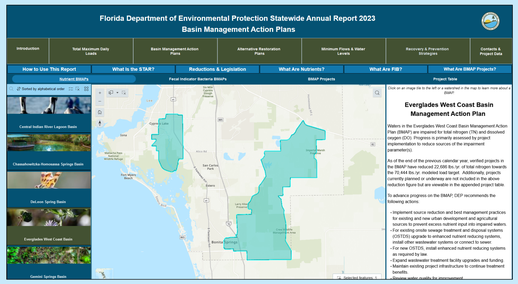
EVERGLADES WEST COAST BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN (BMAP)

REQUIRED REDUCTIONS AND MILESTONES

Projects

Responsible entities are required to identify, plan, complete and report on projects that reduce the loading of nitrogen from sources.

Project collection and reporting are crucial to the successful implementation and management of BMAPs. Projects are reported to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) annually through the BMAP Project Collection Portal. Project lists with associated reductions are published in the Statewide Annual Report (STAR).



The STAR is published July 1 of each year.

BMAP Load Estimation Tool Update

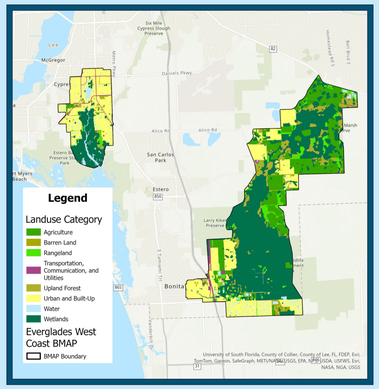
The Load Estimation Tool (LET) is being updated with the South Florida Water Management (SFWMD) Land Cover and Land Use for 2017-2019 dataset for the 2025 BMAP update.

Hendry Creek

Land Use Category	Acres in 2012 BMAP	Acres with Updated Land
Urban	5,184	5,905
Agriculture	98	219
Natural Lands	5,182	4,369

Imperial River

Land Use Category	Acres in 2012 BMAP	Acres with Updated Land
Urban	6,160	8,857
Agriculture	11,597	8,821
Natural Lands	27,203	27,270



Upcoming Milestones

Responsible entities are required to provide lists of projects that demonstrate how they plan to achieve their required reductions for the next five-year milestone.

It is important that all projects needed to achieve milestone targets are included in the STAR, even if a funding mechanism is not currently identified, as this information gives the state an understanding of the support is necessary to achieve BMAP goals and assists with the prioritization of projects.

The tables below show each entity's 50% and 100% Total Nitrogen (TN) reduction milestone in lbs/yr and the year it must be achieved by.

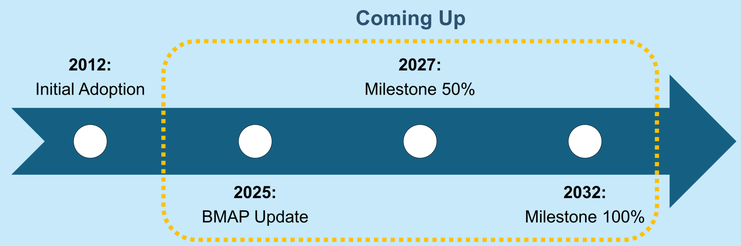
The figure below shows the timeline of the BMAP, beginning with the adoption year and including upcoming important dates.

Hendry Creek

Entity	2027 TN Milestone (lbs/yr)		2032 TN Final Milestone (lbs/yr)	
DACS	50%	183	100%	366
DOT D1		68		135
Catalina at Winkler Preserve CDD		79		157
Laguna Lakes CDD		157		314
Lee County		7,591		15,182
Total		8,078		16,154

Imperial River

Entity	2027 TN Milestone (lbs/yr)		2032 TN Final Milestone (lbs/yr)	
DACS	50%	13,968	100%	27,968
DOT D1		47		94
Corkscrew Farms CDD		555		1,110
City of Bonita Springs		5,407		10,814
Lee County		1,749		3,498
Total		21,726		43,484



As milestone timelines are reached, DEP will continue to evaluate restoration progress. The BMAP provides for phased implementation under subparagraph 403.067(7)(a)1., Florida Statutes (F.S.). This adaptive management process will continue until the TMDLs are met and maintained.

BMAP Management Strategies

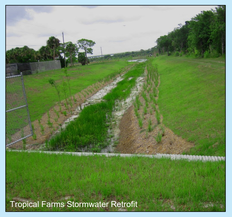
Nutrient reduction credits can be earned through implementing projects addressing sources of nutrients. Reduction milestones must be met to ensure sufficient progress towards meeting the total maximum daily load (TMDL) target.

Source-Specific Management Strategies:

- **Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal Systems:** No new installations of conventional septic systems on lots of 1 acre or less.
- **Wastewater Treatment Facilities:** Facilities must meet certain effluent limitations.
- **Agriculture Best Management Practices (BMP) Enrollment:** This program is mandatory in BMAP areas and assumes certain efficiencies as described in the BMAP.
- **Other Agriculture:** Agricultural sources that are not addressed through BMP enrollment and implementation will need to be addressed through activities such as regional projects, cost-share BMPs or innovative technologies.
- **Urban Stormwater:** Ordinances, education, street sweeping and structural stormwater improvements.


Indiantown Regional Treatment Train


Rock Tube Stormwater Retrofit


Tropical Farms Stormwater Retrofit

Updated Entity Required Reductions

The list of responsible entities in the BMAP will be updated. **Laguna Lakes Community Development District (CDD) and Corkscrew Farms CDD** are new entities for the 2025 BMAP update.

Entities will have updated allocations based on the new LET. Projects previously submitted with verified reductions will be recalculated to reflect the new LET.

Below are the entity allocations for the current BMAP versus the 2025 BMAP update.

Hendry Creek

Entity	Current BMAP TN Reductions (lbs/yr)	Proposed TN Reductions (lbs/yr)	Change (Proposed - Current) TN (lbs/yr)
FDACS	173	366	193
FDOT D1	63	135	72
Catalina at Winkler Preserve CDD	-	157	157
Laguna Lakes CDD	N/A	314	N/A
Lee County	10,084	15,182	5,098
Total	10,320	16,154	5,520

Imperial River

Entity	Current BMAP TN Reductions (lbs/yr)	Proposed TN Reductions (lbs/yr)	Change (Proposed - Current) TN (lbs/yr)
FDACS	48,570	27,936	-20,634
FDOT D1	95	94	-1
Corkscrew Farms CDD	N/A	1,110	N/A
City of Bonita Springs	9,903	10,814	911
Lee County	1,556	3,498	1,942
Total	60,124	43,452	-17,782

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Caloosahatchee River and Estuary and Everglades West Coast Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) Meeting Summary

South Florida Water Management District Service Center
2301 McGregor Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL 33901
Wednesday, November 20, 2024
9:00 am – 10:45 am

Participants

Santiago Acevedo, SFWMD
Evelyn Becerra, DEP
Jenna Bobsein, SFWMD
Brad Cornell, Audubon
Rebecca Dougherty, SFWMD
Yesenia Escribano, FDACS
Alexandria Foos, Geosyntec (FDOT Central)
Marcy Frick, Tetra Tech
Victoria Greenlee, Calusa Waterkeeper
Moira Homann, DEP
Megan Jacoby, SFWMD
Lisa Kreiger, Lee County
Garrett Kusienski, Lee County
Jacob Landfield, SFWMD
Laura Layman, SFWMD
Celeste Lyon, RES
Jessica McPherson, Lee County
Holly Milbrandt, City of Sanibel
Codty Pierce, Calusa Waterkeeper
Connie Ramos-Williams, Calusa Waterkeeper
Maya Robert, City of Cape Coral
Maria Romero, Lee County
Steve Smith, FDACS
Mary Szafraniec, RES
Jennifer Thera, FDACS
Raychel Thomas, Pavese Law
Tony Tomalewski, DEP
Diana Turner, DEP
Jordan Varble, Johnson Engineering

Welcome and Introductions

Marcy Frick welcomed everyone to the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary and Everglades West Coast BMAPs meeting, and the participants introduced themselves and the entity they represent.

Agency Presentations

Evelyn Becerra reviewed the BMAP update components and summarized recent legislative requirements including wastewater and septic system remediation plans. The BMAP update will include a list of projects to meet five-year milestones, as well as regional projects. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been conducting water quality analyses to evaluate progress including hotspot, targeted restoration area (TRA), and trend evaluations. They also identified any modifications needed to the monitoring networks. Evelyn reviewed the BMAP update schedule, which includes technical meetings this week, draft BMAP update in January for review, another round of public meetings to present on the draft BMAP document, public comment period, and then finalization by July 1, 2025. The BMAP project collection portal was opened early for BMAP updates and it will remain open until mid-January for the Statewide Annual Report (STAR). Evelyn stated that the numbers on the poster for the project reductions are reflective of the last STAR through December 31, 2023, and do not include the new project information that stakeholders recently provided.

Megan Jacoby stated that the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is conducting the five-year update for the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Construction Project (CRWCP). They have been providing updates on the projects annually in the South Florida Environmental Report (SFER) to promote transparency, provide accountability to stakeholders, and help achieve the total maximum daily

loads (TMDLs). The CRWCP has 4 projects in planning/design, 3 in construction, and 4 in operations. She noted that a key part of what they are evaluating is the water storage goal of 400,000 acre-feet. Projects to date have provided over 25,000 acre-feet of storage, with an additional 184,000 acre-feet of storage from future projects. SFWMD is also updating the previous model from 2008–2009, and the updated model shows the estimated storage needed for this watershed from the previous modeling is correct. The draft 2025 SFER is available for public comment through December 17.

Jennifer Thera reviewed the staff changes at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). She noted that they are working to update all 12 best management practice (BMP) manuals and the FDACS website has a rule development activities webpage with the latest details on the updates. They plan to have the updates completed early next year. FDACS is also updating the cost-share program to create a system to evaluate projects and status to provide transparent information. Producers can apply for different measures and FDACS has a better tool to evaluate effectiveness to determine what projects are most needed. They also increased the cost-share limit including higher amounts if the producer agrees to monitoring. Jennifer showed the BMP enrollment status for the Caloosahatchee subwatershed and impaired tributaries as well as the Everglades West Coast subwatersheds. The FDACS website includes an interactive map showing enrollment, commodity type, and last implementation verification visit.

Poster Session

After the agency presentations, a poster session was held to allow participants to have one-on-one discussions with the agency staff, ask questions, and provide comments. No comment cards were submitted during the meeting.