

Northeast Florida Estuary Restoration Initiative



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Issue

Lack of coordination and encouragement for estuarine habitat restoration and management efforts in Northeast Florida

Estuary Restoration Needs?

1. Filled Salt Marsh Habitat
2. Ditched Salt Marsh
3. Impounded Salt Marsh
4. Degraded Oyster and Sea Grass Habitats
5. Degraded Shorelines

Management Opportunities/ Issues

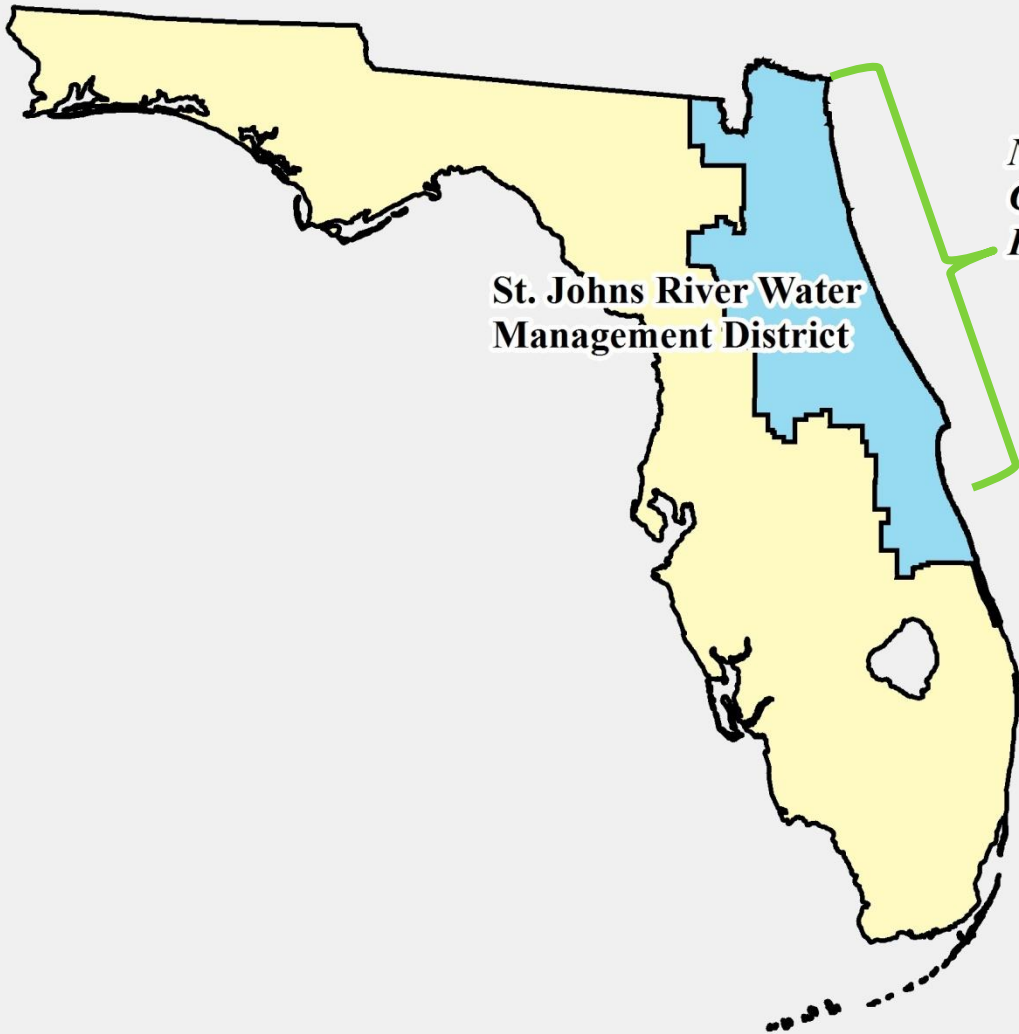
- Majority of Saltmarsh Habitat on Public Lands (Federal, State, Local)
- State Lands, Parks, Aquatic Preserves, Wildlife Management Areas often have minimal mandate for restoration.
- Disturbed Salt Marsh Habitats often not fully mapped or identified in Management Plans

Solution – Northeast Florida Estuary Restoration Team (NERT)

Develop an interagency management team to facilitate planning, partnering, funding and implementation of a comprehensive estuarine habitat restoration initiative in Northeast Florida

Florida Estuarine Habitat Restoration: Creating and Testing a Statewide Planning and Guidance Document

- Florida Estuarine Habitat Restoration
Planning Guide
- Northeast Florida Estuarine Habitat
Restoration Plan



**St. Johns River Water
Management District**

*Northeast Florida
Coastal Habitat
Restoration Initiative*

Building a Partnered Program for Saltmarsh Restoration

1. Coordinate Federal, State & Local Efforts
2. Build Regional Data Sets, Identify Needs
3. Build Local Projects and Partner Network
4. Develop Restoration Best Management Practices & Streamline the Process

NERT Members

SJRWMD	DEP State Lands
FFWCC	DEP GTMNERR/ CAMA
NOAA	EPA – IRL NEP
USFWS	The Nature Conservancy
DACS	USACE

Success and Local Partners

- Impoundment Reconnection/ Restoration
(Merritt Island NWR, Canaveral National SS)
- Dragline Ditch Restoration Program
(Volusia County)
- Spoil Filled Saltmarsh Initiative
(Gamble Rogers/ North Peninsula State Parks)
- Living Shoreline Habitat Projects
(Port Orange, New Smyrna, Ponte Vedra)
- Community Habitat Enhancement Capacity
(Local Oyster Recycling/ Saltmarsh Nurseries)

NERT – Keys to Success

- Compile and incorporate existing local restoration plans and priorities
- Utilize a Stakeholder input process to facilitate support awareness and local buy in
- Develop estuary restoration strategies with Local, State and Federal agency endorsement in mind
- Encourage revision and adoption of final restoration plan components into appropriate local resource management documents

Continuing Progress

Needs –

- Continue to increase range and scope of projects and program
- Secure planning and monitoring grants
- Work to streamline permitting for endorsed regional restoration initiatives
- Develop additional dedicated federal or state program funding streams

Thank You



Photo; Christy Yates