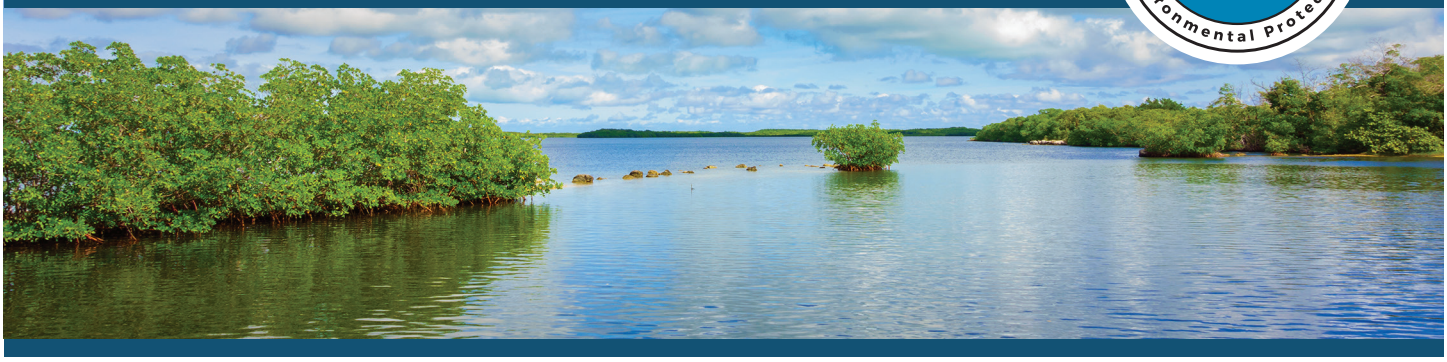
BENEFITS OF MANGROVES



Mangrove trees and shrubs grow in coastal intertidal zones. Mangrove forests grow at tropical and subtropical latitudes because they cannot withstand freezing temperatures. Many mangrove forests can be recognized by prop roots that make the trees appear to be standing on stilts above the water. This tangle of roots allows the trees to handle the daily rise and fall of tides and slow the movement of tidal waters.

- Mangrove forests stabilize the coastline by reducing erosion caused by storm surges, currents, waves and tides.
- Mangroves protect water quality by removing nutrients and pollutants from stormwater runoff before they reach seagrass habitats and coral reefs.
- Mangrove peat absorbs water during heavy rains and storm surge, reducing the chances of coastal flooding.
- Mangroves provide nursery habitat for many commercial fish and shellfish, and thus contribute to the local abundance of seafood.
- Mangroves protect species that are the basis of a $7.6 billion seafood industry, which employs 109,000 people in Florida.
- Mangrove systems provide shelter to a range of wildlife species including birds, deer and honey bees.
- Mangroves serve as nesting areas for coastal birds such as little blue herons, great egrets and brown pelicans. Many birds depend on mangroves for part of their seasonal migrations. Even dead mangroves play an important role, providing roosting areas for bird species.

Check with local environmental officials before trimming mangroves to find out if you need a permit. A mangrove trimming guide with examples, diagrams and images is available online at:
dep.state.fl.us
Search: **Mangrove Homeowner Guide**

FAST FACTS

Mangroves:

- Stabilize the coastline
- Protect water quality
- Reduce coastal flooding
- Provide habitat for fish
- Protect wildlife species
- Protect young fish from predators
- Serve as nesting area
- Contribute $7.6 billion annually to the economy and create 109,000 jobs

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
dep.state.fl.us/water/wetlands/mangroves
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