

The Coastal Program In South Florida

Caring for Our Coastal Habitats

Overview

The South Florida Coastal Program fosters partnerships with state and local governments, private land owners, and non-government organizations, to conserve and restore coastal ecosystems within 11 coastal counties in south Florida. We provide technical and financial support to local conservation alliances to accomplish projects on-the-ground, and we work cooperatively to resolve complex resource problems as a team. Our projects commonly include exotic and invasive vegetation eradication, restoration of hydrology, and water quality enhancement.

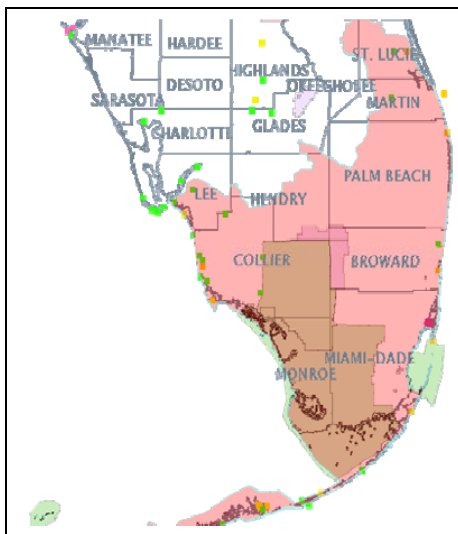


Fig. 1 South Florida Geographic Focus Area.

Priorities

The Coastal Program

Coastal Program Accomplishments

FROM 1995-2006

Restored/Enhanced

- 11,120 acres of coastal wetlands
- 3,616 acres of coastal uplands
- 5.32 miles of coastal streamside habitat

IN FY 2006

- 7 Partnership agreements

Restored/Enhanced

- 9,029 acres of coastal wetlands
- 2,440 acres of coastal uplands
- 1.5 miles of streamside habitat

The Coastal Program has been instrumental in identifying important restoration projects throughout coastal south Florida (Fig. 1). Targeted ecological communities commonly include near-shore reef, seagrass beds, mangrove fringe, saltwater and freshwater herbaceous marsh, maritime hammock, beach dune, coastal strand, and scrub.

Thirty-two endangered or threatened animal and plant species occur within the South Florida Coastal Program's area of coverage. These species are directly threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation as these coastal counties continue to experience tremendous growth.

Conservation Strategies

With our partners, the Coastal Program continues to identify habitat priorities to better focus program efforts. The overall goal is to maintain the structure, function, and ecological processes

of the coastal habitats, and to prevent further loss or degradation

of these habitats in south Florida. Measures to accomplish this goal will include restoring ecosystem function, preventing the colonization of exotics, seeking and implementing innovative landscape solutions, maintaining native communities in a natural state, and increasing public awareness.

For More Information

For more information about the South Florida Coastal Program, contact:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
South Florida Ecological Services
Field Office

Attn: Coastal Program
1339 20th Street

Vero Beach, Florida 32960

Phone: (772) 562-3909

<http://www.fws.gov/coastal/>