

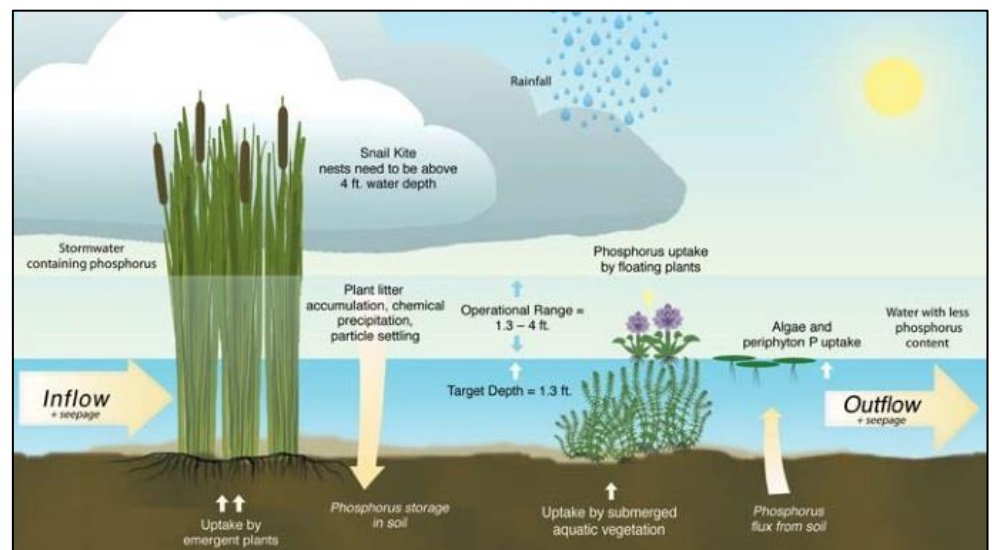
Everglades Stormwater Treatment Areas

FYi

Stormwater treatment areas (STAs) are large, constructed wetlands with emergent and aquatic plants. The plants remove and store nutrients such as phosphorus that are found in stormwater runoff before it is moved out of the STA and into the Everglades. SFWMD has built 57,000 acres of STAs to restore Everglades water quality and is building another 6,500 acres.

Why Florida Built STAs

- Nutrient concentrations, particularly phosphorus, were naturally ultralow in the Everglades
- STAs remove excess nutrients in the water from sources such as fertilizer and through plant growth and accumulation of dead plant material in the soil. These excess nutrients can cause too much of certain undesirable plants such as cattails to grow in the Everglades, crowding out native wetland plants and degrading the ecosystem
- The State of Florida has invested more than \$2 billion in water quality improvements, including the construction of five STAs encompassing 57,000 acres to treat water before it reaches the Everglades
- These features have dramatically reduced the concentrations of phosphorus in Everglades-bound water



How STAs Work

- SFWMD utilizes dozens of pump stations, 350 water control structures and 600 miles of canals to move water in and out of the Everglades STAs south of Lake Okeechobee
- Each treatment cell in an STA contains rows of plants that naturally remove nutrients to cleanse the water before it is sent to the Everglades. Over the past 20 years, the STAs have lowered phosphorus concentrations in Everglades-bound water by about 80 percent each year
- STAs are continually monitored and maintained to make maximize water treatment capacity



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- ❑ SFWMD has also constructed shallow storage features called flow equalization basins (FEBs) that further optimize the ability of the Everglades STAs to treat water

Size and Location of Everglades STAs

- ❑ STA-1 West, in Palm Beach County, currently has 6,500 acres of effective treatment and was completed in 1995. SFWMD is currently working to expand this STA by another 6,500 acres
- ❑ STA-5/6, in Hendry County, currently has 13,700 acres of effective treatment, was completed in 1998 and expanded in 2012
- ❑ STA-2 in Palm Beach County currently contains 15,500 acres of effective treatment, was completed in 2000 and expanded in 2012
- ❑ STA-3/4, in Palm Beach County, currently contains 16,300 acres of effective treatment and was completed in 2004
- ❑ STA-1 East, in Palm Beach County, currently contains 5,000 acres of effective treatment as was completed in 2005

