

Fixing Salinity Levels in Florida Bay

Everglades restoration ensures more natural flows into and through the Everglades.

While the Everglades is the "River of Grass" Florida Bay is the "Meadow of Grass"

The seagrass meadows of Florida Bay make up the largest continuous seagrass bed on Earth.

Along with the mangrove forests lining the coast, these seagrass meadows are the reason Florida Bay can support such a great diversity and quantity of life. Every time Florida Bay experiences an extreme hypersalinity event, seagrass dies. Most of the issues in Florida Bay are tied to out-of-balance salinity. Hypersaline events can also lead to algal blooms and fish kills.

Everglades restoration is working to prevent high salinity and protect seagrass by restoring freshwater flow into the Everglades. Right now, we are experiencing more balanced salinity levels in the eastern and central portions of Florida Bay where we have focused a majority of our efforts.

In the four years since the Combined Operational Plan was implemented, water flow increased into Everglades National Park during the dry season, a time when the park often receives little freshwater.

Adequate freshwater inflow from the Everglades is important to maintaining a delicate-yet-critical salinity balance in Florida Bay, which safeguards the health of vital seagrasses. The result of this additional freshwater helped prevent hypersalinity events.



Record Hydration in Everglades National Park

End of the wet season current water depths (see graphic) in two key locations, Shark River Slough and Taylor Slough, demonstrate that restoration projects and operations work well together to nourish the Everglades and send water south to support the health of Florida Bay.



Salinity Levels in Florida Bay

Record water flows and water depths in the Everglades coupled with rainfall demonstrated that restoration can support healthy salinity levels in Florida Bay. Balanced salinity supports sea grass and spawning fish.





After Investment - Dry Season Salinity

