



An Equal Opportunity Employer

# Southwest Florida Water Management District

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WaterMatters.org

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**Brian J. Armstrong, P.G.**  
Executive Director

December 10, 2024

Commissioner Kathy Bryant, Chair  
Marion County Government  
601 Southeast 25th Avenue  
Ocala, Florida 34471

Subject: Annual Habitat Letter

Dear Commissioner Bryant, Chair:

The Southwest Florida Water Management District's (District) mission is to protect water resources, minimize flood risks, and ensure the public's water needs are met. The District's responsibilities can be grouped under four general areas which form our core mission: water supply, water quality, natural systems and flood protection.

This letter specially addresses our goal for the natural systems area of responsibility. As outlined in our Strategic Plan, the goal for natural systems is to preserve, protect and restore natural systems to support their natural hydrologic and ecologic functions.

As described in Governing Board Policy Annual Habitat Letter, the District is providing elected officials and administrations updated information regarding permitted wetland impacts, mitigation and habitat restoration activities within the District's boundaries. The restoration efforts by our staff and partners tie directly to our natural systems goal.

Since 1984, the District has seen 11,743 acres of wetlands habitat impacted through District permits. During this same period, the District, through projects or permit requirements, has restored or created 49,648 acres of wetlands and adjacent upland habitat; a net gain of 37,904 acres (see chart enclosed).

In Marion County, during the same time, there have been 23 acres of impacts while 1,402 acres of wetland and adjacent upland habitats have been restored or created. This accomplishment is an example of the importance of preserving these systems to support their natural hydrologic and ecologic functions.

We invite you to read more about our initiatives in our Strategic Plan available on our webpage, WaterMatters.org

Sincerely,

Brian Armstrong, P.G.  
Executive Director

MARION COUNTY BCC

DEC 20 2024

Enclosure: Habitat Chart

## 2024 Total Habitat Restored

### Southwest Florida Water Management District

County	Since 1984 Total Permanently Impacted Acres Through ERP Permitting (Approximately)	Since 1984 Total Acres Restored Through District Efforts (Approximately)
Charlotte	517.8	1,993.6
Citrus	77.4	2,129.7
DeSoto	277.3	1,023.7
Hardee	111.5	91.6
Hernando	107.2	1,756.0
Highlands	64.3	133.4
Hillsborough	2,125.5	8,432.1
Lake	111.8	436.3
Levy	4.9	-
Manatee	1,043.0	4,002.4
Marion	23.2	1,402.1
Pasco	2,244.5	10,983.9
Pinellas	520.8	2,499.4
Polk	2,872.3	8,425.7
Sarasota	1,224.6	3,369.6
Sumter	417.4	2,968.3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>11,743.4</b>	<b>49,647.7</b>
	Net Habitat Restoration Gained Within the District	<b>37,904.3</b>

Southwest Florida  
Water Management District

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