

Tampa Bay Estuary Program: A Partnership for a Healthy Bay

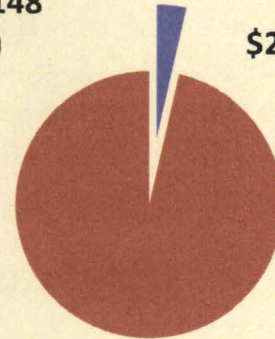


TBEP is a good return on your investment!

For your annual base funding support of \$73,714 over the past 3 years, TBEP has leveraged almost **\$6 Million** in additional funding to implement projects that benefit Tampa Bay.

Return
\$6,008,148
(96%)

3-Year Investment
\$221,142
(4%)



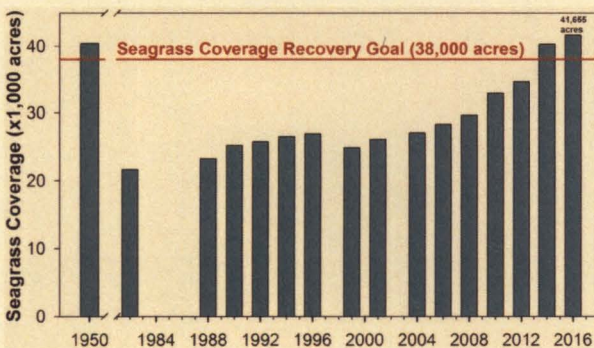
TBEP leveraged \$27 for every \$1 contributed by Pinellas County!

TBEP Highlights and Accomplishments for 2016

Tampa Bay Seagrasses Continue to Surpass Recovery Goal

Seagrasses in Tampa Bay increased by more than 1,360 acres, or nearly 3.3%, since 2014, adding to the record-breaking gains reported two years ago, according to survey results. Overall, seagrasses cover 41,655 acres of bay bottom, a number that continues to surpass the 38,000-acre goal set by TBEP, and sets a new record for the highest amount of seagrass documented since 1950. However, the aerial surveys that form the basis of the seagrass estimates were conducted during the winter of 2015-2016 – before the torrential rains of last summer caused emergency sewer discharges into portions of the bay.

The seagrass surveys are coordinated by scientists with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). Aerial photos are taken every two years in winter, when bay waters are clearest.



The seagrass assessment is bolstered by results from monthly water quality sampling conducted by the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County. All major bay segments met water quality targets in 2016.

The combination of water quality and seagrass information gives bay managers a valuable set of tools to assess the bay's overall health, tracking long-term progress in restoring the bay and serving as an early-warning system for potential problems.

Year	Old Tampa Bay	Hillsborough Bay	Middle Tampa Bay	Lower Tampa Bay
1974	No	No	No	Yes
1975	No	No	No	Yes
1976	No	No	No	Yes
1977	No	No	No	No
1978	No	No	No	Yes
1979	No	No	No	No
1980	No	No	No	No
1981	No	No	No	No
1982	No	No	No	No
1983	No	No	No	No
1984	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
1985	Yes	No	No	Yes
1986	No	No	Yes	Yes
1987	No	Yes	No	Yes
1988	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1989	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
1990	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
1991	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1992	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1993	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1994	No	No	No	No
1995	No	No	No	Yes
1996	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1997	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1998	No	No	No	No
1999	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2000	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2001	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2002	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2003	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
2004	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
2005	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
2006	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2007	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2008	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2009	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
2010	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2011	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
2012	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2013	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2014	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2015	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
2016	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Accomplishments in Pinellas County for 2016

Ft. DeSoto Recirculation Project

Circulation between two backwater bays within the Ft. DeSoto Park were blocked by a manmade causeway. The project restored flow between the two bays by construction of a 40-foot bridge, allowing continued access to a park work area. The project allows flushing which will improve water quality conditions, such as increasing oxygen and reducing water temperatures, that will improve conditions for seagrasses and wildlife. This project is a replicate of a similar project conducted in 2004 that removed a circulation barrier on the primary causeway leading to the park. This was a partnership between Pinellas County, SWFWMD, USFWS and TBEP/TBERF.



Mini-Grants and Social Sharing Programs Benefit Pinellas County

Over the last 3 years TBEP has awarded \$85,385 in community improvement Bay Mini-Grants to benefit Pinellas County. Sales of the Tampa Bay Estuary specialty license plate fund the grant program. \$1.6 million has funded 330 community restoration and education projects for Bay improvement since 2000.



The Shores of Long Bayou Homeowner Association has restored storm water ponds, improving water quality before discharging into Boca Ciega Bay. The work has garnered the group multiple awards, including TBEP's Golden Mangrove Award, for most outstanding Mini-Grant project in 2015.

Social Sharing



TBEP also recently developed a new social sharing campaign to foster awareness and stewardship of Tampa Bay. Share a photo or digital postcard on a popular social media site and show how you love Tampa Bay.



#**LOVE**
Tampa Bay

Thank you for your continued support of this proven partnership program!

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TBEP is a partnership of Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco and Pinellas counties; the cities of Clearwater, St. Petersburg and Tampa; the Southwest Florida Water Management District; the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the US Environmental Protection Agency.