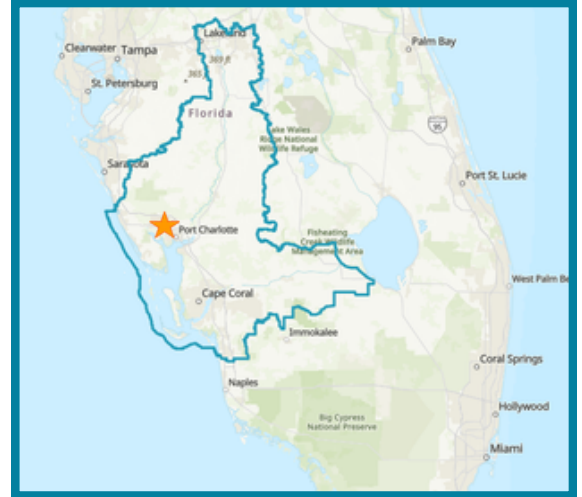


Charlotte County Exceptional Ponds Initiative

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT



Summary

Stormwater ponds are built to capture and treat stormwater; however, nutrient pollution can still accumulate in them - creating algae blooms and other poor water quality conditions that impact water quality on and off-site.

This project aims to improve the water treatment in selected ponds by reducing pollutant inflow with installed native landscaping along the shoreline. The project will also include public education about how such actions can improve water quality, as well as how citizens can adopt best management practices within their yards and pond maintenance that will also reduce pollutants entering waterways.

The project will entail identifying County ponds that are suitable for planting and ranking them to select those that will have maximum impact in benefiting waterways and public. Factors considered will include the current status of shoreline and aquatic habitat/water quality; size and land use of watershed served; long-term maintenance needs; extent of construction and rehabilitation activity required; and public visibility. Once ponds are selected, a comprehensive site assessment and landscape plan will be created and sites will be prepared, including the clearing of invasives and grading of the landscape to assure revegetation efforts are successful. The final stage will be plant installation, with follow-up assessments and educational sign installation.

Location: Charlotte County

Partners: Charlotte County

Implemented: 2026

Status: Ongoing

CHNEP Cost: \$230,000

Funding Source: EPA 320

2025 CHNEP Plan Activity:  

Water Quality Improvement 3:
Reduce urban stormwater and
agricultural runoff pollution

Public Engagement 1: Promote
environmental literacy, awareness,
and stewardship through expanded
education and engagement
opportunities for the general public

COASTAL & HEARTLAND NATIONAL ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP



Anticipated Results and Benefits

Increased Water Quality

Water quality in these ponds and downstream receiving water bodies will be improved by increasing the vegetation around their edges, which removes excess nutrients from the water column and surrounding soils. Enhancing these areas will also increase habitat for a variety of aquatic organisms including decomposers and grazers that positively benefit the nutrient cycle, resulting in additional nutrient pollution uptake.

Aquatic and shoreline plantings compete with algae for nutrients, reducing the risk of algal blooms and the need for chemical control of algae. The surrounding watershed will also see benefits as the water flows from the planted stormwater areas into downstream waters.

Enhanced Wildlife Habitat

As the banks of the ponds are stabilized through vegetative plantings, it will secure the soil and allow for other vegetation to establish and create habitat for numerous different species both on land and in the water below. Over time, as more vegetation establishes along the ponds, it will not only increase habitat for wildlife species but will increase biodiversity in the area as well, providing refugia for migratory species.

Additionally, as light penetration increases from improved water clarity, aquatic plant health and abundance will increase, improving the overall integrity of the aquatic ecosystem. Ponds proposed for naturalization can enhance the aesthetics and ecosystem services in urban areas that lack greenspace, as well as provide important wildlife connectivity to adjacent upland habitat.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Uniting Central and Southwest Florida to protect water and wildlife