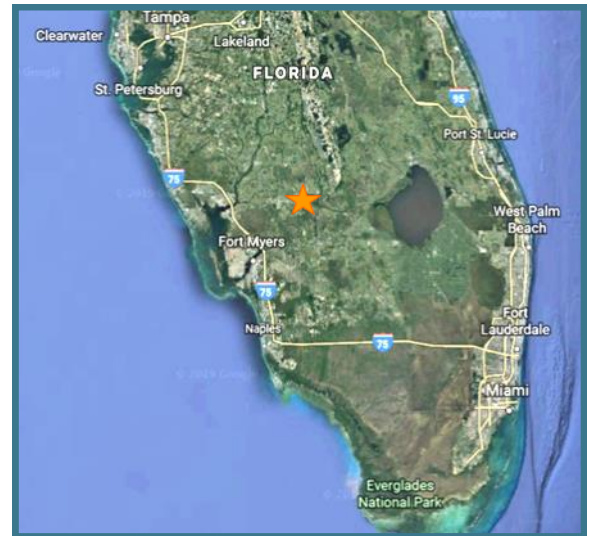


Habitat Restoration Needs (HRN) Plan

FISH, WILDLIFE, & HABITAT RESTORATION



Gail Stenger



Summary

Habitat restoration is central to the mission of the Coastal and Heartland National Estuary Partnership (CHNEP). The Habitat Restoration Needs (HRN) Plan was developed to help guide habitat management, connectivity, preservation and conservation, sustainability, restoration, and resiliency throughout the CHNEP area.

The overarching goal of the HRN Plan is to increase the acreages of native habitats in the CHNEP area, both strategically and opportunistically. This document can be used as a resource to identify and map preservation, conservation, and reservation opportunities, as well as management, enhancement, and restoration targets within each of the CHNEP basins.

Full implementation of the HRN Plan would have substantial positive impacts on the long-term sustainability of water quality and quantity, natural systems, and species populations. The Plan articulates CHNEP's habitat restoration vision for the next 50 years of "A diverse environment of interconnected, healthy habitats that support natural processes and viable and resilient native plant and animal communities", while integrating supplemental analyses to incorporate recent climate change and sea level rise data.

Location: Polk, Hardee, Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto, Highlands, Charlotte and Lee Counties, FL

Partners: CHNEP Management Conference

Implemented: 2018

Status: Completed

CHNEP Cost: \$150,000

Funding Source: Southwest Florida Water Management District and Mosaic funds managed through CHNEP

2019 CHNEP Plan Activity:



Fish, Wildlife, & Habitat Restoration
2.1: Encourage and support the permanent conservation of environmentally sensitive lands and critical habitat areas through land acquisition and conservation easements held in perpetuity.

COASTAL & HEARTLAND NATIONAL ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP



Results and Anticipated Benefits

Project Results:

The HRN Plan resulted in multiple recommendations throughout the CHNEP area including increasing the existing acreage of preservation and conservation areas to 17 percent of the watershed (521,148 acres), reserving less than one percent of the watershed (1,590 acres) to accommodate future coastal habitat migration due to sea level rise, increasing restored areas by 88,130 acres, and increasing managed or enhanced areas to 447,683 acres.

Future Work:

The HRN Plan was completed in May of 2019. Interactive maps from this study are accessible through the CHNEP Water Atlas chnep.wateratlas.usf.edu. A similar project is underway in the CHNEP expansion area including Glades and Hendry Counties with a report and maps to follow.

The results from this project will be used in coordination with FWC's Critical Habitat Conservation Plan to identify multi-partner opportunities and priorities. This project will also assist local and regional organizations and state and federal agencies in identifying, planning, and implementing habitat restoration and land acquisition projects needed to efficiently achieve habitat restoration goals while balancing additional community needs including economic growth, water supply, water quality treatment, and flood protection.

The HRN Report can be found online at CHNEP.org/publications.

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Uniting Central and Southwest Florida to protect water and wildlife