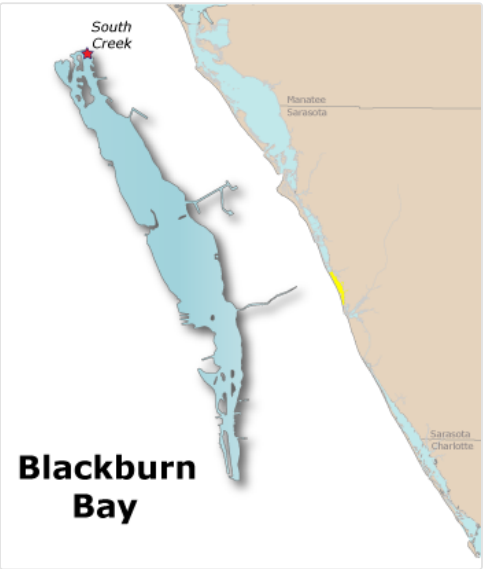
Blackburn Bay Condition Report for 2012

PASS

Chl-a N P

3 out of 3 indicators were rated as **PASS**.

All three indicators must pass for the bay to be rated as **PASS**.



Bays included in this report:
Blackburn Bay

Summary:

The overall health of Blackburn Bay has remained in good condition with all water quality parameters below their associated target levels. However, the biotic indicator, seagrass, has continued to decrease.

Water quality: All three water quality indicators (chlorophyll *a*, nitrogen, and phosphorus) were rated as pass (below the threshold).The mean for chlorophyll *a* was calculated as an arithmetic mean and the means for nitrogen and phosphorus were calculated as geometric means (Numeric Nutrient Criteria Recommendations).The mean chlorophyll *a* level (5.1ug/l) in Blackburn Bay has decreased and was scored as excellent (scored as good in 2010), below the target (6.0ug/l) and threshold (8.2ug/l) levels. The mean nitrogen level (351.3ug/l) has slightly decreased and was scored as excellent, below the target (360.0ug/l) and threshold (430.0ug/l) levels. The mean phosphorus level (55.6ug/l) has remained constant and was also scored as excellent, below the target (170.0 ug/l) and threshold (210.0ug/l) levels.

Biotic Indicator: The total acreage of seagrass has remained relatively constant since 1988 but in 2010 the mean level of seagrass (323 acres) was still below the target of 447 acres.

Water Chemistry Ratings

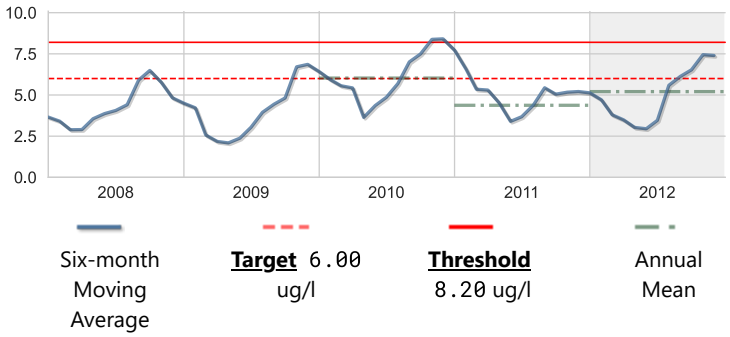
Total nitrogen, total phosphorus, and chlorophyll *a* levels are monitored carefully by water resource managers and used by regulatory authorities to determine whether a bay meets the water quality standards mandated by the Clean Water Act. The trend graphs for these indicators are shown below, along with their target and threshold values. A target value is a desirable goal to be attained, while a threshold is an undesirable level which is to be avoided. An individual indicator receives an "Excellent" rating if its mean value is below the target, a "Good" rating if its mean value is above the target but does not exceed the threshold, and a "Caution" rating if the mean value exceeds the threshold.

The charts below illustrate the general trend of water quality parameters. They show a six-month running average, which moderates high and low values in the data.

Chl-a Chlorophyll a

Score: Excellent

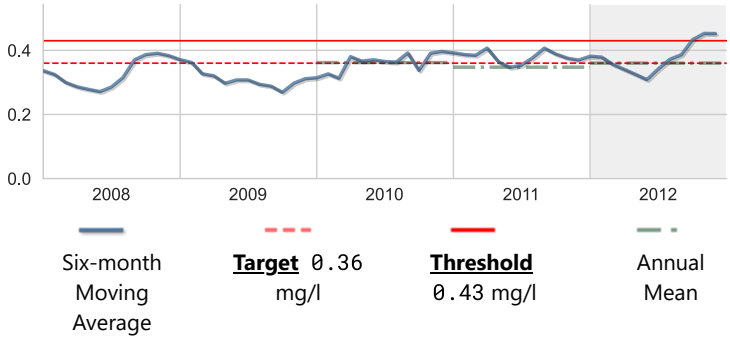
Units: ug/l	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	20.84	43.00
Mean	5.21	5.01
Low	1.03	0.20
No. of Samples	58	781



N Nitrogen, Total

Score: Good

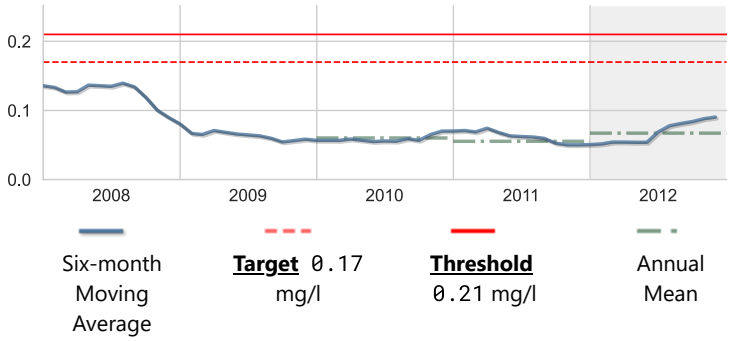
Units: mg/l	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	0.860	1.189
Mean	0.360	
Low	0.125	0.055
No. of Samples	57	768



P Phosphorus, Total

Score: Excellent

Units: mg/l	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	0.200	0.530
Mean	0.067	0.109
Low	0.050	0.050
No. of Samples	59	794

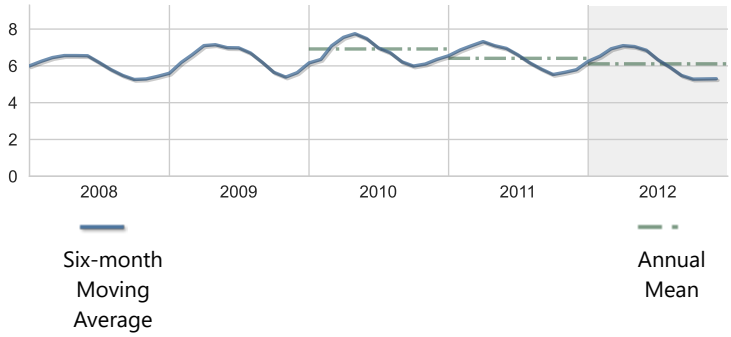


Other Measures of Bay Health

In addition to nutrient levels and chlorophyll concentration, dissolved oxygen levels, and water clarity are also objective indicators of bay health. These have complex interactive cycles which are affected by rainfall, temperature, and tidal action, as well as other factors. High nutrient levels (nitrogen and phosphorus) can stimulate excessive growth of marine algae (indicated by chlorophyll *a* level), resulting in reduced water clarity (and increased light attenuation) and depleted oxygen levels. Both plants and animals in a bay need oxygen to survive, and the seagrasses which provide food and cover for bay creatures need light for photosynthesis.

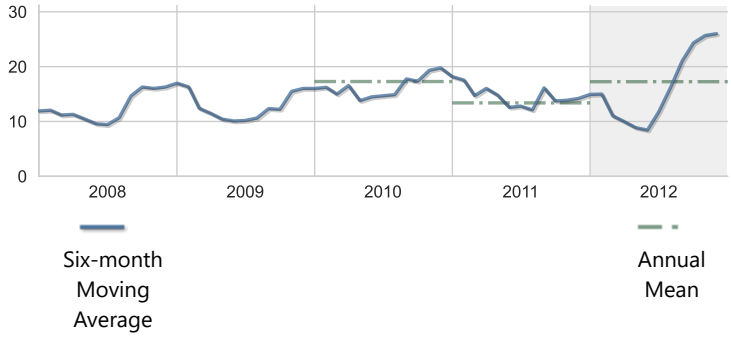
Dissolved Oxygen

Units: mg/l	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	8.30	11.90
Mean	6.11	6.52
Low	4.30	1.60
No. of Samples	48	858



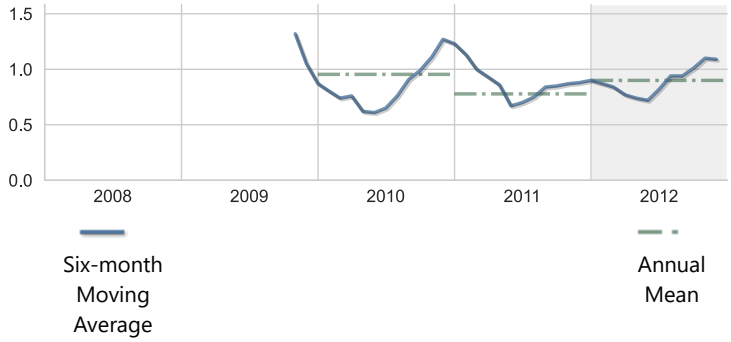
Apparent Color

Units: PCU	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	70.00	250.00
Mean	17.25	19.27
Low	5.00	2.00
No. of Samples	59	794



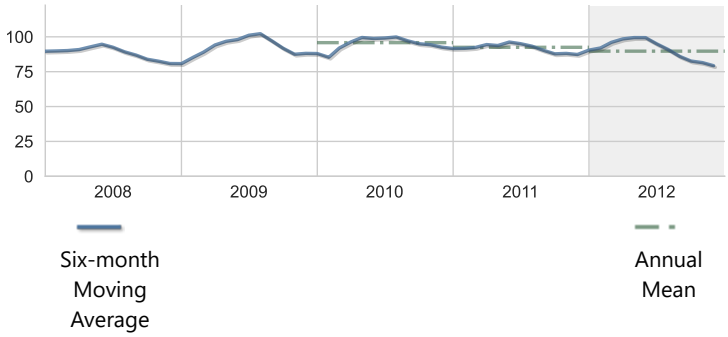
BOD, Biochemical oxygen demand

Units: mg/l	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	1.80	7.10
Mean	0.90	1.11
Low	0.50	0.50
No. of Samples	59	683



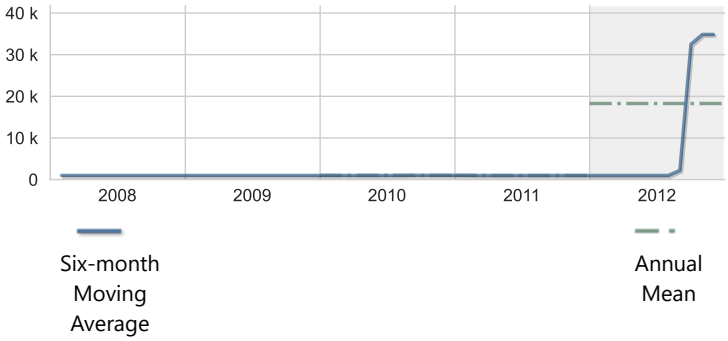
Dissolved oxygen saturation

Units: percent (%)	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	127.00	198.00
Mean	89.71	95.49
Low	65.00	26.00
No. of Samples	48	860



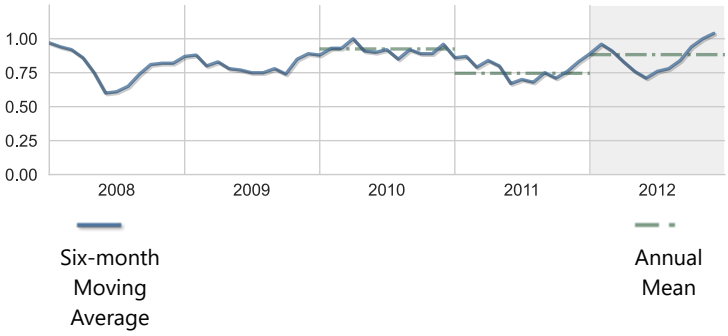
Karenia brevis ("red tide")

Units: #/l	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	290000.00	2280000.00
Mean	18275.86	34853.66
Low	1000.00	1000.00
No. of Samples	58	410



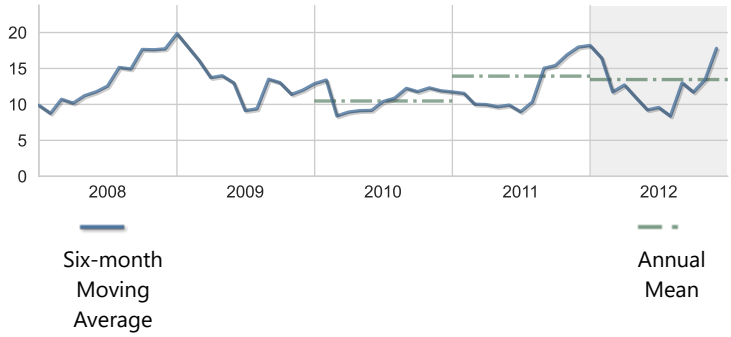
Light Attenuation

Units: K(1/m)	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	1.49	5.03
Mean	0.88	0.86
Low	0.32	0.16
No. of Samples	47	699



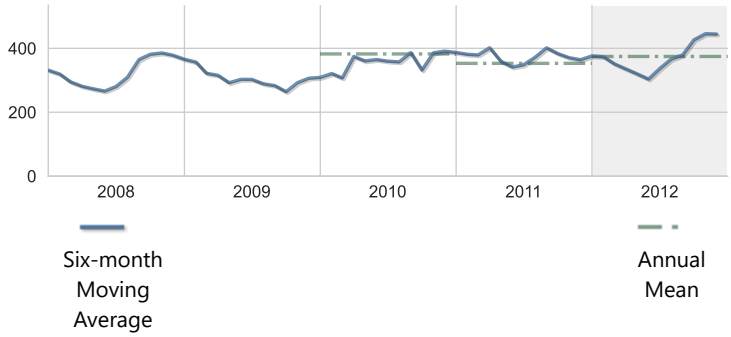
Nitrogen, Ammonia + Ammonium as N

Units: ug/l	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	58.00	120.00
Mean	13.46	14.69
Low	5.00	5.00
No. of Samples	59	796



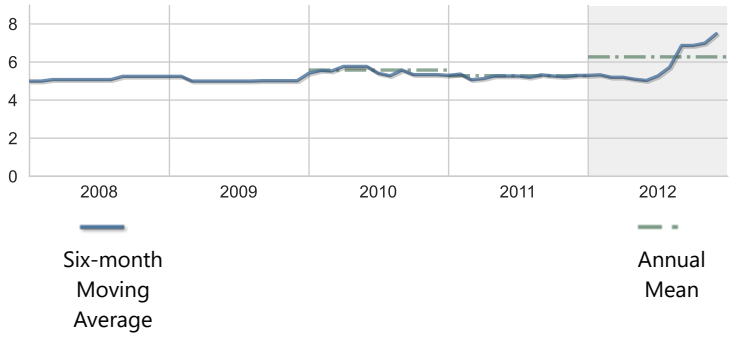
Nitrogen, Kjeldahl

Units: ug/l	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	840.00	1150.00
Mean	374.58	330.34
Low	120.00	0.05
No. of Samples	59	794



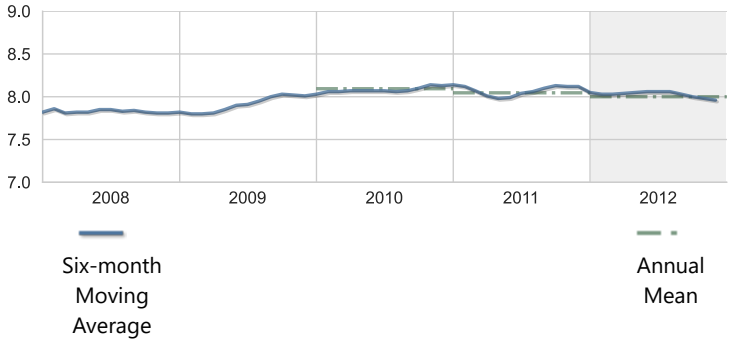
Nitrogen, Nitrite + Nitrate as N

Units: ug/l	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	20.00	65.00
Mean	6.27	6.03
Low	5.00	5.00
No. of Samples	59	1116



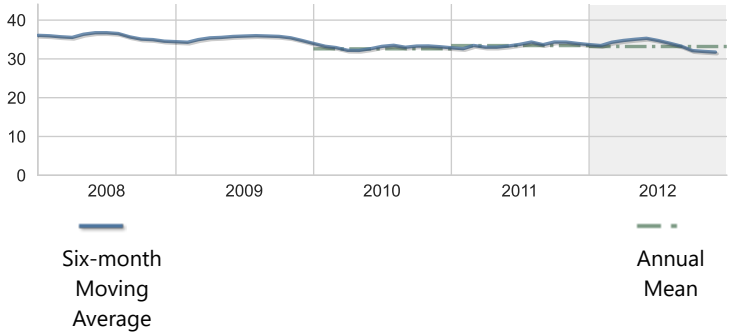
pH

Units: None	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	8.40	8.40
Mean	8.00	7.94
Low	7.80	6.10
No. of Samples	48	860



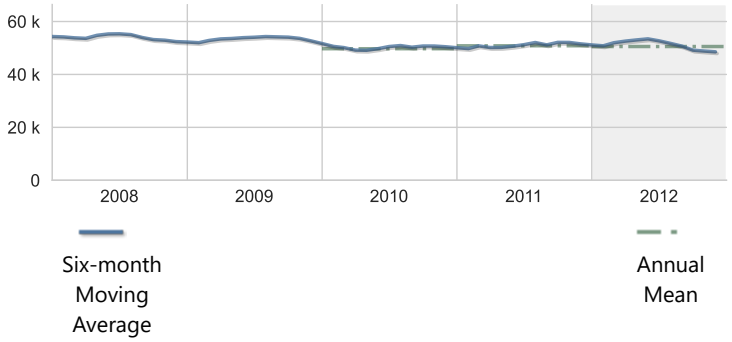
Salinity

Units: PSS	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	37.00	39.30
Mean	33.19	33.35
Low	23.50	5.70
No. of Samples	48	852



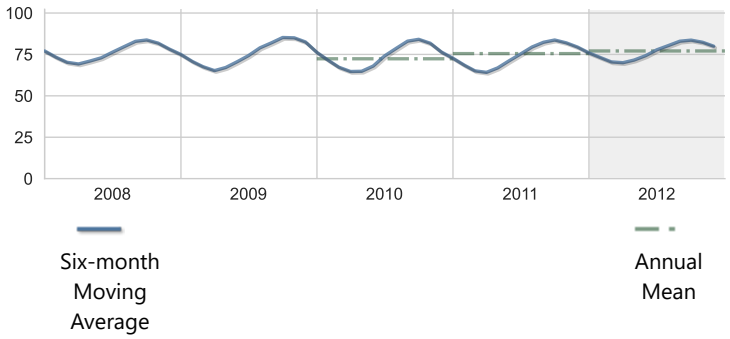
Specific conductance

Units: umho	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	55630.00	58760.00
Mean	50549.17	50725.90
Low	37110.00	10130.00
No. of Samples	48	860



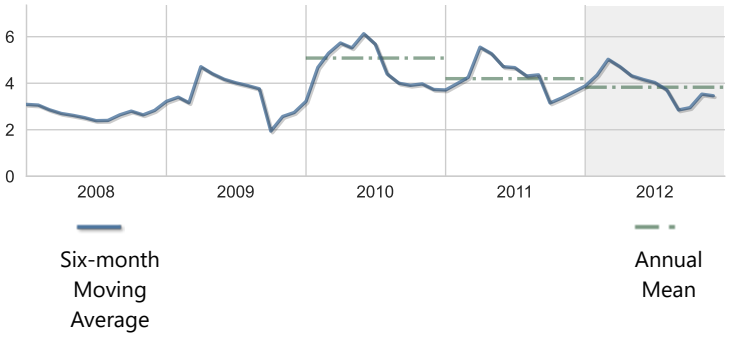
Temperature, water

Units: deg F	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	86.72	92.84
Mean	77.09	76.43
Low	64.76	47.84
No. of Samples	48	860



Turbidity

Units: NTU	Year 2012	Historical period of record
High	10.00	39.00
Mean	3.83	3.96
Low	1.20	0.20
No. of Samples	57	774



Annual Averages

Indicator	Units	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Trend
Dissolved Oxygen	mg/l			6.92	6.41	6.11	
Dissolved oxygen saturation	percent (%)			95.81	92.48	89.71	
Light Attenuation	K(1/m)			0.92	0.75	0.88	
Salinity	PSS			32.60	33.44	33.19	
Turbidity	NTU			5.08	4.20	3.83	

Bay Contour Maps (2012)

Contour mapping is one of the best ways to visualize spatial differences in coastal water quality. The interactive map shown below presents monthly data for one selected water quality indicator atop an aerial view of the bay. Choose a different water quality parameter from the list at the top to change the map.

Showing 2012 Monthly Contour Maps for: Chlorophyll a

January

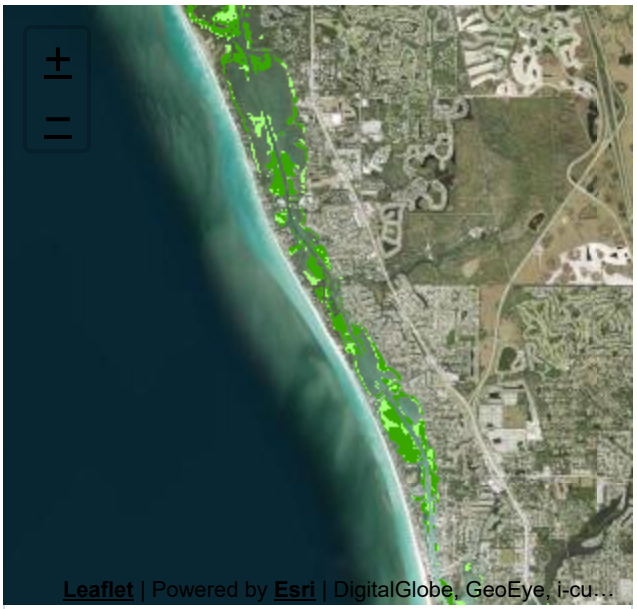
Contour Legend:

- Less than 1 mg/l
- 1.0 - 5.9 mg/l
- 6.0 - 10.9 mg/l
- 11.0 - 17.9 mg/l
- Greater than 18 mg/l

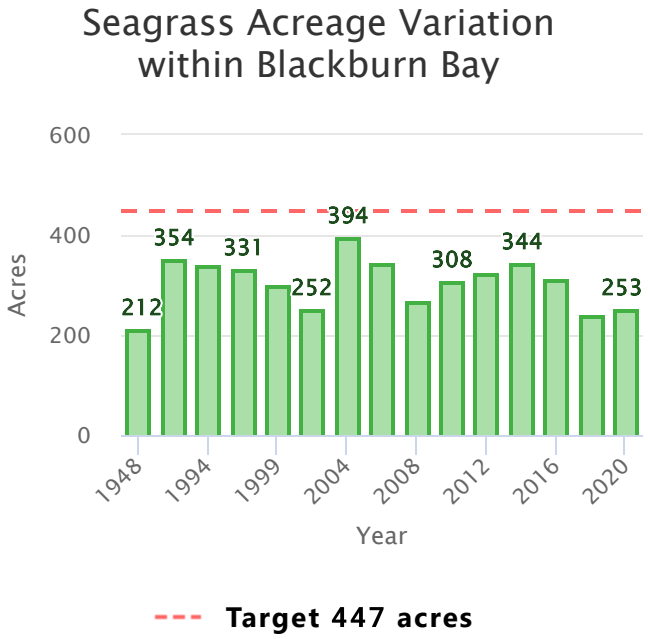
Seagrasses

Among the most important habitats in Florida's estuarine environments, seagrass beds are indispensable for the role they play in cycling nutrients, supplying food for wildlife, stabilizing sediments, and providing habitat for juvenile and adult finfish and shellfish. Use the interactive map below to observe the size, density and location of seagrass beds from year to year. The graph shows how the total amount of seagrass in the bay has changed over time. Seagrass calculations are aggregates of patchy and continuous seagrass measurements only. Recordings of attached algae are not included in these summaries.

Showing Seagrass Coverage for 2020:



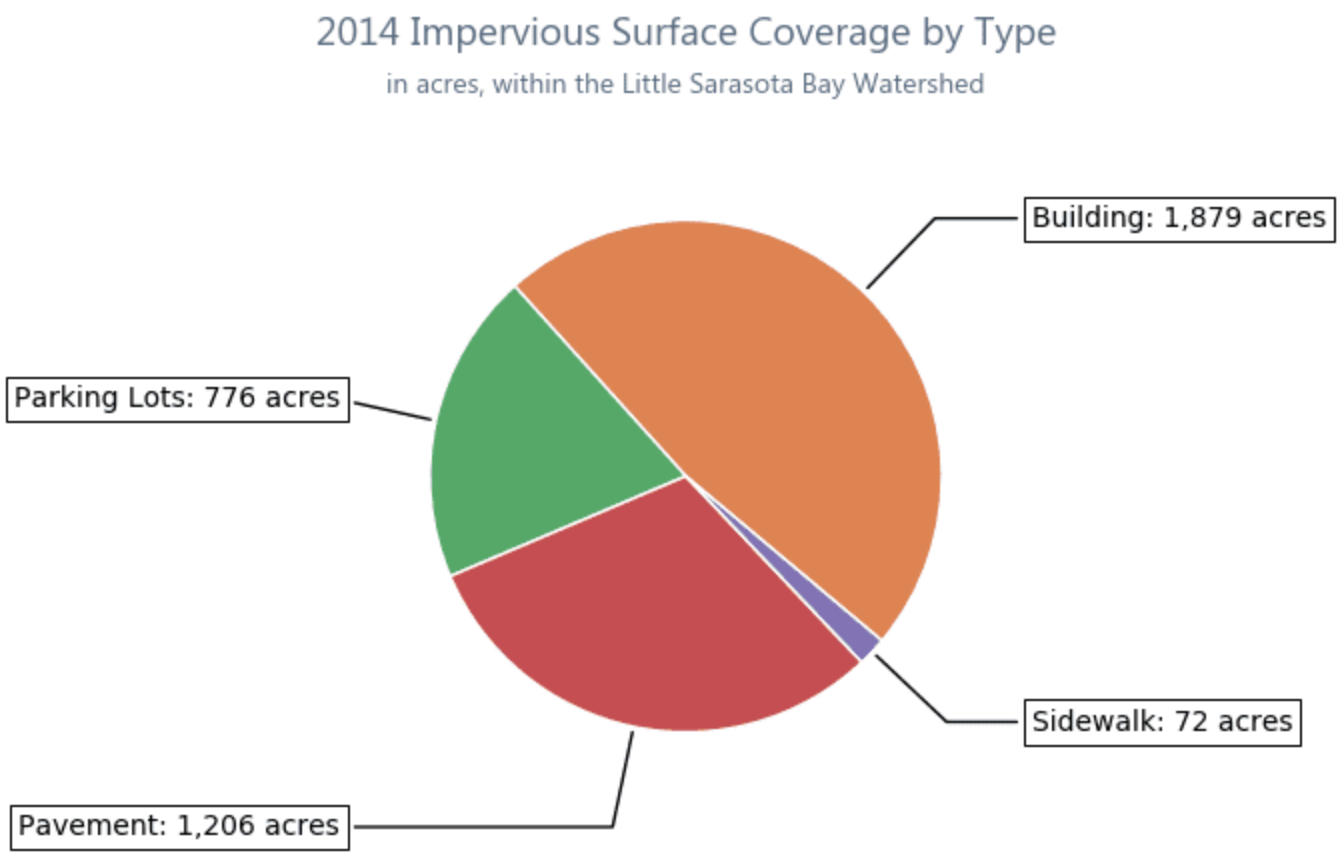
Legend:
Continuous Seagrass Patchy Seagrass



Impervious Features

Rain that falls on land that is in a natural state is absorbed and filtered by soils and vegetation as it makes it way into underground aquifers. However, in developed areas, "impervious surfaces" impede this process and contribute to polluted urban runoff entering surface waters. These surfaces include human infrastructure like roads, sidewalks, driveways and parking lots that are covered by impenetrable materials such as asphalt, concrete, brick and stone, as well as buildings and other permanent structures. Soils that have been disturbed and compacted by urban development are often impervious as well.

14% of the land area within the **Little Sarasota Bay Watershed** is covered by impervious surfaces



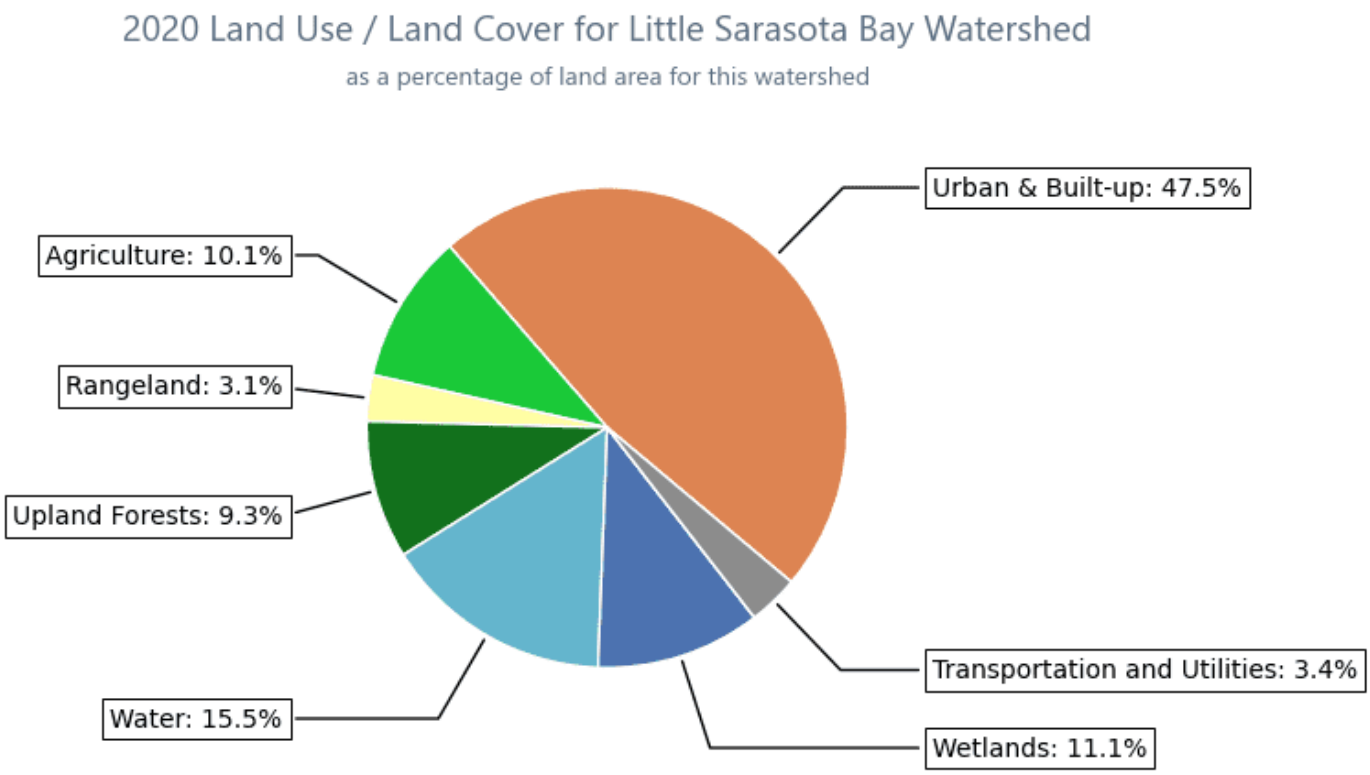
Land Use / Land Cover

Land use within a bay's watershed has a major effect on its water quality. In general, less development means better water quality. Land Cover/Land Use classifications categorize land in terms of its observed physical surface characteristics (upland or wetland, e.g.), and also reflect the types of activity that are taking place on it (agriculture, urban/built-up, utilities, etc.). Florida uses as its standard a set of statewide classifications which were developed by the Florida Department of Transportation.

Blackburn Bay is located within the Little Sarasota Bay Watershed. The chart below shows the land use / land cover characteristics for Little Sarasota Bay Watershed within the boundary of this Water Atlas. **View details about the Little Sarasota Bay Watershed »**

Acreage and Percentage within each Land Use / Land Cover Category for Little Sarasota Bay Watershed

Land Use Classification	1990	2005	2011	2014	2017	2020	Trend
Urban & Built-up	8,943 **31.9%**	11,834 **42.2%**	12,102 **43.1%**	12,162 **43.3%**	12,777 **45.5%**	13,343 **47.5%**	
Agriculture	3,550 **12.6%**	3,228 **11.5%**	3,258 **11.6%**	4,223 **15%**	3,124 **11.1%**	2,837 **10.1%**	
Rangeland	825 **2.9%**	1,822 **6.5%**	1,474 **5.3%**	579 **2.1%**	1,233 **4.4%**	877 **3.1%**	
Upland Forests	7,098 **25.3%**	3,066 **10.9%**	2,981 **10.6%**	2,725 **9.7%**	2,687 **9.6%**	2,603 **9.3%**	
Water	3,429 **12.2%**	4,123 **14.7%**	4,147 **14.8%**	4,175 **14.9%**	4,227 **15.1%**	4,337 **15.5%**	
Wetlands	3,490 **12.4%**	3,133 **11.2%**	3,191 **11.4%**	3,227 **11.5%**	3,121 **11.1%**	3,120 **11.1%**	
Barren Land	62 **0.2%**	18 **0.1%**	19 **0.1%**	20 **0.1%**	6 **0%**	6 **0%**	
Transportation and Utilities	675 **2.4%**	841 **3%**	892 **3.2%**	952 **3.4%**	898 **3.2%**	948 **3.4%**	


2020 Land Use / Land Cover for Little Sarasota Bay Watershed
as a percentage of land area for this watershed
Urban & Built-up: 47.5%
Agriculture: 10.1%
Rangeland: 3.1%
Upland Forests: 9.3%
Water: 15.5%
Transportation and Utilities: 3.4%
Wetlands: 11.1%