


Roberts Bay Condition Report for 2020



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**.

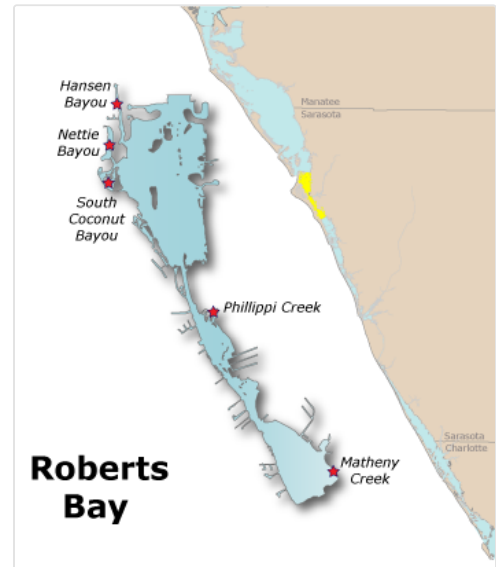
Summary:

All measures of water quality improved in Roberts Bay in 2020, with the exception of biochemical oxygen demand, and it increased only very slightly. The mean concentration of total nitrogen decreased enough to bring it below the threshold, boosting the rating for nitrogen from "Good" to "Excellent".

Note: Beginning in 2020, Sarasota County switched from measuring apparent color to true color. The latter will be added to Bay Conditions reports in the near future.

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.



Bays included in this report:
Grand Canal, Hansen Bayou,
Nettie Bayou, Roberts Bay,
Sarasota, South Coconut
Bayou

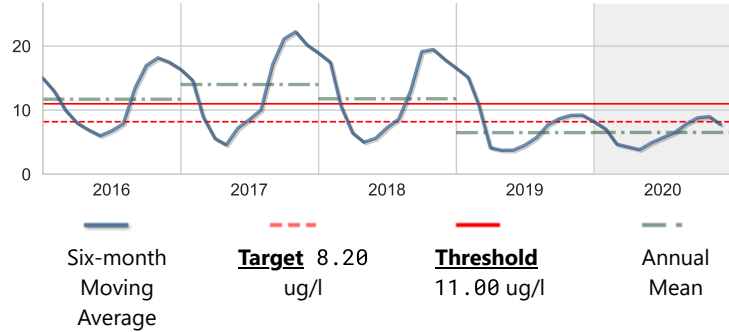
The charts below illustrate the general trend of water quality parameters. They show a six-month running average, which moderates high and low values in the data.



Chlorophyll a

Score: Excellent

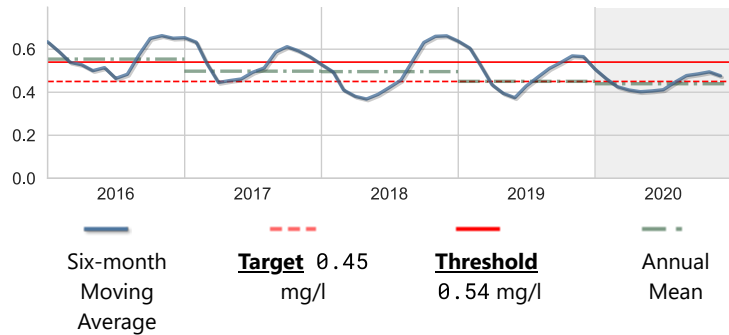
Units: ug/l	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	16.44	58.47
Mean	6.53	8.40
Low	1.87	0.33
No. of Samples	56	2425



Nitrogen, Total

Score: Excellent

Units: mg/l	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	0.668	1.376
Mean	0.439	0.441
Low	0.298	0.065
No. of Samples	56	1472

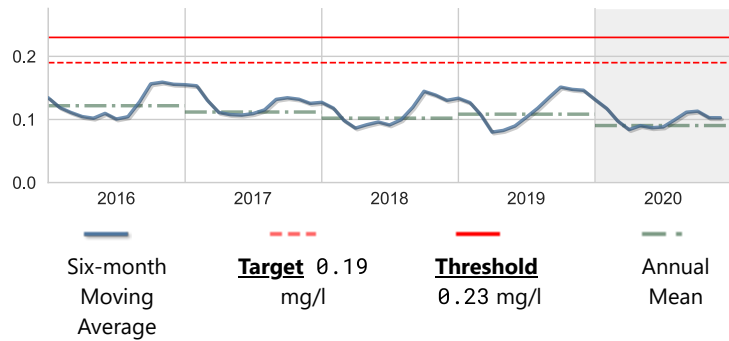




Phosphorus, Total

Score: Excellent

Units: mg/l	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	0.200	0.480
Mean	0.090	0.128
Low	0.050	0.050
No. of Samples	56	1486

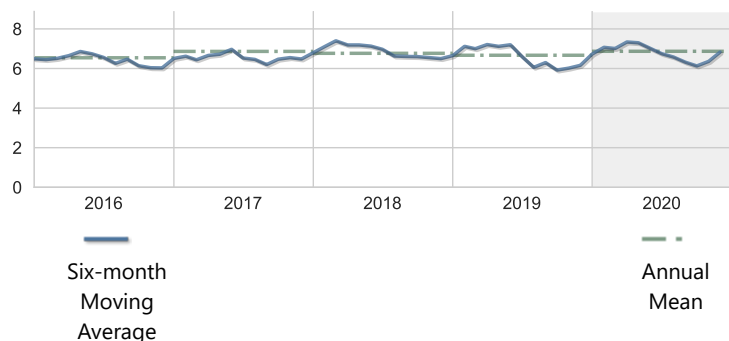


Other Measures of Bay Health

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

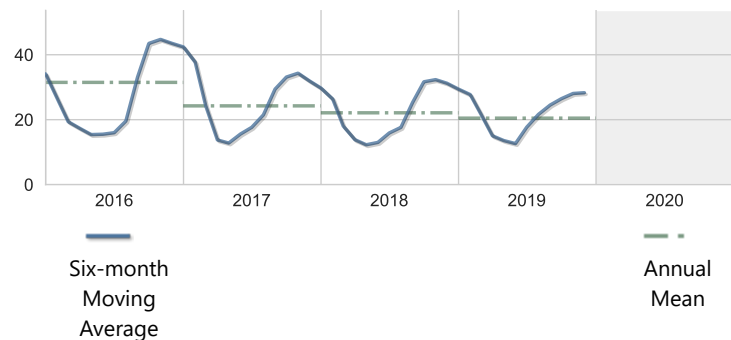
Units: mg/l	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	8.87	11.60
Mean	6.87	6.53
Low	1.35	1.35
No. of Samples	56	1602



Apparent Color

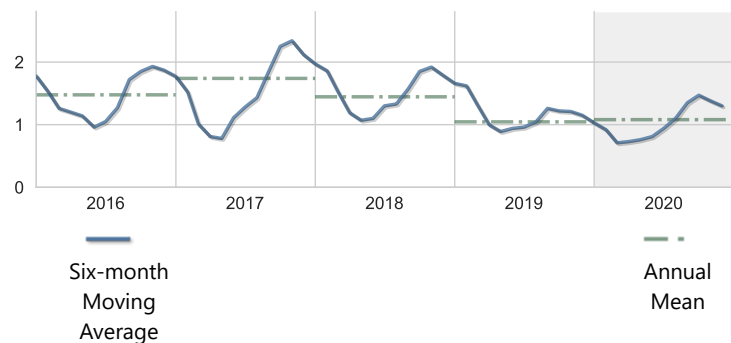
Note: The latest available sample for this parameter is from December 2019

Units: PCU	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High		150.00
Mean		23.31
Low		2.00
No. of Samples	0	1425



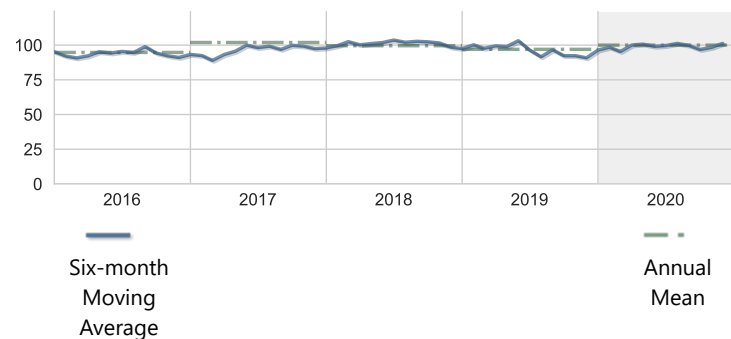
BOD, Biochemical oxygen demand

Units: mg/l	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	3.10	5.90
Mean	1.08	1.40
Low	0.50	0.50
No. of Samples	56	1345



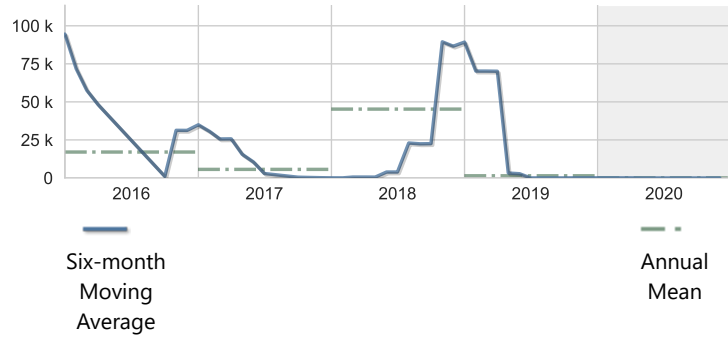
Dissolved oxygen saturation

Units: percent (%)	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	136.00	173.00
Mean	100.00	95.05
Low	20.00	20.00
No. of Samples	56	1602



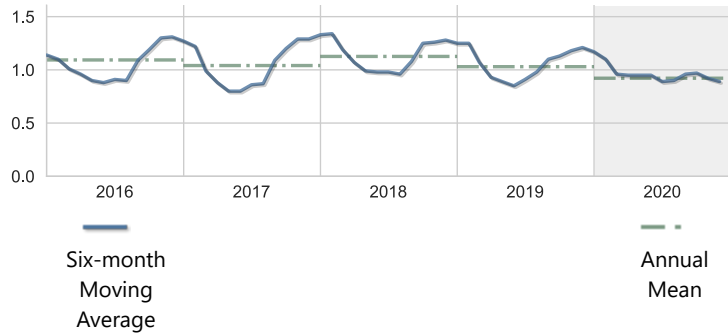
Karenia brevis ("red tide")

Units: #/l	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	0.00	1832000.00
Mean	0.00	10825.06
Low	0.00	0.00
No. of Samples	56	906



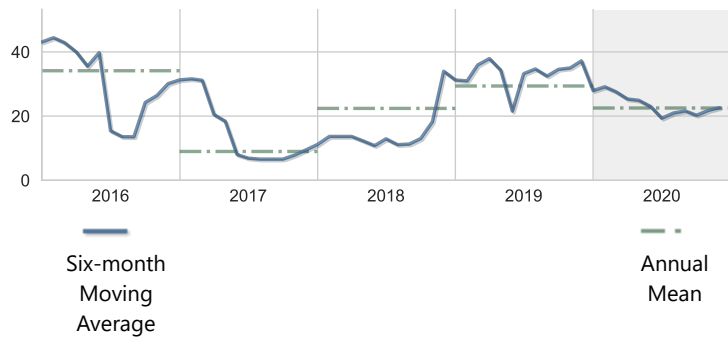
Light Attenuation

Units: K(1/m)	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	1.87	3.56
Mean	0.92	1.03
Low	0.44	0.15
No. of Samples	56	1403



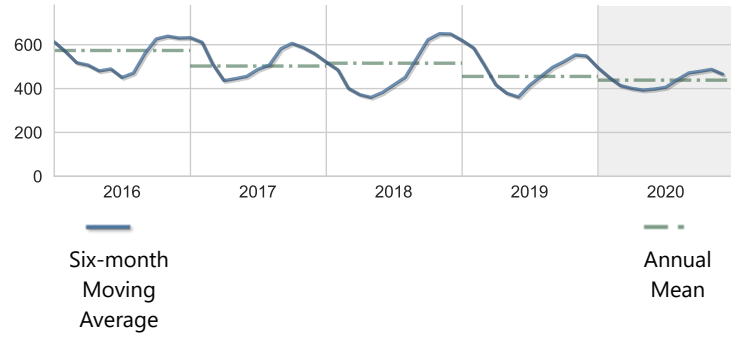
Nitrogen, Ammonia + Ammonium as N

Units: ug/l	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	82.00	243.00
Mean	22.52	23.60
Low	7.00	5.00
No. of Samples	56	1481



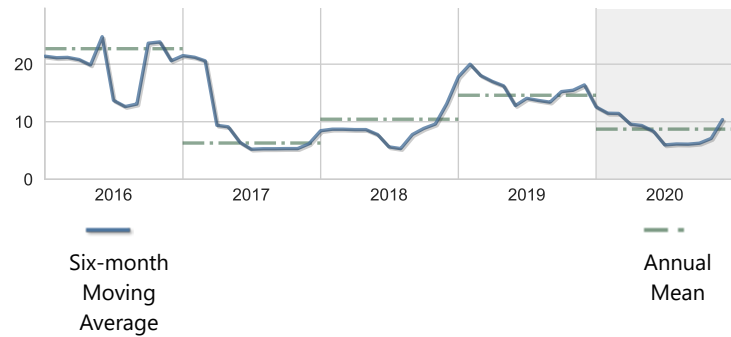
Nitrogen, Kjeldahl

Units: ug/l	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	660.00	1320.00
Mean	438.39	458.61
Low	270.00	60.00
No. of Samples	56	1486



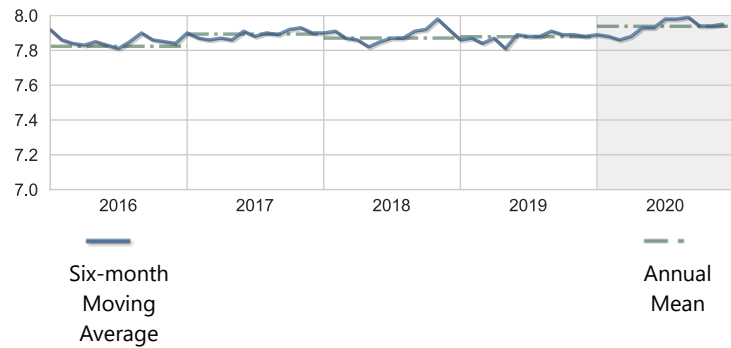
Nitrogen, Nitrite + Nitrate as N

Units: ug/l	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	29.00	339.00
Mean	8.71	11.74
Low	5.00	5.00
No. of Samples	56	1918



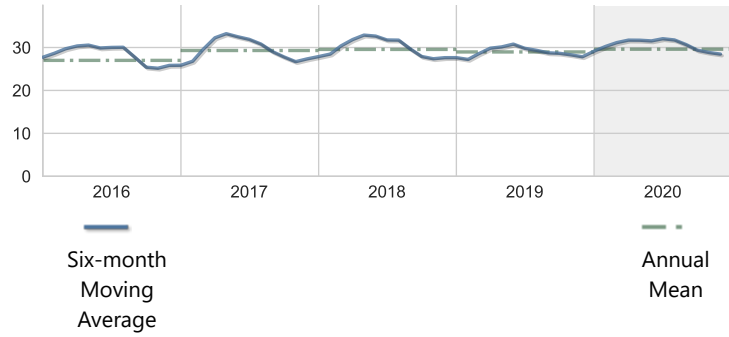
pH

Units: None	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	8.13	8.40
Mean	7.94	7.88
Low	7.34	7.10
No. of Samples	56	1602



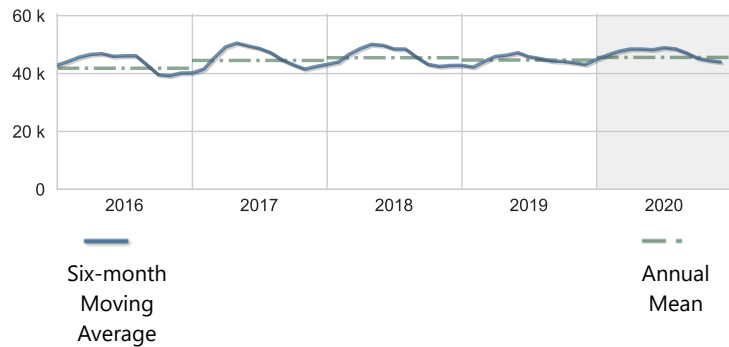
Salinity

Units: PSS	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	35.00	38.80
Mean	29.60	30.20
Low	21.90	1.80
No. of Samples	56	1602



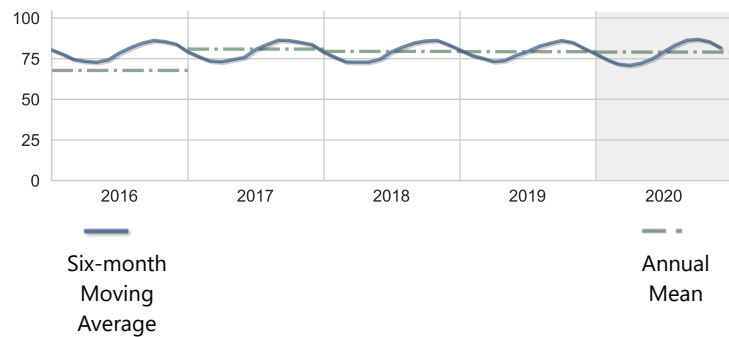
Specific conductance

Units: umho	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	53000.00	58320.00
Mean	45575.00	46358.78
Low	34900.00	3370.00
No. of Samples	56	1602



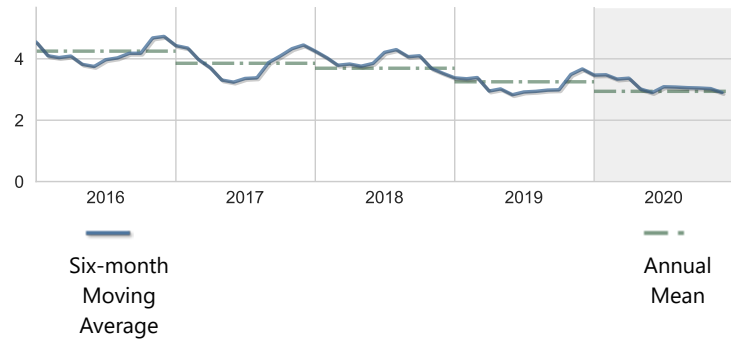
Temperature, water

Units: deg F	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	91.94	92.48
Mean	79.05	78.04
Low	62.42	48.56
No. of Samples	56	1602



Turbidity

Units: NTU	Year 2020	Historical period of record
High	5.60	24.00
Mean	2.94	4.14
Low	1.40	0.85
No. of Samples	56	1481



Annual Averages

Indicator	Units	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Trend
Dissolved Oxygen	mg/l	6.54	6.86	6.77	6.67	6.87	
Dissolved oxygen saturation	percent (%)	94.73	101.91	99.57	96.97	100.00	
Light Attenuation	K(1/m)	1.09	1.04	1.13	1.03	0.92	
Salinity	PSS	27.00	29.30	29.55	28.97	29.60	
Turbidity	NTU	4.25	3.85	3.69	3.25	2.94	

Bay Contour Maps (2020)

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 2020 Monthly Contour Maps for: Chlorophyll a ▼

January



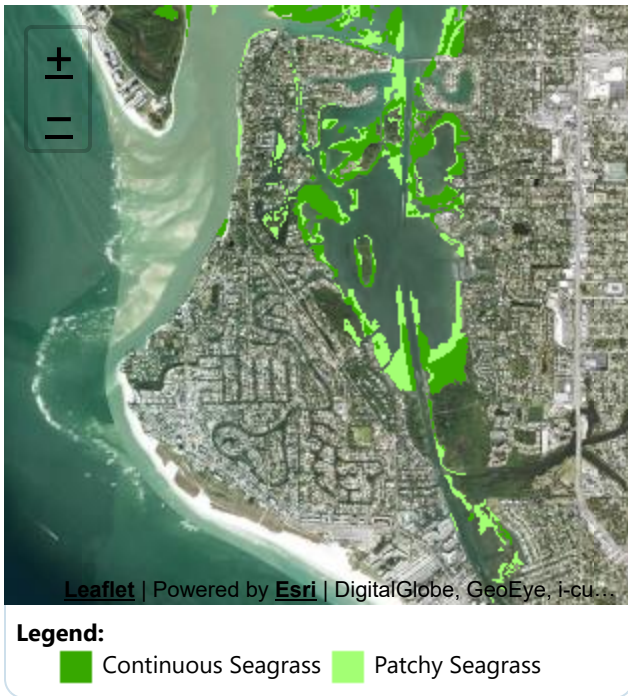
Contour Legend:

- 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

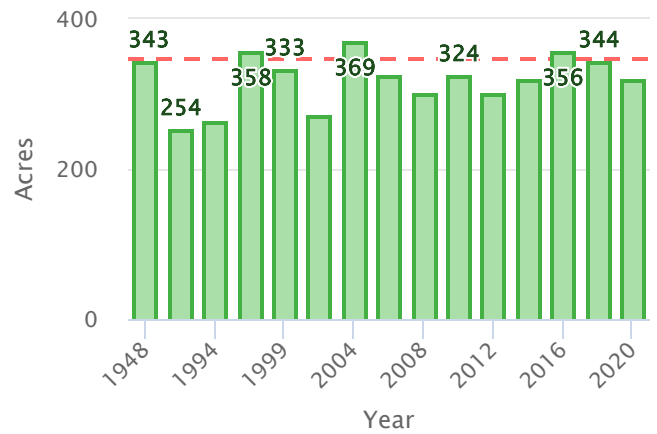
Seagrasses

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:



Seagrass Acreage Variation within Roberts Bay



--- Target 348 acres

Impervious Features

Rain that falls on land that is in a natural state is absorbed and filtered by soils and vegetation as it makes its 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.

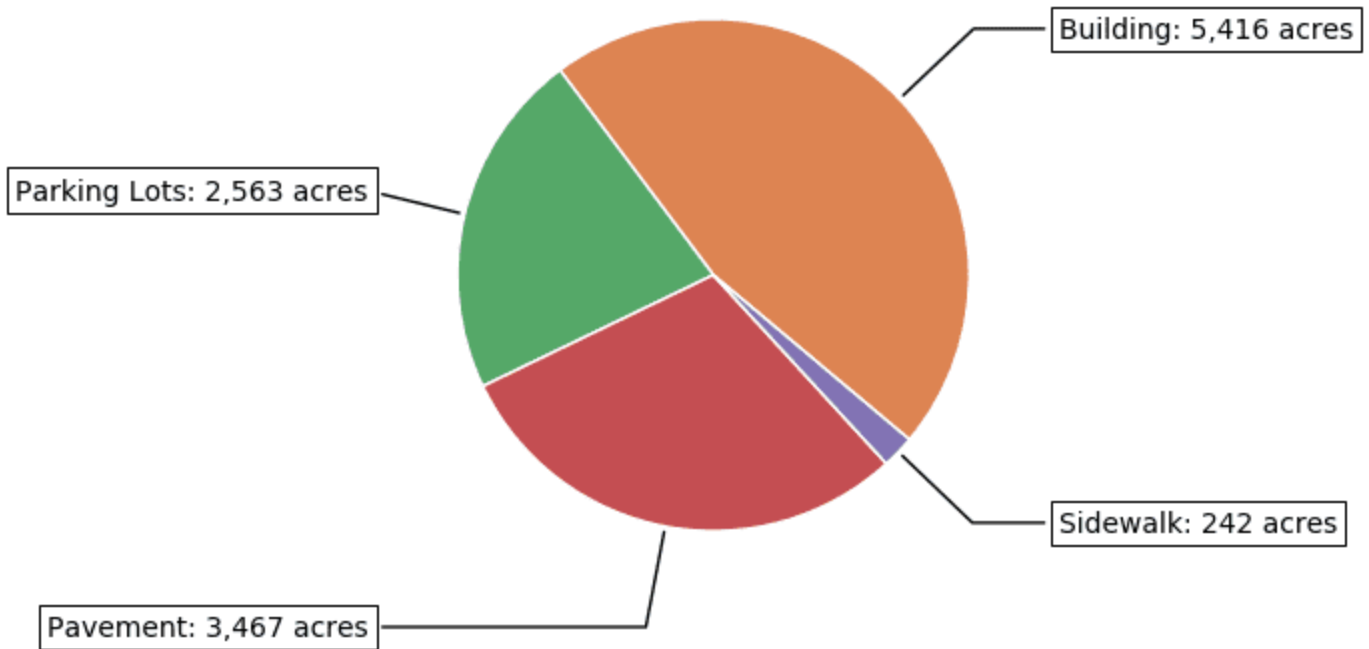


19% of the land area within the **Sarasota Bay Watershed** is covered by

impervious surfaces

2014 Impervious Surface Coverage by Type

in acres, within the Sarasota Bay Watershed











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.

Roberts Bay is located within the Sarasota Bay Watershed. The chart below shows the land use / land cover characteristics for Sarasota Bay Watershed within the boundary of this Water Atlas. **[View details about the Sarasota Bay Watershed »](#)**

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

2020 Bay Conditions Report for Roberts Bay

Land Use Classification	1990	2005	2011	2014	2017	2020	Trend
Urban & Built-up	32,908 53.3%	37,844 61.3%	38,343 62.1%	37,987 61.6%	38,749 62.8%	56,970 59.1%	
Agriculture	6,338 10.3%	2,497 4%	2,215 3.6%	2,309 3.7%	1,822 3%	2,986 3.1%	
Rangeland	547 0.9%	199 0.3%	225 0.4%	430 0.7%	208 0.3%	261 0.3%	
Upland Forests	3,588 5.8%	2,109 3.4%	1,874 3%	1,923 3.1%	1,756 2.8%	2,075 2.2%	
Water	13,350 21.6%	14,227 23.1%	14,278 23.1%	14,131 22.9%	14,255 23.1%	25,360 26.3%	
Wetlands	2,870 4.7%	2,227 3.6%	2,229 3.6%	2,372 3.8%	2,327 3.8%	4,889 5.1%	
Barren Land	29 0%	9 0%	99 0.2%	109 0.2%	100 0.2%	76 0.1%	
Transportation and Utilities	1,845 3%	2,602 4.2%	2,452 4%	2,453 4%	2,511 4.1%	3,783 3.9%	

2020 Land Use / Land Cover for Sarasota Bay Watershed

as a percentage of land area for this watershed

