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Return of Seagrasses to 1948 Levels Reflect Improving Sarasota Bay Health

SARASOTA, FL – May 30, 2008 Historic photos from 1948 were recently analyzed by Photo Science, a high-tech photo interpretation company experienced in military applications. Using the same methodology the 1948 photos were compared to 2005 imagery of the Sarasota Bay bottom. Based on this comparison it was determined that seagrasses in Sarasota Bay are approximately the same as in 1948.

"Seagrasses are a primary indicator of Bay health" says Mark Alderson, Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Executive Director, "and this data suggests that the Bay is responding to the large scale pollution control programs implemented regionally and their positive impact on water quality."

This data suggests the Bay is responding to the capital improvement and educational programs being implemented by the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program and its partners as laid out in the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. We need to continue these programs to ensure further recovery to Sarasota Bay.

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program is dedicated to restoring the area's greatest natural asset—Sarasota Bay. Its unique program strives to improve water quality, increase habitat and enhance the natural resources of the area for use and enjoyment by the public. Sarasota Bay is one of 28 estuaries in the United States that have been named by the U.S. Congress as an "estuary of national significance."