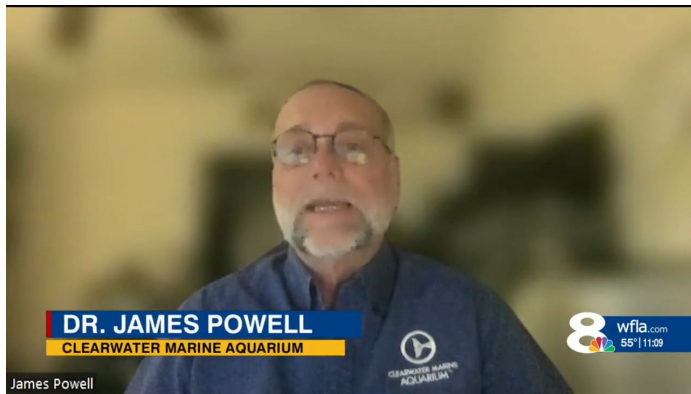


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LOCAL NEWS

Seagrass in Old Tampa Bay at historic lows, says new study

by: [Jack Royer](#)

Posted: Feb 14, 2023 / 09:49 AM EST

Updated: Feb 14, 2023 / 01:48 PM EST

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TAMPA, Fla. (WFLA) – Old Tampa Bay lost 12% of its seagrass between 2020 and 2022, according to new research released Monday from the Tampa Bay Estuary Program.

“Without sea grass, without good water quality, it’s hurting our pocketbooks, it’s hurting our health, it’s hurting our fun,” Maya Burke, the program’s assistant director said.

The loss is blamed on algal blooms that limit sunlight to the plant, among numerous other factors. Over 1,000 manatee deaths are blamed on the problem on Florida’s east coast, causing concern for researchers.

“It’s also a really important nursery ground for a lot of the commercial and recreational important fish that we fish for fun or to feed our families,” Burke added.

The loss accounts for over 4,100 acres of seagrass in Old Tampa Bay alone, mostly in the upper part of the bay.

Restoration efforts have been ongoing for years, but this decline marks a low point since researchers began keeping track.

“We value clean water as a community, and we need to make the requisite investments to make sure that we don’t lose ground in terms of protecting water quality, sea grass resources, and things that we love about Tampa Bay,” Burke said.

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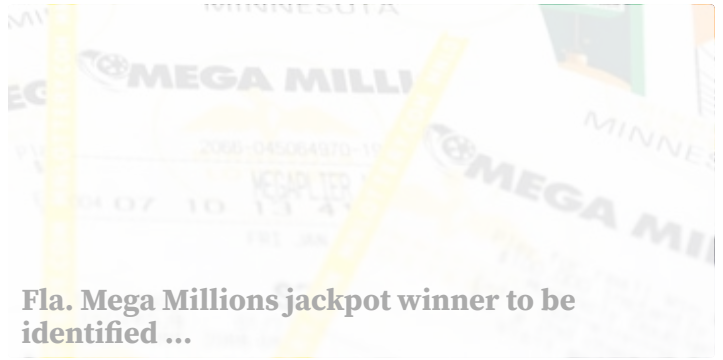
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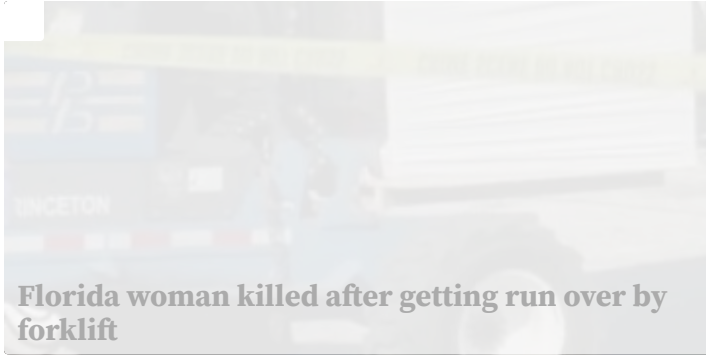
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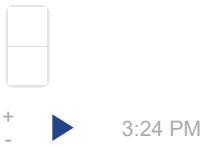
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