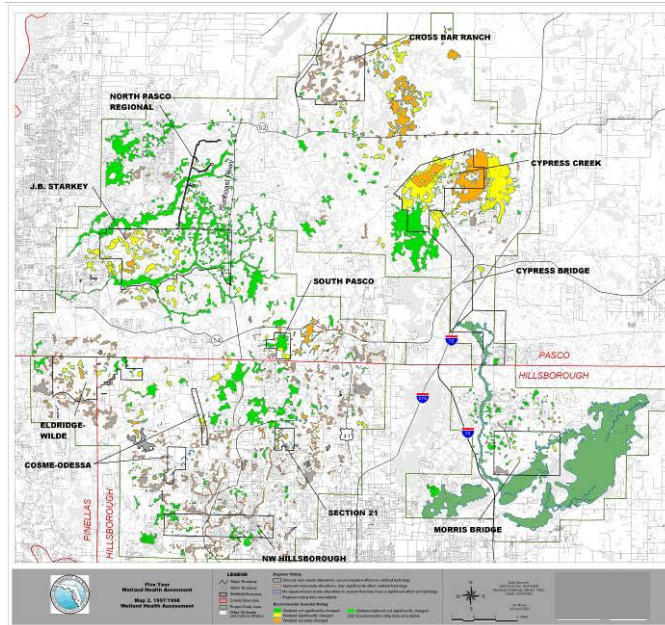


Five Year Wetland Assessment



Client/Owner: Southwest Florida Water Management District
Project Location: Pasco and Hillsborough Counties, Florida

This large-scale project involved Wetland Health Assessments at 409 wetlands in and around Tampa Bay Water's 11 Consolidated Wellfields. This project was especially important in assessing regional wetland health because it focused on identifying wetlands not currently monitored by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) or Tampa Bay Water, and therefore filled substantial spatial gaps where wetland health was poorly known. This multi-faceted project included development of a comprehensive database to store and manage multiple wetland health datasets including: Wetland Health Assessment data collected during the 1997-1998 and 2004-2005 events, historical and 1999 wetland condition data collected for the Tampa Bay Water Candidate Sites Evaluation Study, and Wetland Assessment Procedure data collected in 2003 for both Tampa Bay Water and the SWFWMD. The compilation of these datasets allowed for the input of important historical wetland data (where available) into pre-field forms that were utilized by teams of water resource engineers and environmental scientists to preliminarily assess topographic features and field maps depicting historical and recent imagery. Wetland Health Assessment field forms for the 2004-2005 event also were prepared by linking this database to a GIS database developed from the conversion of hardcopy SWFWMD wetland health assessment maps produced in 1997-1998. Geographical reference information from the GIS database was presented on the field forms to assist the field evaluation teams in locating and gaining access to wetlands. Field evaluation teams then assessed 409 wetlands for wetland health. Data collected from these assessments were entered in the wetland evaluation database and reviewed for quality control purposes. From these data and previously collected wetland health data, wetland health maps and analyses were prepared to assist the SWFWMD in assessing regional wetland health over time as Minimum Flows and Levels are developed and a wetland recovery plan is implemented.