

Tomoka Marsh

AQUATIC PRESERVE

“The Tomoka Marsh Aquatic Preserve protects a lasting legacy a magical part of old Florida, where waters from palm lined subtropical rivers mix with vast salt marshes just back from the sea. This rich estuary serves as a nursery for so many species identified with Florida like manatees, snook, blue crabs, and wading birds. Perhaps just as important, it captures its place name from the Timucua, the last of the native tribes who lived in close relationship with these unique lands and waters. Protection of these lands did not just come about on its own but through partnerships between the state, county, conservation organizations, and concerned citizens who continue to appreciate the magical sense of place which is the Tomoka.”

*Clay Henderson
former Chair, Volusia County Council
President emeritus, Florida Audubon Society*

Key Accomplishments

- Participated in the U.S. Geological Survey’s 3-year juvenile fisheries survey assessment at various locations within the Halifax River. Assisted with trawl and seine collections, identification of fish, and aquatic preserve staff served as boat safety officer for the project. Information obtained from the survey adds to the knowledge base for the estuary and will aid resource managers in planning for future fisheries augmentation programs.
- Completed three year bird survey of Tomoka and Halifax Rivers. Documented 180 species including numerous listed species such as the wood stork, bald eagle, least tern, snowy egret, little blue heron, roseate spoonbill and reddish egret. Numerous migratory birds such as the endangered Peregrine falcon and piping plover were observed feeding or resting in marsh habitat found in the aquatic preserve. Ten species of duck, including the rare common golden eye were observed.



Bulow Creek after restoration

Project Spotlight

Bulow Creek Restoration

The final phase of Bulow Creek restoration at Corona Canal was completed by Volusia County Mosquito Control. The project was supported in part by Volusia County Stormwater Utility funds, Ponce Inlet Port Authority, and the Mosquito Control District. The



Sand deposition in Bulow Creek

Florida Department of Environmental Protection permitted the project in cooperation with the Florida Park Service and Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas. Thousands of cubic yards of sand deposited in Bulow Creek from

upland sources through Corona Canal were removed using the Mosquito Control District’s unique amphibious excavator. The excavated sand was used in the repair of several local roads, at other county project sites, or was deposited at the Flagler County landfill. Five shallow weirs were installed at various locations upstream of the canal to prevent future sand deposition. Because the canal drains a large two county area, the locations of the weirs allow for maintenance and removal of any sediment that may accumulate in the future. The project was a great success aesthetically with approximately one-quarter mile of streambed restored to near natural conditions.

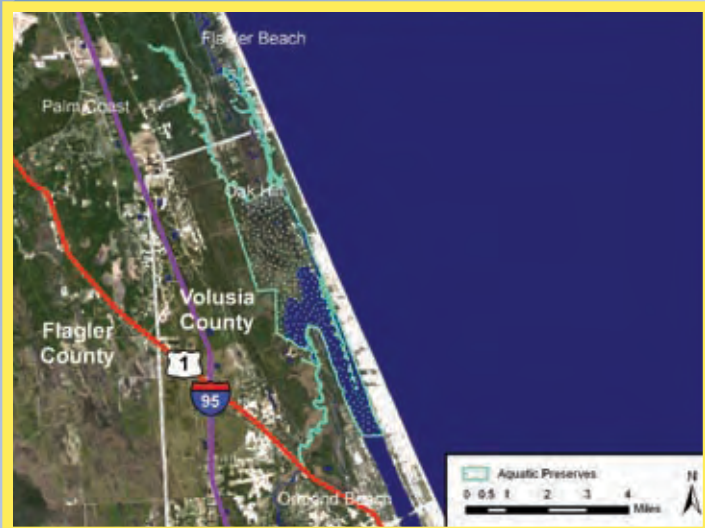
Tomoka Marsh Aquatic Preserve

Location:

Northeast coast of Florida, along the Tomoka River and portions of the Halifax River, in Flagler and Volusia counties, between the towns of Ormond Beach and Flagler Beach

Acreage:

8,000 acres of sovereign submerged lands



Local Contact:

Deborah Shelley
Aquatic Preserve Manager
8300 West State Road 46
Sanford, FL 32771
(407) 330-6727
www.aquaticpreserves.org



The endangered woodstork feeds in quiet backwaters



Shorebirds resting along the Halifax River



Marshes are exceptionally productive



Scenic vista along the Tomoka

Aquatic Preserve Facts:

- The Halifax River, Smith Creek and the Tomoka River are an important travel corridor for the endangered West Indian manatee. The Tomoka River and its tributaries Strickland, Thompson and Dodson Creek are a designated Manatee Sanctuary.
- In the early 1980's, a tributary of the Tomoka River was the site of the first witnessed and documented birth of a free-ranging manatee.
- The aquatic preserve is a valuable nursery area for fish, shrimp, and crabs caught by commercial and recreational fishermen in the Atlantic Ocean.
- The preserve is utilized by over 120 species of fish including snook, redfish, croakers, flounder, red drum, black drum, pompano and seatrout. The small, often unseen anchovy dominates as forage for larger and more popular game fish.
- Several designated species utilize the preserve including the endangered wood stork, the threatened bald eagle, least tern, Southeastern American kestrel, Atlantic salt marsh snake, and the Atlantic loggerhead sea turtle. Species of special concern include the little blue heron, tricolored heron, brown pelican, snowy egret, roseate spoonbill, and the common snook.
- The Tomoka area has important archaeological and historic resources. Nineteen prehistoric sites are located near the preserve, including the remains of the Timucuan village Noco-roco located at Tomoka State Park.



A publication funded in part by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas, pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award No. NA04NOS4190035. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the view of the State of Florida, NOAA, or any of its sub-agencies.