

# Yellow River Marsh

# AQUATIC PRESERVE

*“A trip on the Yellow River is like going back in time. Its tall-forested banks, pristine water quality and productive fishing create a place one can go to be completely surrounded by nature. The Yellow River Preserve is one of Florida’s most precious contributions it has for its future generations.”*

*Ernie Rivers,  
River Keeper and Bream Fisherman Associate of Northwest Florida*

## Key Accomplishments

- A study of the Gulf sturgeon within the Yellow River completed in November 2001 by the Northwest Florida Aquatic Preserve staff identified spawning habitats and migratory patterns of this species adding to our knowledge of the preserve’s ecological value . This was in conjunction with a study concerning a proposed dam on the Yellow River. Sturgeon eggs have since been found to occur above the proposed dam site.
- A shoreline restoration project along the eastern shore of Garcon Point was completed in 2002. Due to erosion most of the shoreline plants have been removed, but some emergent vegetation still remains. Restoration works will re-establish vegetation within the area to further reduce accelerated erosion within this area of the shoreline.



Juncus wetland

## Project Spotlight

The loss of shoreline within the Yellow River Marsh Aquatic Preserve and connecting Yellow River Marsh Preserve State Park is generally the result of increased erosion due to wave energy amplified by coastal armoring on either side. Within the last 10 years 80 ft. of shoreline has been lost to allow for severe coastal flooding of a coastal pine flatwood forest. The restoration of this coastal



A tree highlights increased erosion

transition zone will improve the potential for this coastal habitat to respond to climate changes that provide room for habitat migration with sea level rise.

The project will allow for the only public access to the shoreline within a public owned parcel of 400 acres through construction of a two mile loop nature trail, environmental educational kiosks to support education and training through

restoration of a coastal estuarine habitat. The proposed restoration project utilizes the intertidal placement of vertical oyster reef structures along approximately 1,000 linear feet of shoreline to reduce the wave energy. The proposed estuarine project is expected to grow an established living oyster reef which would enhance habitat, emergent vegetation and the water column within the Yellow River Marsh Aquatic Preserve.

# Yellow River Marsh Aquatic Preserve

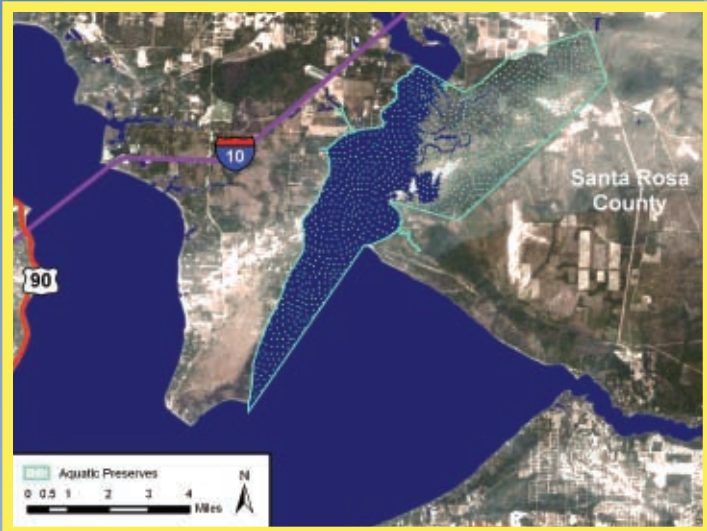


## Location:

Santa Rosa County

## Acreage:

16,000 acres of sovereign submerged lands



## Local Contact:

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Cypress trees on the shore



Nesting great blue heron



Alligator snapping turtle caught while netting for sturgeon



Submerged aquatic vegetation along banks of a Yellow River tributary

## Aquatic Preserve Facts:

- There are over 3,000 acres of salt- and fresh-water marshes and approximately 5,000 acres of forested wetlands which provide filtration from pollutants and serve as natural flood control.
- At least 101 species of fish occur in the Florida portion of the Yellow River system, including Blackwater Bay. Of the species recorded, 33 are marine or brackish water forms.
- The freshwater fisheries of the Yellow and Blackwater Rivers are two of the most biological diverse in the state of Florida due to the large coverage of forested wetlands, marshes and grassbeds that encompass these watersheds with little agriculture or residential impacts.
- The most popular recreational activity within the preserve is fishing. Brim and striped bass are a popular catch.
- Over 70% of commercially important fish and shellfish species rely on estuaries at some stage of their lives.

