



# Weeki Wachee River SAV Restoration Project Update

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## *About the Foundation*

The Fish & Wildlife Foundation of Florida works to protect Florida's iconic animals and plants and the lands and waters they need to survive, while supporting traditional outdoor recreation and education. We partner with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and many other public and private entities through philanthropy, direct conservation action, communications and outreach, and education.





# How We Work

- Partner-Driven Approach
- Specialty License Plate Grants
- Direct Conservation

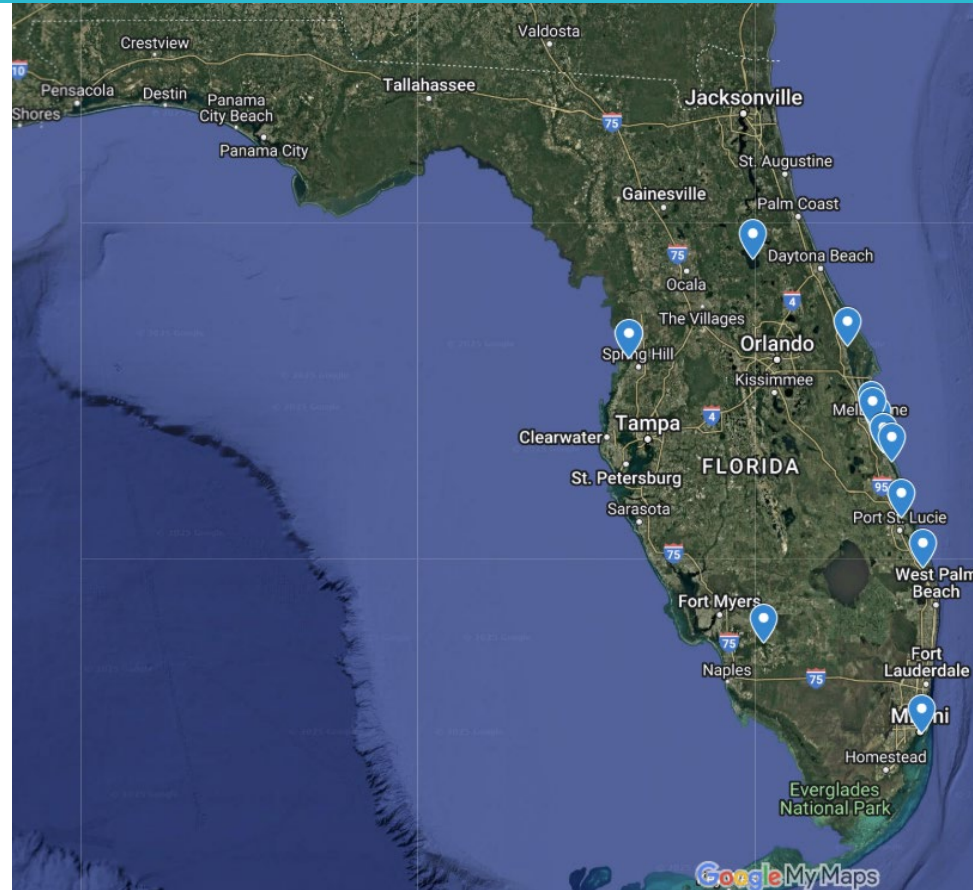




# Aquatic Habitat Restoration

## Aquatic Habitat Restoration Projects

- 📍 Weeki Wachee SAV Restoration
- 📍 Lake Trafford Revegetation
- 📍 Biscayne Bay Seagrass Restoration
- 📍 Lake George SAV Restoration
- 📍 Titusville Causeway Multi-Trophic Restoration
- 📍 IRL Tributaries Pilot: Goat Creek
- 📍 IRL Tributaries Pilot: Crane Creek
- 📍 IRL Tributaries Pilot: North Fork St. Lucie River
- 📍 IRL Tributaries Pilot: Turkey Creek
- 📍 IRL Tributaries Pilot: Saint Sebastian River
- 📍 NW Loxahatchee River SAV Restoration
- 📍 Saint Sebastian River Phase II
- 📍 Preachers Hole





# *Weeki Wachee River SAV Restoration Project*

- Native eelgrass replanted
  - Help stabilize the riverbed
  - Improve water quality
  - Restore habitat for fish and wildlife
- Protective cages installed
  - Protect plants while they take root
  - In place for 12-months
- Signs posted at boat ramps
  - Inform community of project







# Background

- In 2017, the Southwest Florida Water Management District included the river in the Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan (SWIM).
  - The SWIM plan supports projects aimed at improving water quality and habitat.
  - According to the SWIM plan, loss of native SAV is likely due to sedimentation, recreation & invasive species competition.
- The first Springs Protection Zone was put in place in 2023.
- Channel restoration project completed in 2025.

\*With these measures in place, the rate limiting factors (sedimentation, recreation & invasive species) have been addressed, creating a strong opportunity for SAV restoration.





Rogers Park

E Richard Dr.

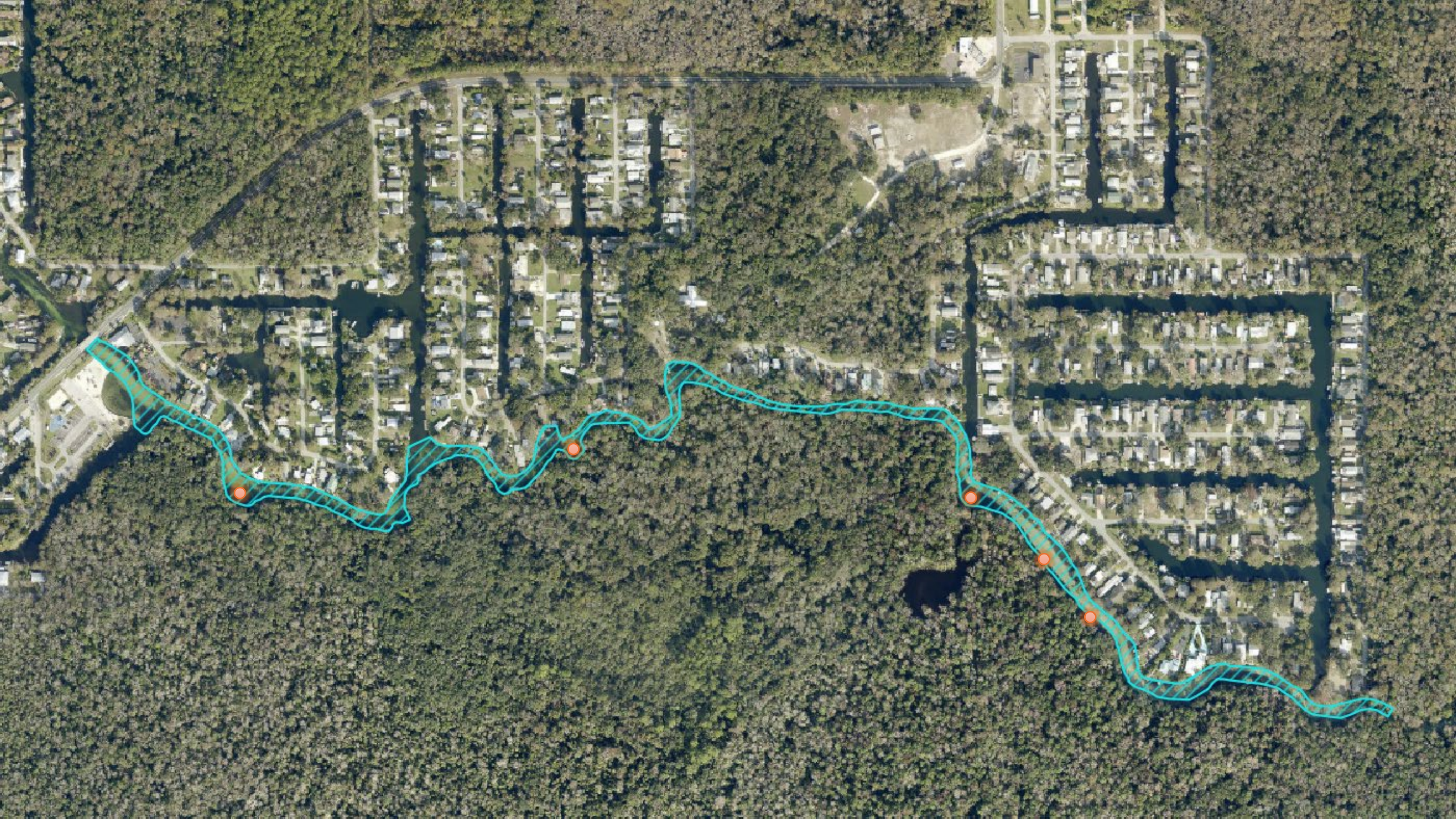




# Methods

- 44,610 planting units were installed into the river.
  - 43,950 mechanical planting units (MPUs)
  - 660 four-inch peat pot planting units
- 132 GrowSAV™ Herbivory Exclusion Devices.





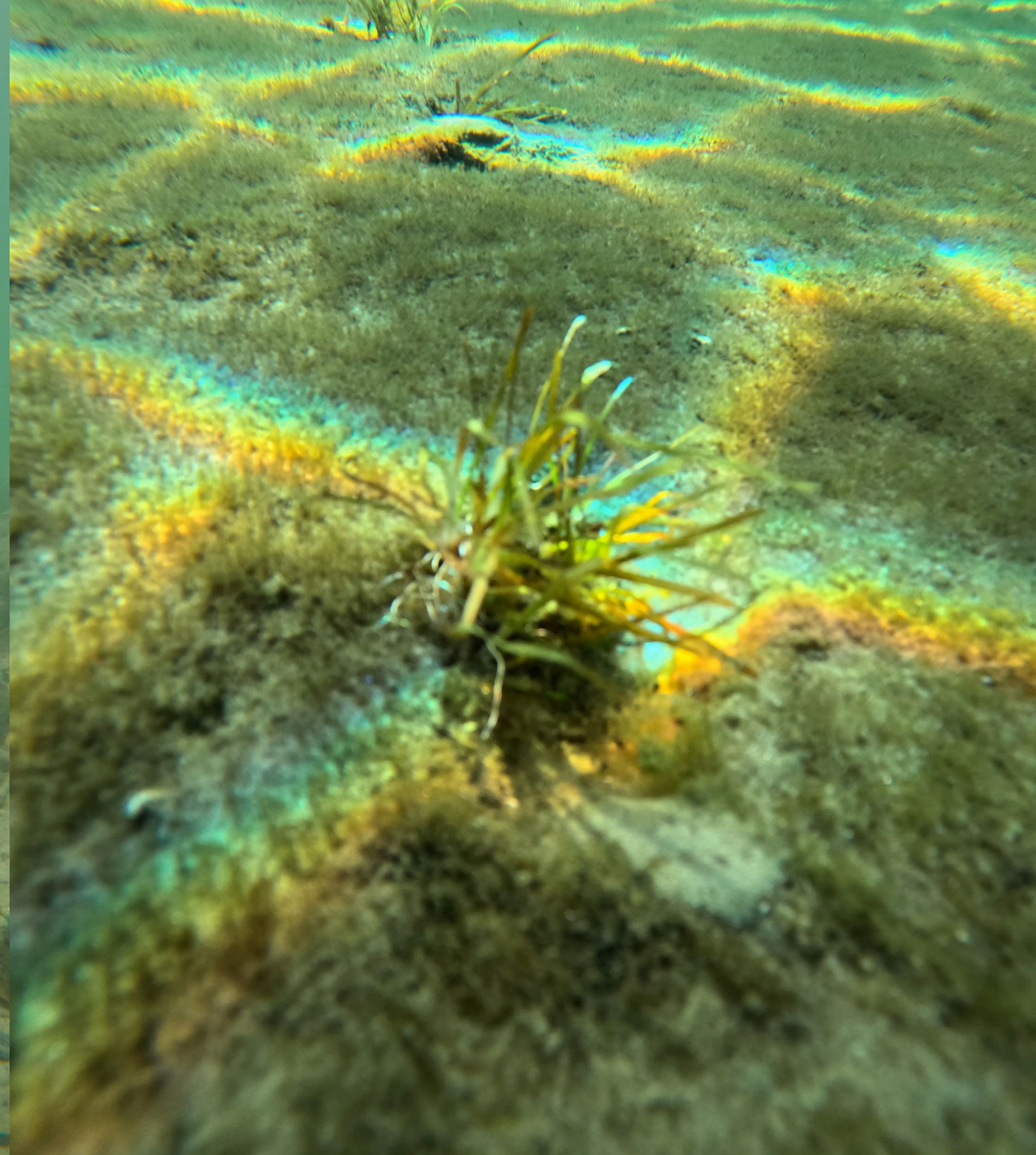




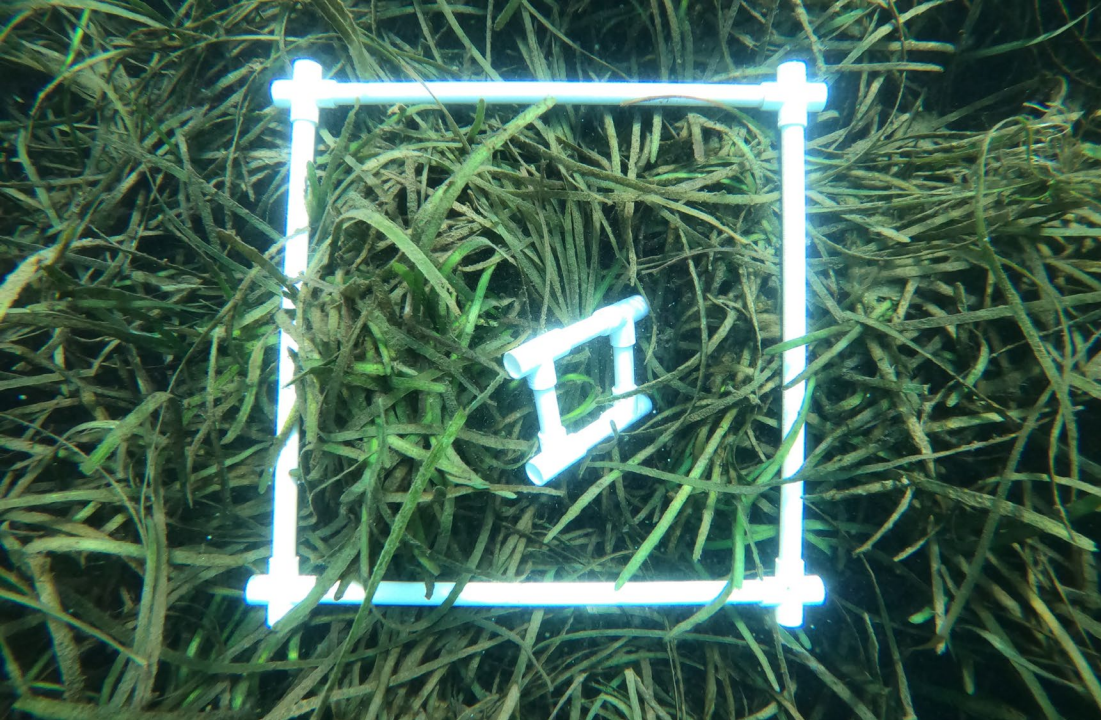












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## Monitoring

- Monthly maintenance events
  - Clean Herbivory Exclusion Devices
  - Collect data such as survival, coverage, expansion, etc.
- Yearly monitoring events
  - One-year, two-years and three-years post-installation
  - Collect data such as survival, spread, density, canopy height, coverage, etc.



# Questions?

