



## **Weeki Wachee River SAV Restoration Project**

### **Month 3 Maintenance Report**

FDEP PERMIT NUMBER: 27-0192455-004-EI

ACOE PERMIT NUMBER: SAJ-2019-01203

Prepared On:  
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## Date of Work Accomplished

The third monthly maintenance event for the Weeki Wachee River SAV Restoration Project was performed on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

## Tasks Accomplished

1. Monitored Plant Growth and Survival
2. Removed biofouling from the GrowSAV™ Herbivory Exclusion Devices

## Task Description

1. **Monitored Plant Growth and Survival** – A team of Sea & Shoreline biologists monitored planting units. Plant growth and survival were noted, and any displaced planting units were carefully replanted by hand. Monitoring was performed in water using a mask and snorkel.
2. **Removed biofouling from the GrowSAV™ Herbivory Exclusion Devices** – Biofouling that had accumulated on the top and side mesh of the GrowSAV Herbivory Exclusion Devices was removed by a team of Sea & Shoreline biologists using stiff-bristled scrub brushes. All biofouling removal was performed in water using a mask and snorkel.

## Notes and Event Summary

### ***Month 3 Maintenance and Monitoring Event***

The third monthly maintenance event for the Weeki Wachee River SAV Restoration Project occurred on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The GrowSAV™ Herbivory Exclusion Devices exhibited light to moderate levels of biofouling, consisting mainly of settled sediments and attached filamentous algae. Sea & Shoreline biologists removed biofouling from the top and side mesh on mask and snorkel using stiff-bristled scrub brushes.

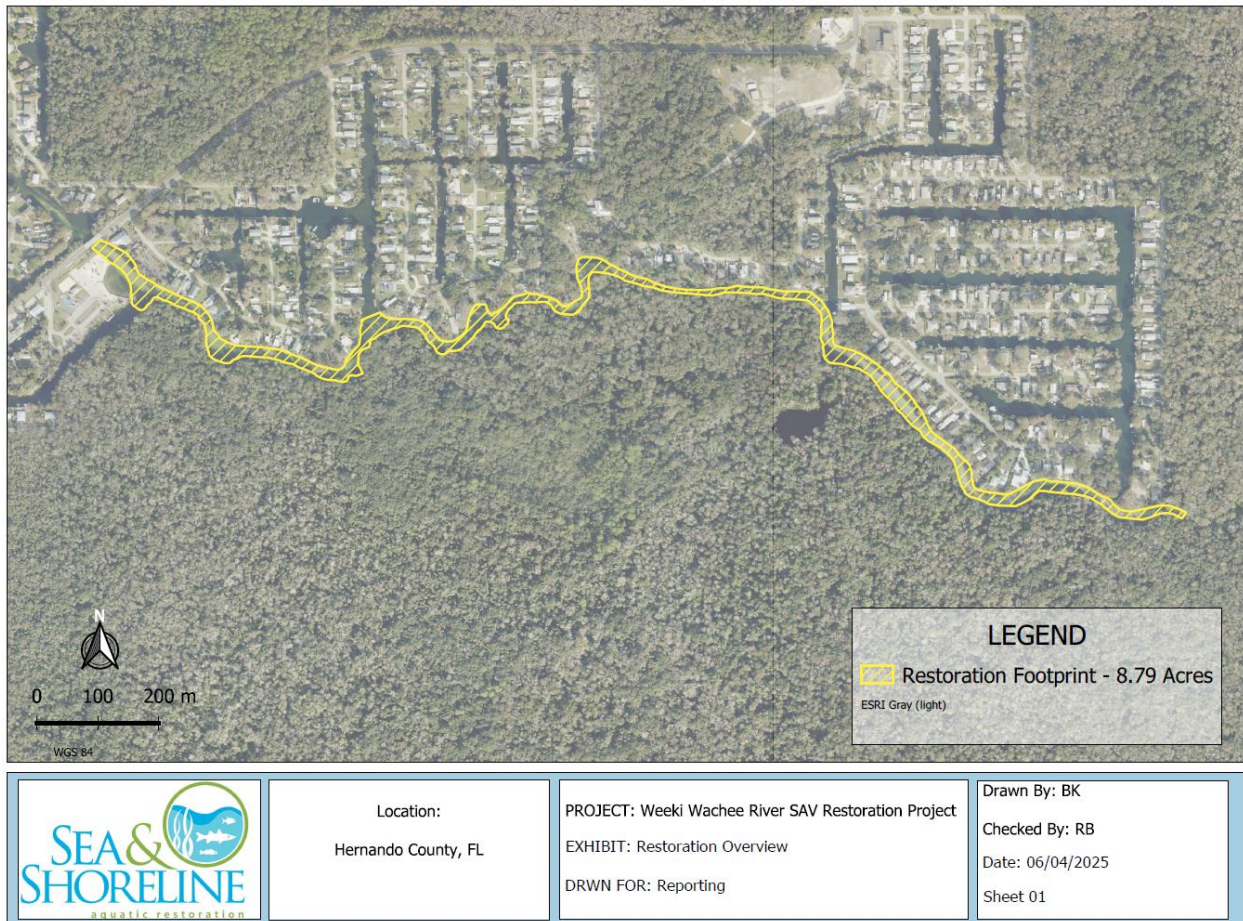
Just three months after installation, both unprotected and protected planting units are showing very encouraging signs of growth and expansion throughout the river. Again, it is estimated that *V. neotropicalis* is present in 130/132 (98%) of the GrowSAV™ Herbivory Exclusion Devices, with coverages ranging from 1 to 4 on the Braun-Blanquet coverage scale. The blade height of protected units varies from 20 to 75 cm, with some units extending well beyond the top of their associated device (**Figure 7**). Signs of lateral expansion beyond protective devices were also observed throughout approximately 70% of devices (**Figure 6**). Protected planting units still have greater blade heights than the surrounding unprotected units, which is expected due to grazing pressure in the area. Despite this, blade heights of unprotected units range anywhere from 5 to 25 cm, with an average of 10 cm. Visible signs of lateral expansion were observed in unprotected planting units throughout the restoration footprint (**Figure 4**).

Water clarity has visibly decreased since the last maintenance event. The entirety of the river was extremely dark and tannic as a result of the heavy rainfall that this area has been experiencing. However, light availability did not appear to be an issue for planting units during this time. We expect to see an improvement in the water clarity next month.

### **Recommendations and Rectifications**

There are no recommendations or rectifications at this time, following the third monthly maintenance event, planting units are continuing to show encouraging signs of expansion. Maintenance will continue for the next nine months, with the fourth event taking place in September 2025.

## Maps.

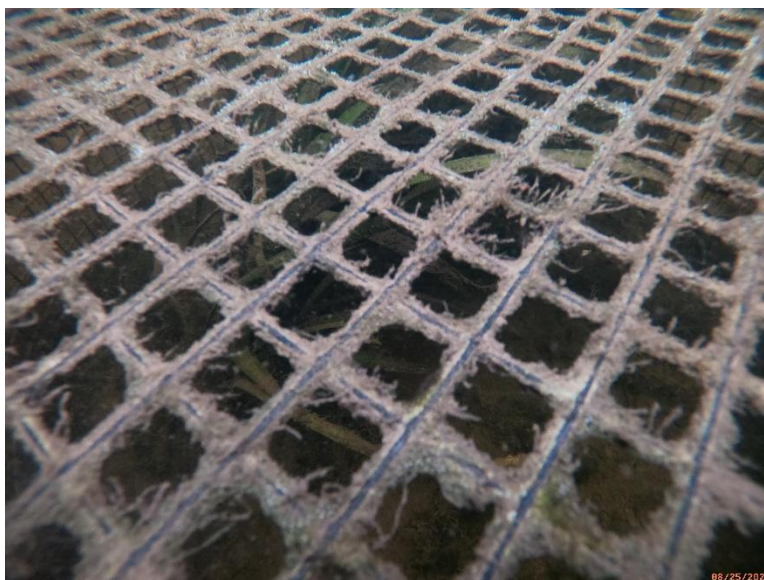


**Map 1 – Overview of Restoration Area.**



**Map 2 – Overview of GrowSAV™ Herbivory Exclusion Device Installation Locations.**

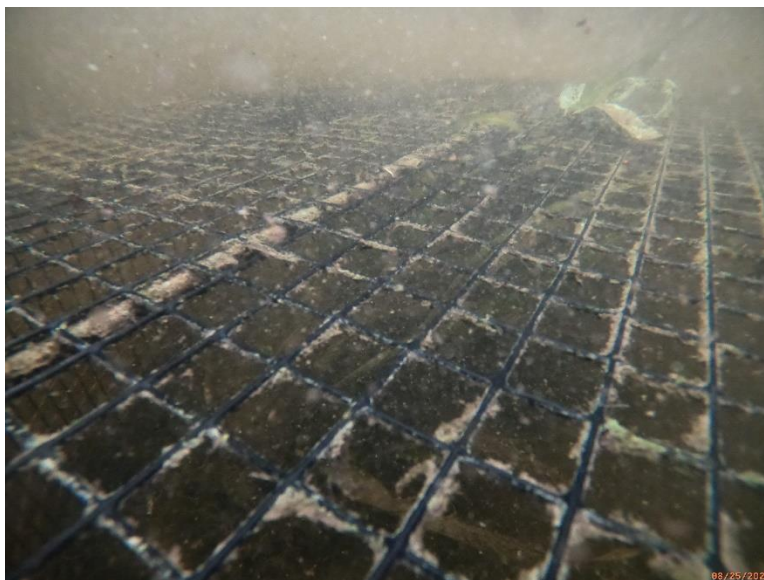
**Figures.**



**Figure 1.** Example of biofouling prior to removal.



**Figure 2.** Example of Sea & Shoreline biologist removing biofouling.



**Figure 3.** Example of GrowSAV Device after biofouling removal.



**Figure 4.** Example of unprotected units showing signs of lateral expansion.



**Figure 5.** Example of unprotected planting units.



**Figure 6.** Example of protected units expanding beyond their associated device.



**Figure 7.** Example of protected units extending beyond their associated device.



**Figure 8.** Example of protected planting units.