



Weeki Wachee River SAV Restoration Project

Month 11 Maintenance Report

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Prepared For:

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Date of Work Accomplished

The eleventh monthly maintenance event for the Weeki Wachee River SAV Restoration Project was performed on April 9th, 2026.

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 11 Maintenance and Monitoring Event

The eleventh monthly maintenance event for the Weeki Wachee River SAV Restoration Project occurred on April 9th, 2026. The GrowSAV™ Herbivory Exclusion Devices exhibited light levels of biofouling, consisting mainly of settled sediments, filamentous algae and entrapped leaf litter. Sea & Shoreline biologists removed biofouling from the top and side mesh of the devices using stiff-bristled brushes (Figures 1 & 2).

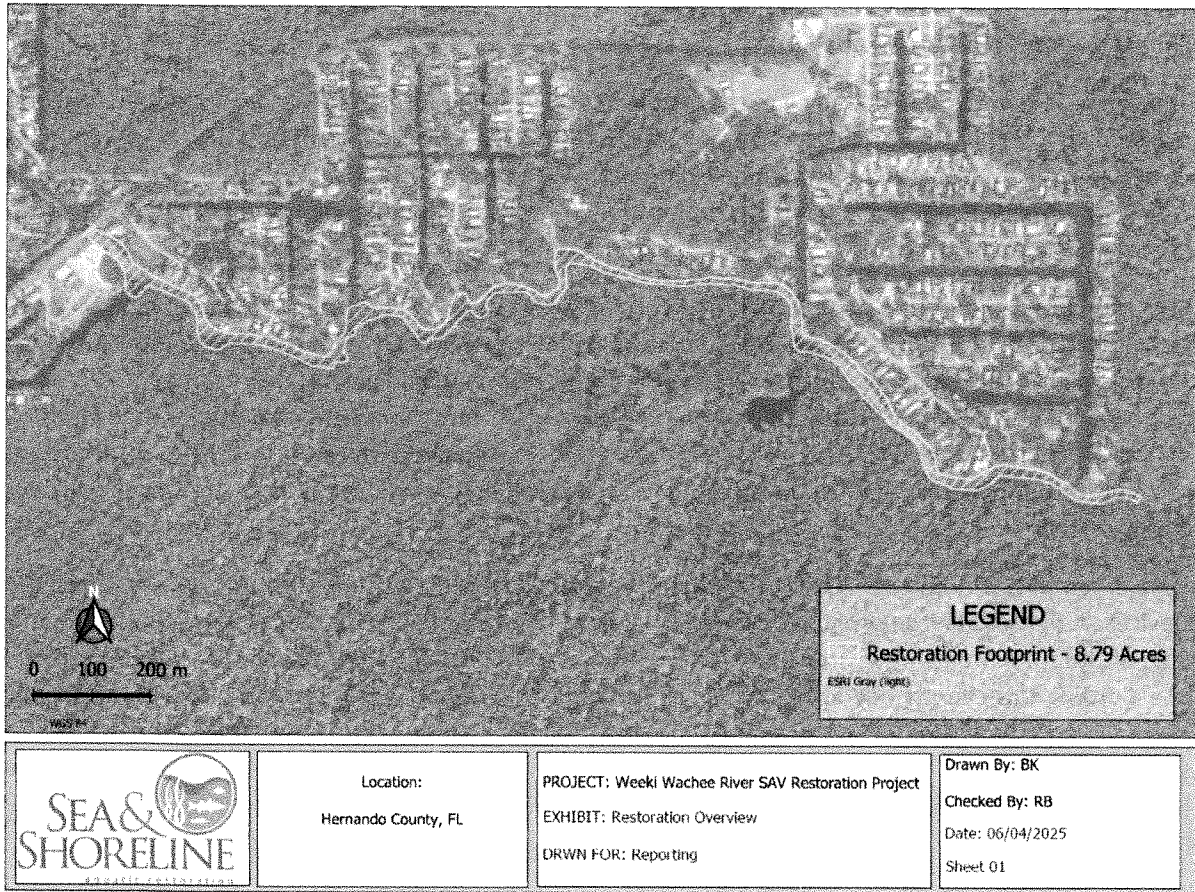
The estimated success rate of *V. neotropicalis* within GrowSAV™ Herbivory Exclusion Devices has remained consistent with the previous month, with approximately 65% of the devices exhibiting successful growth. The canopy height of protected units has remained unchanged, varying from 15 cm to upwards of 60 cm. Canopy heights of unprotected units were consistent with previous months (approx. 5 cm), likely due to increased grazing pressure during the winter months (Figure 3). Unprotected units remain short but continue to display signs of lateral expansion throughout the river. Increased expansion is expected as we continue into warmer months.

Supplemental planting units installed at site 5 were observed in approximately 10% of the GrowSAV™ Devices. A dense *Chaetomorpha* bloom again was observed at site 5 during this event, covering almost 90% of the total area where GrowSAV Devices are installed (Figure 6). The bloom was also observed at site 4 during this event, covering less than 10 percent of the area. *Chaetomorpha* usually blooms when there are excess nutrients in the system and prefer higher salinity levels. In addition to the increased salinity at site 5 that is likely contributing to the low survival rate, the algae is also smothering shorter, juvenile plants. The *Chaetomorpha* was gently swept out of each device

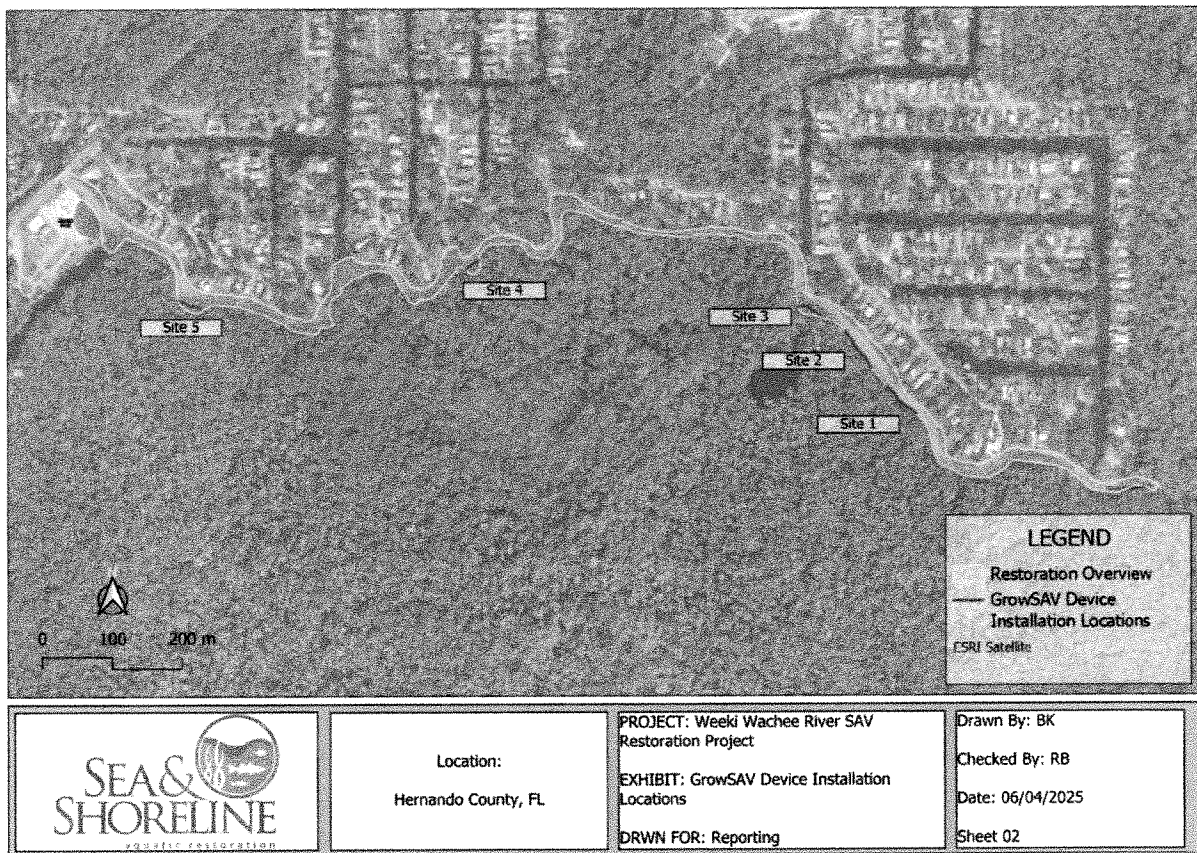
Recommendations and Rectifications

The *Chaetomorpha* bloom at sites 4 and 5 will continue to be monitored, any algae that builds up within the devices will be gently swept out. It is recommended that *Ruppia maritima* is added at site 5, where salinity has proved to be a rate limiting factor, as *R. maritima* has a higher salinity tolerance. Maintenance will continue for the remaining month, with the next event taking place in May of 2026.

Maps.



Map 1 – Overview of Restoration Area.



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

Figures.

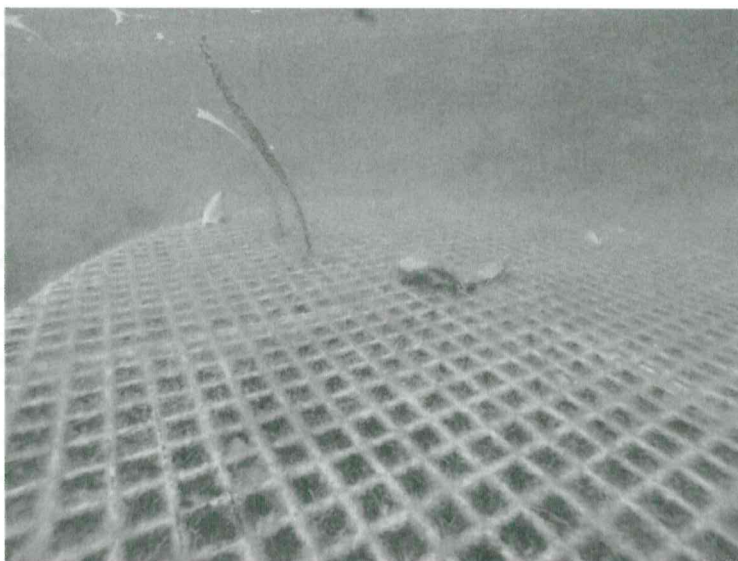


Figure 1. Example of biofouling on GrowSAV™ device



Figure 2. Example of biofouling removal.



Figure 3. Example of protected units.



Figure 4. Example of unprotected units.



Figure 5. Example of unprotected planting units.



Figure 6. Example of algae present inside of GrowSAV Device.