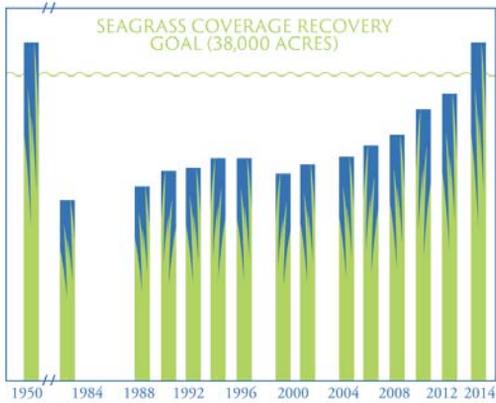


BACK TO 1950

A Story of Success:

TAMPA BAY SEAGRASS LEVELS REBOUND TO 1950s LEVELS

SEAGRASS COVERAGE (x 1,000 ACRES)



Seagrasses need sunlight to grow. In Tampa Bay, seagrasses typically flourish in waters six feet deep. With improving water clarity they can grow in deeper waters.

FROM 2012-2014, TAMPA BAY REGAINED 5,600 ACRES OF SEAGRASSES— ENOUGH TO COVER AN AREA THE SIZE OF TAMPA INTERNATIONAL AND ST. PETERSBURG-CLEARWATER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS COMBINED.



TURTLE GRASS



SHOAL GRASS



MANATEE GRASS

A healthy Tampa Bay contributes 13%, or **\$22 billion,** of the total economic activity within the six counties in the bay's watershed.

An adult manatee can eat **100 POUNDS** of seagrass a day.



About **70%** of the fish we catch for food or fun in Florida spend part of their lives in seagrasses.



SEAGRASS SUSTAINS MANY SPECIES...

A Story of Success:

THE RECOVERY OF TAMPA BAY'S SEAGRASSES IS A NATIONAL SUCCESS STORY

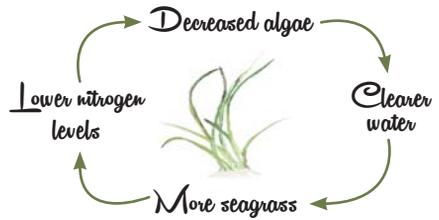
In 2015, Tampa Bay harbored 40,295 acres of seagrasses, the most in 60 years!

The bay's dramatic turnaround began in the early 1980s, after decades of rapid growth and associated pollution left the bay murky and choked with thick mats of algae.

Citizens, elected officials, industries and regulators worked together in a formal partnership called the Tampa Bay Estuary Program to reduce the excess nitrogen chiefly responsible for the bay's decline.

Seagrasses, which had disappeared from much of the bay, were selected as a living benchmark of our progress.

As nitrogen levels decreased, so did algae. The water became clearer, and seagrasses began to regrow. In 2015, we reached our goal for seagrass restoration in the bay for the first time!



How Nitrogen is reduced:

Treating rainfall runoff (stormwater)



Improving wastewater quality or reusing wastewater



Improving industrial practices



Installing better pollution controls on power plants



Reducing auto emissions



Seagrasses are food factories, supporting a “who-eats-who” food web that includes sea trout, shrimp and scallops. They help anchor bay sediments in place and naturally filter pollutants from the land. Seagrasses capture and store carbon, dampening the effects of climate change.

