



Stevenson
Creek
Advocacy
Group, Inc.

Stevenson Creek *a special place*

StevensonCreek.org

Story About a Community, Its Estuary and Watershed



Roseat Spoonbill



Riparian Buffers with Mangroves and Oyster Beds

Stevenson Creek Bridge



Manatee

Who We Are



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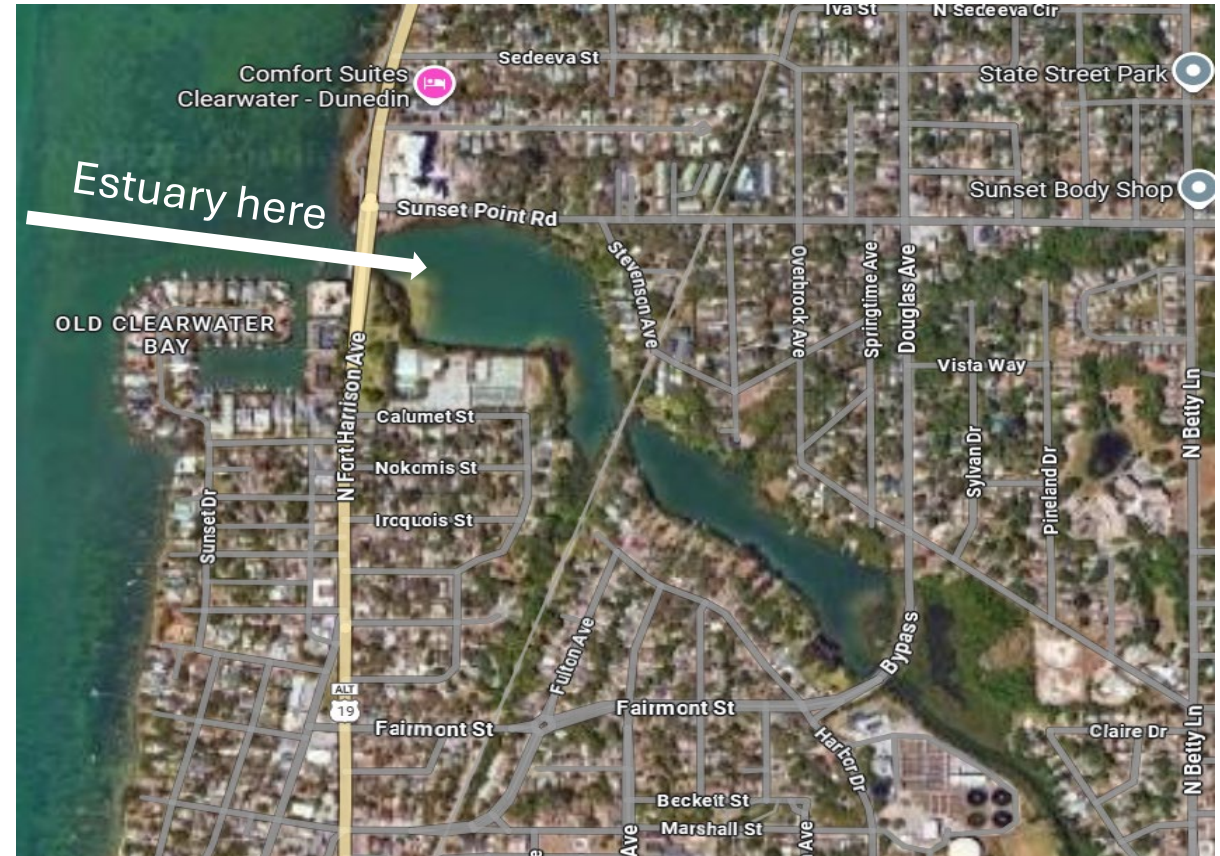
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Our Community, Estuary and Watershed

Stevenson Creek Advocacy Group

- A 501(c)(3) nonprofit since spring 2024
- Founded by local residents
- Volunteers run it
- Represents local residential issues
- **Protects local estuary/aquatic preserve**
- Promotes conservation & water quality
- Watershed education and awareness
- Collaborates with local organizations and local officials

Pass around our sign-up sheet:
Contact info is welcomed!



Where We Are



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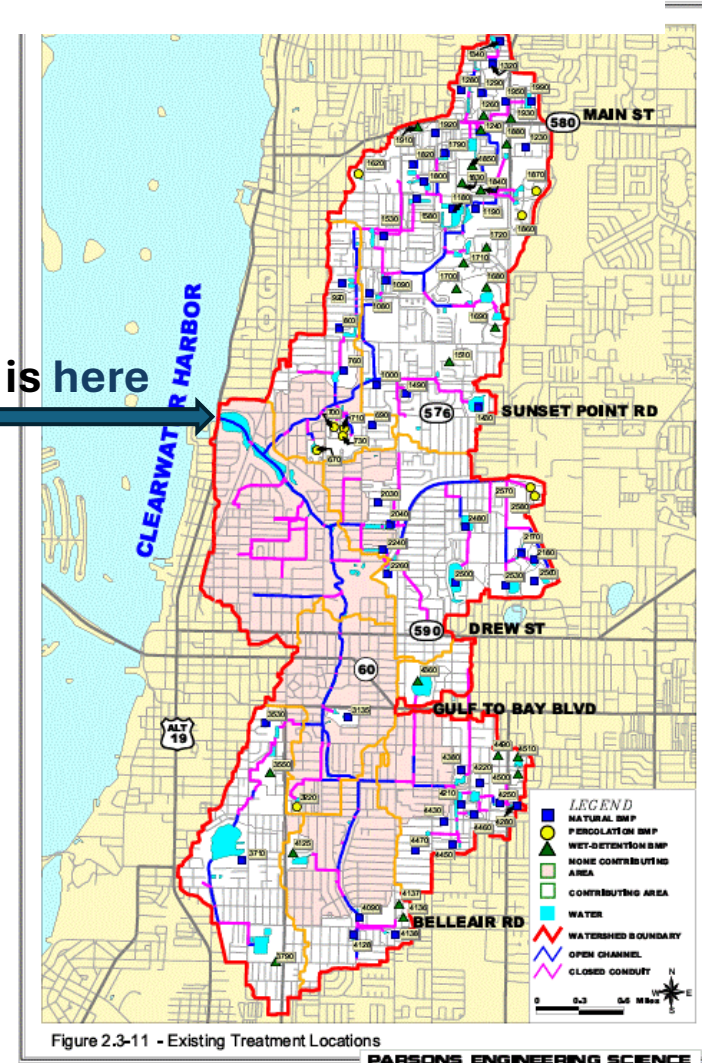
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Stevenson Creek Estuary and Watershed

- Watershed is 6,285 total acres
- Clearwater's largest, most urbanized watershed
- Two tributaries feed the estuary
 - Stevenson Creek flows north from Belair Rd
 - Spring Branch flows south from Dunedin
- The only estuary flowing to Clearwater Harbor
 - SC watershed study from 2000 on MyClearwater.org

The estuary is here





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- Water quality is improving in the estuary
 - Credit the Clean Water Act
- Watershed improvement projects have improved water quality.
 - Beginning with NOT channelizing the Stevenson Creek with concrete (in 1990s)
 - Thank you to Lisa and Mike for helping win that battle.
- The following watershed projects are Best Management Practices (BMPs)
 - *HATS OFF to Clearwater Public Works Dept and Environmental Mgmt Division for the following investments.*

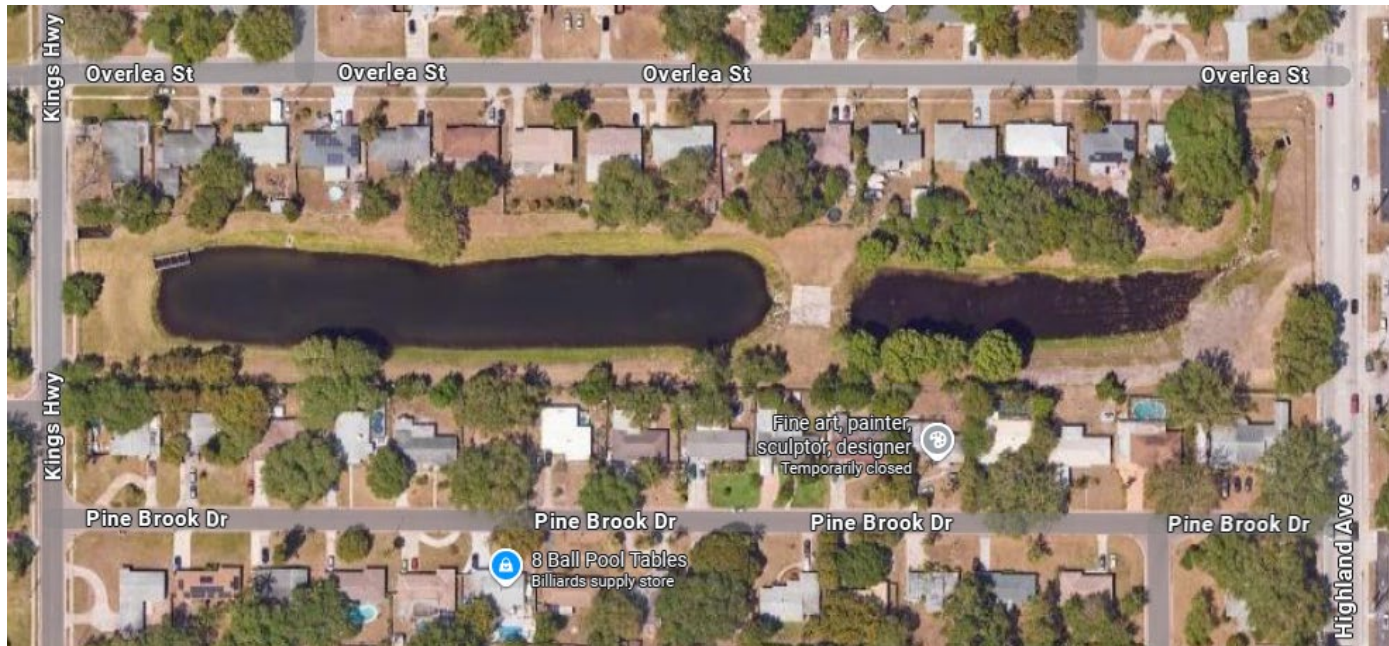


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Watershed improvement project

BMP Project at Overlea / N. Highland - extended detention ponds (1990s)



Google Maps, 2025 aerial view



View from N. Highland St



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Watershed improvement project

BMP Project at Glen Oaks Park - extended retention (2000)



2025 aerial of 5 retention ponds



2025 view of Glen Oaks Park retention pond



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Watershed improvement project

Stevenson Creek estuary – USCOAE dredging project (2013-2014)



2013 Aerial View

Dredge Project

Stevenson Creek Estuary

- Dredged approximately 105,000 CY of sediment
- Eighty years accumulated sediment and pollution
- From uncontrolled urban stormwater runoff



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Watershed improvement project
BMP Project: Bioretention / rain gardens in Crest Lake Park (2022)



View of two rain gardens with educational outreach signs



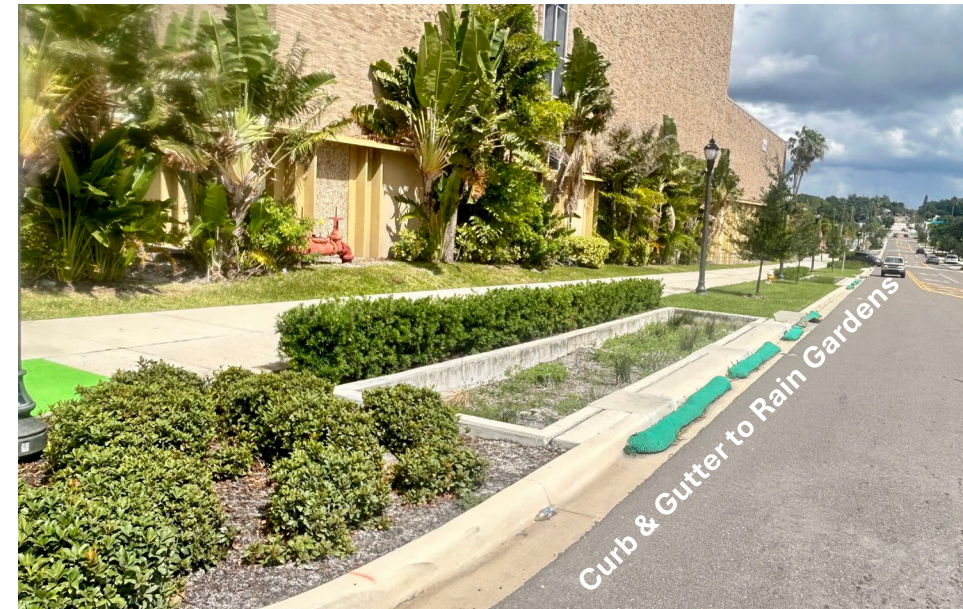
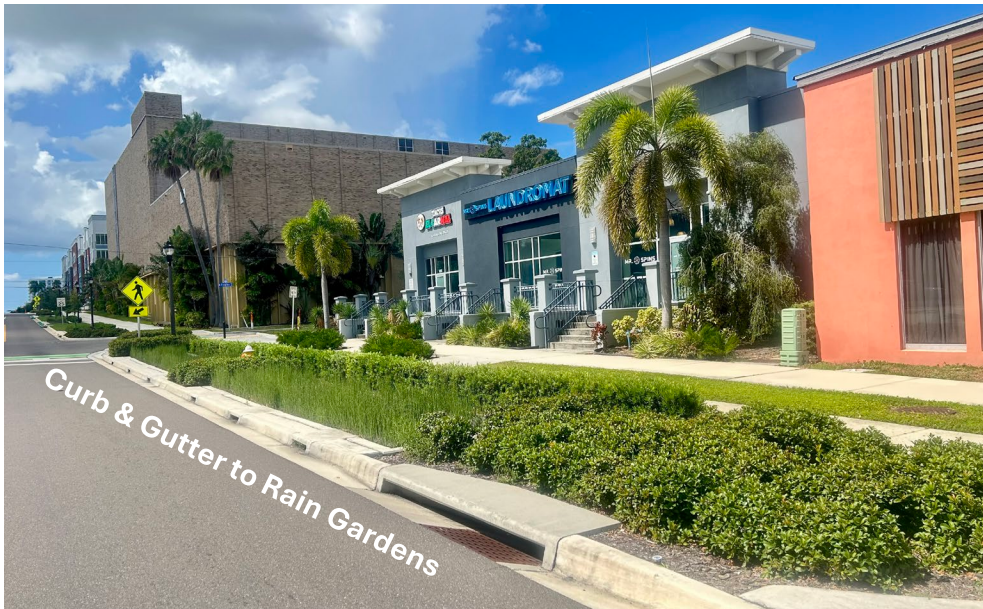
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Watershed improvement project

BMP Project: Streetscapes with Bioretention at Cleveland St & Betty Ln (2023)



Going forward: Many opportunities for BMP stormwater retrofits in Stevenson Creek watershed



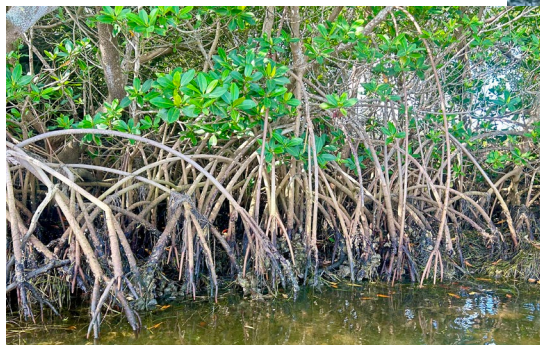
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Watershed improvement project

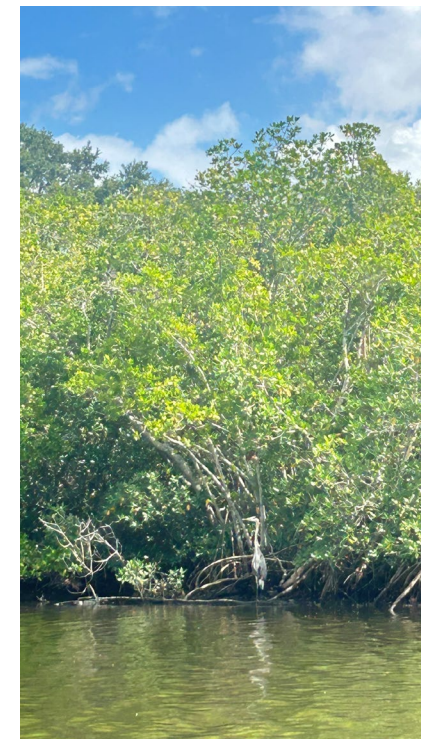
Growing Riparian Buffers for Stevenson Estuary/Aquatic Preserve



Mangrove oyster beds



Healthy clusters of Mangroves in the estuary



Heron fishing

BMP Riparian Buffers: Low cost, beneficial BMP for water quality and aquatic life.



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Watershed improvement project

BMP Project: Riparian Buffers for Stevenson Creek Tributaries



Stream reach with healthy buffer



Stream reach with healthy buffer

Riparian Buffers: Low cost, beneficial BMP for water quality and aquatic life.

Why We Care About Manatees



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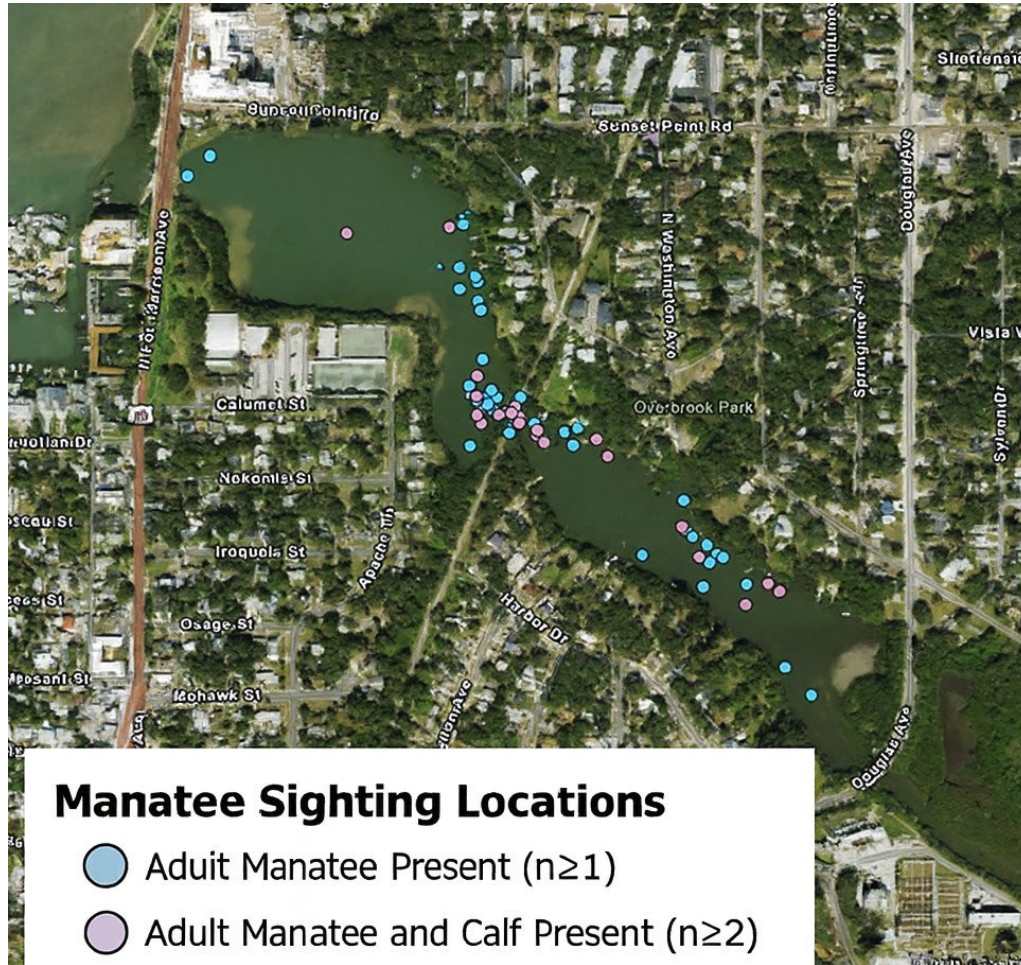
- Manatees are “indicator species” finding quality fresh drinking water from our two freshwater tributaries

- **REPORTED MANATEE SIGHTINGS**
Citizen science data collection in 2025.

Reported to SaveTheManatee.org

- 161 adult Manatees
- 26 calves

(Sightings estimated to be 10% of total)



Why We Care About
Our Aquatic Preserve

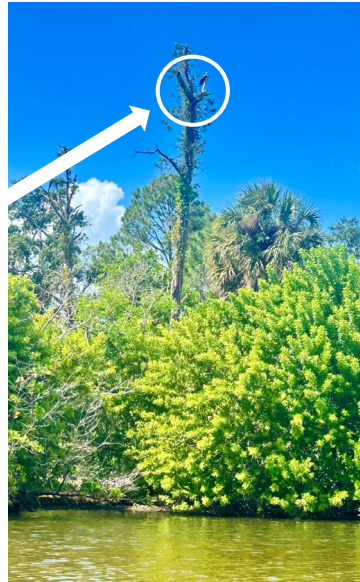


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- Diverse aquatic life returns to the preserve!
- Manatees,
- dolphins,
- bald eagles
- herons
- mullets,
- bass,
- oysters,
- blue crabs... and more!



Video clip on Pinellas Trail Bridge, June, 2025

Why We Care About
Aquatic Preserves



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- Diverse life in our aquatic preserve... Manatees indicate good water quality!



Two videos showing multiple Manatees sighted from Pinellas Trail Bridge, July 2025

Why We Care
About Manatee Safety

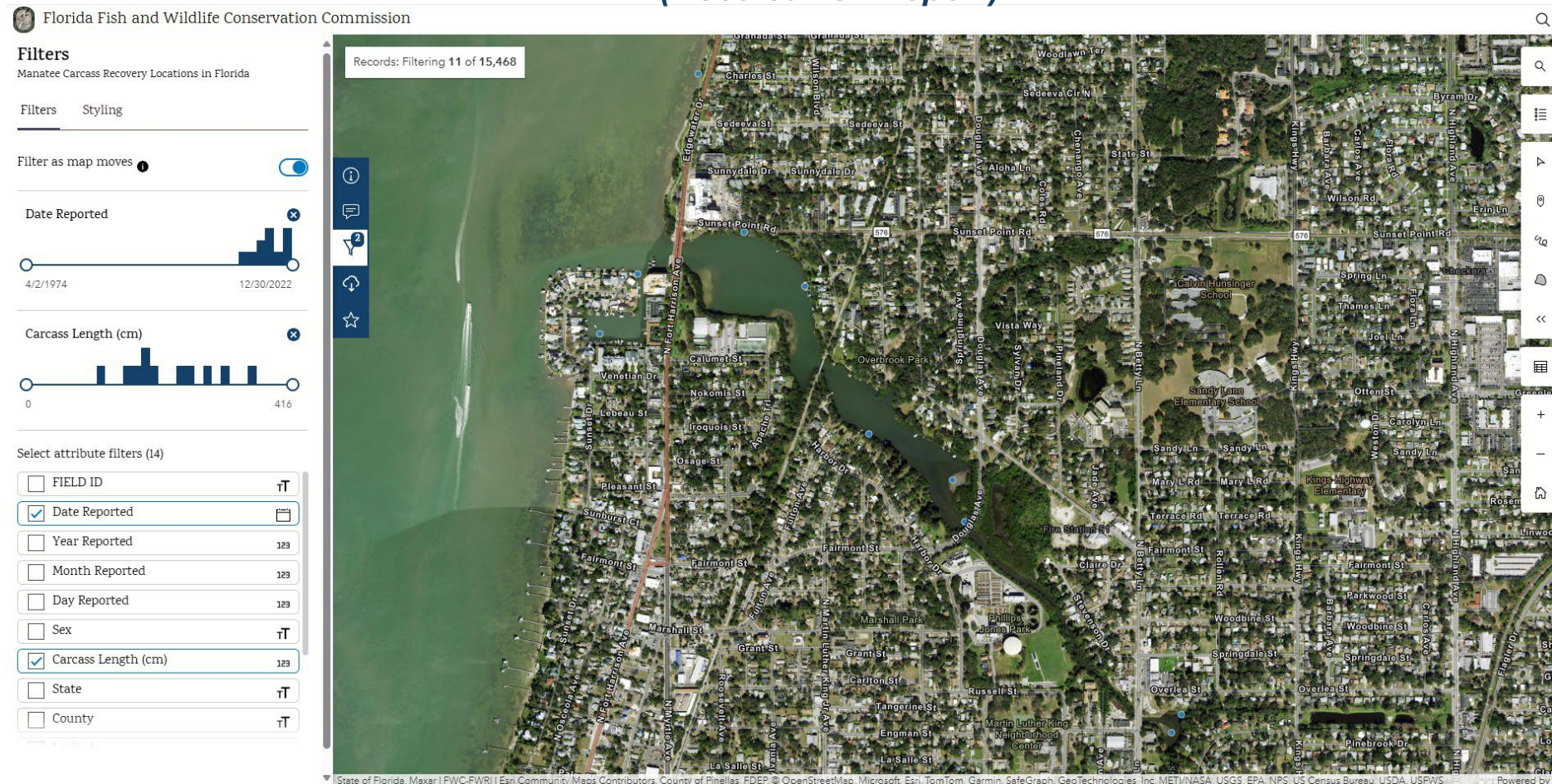


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FWC reported 5 of 9 deaths around the estuary due to “watercraft collisions”, 2016-2022
(Need current report)



Protecting
the Manatees

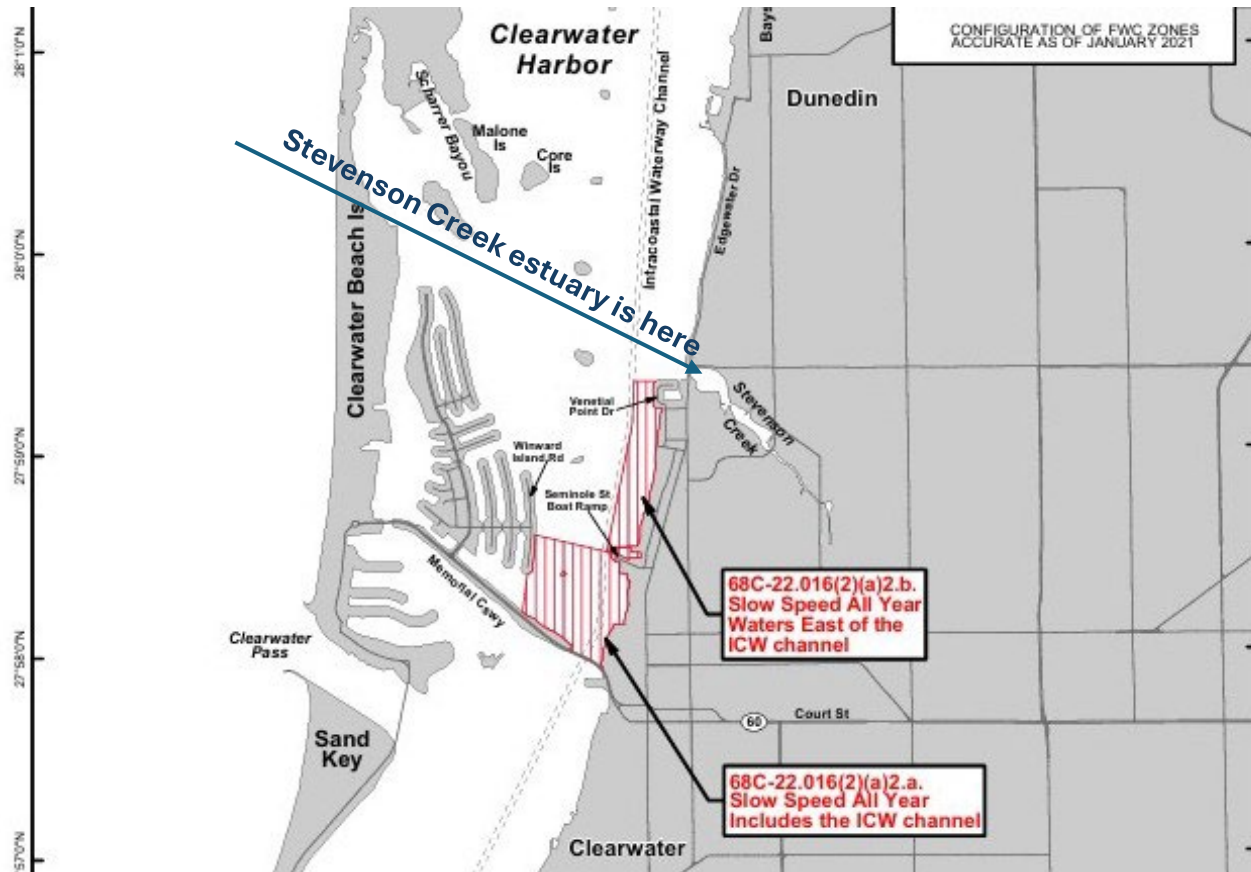


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FWC map of existing Manatee Protection Zone (MPZ) in Clearwater Harbor



FINDING: Lack of signage in existing MPZ

ACTION PLAN GOING FORWARD:

- Working with the City of Clearwater
 - To install more signage in existing MPZ
 - To expand MPZ into the estuary
 - Using Manatee data for justification
- To increase boater awareness of Manatees
- To increase enforcement of “Slow Speed Zones”



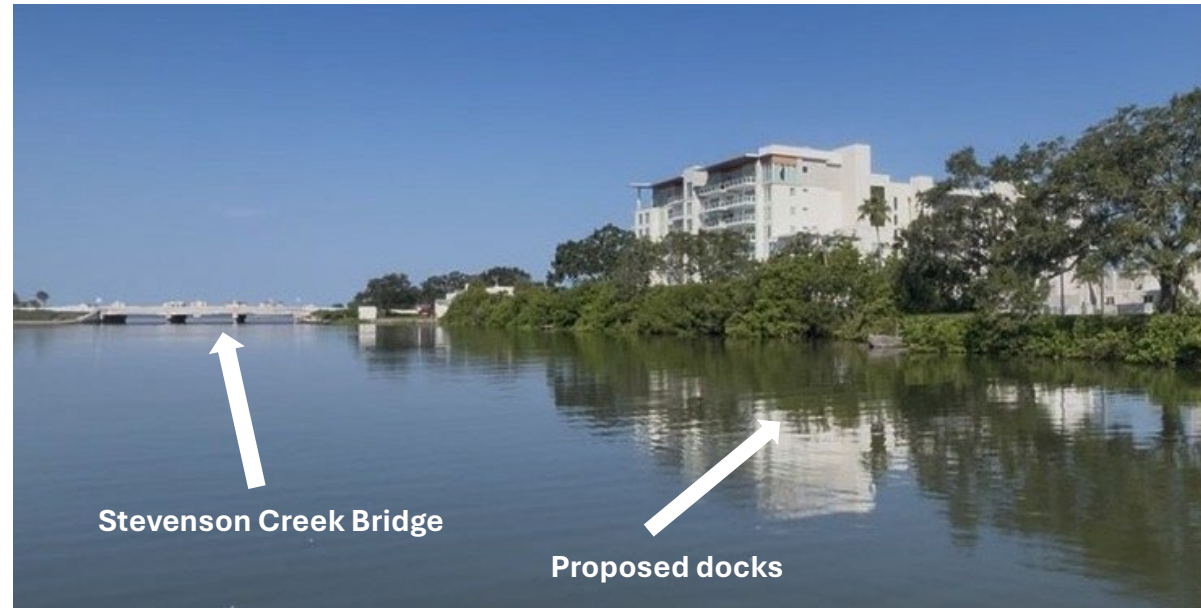
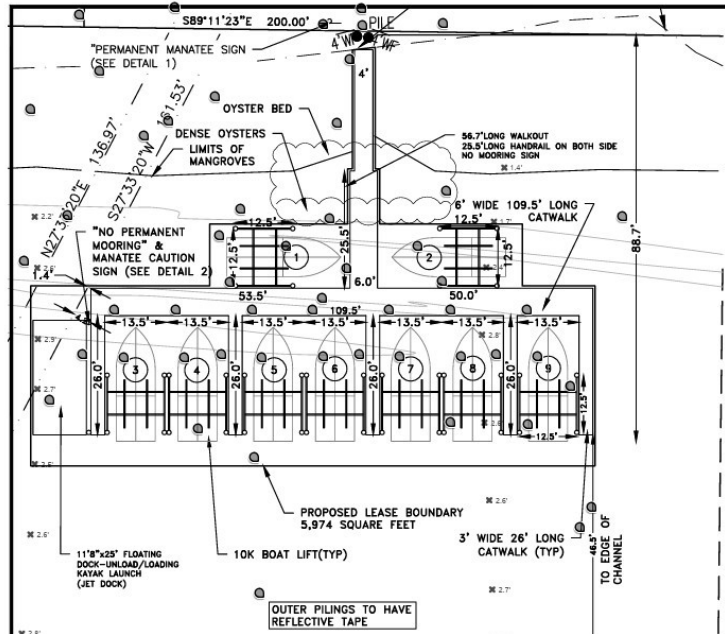
Concerning
issue now!



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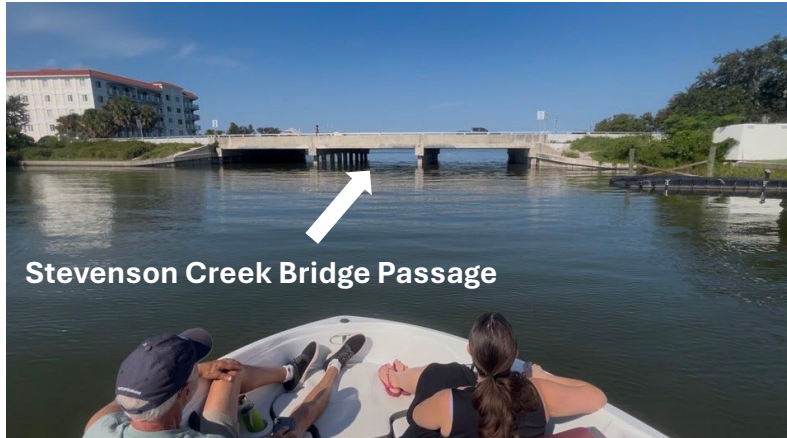
- **Resisting plan to permit nine private docks in the estuary.**
 - **Multi-docks breaks precedent in estuary for single residential docks only.**
 - *Plan does not fit: Like trying to fit a square peg in a round hole.*

Concerning
issue now!



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- **Our assessment**

- **Why nine new docks are NOT in the public's interest and will be public safety hazard**
 - Increased boat traffic in shallow tidal waters near short, narrow bridge.
 - Narrow bridge passage in direct conflict with Manatees swim path.
 - The only swim path for Manatees into the estuary is at the bridge.
 - More prop boats and Manatees sharing the same space.
- **Conclusion: Increased risk of “watercraft collisions” and Manatee deaths.**

In Summary



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- We're home to a very special aquatic preserve
 - The only estuary feeding Clearwater Harbor
- We care about water quality and navigation safety
- We do citizen science and stormwater monitoring
 - Collecting Manatee data for [SaveTheManatees.org](https://www.savethemanatees.org).
 - Working w/ Clearwater to expand MPZ and safety signage
- We're active with "*Keep Pinellas Beautiful*"
 - Marine trash cleanups and trash trap clean outs (like this)
- We also monitor Marshall sewage treatment plant located at estuary's headwaters



What We Need!



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- **Your support!**
 - **Sign up to receive news updates, to donate and to learn more...**
 - **At StevensonCreek.org - Click on “YOU CAN HELP / DONATE”.**
 - **Help us SAVE Manatees and STOP the multi-docks.**
 - **Long-term: Close Marshall sewer plant; open fish hatchery**
- **Thank you!**
 - **The story continues!**
 - **Questions?**



Pinellas Trail Bridge