

SAVe Our River's Grasses

What happened to the underwater grasses?

Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) is vital to the health of the St. Johns River and its ecosystem. SAV improves water quality, provides food and habitat for fish and wildlife, prevents erosion, and more.



ST. JOHNS
RIVERKEEPER®

Unfortunately, we have seen a significant decline in SAV in recent years. More than 90% of the SAV in the Lower St. Johns River was lost after Hurricane Irma in 2017 and numerous stressors have prevented the return of the grasses. Without SAV, the health of our river and its wildlife are at risk.

Campaign to Save the SAV

As a result, St. Johns RIVERKEEPER® (SJRK) launched the SAvE Our River's Grasses Expedition, a multi-year initiative to investigate the demise of the SAV, identify sources of the problem, and implement solutions. Our team will continue with a series of expedition field visits to survey an 80-mile stretch of the river between Doctors Lake and Lake George to measure remaining grass beds, conduct water quality testing, and work with government officials and local residents to search for solutions to restore this vital habitat.

As a supporter of the SAvE Our River's Grasses Expedition, you can help us improve the health of your St. Johns River!



You Can Make a Difference

Support or Sponsor an Expedition Field Visit

This year, St. Johns RIVERKEEPER® will embark on three multi-day expedition field visits in our quest to restore the grasses. Each of our SAvE Our River's Grasses field visits costs up to \$15,000 for staffing, water quality testing, lodging, fuel, equipment, and supplies.

Support or Sponsor an SAV Enclosure

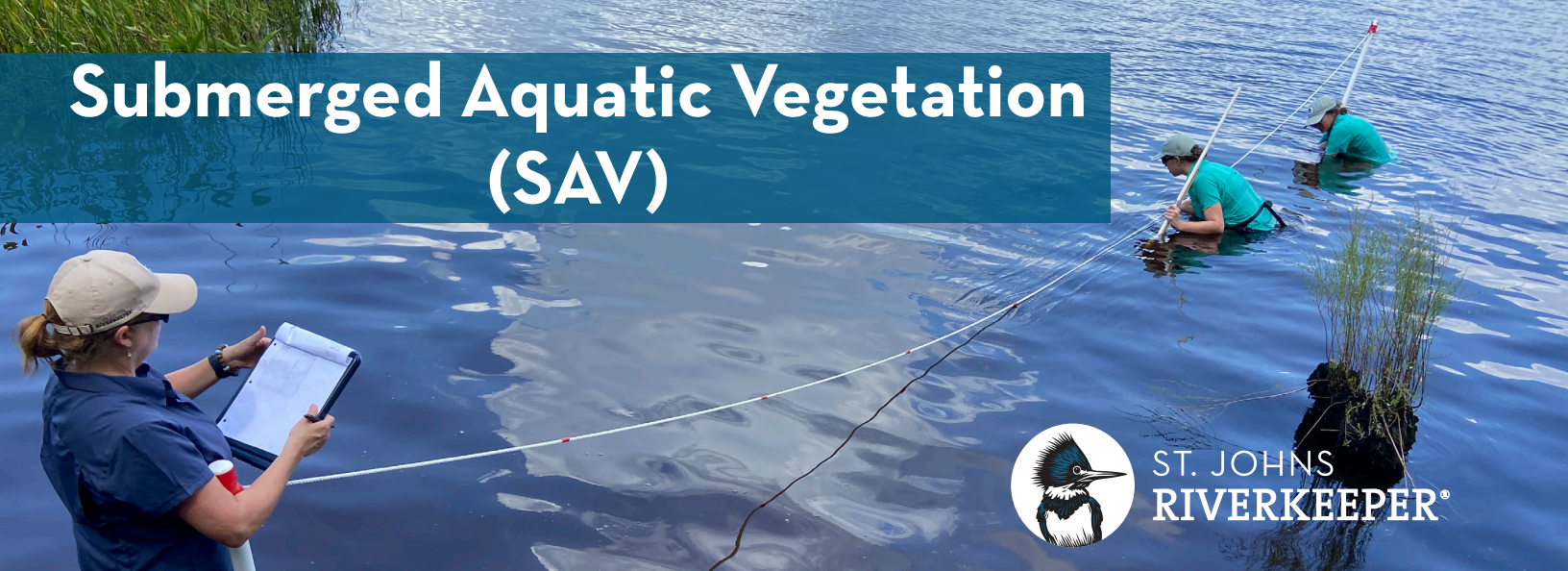
We are currently working with homeowners, state agencies, and local bass anglers to install small enclosures along the expedition routes. The temporary fences reduce grazing pressure from wildlife on the SAV so healthy grass beds can be reestablished. This strategy does not harm wildlife and has proven to facilitate the regrowth of grasses.

Please consider a gift to help support our SAV research and advocacy efforts so we can continue this vital work to protect some of the most threatened habitat in our watershed. StJohnsRiverkeeper.org/SAV

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, CONTACT MEREDITH JESPERSEN AT MEREDITH@STJOHNSRIVERKEEPER.ORG.



Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)



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What is SAV and Why Does it Matter?

Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) is the foundation of our river's health - providing biofiltration, habitat & food for both commercial & recreational aquatic species, erosion protection, oxygenation of the water column, carbon sequestration, and more. Unfortunately, pollution problems and mounting threats to the river's health have resulted in the near demise of the SAV, much to the alarm of scientists, anglers, and river enthusiasts. **Scientists conclude more than 90% of SAV in the lower St. Johns alone was completely decimated following Hurricane Irma and has yet to fully recover.**



Our Efforts

In 2023, St. Johns RIVERKEEPER® launched *SAVE Our River's Grasses*, a multi-year quest seeking answers and solutions to the disappearing SAV of the St. Johns. During each week-long field visit, our team surveys an 80-mile stretch of the river between Doctors Lake and Lake George. During this time, we search for remaining grass beds, take measurements, conduct water quality testing, and seek solutions to restore this vital habitat. **We will return to the field annually during the SAV growing season (March to October) through 2027 to identify and implement solutions to restore our river's SAV.**



VISIT STJOHNSRIVERKEEPER.ORG/SAV TO LEARN ABOUT
SAVE OUR RIVER'S GRASSES AND HOW YOU CAN HELP.

