

## Dona/Roberts Bay Condition Report for 2011

**CAUTION** Chl-a N P

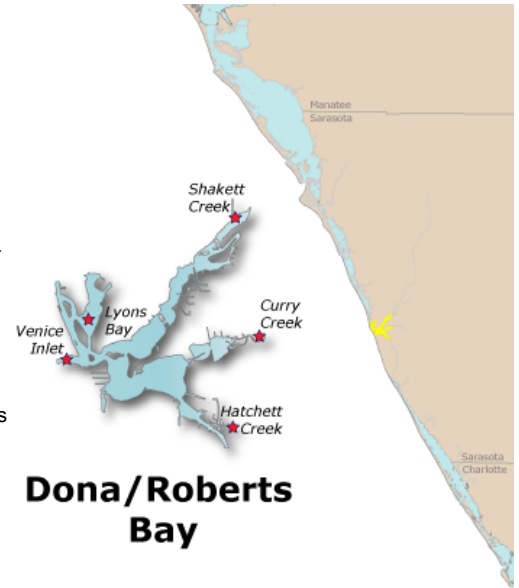
1 out of 3 indicators were rated as PASS.  
[Learn more about how this report is created](#)

### Summary:

The overall health of Dona/Roberts Bay has remained in fair condition. Two water quality indicators, chlorophyll a and nitrogen, were scored as caution (levels above threshold). However, the biotic indicator, seagrass, has increased in coverage and was now above the target acreage.

**Water quality:** The mean for chlorophyll a was calculated as an arithmetic mean and the means for nitrogen and phosphorus were calculated as geometric means (Numeric Nutrient Criteria Recommendations). Only one water quality indicator, phosphorus, was rated as pass (below the threshold) and remained in excellent condition. The mean phosphorus level (74.7ug/l) has decreased since 2010 and remains below the target (170.0ug/l) and threshold (180.0ug/l) levels. The mean nitrogen and mean chlorophyll a levels were both scored as caution due to levels exceeding the threshold level (nitrogen threshold level = 420.0ug/l, chlorophyll a threshold level = 4.9ug/l). The mean nitrogen level was calculated as 395.5ug/l and the mean chlorophyll a level was calculated as 5.7ug/l).

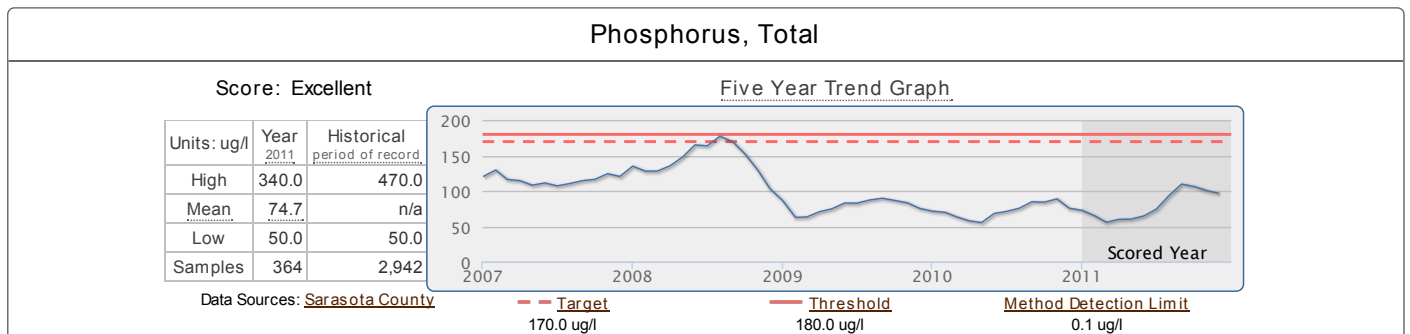
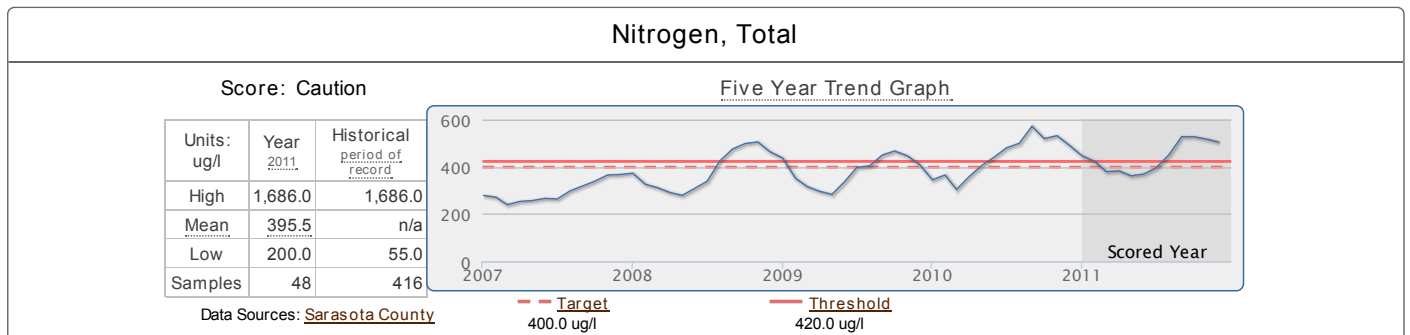
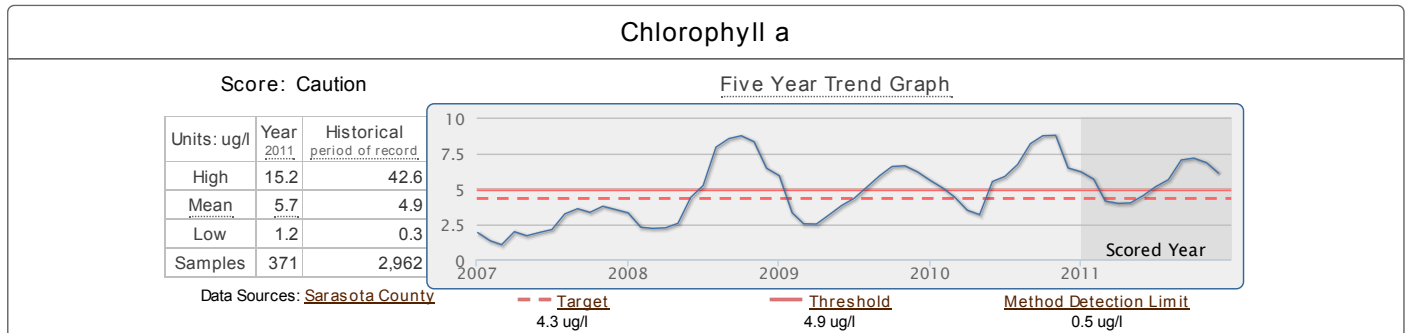
**Biotic Indicator:** The biotic indicator, seagrass, was in good condition with a continued increase in acreage since 1988. In 2010 the total acreage was 138, a 194% increase since 1988.



## Dona/Roberts Bay

### Water Chemistry Ratings

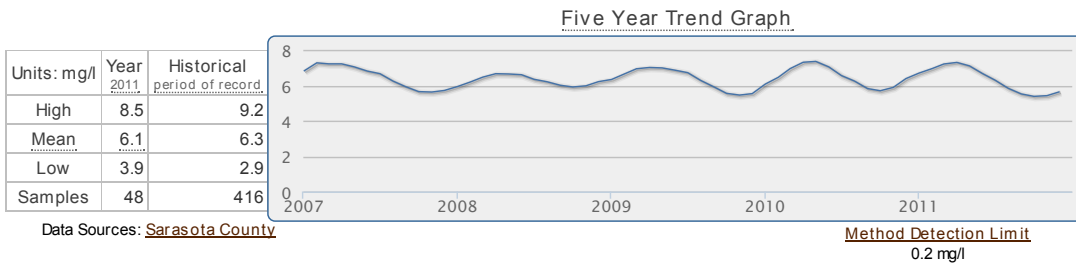
Total nitrogen, total phosphorus, and chlorophyll a levels are monitored carefully by water resource managers and used by regulatory authorities to determine whether a bay meets the water quality standards mandated by the Clean Water Act. The trend graphs for these indicators are shown below, along with their target and threshold values. A target value is a desirable goal to be attained, while a threshold is an undesirable level which is to be avoided. [Learn More about these ratings and how they are calculated »](#)



## Other Measures of Bay Health

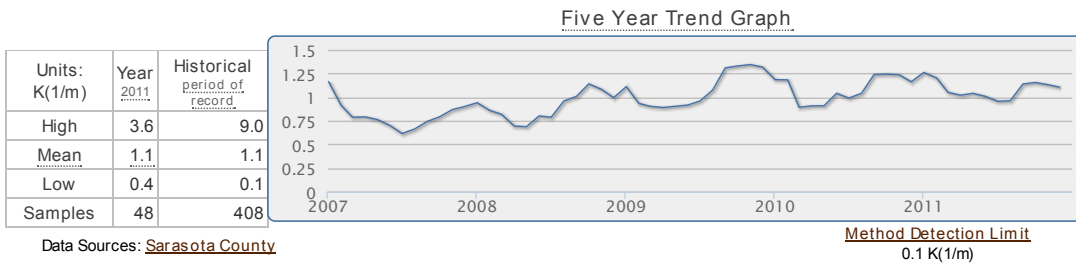
In addition to nutrient levels and chlorophyll concentration, dissolved oxygen levels, and water clarity are also objective indicators of bay health. These have complex interactive cycles which are affected by rainfall, temperature, and tidal action, as well as other factors. High nutrient levels (nitrogen and phosphorus) can stimulate excessive growth of marine algae (indicated by chlorophyll a level), resulting in reduced water clarity (and increased light attenuation) and depleted oxygen levels. Both plants and animals in a bay need oxygen to survive, and the seagrasses which provide food and cover for bay creatures need light for photosynthesis.

### Dissolved Oxygen



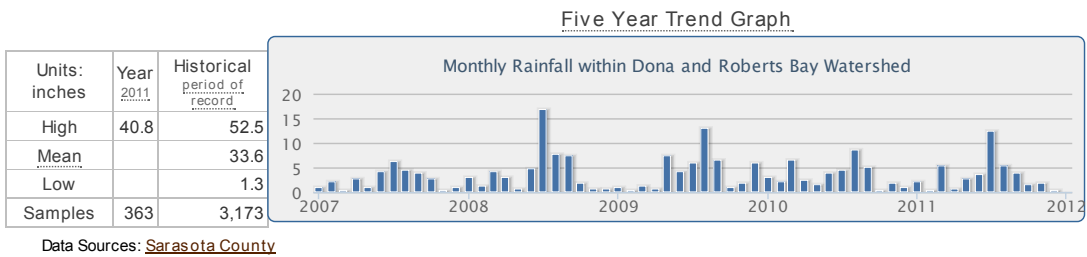
Data Sources: [Sarasota County](#)

### Light Attenuation

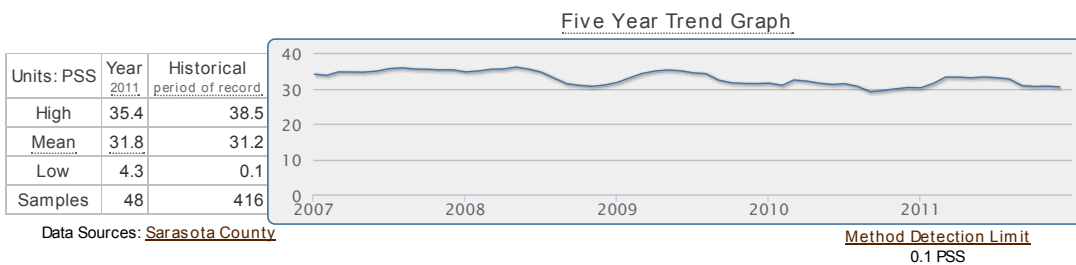


Data Sources: [Sarasota County](#)

### Rainfall

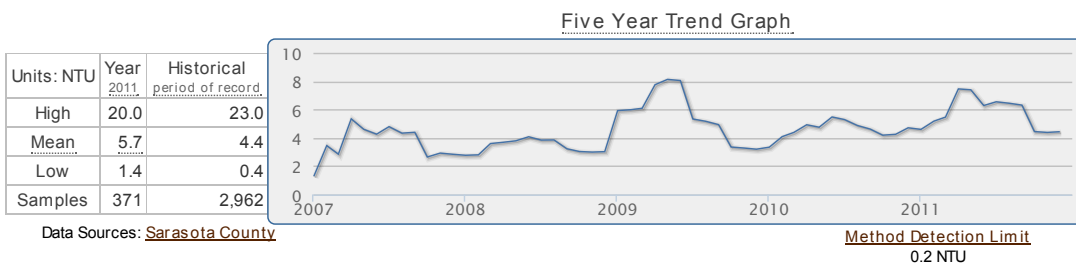


### Salinity



Data Sources: [Sarasota County](#)

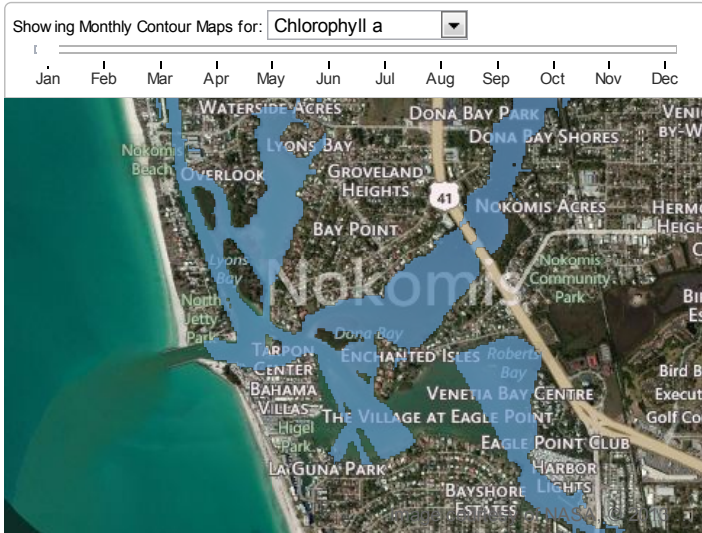
### Turbidity



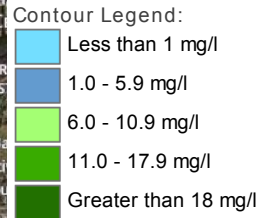
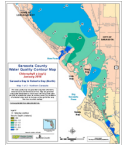
Data Sources: [Sarasota County](#)

## Bay Contour Maps

Contour mapping is one of the best ways to visualize spatial differences in coastal water quality. The interactive map shown below presents monthly data for one selected water quality indicator atop an aerial view of the bay. Choose a different water quality parameter from the list at the top to change the map. [Learn More about Water Quality Contour Mapping »](#)

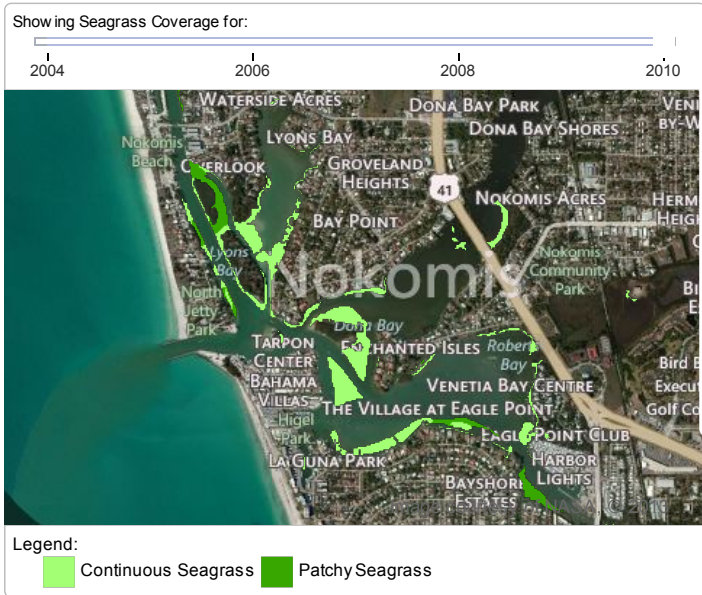


Visit the [Water Quality Contour Mapping Tool](#) to view and compare monthly water quality contour maps for ten different water quality indicators. In addition, you can generate your own custom maps.

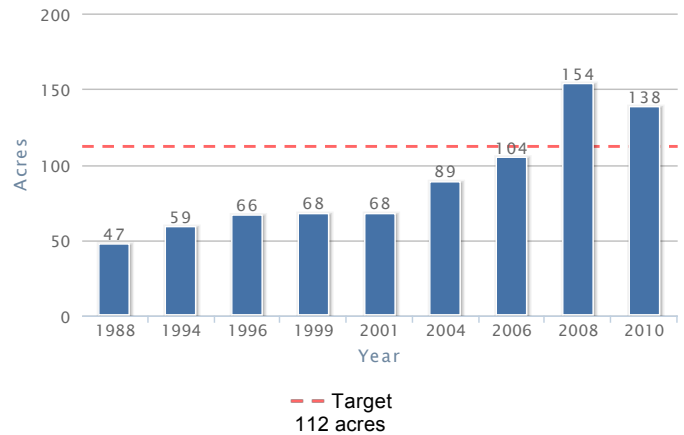


## Seagrasses

Among the most important habitats in Florida's estuarine environments, seagrass beds are indispensable for the role they play in cycling nutrients, supplying food for wildlife, stabilizing sediments, and providing habitat for juvenile and adult finfish and shellfish. Use the interactive map below to observe the size, density and location of seagrass beds from year to year. The graph shows how the total amount of seagrass in the bay has changed over time. [Learn More about Seagrasses »](#)



Seagrass Acreage Variation within Dona/Roberts Bay



## Land Use / Land Cover

Dona/Roberts Bay is located within the Dona and Roberts Bay Watershed. [View details about the Dona and Roberts Bay Watershed »](#)

Land use within a bay's watershed has a major effect on its water quality. In general, less development means better water quality. Land Cover/Land Use classifications categorize land in terms of its observed physical surface characteristics (upland or wetland, e.g.), and also reflect the types of activity that are taking place on it (agriculture, urban/built-up, utilities, etc.). Florida uses as its standard a set of statewide classifications which were developed by the Florida Department of Transportation. [Learn More about Land Use and Land Cover »](#)

