

# SAVE FLORIDA'S AQUATIC PRESERVES



The Florida Legislature has released plans to cut essential funding that supports protection and conservation of Florida's Aquatic Preserves. This program has already been cut 25% by the Legislature over the last three years. **The current proposed cut of over \$1 million in state funds is an additional 15% reduction that will close six Aquatic Preserve field offices, and eliminate 23 staff** currently involved in restoration, education, research, and stewardship of over 2 million acres within the Aquatic Preserves.

## **What you can do to help:**

**Contact your local state legislators in the Senate and House via email and letter NOW** and urge them to support the Governor's recommendation for Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA). To locate your legislators, go to: [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov) and [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov). In your email/letter, please incorporate the following points about CAMA and Aquatic Preserves:

- ✓ **CAMA is responsible for managing over 4 million acres of submerged lands within 41 Aquatic Preserves, three National Estuarine Research Reserves, and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary** representing Florida's most pristine coastal and marine resources.
- ✓ **Florida's Aquatic Preserves protect sea grass beds, coral reefs, mangrove and marshes that serve as powerful economic engines** driving local businesses such as tourism, sport fishing, boating, and commercial seafood industries that generate billions of dollars each year.
- ✓ **CAMA is a non-regulatory program that uses science and education to build successful collaborative partnerships** that effectively engage public and private sectors in coastal stewardship.