

# Southwest Florida Water Management District Rock Creek Ponds Ecosystem Restoration

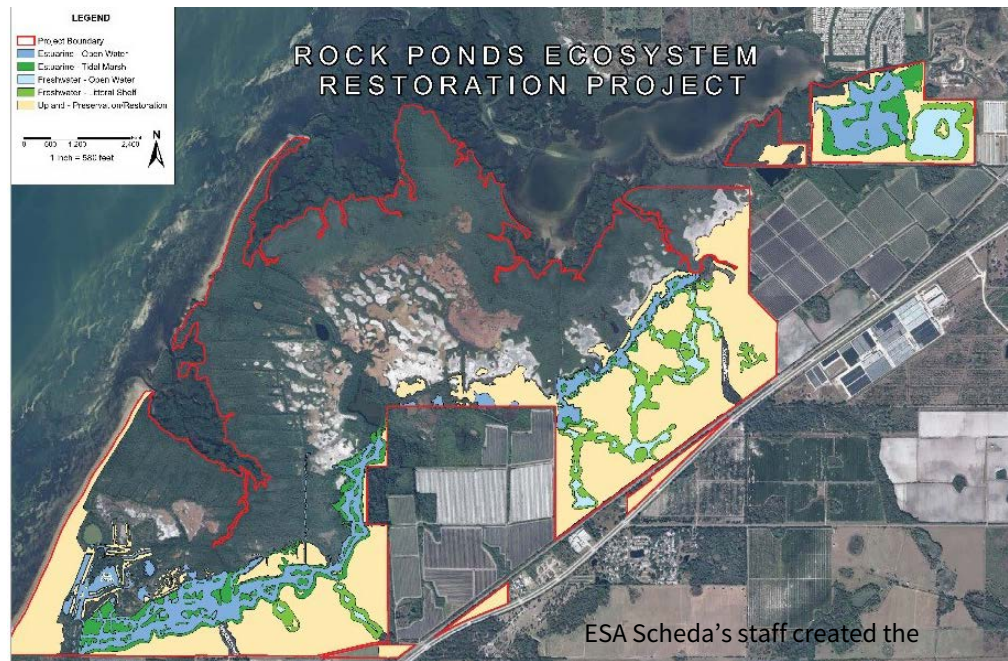
## Location

Hillsborough  
County, Florida

## Awards

2014 Stewards of  
Heritage Award,  
Florida  
Archaeological  
Council

2017, Future of  
the Region Award  
1st Place, Tampa  
Bay Regional  
Planning Council



ESA Scheda's staff created the

The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and Hillsborough County purchased the 2,572-acre Rock Creek Pond properties because of their poor ecological condition and the unique potential for habitat enhancement, restoration and preservation. This effort represents the SWFWMD Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program's largest habitat restoration effort for the region. This project unites the award-winning Cockroach Bay restoration project (also designed by ESA Scheda restoration scientists) with the habitat restoration at Terra Ceia Preserve to the south. ESA Scheda scientists worked closely with the project partners (SWFWMD and Hillsborough County) to formulate the overall project conceptual design.

construction plans and secured the regulatory permits. ESA Scheda's staff produced the Technical Specifications and Bid Documents so this ambitious project could be successfully put out to bid. The resulting design includes landform changes to over 980 acres of fallow farm fields and historic borrow pits. ESA Scheda provided daily construction inspection and directed field adjustments to maximize the project's future ecological benefits. Over one million wetland plants were installed; ESA Scheda's CEI staff inspected all plant material and oversaw plant installation process. Twenty volunteer plantings were coordinated to augment the initial planting effort.