



Escambia County

Summary of Environmental Issues

Summary of Escambia County Environmental Issues

- Water Quality
- Loss of Habitat and Function
- Sea Level Rise
- Air Quality

Water Quality

- Point Sources
 - Industry, Septic Tanks, WWTPs
 - nutrients, pathogens, toxic organics (dioxins, PAHs, VOCs), pharmaceuticals
- Nonpoint Sources
 - Stormwater, Agriculture
 - nutrients, pathogens, toxic metals, pesticides, toxins, sediment/erosion, pharmaceuticals
 - increased development, increased impervious surface
 - old infrastructure – no stormwater treatment
 - increased use of fertilizers, pesticides, antibiotics, and hormones to increase yield per acre
 - feed lots – increased concentration of pollutants/wastes
 - wetland and riparian vegetated buffers

Loss of Habitat and Function

- Loss of Suitable Habitat – needed for nesting, reproduction, nursery areas, foraging for food, escape from predators, corridors/connectivity
- Loss of Biodiversity – ecosystem stability, sustainability
- Lack of Maintenance – prescribed burning, monitoring, invasive species removal, overharvesting
- Change in climate – loss/change of habitat, effects on plant and animal behavior and reproduction
- Sea level rise – loss/change of habitat, loss of marshes, floodplain wetlands, seagrasses

Sea Level Rise



- Pensacola past 100 years: +8.4 inches (NOAA)
 - projection for next 50 years: +12 inches (NOAA)
- Projected loss of 650 acres of land in Escambia County
 - shoreline inundation of 20 feet
- Water quality impacts – inundated/overflowing septic tanks, lift stations, broken sewer lines, human health
 - groundwater level rise – stormwater ponds overflow or fail
- Habitat impacts – loss/change of habitat
 - loss of emergent marshes, seagrasses, floodplain wetlands
- Flooding – infrastructure damage, economic impacts

Air Quality

- Health effects
 - Humans - increased medical costs (asthma, emphysema)
 - Plants and animals – decreased photosynthesis, disease
- Atmospheric Deposition – affects water quality
 - Mercury – fish tissue, health advisories
 - Nitrogen – algae blooms, red tides, low DO, fish kills (eutrophication)
- Ground Level Ozone - levels close to non-attainment
 - Loss of federal funding from FDOT
 - Special gasoline blend – more expensive
 - Vapor-trapping nozzles on gas pumps
 - High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes