

St. Andrew Bay RMA

# St. Andrew Bay Water Quality Report

St. Andrew Bay Resource Management Association, Inc.

## RMA compares water quality in St. Andrew Bay over past 20 years

### St. Andrew BayWatch A Quick Look:

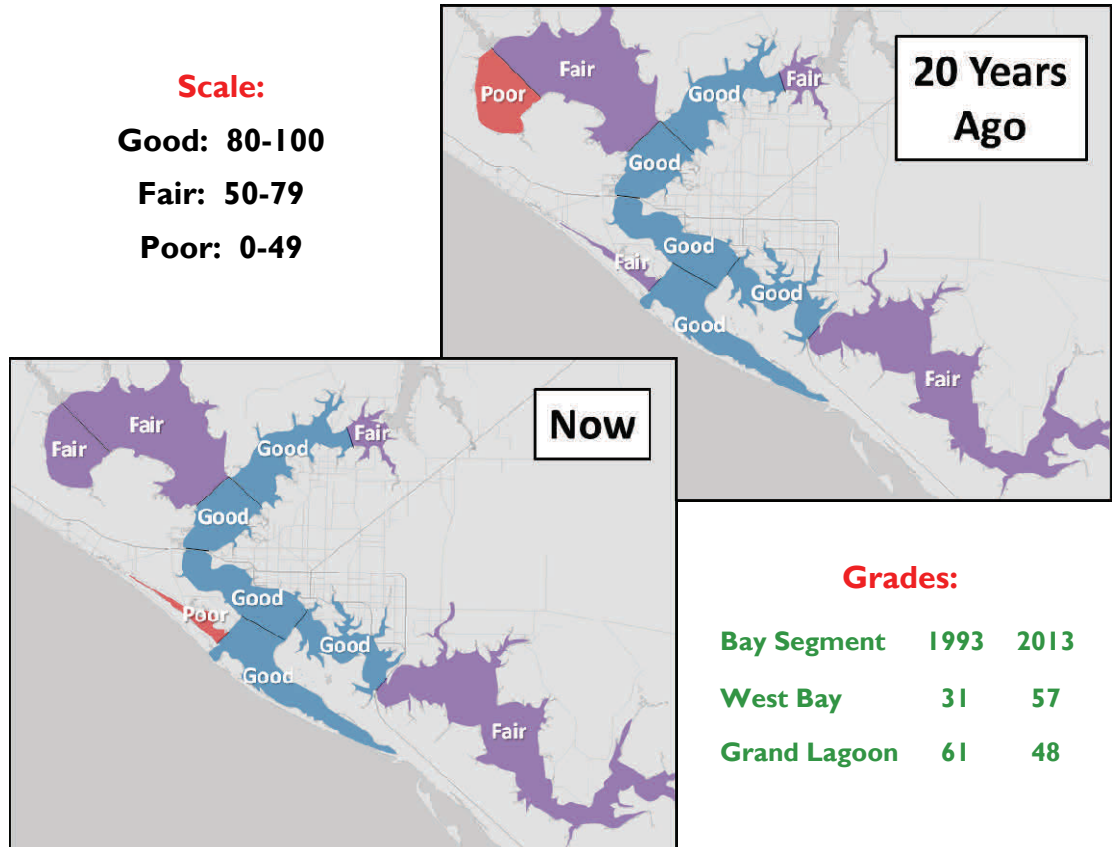
- 84 stations sampled monthly
- 50 community volunteers
- 24 years of water quality data for St. Andrew Bay
- Partners:
  - \* FDEP
  - \* UF's Lakewatch
  - \* NFWMD
  - \* NFWF
- Due to high quality, data are used by FDEP and other agencies to track conditions and set pollutant limits in our bay
- Grades based on water clarity and levels of nutrients and chlorophyll ([www.sabrma.org](http://www.sabrma.org) for details)

### Scale:

Good: 80-100

Fair: 50-79

Poor: 0-49



Data for 1991-1993 were compared to data for 2011-2013

### Water Quality Results:

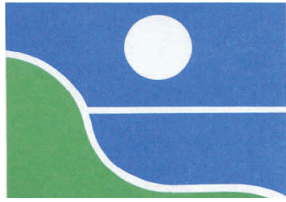
- West Bay improved because treated wastewater was removed 2011
- Grand Lagoon deteriorated due to continued runoff of stormwater

### Why did Grand Lagoon water quality decrease over the past 20 years?

- Increased stormwater runoff due to more development
- Septic tank drainfields empty into the lagoon during rain events
- More seawalls so fewer native plants to remove pollutants

We need to construct and restore wetlands to better manage stormwater!

**RMA's goal: "Good" water quality for the entire bay! Protect our bay! Join RMA!**



St. Andrew Bay RMA

**JOIN RMA! PROTECT  
ST. ANDREW BAY!**

**St. Andrew Bay RMA  
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Panama City, FL 32406**

If you want to contact us:

Call: 850-763-4303

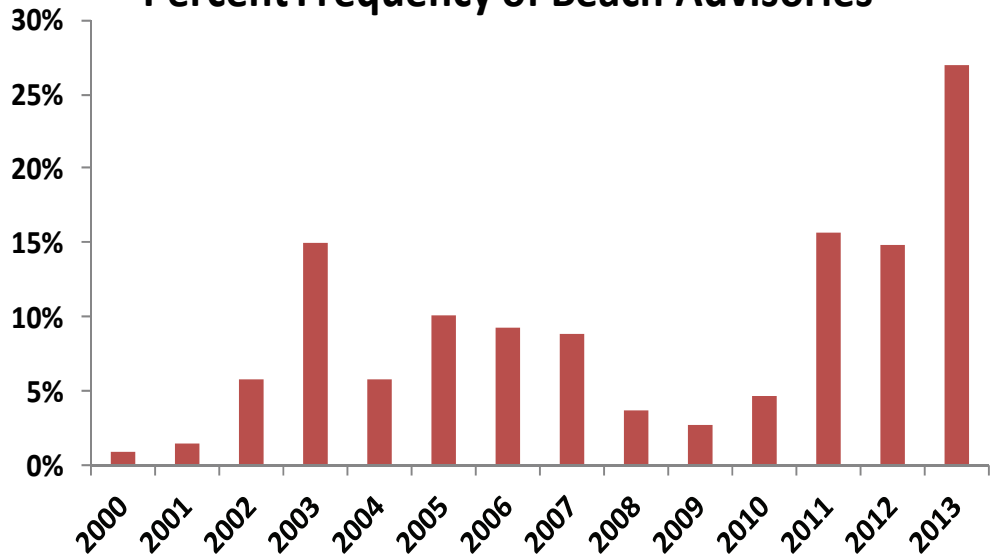
Email: [sabrma@sabrma.org](mailto:sabrma@sabrma.org)

Website: [www.sabrma.org](http://www.sabrma.org)



## Water quality and your health

Percent Frequency of Beach Advisories



The Healthy Beaches Program operated by the Florida Department of Health in Bay County collects water samples at 10 swimming beaches along our coastline. The samples are tested for fecal bacteria which live inside the intestines of humans, farm animals, and birds.

If fecal bacteria levels are too high, the Department of Health places a notice in the News Herald. These beach advisories mean that the fecal bacteria present may cause human illness.

**Why so many advisories in 2013? We had a very wet summer. Therefore there is a relationship between rain events and beach advisories, so stormwater runoff is an issue for Bay County.**

Too many homes on septic tanks could be contributing to this problem. Ecologically speaking, coastal areas like Bay County should not allow so many septic tanks as the water table is too shallow.

This data can be found at the FDOH website: [www.floridahealth.gov/healthy-environments/beach-water-quality/index.html](http://www.floridahealth.gov/healthy-environments/beach-water-quality/index.html). Scroll down to find Bay County.

**Remember, poor water quality in our bay reduces the amount of seafood our bay can produce. We want better water quality in St. Andrew Bay to support our economy. Good water quality also improves our quality of life and the diversity of marine life in our coastal waters.**

The St. Andrew BayWatch Program of RMA has been collecting water quality data in St. Andrew Bay for 24 years. RMA is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization that relies on community volunteers for its Baywatch, Turtlewatch, Seagrass, Scallop and Shoreline Programs.

RMA's main goal is to protect the resources in St. Andrew Bay. For more information or to join RMA, go to [www.sabrma.org](http://www.sabrma.org). RMA relies on membership dues and grant monies to fund its programs. Memberships start at \$20/year/individual, so join RMA and help protect our bay!