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Implementation of RSM principles for Ecosystem Restoration in Tampa Bay, FL

RSM is a systems-based approach to integrating the management of littoral, estuarine, and riverine sediments to achieve balanced and sustainable solutions to sediment-related needs. This study developed a suite of RSM strategies for the beneficial use of dredged materials in Tampa Bay, Florida. Tampa Bay has a history of RSM accomplishments, including the beneficial use of dredged material from Federal navigation channels for shore protection, to restore seagrass habitat, and to create bird nesting habitat. However, many RSM opportunities are challenged by short turn-around times associated with funding timelines that are typical of maintenance dredging projects. This effort was aimed at providing options for ecosystem restoration using a variety of dredged material types and obtained throughout the Tampa Bay region that could be implementable with approximately six months' lead time. The strategies were developed during a stakeholder-driven process undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Jacksonville District (SAJ) in collaboration with the USACE National RSM Program from January 2016 to February 2017. An overview of the study area, descriptions of the Federal projects in the study area and past RSM activities associated with them, and a discussion of the strategies outlined in the report will be discussed.

Bio: Aubree Hershoin is an ecologist with eight years of experience in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District. She works on Civil Works navigation and shore protection projects, conducting environmental analyses pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and coordinating with other Federal and state agencies. Aubree earned a B.A. in Environmental Policy from Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 2001, an M.S. in Ecology from the University of Florida in 2004, and a Ph.D. in Ecology from the University of Florida in 2009.