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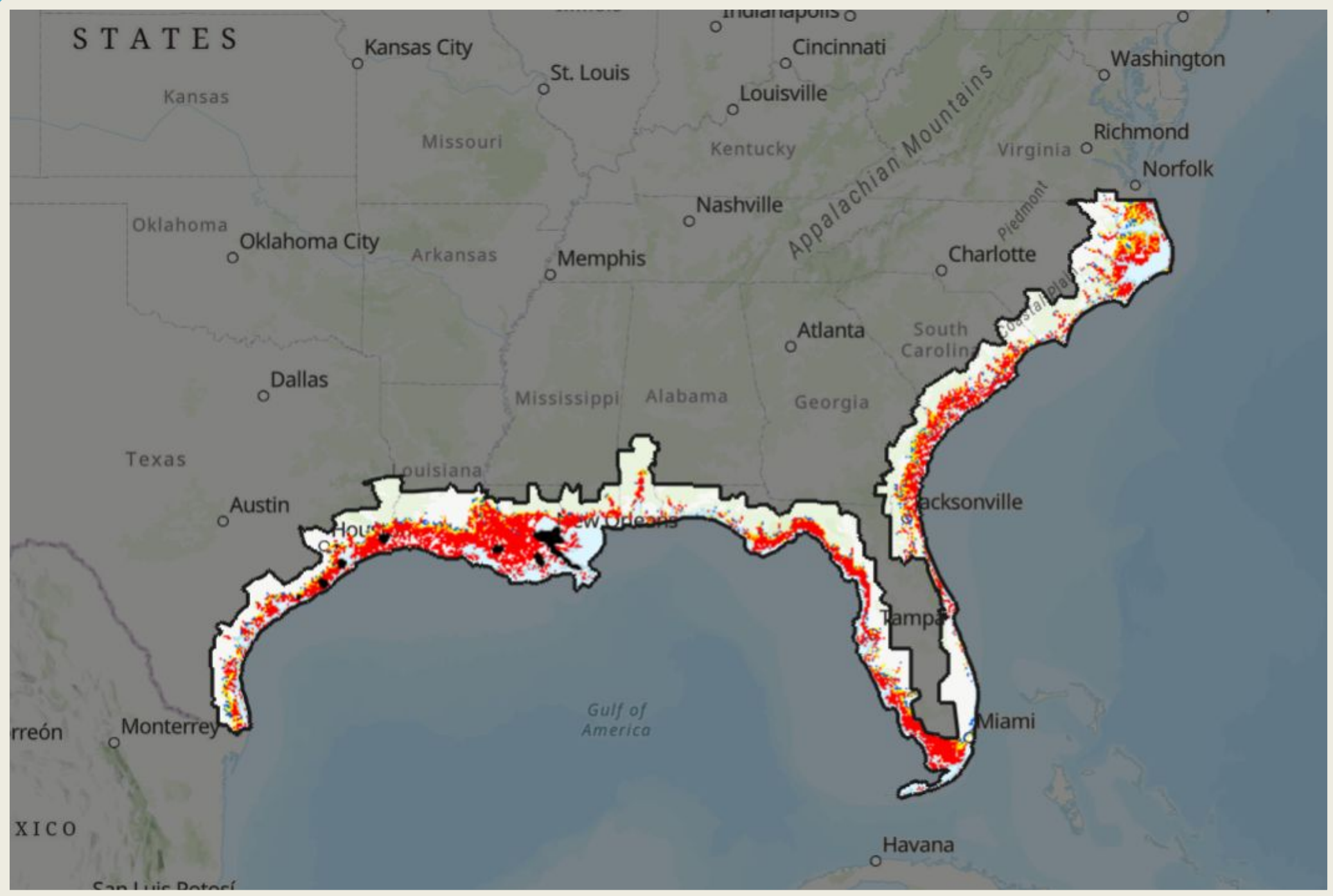
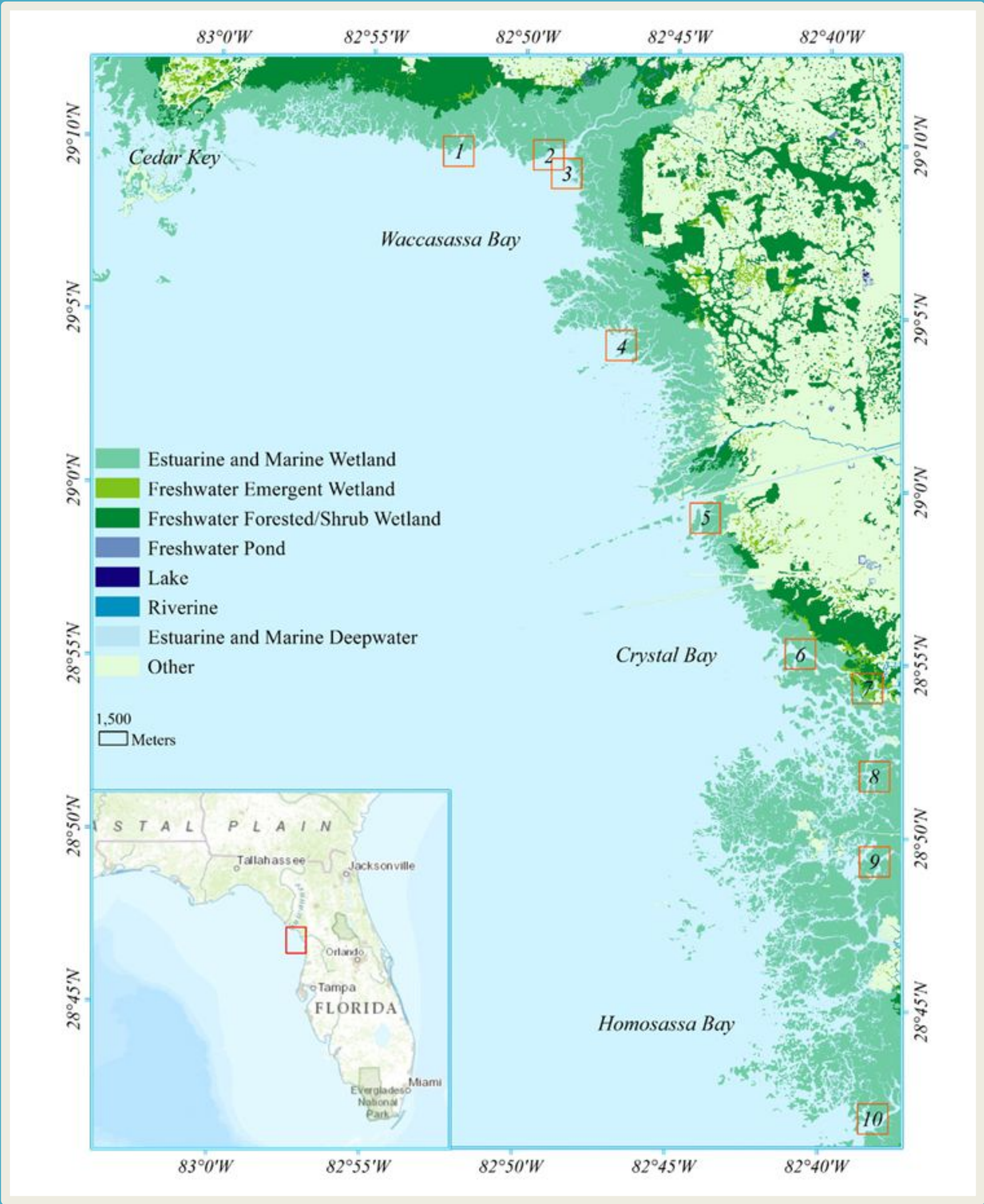
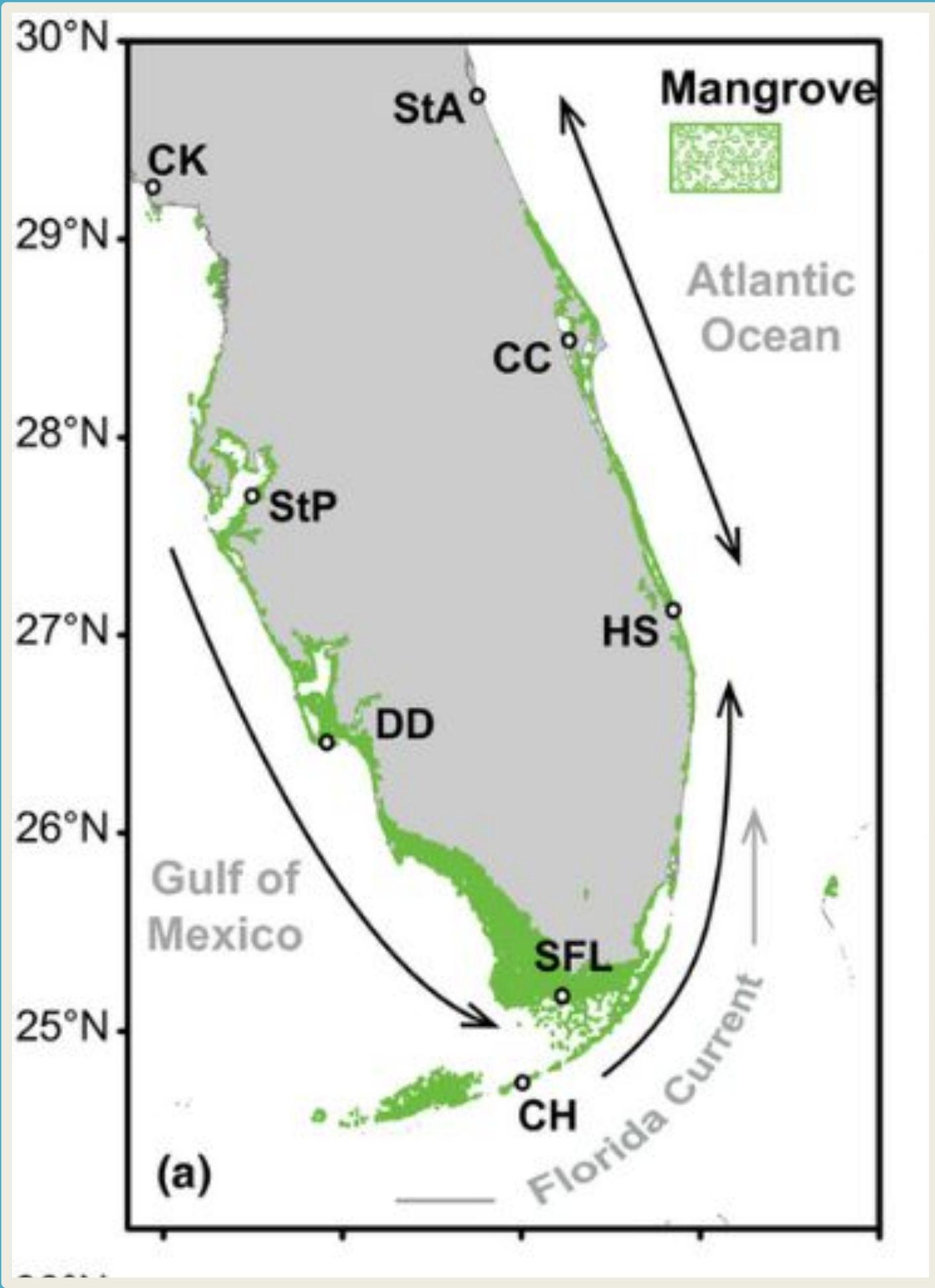
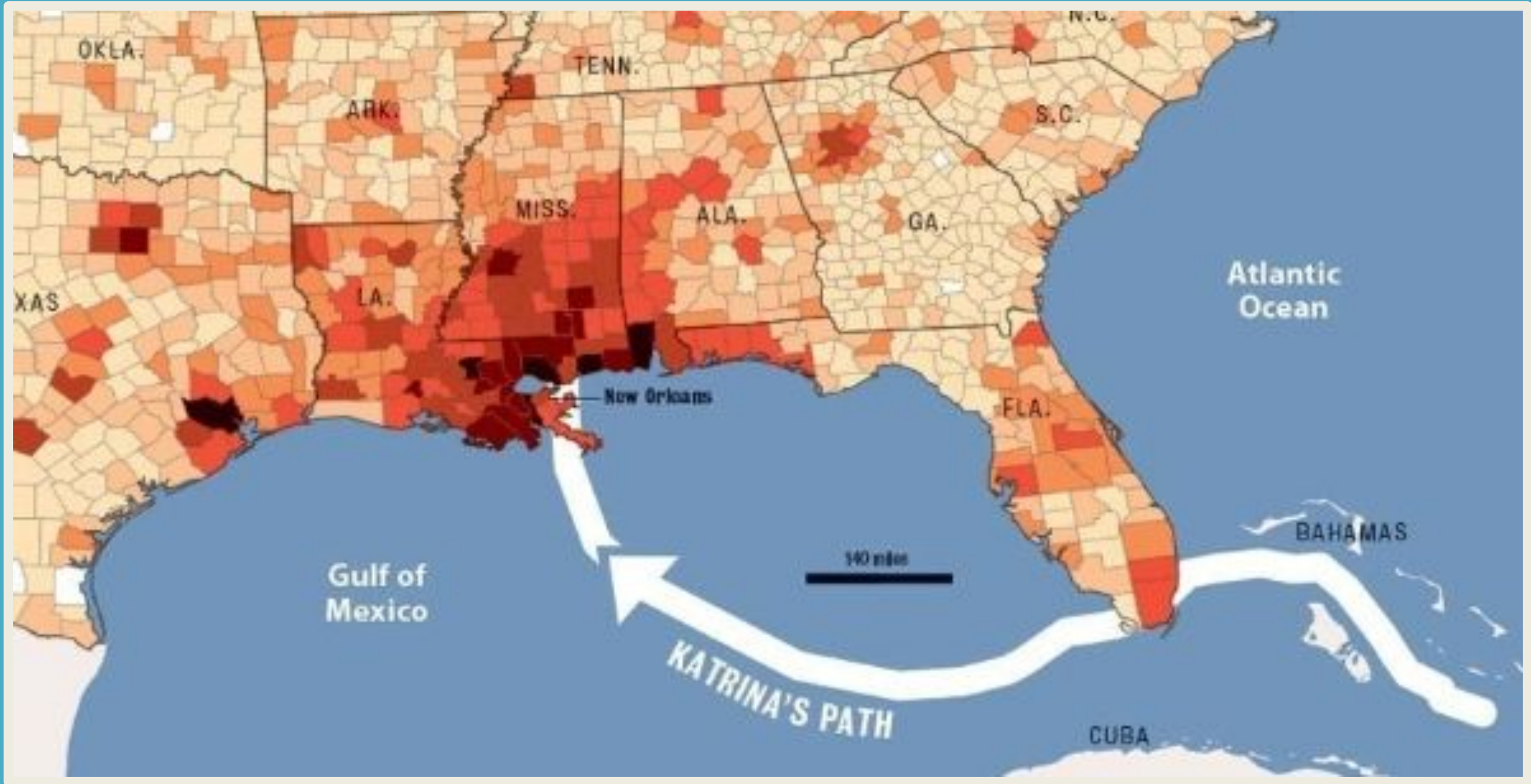
Recently, as of October 2024, the Hurricane Season was one to remember. This was the first time I truly grasped the severity of hurricanes thanks to all of its media coverage, which sent me down a rabbit hole. Before colonization and urban industrialism, Native American tribes around the country entrusted nature around them with handling natural disasters; this included wetlands. Eventually, they were burned, drained, and filled to promote the growth of cities. Now, with the destruction of natural barriers, scientists are trying to cite Indigenous land management as an inspiration for nature-based solutions to climate resilience—such as restoring mangroves and wetland buffers to reduce damage.

Methodology:

1. First, I looked at the history behind wetlands and how they were drained and burned during industrialization.
2. Second, I looked at which states get damaged from hurricanes the most: Florida, Louisiana, Texas (Gulf Coast), North and South Carolina, Mississippi, and Alabama. I mainly narrowed my research down to Florida and Louisiana.
3. Third, I researched which part of each state feels the most damage from hurricanes.
4. Once I figured out which part of the state suffered most of the damages, I figured out whether they had a sufficient enough amount of wetlands.

Wetlands and Floods

By: Kiara M. Alvarez



Results/Conclusion:

The difference between the lack of wetlands and the places in Florida that suffer the most damage proves my theory to be correct. For starts, places such as New Orleans or the Florida Panhandle suffer some of the worst damage from Tropical Storms and hurricanes. Those places also, not so coincidentally, have the most infrastructure, which suggests the lack of wetlands in replacement of urbanization. So, tropical storms and hurricanes such as Katrina (2005), Michael (2018), Laura (2020), Ida (2021), and Milton (2024) severely damaged places with the most infrastructure, making them suffer millions, even billions, in damage thanks to the lack of proper barriers against these natural disasters.

What Can You Do?:

1. A more obvious one is spreading awareness. Make it known to people that you care about our climate and environment. Staying silent **WILL NOT** help. People have lost their lives and homes over this issue.
2. Support Wetland Restoration Projects by volunteering to help or, if you're too far, donate to organizations that focus on this issue.
3. **YOU HAVE A VOICE!** You're able to support and change your local and state policies by voting for leaders who you *know* will help.
4. Lastly, resist making our climate worse. It is bad enough.