



# Sea Level Rise in Florida: Science, Impacts, and Options

*Albert C. Hine, Don P. Chambers, Tonya D. Clayton, Mark R. Hafen, Gary T. Mitchum*

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“A scientifically credible and highly readable account of what is likely the greatest threat to Florida’s environment, economy, and culture over the coming decades.”—Reed F. Noss, author of *Forgotten Grasslands of the South*

“Every Floridian should read this book. It is the clearest and most readable description of how and why the sea level changes and what the future has in store for us.”—Orrin H. Pilkey, coauthor of *Global Climate Change: A Primer*

Sea levels are rising—globally and in Florida. Climatologists, geologists, oceanographers, and the overwhelming majority of the scientific community expect a continuation of this trend for centuries to come due to climate change, ocean warming, and ice mass loss.

While Florida’s natural history indicates that there is nothing new about the changing elevation of the sea, what *is* new is its accelerating pace. Also new—and alarming—is the ever-growing, immobile human infrastructure near the coasts: high-rise condos, suburban developments, tourist meccas, and international metropolises. In a state where much of the landscape is topographically low and underlain by permeable limestone, the stakes are particularly high. Modern-day sea level rise, with potential impacts to large land areas and populations, poses unprecedented challenges for sustainability, urban planning, and political action.

This book offers an in-depth examination of the cycle of sea levels in the past and the science behind the current measurements and the future projections. The authors assess the most likely range of sea level rise in Florida based on a synthesis of projections for the next hundred years. They also discuss ongoing and potential consequences for natural marine and coastal systems and how we can begin to plan strategically for the inevitable changes.

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