



*Palm Beach County  
Department of Environmental  
Resources Management  
**Environmental  
Enhancement &  
Restoration Division**  
May 2008 Status Report*

**John Prince Park/Chain of Lakes Restoration**

One of the project goals was to re-establish habitat for fisheries by removing extensive layers of anoxic muck and vegetation mats to the natural sand bottom, creating deep areas within the lake and planting a mix of herbaceous wetland plant species along the recontoured shoreline.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission recently released 15,400 sunshine bass, a hybrid sterile cross between a striped bass and a white bass. The record size for sunshine bass is 16 pounds, and they can reach weights of 6 or 7 pounds in three years. The fish were placed in Lake Osborne not only to create new fisheries, but also to control abundant gizzard shad populations.

**Juno Beach Renourishment**

A meeting with PBC, USACE, USFWS, NMFS, and EPA staff addressed the recent USACE Request for Additional Information (RAI). A final draft of the response to FDEP RAI 3 is expected to be submitted within the next 2 weeks. Work has begun on technical specifications and coordination of the contracting process in expectation of permit issuance. Construction is expected to begin in November.

**Singer Island Erosion Control Project**

Benthic surveys, the UMAM evaluation surveys, and a portion of the required cryptic fish surveys have been completed. Additional numerical modeling of the segmented breakwater is underway. Model grids have been established to evaluate various alternatives, including an alternative without the two southernmost breakwater segments and/or the artificial reef, and varied breakwater segments crest elevations. The modeling will evaluate how the suggested changes in breakwater segment configuration will modify sand transport gradients for the purpose of evaluating potential for downdrift impacts.

A meeting was held with USFWS and NMFS staff to discuss the federal issues outlined in the ACOE comment letter.

Staff are scheduled to make a presentation at the Riviera Beach City Council workshop on June 10<sup>th</sup>, which will focus on local funding of project costs.

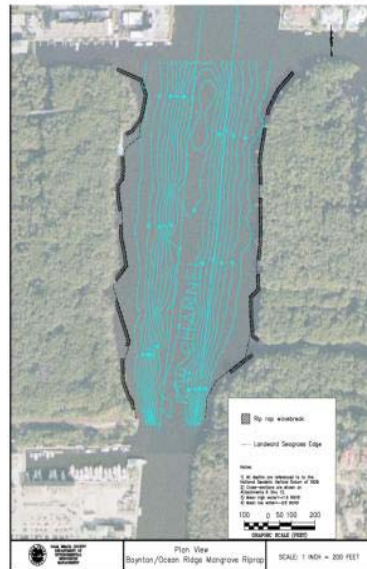
**Reef Monitoring and Management**

This month the Reef Research Team visited Sea Emperor and Boca Ledge, a natural/artificial reef comparison

set. Yellow garden eels have reestablished west of the Sea Emperor, and several large goliath grouper were present. The hard coral colonies on the concrete continue to increase in size, and 14 species were counted on the concrete. Numerous fish species were present on the natural reef site which has ledges up to 20 ft. in height.



**Boynton Beach/Ocean Ridge Riprap**



Permits and plans associated with the placement of ~4,000 tons of limestone boulders to protect mangroves north of the Ocean Ave. Bridge are complete. Work should be completed by late summer with funding from a Lake Worth Lagoon Partnership Grant.

**Snook Islands Natural Area**

Recently two manatees were spotted feeding on Spartina inside the newly restored Snook Islands Natural Area. The third year of seagrass monitoring is currently underway with seagrasses, *Halophila johnsonii* and *H. decipiens* found throughout the site.

**Jupiter Beach**

FIND completed dredging of the ICWW after receiving a permit extension from FDEP. Approximately, 122,000 CY of sand was placed on the beach south of the inlet.

PBC has asked the COE to reconsider their decision to require an intensive restudy of the nourishment project prior to funding consideration. The study would delay the project schedule and significantly elevate project costs.



**South Palm Beach**

Staff provided an update of the local coastal management projects and responded to questions from both Council members and the public at the

recent Town Council meeting.

**Program Management**

Staff attended a forum with Congressmen Klein & Oberstar to discuss specific coastal project issues and County management of Continuing Authority Program funded projects.

Staff participated in the recent PBC Tourism Summit, providing information on Natural Area public use facilities, reef resources, NENA and the beach program.

Annual contracts for dune & wetland restoration and reef & breakwater construction have been advertised for bids.

**Riviera Beach Maritime Academy Reefs**



Students of the Riviera Beach Maritime Academy are constructing approximately 54 concrete “rice cakes” to build 18 reefs set on pilings. These unique reefs are funded by the Lake

Worth Lagoon Partnership Grant and will be installed at the Kelsey Park Artificial Reef Site in late May.

**Sea Turtle Update**

Like the leatherbacks, green sea turtle nesting got off to an early start during the 2008 nesting season. Though green nesting typically begins in early June, a green nest was recorded on Juno Beach on 5/19. To date, loggerhead nesting is 20-40% lower than the 5-year average, however, loggerhead nesting at Tequesta is 24% higher than the 5-year average. Current leatherback totals are similar to the 5-year average.



**Oyster Reefs**

Staff continues to work with the South Florida Water Management District (WMD) on the environmental permit for constructing oyster reefs near John's Island. Pending permitting, the first phase of construction is anticipated for this summer.

**Coral Reef Symposium**

During July 7-11, the 11th International Coral Reef Symposium will be held in Ft. Lauderdale. This is the first time in over 30 years this worldwide conference has been held in mainland U.S. ERM staff and the Reef Research Team will be providing 3 different field trips for attendees on local reefs both before and after the Symposium.

**Sediment Sourcing Study**

Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) has been given a contract to study the source of sediments found in the C-51 basin and central Lake Worth Lagoon. The study will determine the relative contributions of sediments from various land use types and will be used to focus future sediment control strategies.

**Intracoastal Waterway Planning**

Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council recently conducted a planning charette to create a master plan for the Intracoastal Waterway in Palm Beach County. For more information, see [http://www.tcrpc.org/departments/studio/intracoastal\\_water\\_way/icww\\_home.htm](http://www.tcrpc.org/departments/studio/intracoastal_water_way/icww_home.htm).

