

**PALM BEACH COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
RESOURCES MANAGEMENT  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
ENHANCEMENT &  
RESTORATION DIVISION  
AUGUST 2007  
STATUS REPORT**

**Sea Turtle Nesting Update:** Loggerhead nesting has been generally lower than the 5-year average, and on some beaches (Tequesta and Jupiter) is as much as 25-50% lower than this time in 2006. Despite the decrease in loggerhead nesting, leatherback nesting set a new record high in Palm Beach County and green nesting is similar to or exceeding the trend seen in 2002, the previous record season. Sea turtle nesting season ends on October 31.

**Snook Islands  
Natural Area**

ERM staff documented the southernmost successful American Oystercatcher nest in the United States.



Staff first documented the chick in early July and it has since fledged. Oystercatchers are a species of special concern in Florida and typically have a nesting success rate of less than 30%. ERM staff also documented several endangered Piping Plovers at Snook Islands.



This is the first documented sighting of Piping Plovers in Palm Beach County.

**Ibis Restoration**

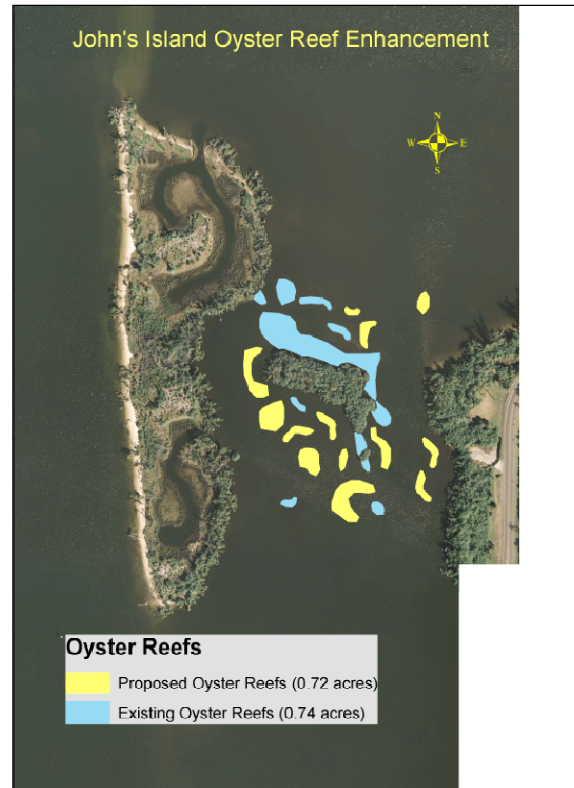
Staff is collecting resource data in the proposed project area of Ibis Isle. Data collection efforts include muck depth, oyster mapping and mangrove delineation

**Jupiter/Carlin**

Initial engineering & design work for the re-nourishment project scheduled for winter 2009/10 is underway. USACOE has initiated coordination with the USFWS on providing a biological opinion for

additional emergency dune restoration along the northern reaches of the project area.

**Oyster Reefs**



Thirty-four acres around John's Island has been selected for oyster reef construction. Permitting is underway with a goal of initiating construction in 2008. Staff submitted a \$250K grant application for funds to cover half of the estimated \$500K to construct the first phase of the multi-year project

**Juno Beach**

Pre-construction monitoring of sea turtle nesting and reproductive success continues throughout the project area. Aerial photos showing the delineation of nearshore reef throughout the project area have been digitized for inclusion in the pending permit documents. A draft response to FDEP's 2<sup>nd</sup> request for additional information (RAI) is being reviewed.

**Singer Island Erosion Control Project**

Corps permitting staff have asked for further clarification & review of impact minimization in the design of the structures. Additional modeling will be utilized to test the impact of any proposed changes. The Corps review process, which is governed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) will begin with an Environmental Assessment (EA) in order to determine whether there are potential significant adverse impacts of the proposed action and the alternatives. This is a less detailed document used to

make a decision whether or not to prepare an EIS. If significant adverse impacts are predicted, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is prepared. If not, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is prepared. A mitigated FONSI is prepared if the predicted impacts can be avoided, reduced, or minimized.

The response to the first RAI was submitted to DEP on August 27<sup>th</sup>. As per DEP, a sub-bottom survey was completed on August 17<sup>th</sup> to create a detailed profile of local nearshore hardbottom. The data will be incorporated into the sand transport model in order to finalize structure design and placement.

### **South Palm Beach**

In accordance with a condition of the FDEP Emergency Permit, the County conducted a nighttime lighting survey of the project area once the dune restoration was complete. Several properties along the shoreline were not in compliance with the Town's lighting ordinance. Artificial light sources can disorient nesting female sea turtles and their hatchlings as they try to find their way back to the ocean. Survey results were shared with the Town for further action.

Coordination on the initiation of the NEPA process continued after reassignment of Corps staff.

### **South Lake Worth Inlet**

Permit requirements for restoration of the jetties are being determined by the DEP. Staff attended a public meeting and met with the consultant under contract with the City of Boynton Beach to discuss inlet improvement alternatives.

### **Ocean Ridge Shore Protection Project**

The 12 month monitoring report is being finalized, and a task order for the 24-month report has been approved. A proposal for the 24-month hardbottom monitoring awaits DEP approval.

### **Nearshore Mitigation Reefs**

A preliminary design of reef pods and potential sites in north and south-central County are under review for potential impacts to longshore drift and stability. Sand depth profiles will be conducted on the potential sites.

### **Reef Monitoring and Management**

Staff monitored the nearshore



reef at Ocean Ridge and Gulfstream. Much nearshore was exposed; however, the artificial reefs were buried in 2-3 more feet of sand compared to last year. The Reef Research Team surveyed Governor's River Walk Reef and mapped rock deployments and ship disposition.

Photo by Lin Creel

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



The restoration project is in full swing with several components of the project occurring concurrently. Excavation for the box culvert on campground road is underway and concrete formwork will commence the last week of August. The north end of Lantana Airport has been cleared and surveyed, as has the spoil area (future "Bird Island") north of Square Lake. The dredge work is ongoing with 2,000 cubic yards of sand excavated thus far. The sand will be used for several fill components of the project including; fill along the L-14 canal alcove; fill along the campground road before the placement of rock designed to protect the shoreline; fill for construction of the temporary haul road; and, fill for the creation of the littoral shelves around the lake.



### **L.O.S.T. Trailhead**

Design and permitting of a new trail access facility off Connors Highway and adjacent to the Herbert Hoover Dike is nearing completion. Parking for cars, bicycles, busses & horse trailers, a horse paddock, and an information kiosk will be built at the junction of the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail and the Ocean-to-Lake Trail. Further information on the NENA program is available at:

<http://www.co.palm-beach.fl.us/erm/vena.asp>