

PALM BEACH COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT & RESTORATION DIVISION

AUGUST 2009 STATUS REPORT

shelf, 1 acre of open-water habitat, and 1 acre of hardwood wetland. A total of 24,300 tons of spoil was excavated and hauled off-site and more than 27,000 wetland plants and 350 native wetland trees were planted. The \$700,000 cost was funded with grants from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The benefits of the project include improved freshwater wetland habitat, food source and shelter for fish, birds and invertebrates and improved water quality by removing muck sediments and installing native wetland vegetation to help filter water pollutants.

South Lake Worth Inlet Projects

Installation of the concrete piles for the sand transfer plant and associated utility trench is complete. Both concrete pours for the foundation of the plant are complete and forms for the walls of the plant are in place. The old discharge pipe under the bridge and to the south has been removed and a new "sand cannon" is under construction on the beach. More than half of the sheet piles have been installed along Bird Island.



Artificial Reef Program:

10,000 tons of limestone boulders are being placed in shallow water off Ocean Ridge just south of the inlet and 900 tons of rock are being deployed to a reef further offshore in about 65 ft of water. The oyster reef now under construction near John's Island will use 7,500 tons of small limestone rock.

Ibis Isle Restoration Project:

Over 25,000 cubic yards of sand has been transported from Juno Dunes Natural Area to Ibis Isle. The sand was used to cap 3 acres of muck in the central portion of the project and create the perimeter berm to the north. The central portion of the project was completed with the installation of 750 linear feet of stone to stabilize the capped area and provide substrate for larval oyster recruitment. Muck in the central portion was capped using a longstick excavator, while muck in the north and south portions will be capped using a modified pea-gravel shooter, designed specifically for this project.



Lake Ida Restoration Project:

The Project wrapped up construction the last week of August, creating 3.5 acres of littoral

South Cove Natural Area:

After a one week Florida Statue Chapter 120 Administrative Hearing, the lawyers' recommended final orders were submitted to the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) who expects to provide a final ruling in mid-September.

Sea Taxi:

Staff is looking into the purchase of the ship, *Sea Taxi* for reefing. Discussions have just begun on this project, but it appears that the vessel can be bought and prepared for reefing at a considerably discounted rate.

Seagrass Monitoring at Snook Islands:

The presence of Johnson's seagrasses is still noted throughout the restoration site in this 4th year post-construction although the densities appear to have decreased. Paddle grass, the other locally found species of the genus *Halophila*, was notably absent in this latest survey. Oyster colonization continues to be robust.

Central County Erosion Control:

The Town of Palm Beach Town Council will consider an Interlocal Agreement to cost share on the engineering, design & permitting of the proposed project as well as the USACE required Environmental Impact Study (EIS) on September 8. Following Town approval, the Board of County Commissioners will consider the agreement at their meeting on September 15. The agreement is expected to impact the project timeline, but will also reduce the overall costs for all parties. The consultant managing the EIS for the USACE has already provided final draft products (Statement of Work, Quality Management Plan and Public Participation Plan) for review to the USACE.

Peanut Island: The re-contouring of the lagoon created 0.38



acres of intertidal spartina habitat which will help stabilize the shoreline, increase nutrient uptake, and provide important shallow water habitat for wildlife. The project also dredged approximately 6,000 cu yds of sand from the boat docks and fishing pier for use in restoring the eroding shoreline.

Singer Island Erosion Control Project: The National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion (BO) has been drafted and should be submitted to the Corps in mid September. There has been no indication of when the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) BO will be available. A response to RAI # 6 was submitted on 8/14 and RAI #7 was received on 8/25 and responded to on 8/28. A comment letter from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission regarding the project has been received by the FDEP. The FDEP public hearing for the revised Erosion Control Line was held on 8/26. FDEP is in the process of drafting an amendment to the funding agreement which will encumber another \$2.5M in State funds. This brings the total State funding to just over \$9.75M. The remaining State funding (\$2.2M) has been requested as part of next year's appropriations.



Dubois Park Restoration: County staff attended a regulatory public meeting where the SFWMD Executive Director and District regulatory staff met with permit applicants and interested stakeholders to review projects of public interest.

Jupiter/Carlin Beach Renourishment: A draft Joint Coastal Permit (JCP) application and environmental assessment (EA) is under review. FDEP comments regarding the updated Section 934 Report proposal generated a revision to the scope of work. The proposal will be presented to the BCC on October 6.

Jupiter Beach Erosion Control: Revised structural alternative concept sketches are expected in September.

Juno Renourishment: Construction is scheduled to begin on November 1. New sea turtle nests laid in the project area are now being relocated to another part of the beach where they will not be impacted by the construction. Contract submittals are still being received from the contractor and are under review by staff. Pre-construction monitoring of the reefs adjacent to the borrow area is scheduled to begin during the last week in September.

NENA Bluegill Trail Phase 1: This project includes construction of a 5.4 mile long bicycle/pedestrian crushed concrete trail along the east levee of the C-18E canal through Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area, a steel and concrete bridge over the C-18E canal for trail users to reach Riverbend Park and trailside amenities such as a chickee shade shelter. The project is anticipated to be advertized for bid in late October or early November.



NENA Pantano Trail, Phase 1

This project will provide improved bicycle and pedestrian access to the northwestern three sections of the Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area from Riverbend Park. A portion of the Florida Trail Association's Ocean-to-Lake hiking trail lies in this portion of the natural area. Environmental documentation and preliminary construction plan development for Phase 1 of the trail will begin in October.

NENA Historic Jupiter-Indiantown Trail, Phase 1: The 2.1 mile long multi-user trail through the Cypress Creek Natural Area will provide access to hiking trails in the natural area and create a connection between the bike trail on the south side of Indiantown Road east of Jupiter Farms Road and the designated Scenic Byway, Old Indiantown Road at Mack Dairy Road. Thirty percent plans for the trail were submitted to FDOT for review in July and staff is responding to comments from FDOT on these plans now.

Mooring Buoys: The six buoys will be periodically rotated among the twelve anchors to minimize impact on the reef. This project is funded through a State Wildlife Grant administered by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission's Wildlife



Setting the mooring anchor

Legacy Initiative. The Wildlife Foundation of Florida has begun an endowment fund for donors to contribute toward the long term maintenance and monitoring of these buoys.



Reef Monitoring and Management: The Team surveyed the ZION TRAIN, MISS JENNY barge, Jupiter

Concrete, and Governor's River Walk. Unusual sightings were a spotted eagle ray with a remora, several large goliath groupers hanging out in the wrecks and large schools of boga. The end of August the Team visited the MIZPAH, South Corridors, and Cross Current Reef. There might be another goliath grouper breeding aggregation forming at the MIZPAH. There were over 45 goliaths; each 5-7 ft. in length; and all exhibiting reproductive colorations and behaviors.