



**PALM BEACH COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
ENHANCEMENT &  
RESTORATION DIVISION**

**November 2008 Status Report**

**Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative:**

Local and state agencies are partnering to launch the Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative. An Executive Committee represented by a Palm Beach County Commissioner, a Governing Board Member of SFWMD, FDEP's Southeast District, League of Cities and the Director of PBC Environmental Resources Management will be augmented by Technical Committee Chairs with agency representation in major areas of emphasis for the Lake Worth Lagoon: Water, Habitat, Pollution Prevention and Public Outreach. The Initiative will officially "Kickoff" in January, with upcoming opportunities for public and agencies to get involved. Stay tuned to <http://www.pbcgov.com/erm/lakes/estuarine/lake-worth-lagoon/> for updates.

**Lake Worth Lagoon Partnership Grant Program**

The Program funds projects that benefit habitat and water quality in the Lagoon and Chain of Lakes, including mangrove, spartina, maritime hammock and seagrass habitat restoration, oyster & artificial reef construction and stormwater management system installation. The Initiative is seeking \$6.22 million in legislative appropriations in Fiscal Year 2009-2010 to fund 9 proposed construction projects. Matching local funds are expected to exceed \$7.4 million.

**Storm Event Sampling in the Lake Worth Lagoon Watershed:**

The Lagoon receives drainage from an estimated 450 square mile area. Major fresh water inflows from the watershed are discharged to the estuary from regional canals: the Earman River (C-17) canal, which discharges to the north or upper segment of the lagoon; the West Palm Beach Canal (C-51) which discharges to the central segment; and the Boynton Beach Canal (C-16) which discharges to the southern segment. These discharges may carry large influxes of nutrients, suspended and dissolved organic matter and contaminants affecting the flora and fauna. Altered hydrology, loss of natural habitat as well recreational pressures have all contributed to the environmental degradation of this body of water. Palm Beach County is partnering with the SFWMD to conduct a study to characterize the types and magnitude of pollutants in

stormwater runoff for all land cover areas within the watershed, particularly from storm events. The watershed and associated hydrology will be examined to assist in development of storm event mean concentrations and a sampling plan.

**Peanut Island**

Staff is working with the Parks Department to finalize plans for dredging sand from areas around the boat docks and fishing pier. The dredged sand will be utilized to stabilize the eroded shorelines and re-contour the swimming lagoon.

**Damage at the Breaker's Reef:**

Approximately 2 acres reefs were damaged off the Breaker's Hotel in 60' of water. Coral restoration by the FDEP could be initiated following their assessment.

**Broward/Palm Beach County Artificial Reef:**

A cooperative reef project is being discussed with staff from Broward County who are pursuing the procurement of a 150 foot supply ship. With no permitted site suitable for the placement of such a vessel, a Palm Beach County reef site very near the south County line may be just the answer.



**Annual Marine Contract:**

M&J Construction of Pinellas County, Inc. was awarded the annual marine contract. Initial work will include a breakwater project along the Intracoastal north of the Ocean Avenue Bridge in Ocean Ridge and Boynton Beach and a limestone boulder and pre-cast concrete module mitigation reef to be constructed just north of the City of Riviera Beach's Municipal Beach in 8-12' of water. A shallow water oyster reef project near John's Island and a mitigation reef offshore of Ocean Ridge are scheduled to follow the initial tasks.

**Snook Islands Restoration Project Update:**

A recent site visit was made to assess current conditions of the mangrove/Spartina plantings at the restoration site, east of the Lake Worth Municipal Golf Course. A record 16 plovers were observed foraging on the tidal flats with the mated pair of oyster catchers still maintaining their stake at the site for the fourth consecutive year.

## Sea Turtle Nesting Update:

Though sea turtle nesting season officially ended on October 31st, at least two sea turtle nests have been documented in November – a suspected



hawksbill nest in Juno Beach and another in Highland Beach. Two confirmed hawksbill nests were also documented during the 2008 nesting season – one each in Boca Raton and Palm Beach Shores. Only 8 hawksbill nests have been documented locally since detailed surveys began in the 1980s. Final nesting totals are not yet available, but preliminary totals indicate that loggerhead nesting was approximately 29% higher than the 2007 nesting season, while green and leatherback nesting declined 22% and 53%, respectively, from the record high 2007 nesting season.

### National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant:

A \$75,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) has been awarded to ERM to perform standardized countywide lighting surveys during the 2008 and 2009 sea turtle nesting seasons. The results of these surveys will be passed along to the local jurisdictional agency and technical assistance will be offered to improve compliance. If you haven't yet been contacted by ERM and are interested in the results of your 2008 lighting survey, please contact ERM's lighting coordinator at 561-233-2400.

### NENA trailhead at Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail

The Florida Trail Association was the first group to make use of the trailhead for the seventeenth annual Big "O" hike around Lake Okeechobee on top of the Herbert Hoover Dike. A group of hearty hikers participate in all of portions of the nine-day, 110-mile long hike.

### Historic Jupiter-Indiantown Trail

Starting with the purchase of a 367-acre site lying north of Indiantown Road and immediately west of the Loxahatchee Wild and Scenic River Corridor, the County has acquired almost all of the undeveloped land south of the Martin County line and east of Mack Dairy Road. A series of grants from the Florida Community Trust (FCT) partially reimbursing the costs of purchasing the tracts require the development of certain public use facilities. The Historic Jupiter-Indiantown Trail, which traverses a portion of the Cypress Creek Natural Area, will become a shared-use trail with amenities such as shade shelter, information kiosk and bike racks at intersections with hiking trails.

### Countywide Coastal Council

The Council met to update members on pending projects, hear a report sea turtle nesting activity and

discuss opportunities for collaborative efforts. The next meeting is scheduled for Feb 13.

### Jupiter/Carlin Structures

Now that adequate wave and current data are available, design focus has shifted to computer model setup, calibration & validation. Staff met with Town of Jupiter staff to discuss project scheduling & funding.

### Jupiter/Carlin Renourishment

Design & permitting work continues in coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers, our Federal sponsor for this project. Federal participation is contingent upon completion of an economic analysis known as a Section 934 Report and a line-item appropriation by Congress.

### Juno Beach Renourishment

Construction Contract bids will be opened December 2nd. The tentative construction start date is early February and must be completed by April 30. Work on a mitigation reef for the project is underway off Riviera Beach.

### Singer Island Erosion Control Project

The Erosion Control Line survey work is underway. An amendment to the State funding agreement to encumber \$7M of State funds for construction costs and the Interlocal Agreement with the City of Riviera Beach for 20% cost share of eligible project costs are scheduled for BCC approval at the December 2nd meeting.

### South Palm Beach/Lantana

Restoration of the dune is pending receipt of a Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL) permit from the FDEP. Design & permitting work for the breakwater project continues on both state and federal levels. Staff provided technical assistance to the Town of Lantana on their seawall project and presented information on the Project to Town of Palm Beach officials, staff and residents.

### South Lake Worth (Boynton) Inlet

Bids for construction of the new sand transfer plant, north and south jetty rehabilitation, and new Bird Island seawall are due December 9th. Discussions of navigational lighting and project updates highlighted a meeting of the SLWI Advisory Committee. A meeting of the City of Boynton Beach's Inlet Committee was held to discuss how storm surge levels would affect individual communities. The next meeting is scheduled for December 12.

### Ocean Ridge Shore Protection Project

After several weather delays, field work on the 3-year post-construction biological monitoring is now complete.

For more information on Palm Beach County environmental restoration projects, please visit: <http://www.co.palm-beach.fl.us/erm/>

