

# August 2019 Project Status Report

## Department of Environmental Resources Management



**Lake Worth Lagoon Tour:** On August 16, ERM invited Florida House Representative Mike Caruso and staff from the County's Office of Legislative Affairs to tour the Lagoon. Staff provided an overview of past, current and proposed habitat preservation and restoration projects in the northern and central Lagoon.



TOUR WITH MIKE CARUSO



REEF DART DEPLOYMENT

**Twisted Trunk:** This month, Twisted Trunk Brewing in Palm Beach Gardens held their annual "Night for the Natural Areas" fundraiser. Twisted Trunk served their limited release Loxahatchee Lager at the event, which is held to raise awareness of the Palm Beach County Natural Areas. ERM staff was on hand to give a presentation about our County Natural Areas. After the event, Twisted Trunk donated \$4,000 to the Natural Areas Fund.

**Hazardous Mitigation Grant:** ERM was awarded a grant from the Florida Division of Emergency Management, funded by FEMA, for wildfire mitigation involving mechanical reduction of vegetation to reduce the risk of wildfires. This \$750,000 project is funded by a 75/25 cost share grant, which allows up to half of ERM's 25% to be satisfied with in-kind services.



WILDLIFE RELEASE

### **Palm Beach County Fishing Foundation (PBCFF):**

Palm Beach County deployed 30 reef darts and 30 culverts in 500 ft. of water 4 miles offshore of the Lake Worth Inlet to create a deep offshore reef. The materials were donated by the PBCFF, which is the non-profit arm of the West Palm Beach Fishing Club, and deployed by the County. The deep reef is designed to create habitat for grouper and snapper.

### **Chris O'Hare Mermaids:**

Chris O'Hare, a local sculptor, donated 19 artificial reef modules that feature mermaids, abstract art, and plenty of great opportunities for underwater pictures. One module allows a diver to stand behind a mermaid tail and pose as a mermaid. The modules, along with 100 tons of reused concrete donated from GL Homes, were placed by ERM's contractor in 45 ft. of water ~1 mile southeast of the Lake Worth Inlet.



MERMAID REEF MODULE

**Wildlife Release:** Busch Wildlife Sanctuary, an ERM Adopt a Natural Area partner, released three juvenile foxes back into the wild at Cypress Creek Natural Area. The three orphaned sibling foxes were brought to Busch, who reared them with the intent to return them to the wild. Over 100 members of the community were on hand to see the foxes and a rehabilitated Great Blue Heron released.

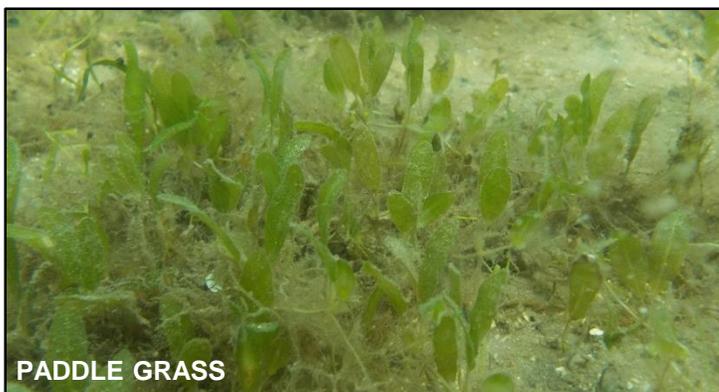


### Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners

Mack Bernard, Mayor, Dave Kerner, Vice Mayor, Hal R. Valeche, Gregg K. Weiss, Robert S. Weinroth, Mary Lou Berger, Melissa McKinlay

**Fisheries Monitoring:** FWC conducted fisheries monitoring in the central and northern Lake Worth Lagoon. Eleven economically important taxa were collected: bonefish, sheepshead, blue crab, common snook, ladyfish, shrimp, mutton snapper, gray snapper, southern kingfish, striped mullet, and permit.

**Lake Worth Lagoon (LWL) Seagrass:** The 2018 lagoon-wide seagrass mapping effort has been finalized. Over 900 locations were surveyed to provide updated seagrass data, which was last collected in 2013. The area with the most abundant coverage continues to be the northern LWL from Peanut Island to PGA Boulevard. Several areas of small seagrass expansion were documented in both the northern and southern LWL, while seagrass was nearly absent in the surveyed areas of the central LWL.



**Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative (LWLI) Funding Request:** The LWLI Legislative Funding Request Selection Committee convened to hear project proposals. Eight projects were presented for ranking and inclusion in the 2020 Palm Beach County Legislative Agenda. Projects included stormwater retrofits by the Town of Lake Park and the City of Lake Worth Beach; septic to sewer conversion by the Town of Hypoluxo; submerged land acquisition by the City of Riviera Beach; and habitat restoration, submerged land acquisition, and monitoring by Palm Beach County.



**Trident Run:** ERM's Adopt a Natural Area partners, the Sand Spur Ultras, held a half marathon at Jupiter Ridge Natural Area. The event brought 50 runners to the site for a hot afternoon of running in soft sugar sand. The fastest time for the men was 1 hour and 49 minutes while the fastest woman completed the course in 2 hours and 10 minutes. The Sand Spurs are currently taking registration for the next Jupiter Ridge Run on December 28, which will be a 50K/25K. The Sand Spurs donate a portion of their race proceeds to the Palm Beach County Natural Areas fund.

**Eagle Scout Project:** An Eagle Scout from the Jupiter High School environmental program worked at the Lake Worth Golf Course to construct low profile oyster reef habitat. He, along with 14 other scouts, brought in a half ton of limestone and placed it in small piles along the shoreline at an elevation where oysters are expected to grow. This project will add to the oyster habitat and help improve the water quality in Lake Worth Lagoon.



**Adventure Awaits:** Register NOW for a **FREE** event at [PBCERM.EVENTBRITE.COM!](https://www.pbcerm.com)

## UPCOMING ERM EVENTS

- **September 7: GROWING UP WILD - LIFE IN THE WETLANDS** at Sweetbay
- **September 15: WHAT'S BLOOMING NOW?** At North Jupiter Flatwoods
- **September 18: 5K TRAIL RUN HOSTED BY FLEET FEET** at Yamato Scrub
- **September 25: MEET THE SNOWBIRDS** at Winding Waters
- **October 1: MEET THE SNOWBIRDS** at North Jupiter Flatwoods



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