

June 2020 Project Status Report

Department of Environmental Resources Management



Tarpon Cove: Placement of sand from the Town of Palm Beach Marina expansion began in late May and is estimated to be 10% complete. This beneficially reused material will fill a dredge hole to create additional islands and seagrass and mangrove habitat.



LOXAHATCHEE SLOUGH
OBSERVATION TOWER

Artificial Reef Deployment: The County deployed 645 tons of limestone boulders 1 mile south of the Lake Worth Inlet in 40 ft. of water. The boulders were placed near an existing reef comprised of reused concrete and mermaid statues. Each pile consists of 323 tons of limestone with approximately 10ft. of relief. The material and deployment was funded in part by a Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Artificial Reef Grant. These reefs provide great fish habitat and easy access for shallow-water dives.



PBC'S NEWEST
ARTIFICIAL REEF



TARPON COVE
SAND PLACEMENT

Loxahatchee Slough Grand Opening: The latest public use facilities for the Loxahatchee Slough, Palm Beach County's largest natural area (12,957 acres), have officially been opened. The entrance is located at 11855 Beeline Highway, 1.6 miles north of PGA Blvd in the City of Palm Beach Gardens. A 0.25 mile paved walking trail leads from the parking lot to an observation platform overlooking a wetland. Amenities include an educational kiosk, fishing pier, picnic tables, miles of natural surface hiking trails and an observation tower. The new facilities encourage passive activities like wildlife viewing and photography, which will protect historic native habitats and biological diversity by increasing environmental awareness.



PADDLER AT
LOXAHATCHEE SLOUGH



Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners

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

Lake Worth Lagoon Volunteers: Half a dozen volunteers from the Lake Worth Waterkeeper group put in quite a bit of effort to clean up the shoreline along the Jewell-Steinhardt Cove Living Shoreline. They gathered over 200 lbs. of trash and debris, including a heavy piece of wood piling, and dismantled a makeshift shelter that had been built near the beach.



VOLUNTEER CLEAN UP



STORYWALK INSTALLATION

Pondhawk StoryWalk Installation: ERM staff is working with the City of Boca Raton Recreation Services Department, Adopt-A-Natural-Area Adopter for Pondhawk Natural Area, to install 18 “StoryWalk” boards. Visitors to the Boca Raton Public Library and Pondhawk will be able to read the pages of a children’s storybook as they walk along the hiking trail. This fun, educational activity provides a way to help build children’s interest in reading while encouraging a healthy activity for all.

Mechanical Fuel Reduction: ERM has begun work at Royal Palm Beach Pines Natural Area to reduce the risk of wildfire activity and improve the health of the ecosystem by using mechanical equipment to clear vegetation. Less vegetation means that less fuel will be available to a wildfire, should one occur. With less fuel, fires burn at a lower intensity and for a shorter duration, making them more easily controllable. There’s a benefit to the ecosystem as well: clearing overgrown vegetation allows threatened Florida native species such as gopher tortoise, milkweed, rosemary, and pinweed to thrive.



MECHANICAL FUEL REDUCTION



OYSTERCATCHER BANDING

Banding American Oystercatchers: Four Lake Worth Lagoon restoration projects provided nesting habitat for state-designated threatened American oystercatchers this season: Snook Islands Natural Area, Bryant Park Islands, Grassy Flats, and Tarpon Cove Islands. Of the four nests observed, three eggs successfully hatched. In partnership with FWC, all three chicks received identification bands, which allow biologists to better manage the species by documenting sightings of individuals.



Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners

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