

February 2019 Project Status Report

Department of Environmental Resources Management



Commissioner Tour: ERM staff were proud to lead a walking tour of two south county natural areas for Commissioner Robert S. Weinroth. The Commissioner and his staff toured Yamato Scrub and Delray Oaks Natural Areas, both of which are within the Commissioner's district. The weather was perfect and ERM staff were able to share with the Commissioner the joys and challenges of managing public lands in an urban environment.

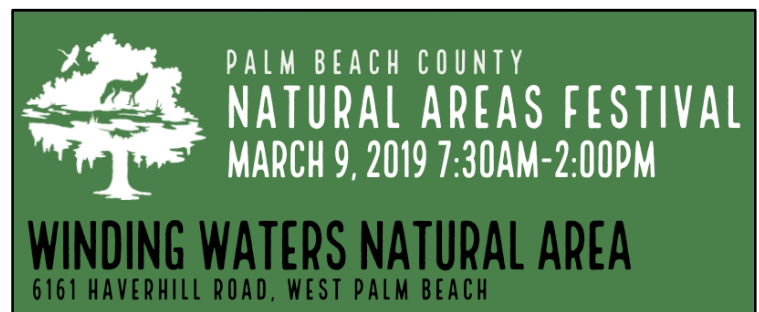


Winter Shorebird Survey: In early February, ERM staff participated in the annual Florida Shorebird Alliance Winter Shorebird Survey. The objective is to document the birds present along Florida's shorelines during a one-week window. ERM staff visited 28 miles of beaches in the County and counted 1,584 shorebirds of 14 different species. On Singer Island, staff found 84 black skimmers, one of six focal species of the survey. One banded bird was reported to the USGS Bird Banding Laboratory, who confirmed that the skimmer was first spotted as a flightless juvenile in New York on August 24th, 2017.

Derelict Vessel Removal: ERM funded the removal of a derelict vessel at Currie Park. The removal was completed on Friday, February 22nd in partnership with LagoonKeepers.org.



Pântano Trail: A section of the Jaega Wildways trail system is currently closed and under maintenance. The Pântano trail is receiving a much-needed resurfacing to fill potholes and address other maintenance concerns. The trail is expected to reopen in March. While working on the trail, staff observed a Nile monitor along the trail right of way. The Nile monitor, a 4-6 ft. long monitor lizard, is one of the many exotic species causing environmental damage in native Florida ecosystems. Sightings of exotic pest animals can be reported through the Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS) hotline (1-888-IVEGOT1) or the IveGot1 mobile phone app.



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

First 2019 Sea Turtle Nest in Florida Recorded in Palm Beach County:

While sea turtle nesting season officially starts on March 1st, the first leatherback sea turtle nest in the state was found a bit early on February 26th in Palm Beach County. Leatherbacks are the first species to nest each season and they are the rarest of the three regularly-nesting species. Last year there were 949 leatherback nests in Florida and 305 of these were in Palm Beach County.



MANATEES AT MANATEE LAGOON

Manatees: Manatees continue to enjoy our waterways and many were out in early February at the warm water refuge near FPL's Manatee Lagoon Eco-Discovery Center in Riviera Beach. At Manatee Lagoon's annual ManateeFest event, ERM staff participated in education efforts to remind visitors that manatee season starts November 15th and runs until March 31st and that it is important to keep an eye out for them while boating on the Lake Worth Lagoon and other County waterways.



Lake Worth Lagoon Volunteers: Cultivating the Lake Worth Lagoon, a group of Lake Worth volunteers, completed a mangrove-planting event on Thursday, February 28th at the Bryant Park Living Shoreline Project.

Prescribed Burn: ERM staff conducted another prescribed burn at Hungryland Slough Natural Area in February. The 290-acre burn met all of the intended ecological objectives. So far, in fiscal year 2019, ERM has burned a total of 2,385 acres.



Adventure Awaits: Register NOW for a **FREE** event at PBCERM.EVENTBRITE.COM!

UPCOMING ERM EVENTS

- **March 9:** **NATURAL AREAS FESTIVAL** at Winding Waters
- **March 9:** **RUN FOR THE NATURAL AREAS 5K** at Winding Waters
- **March 13:** **GROWING UP WILD – MEET THE CREATURES OF THE LAKE WORTH LAGOON** at Jewell Cove-Lake Worth Beach Complex
- **March 16:** **MORNING PADDLE** at Winding Waters
- **March 29:** **MEET THE SNOWBIRDS – BIRD WATCHING** at Frenchman's Forest
- **April 3:** **GROWING UP WILD – BUTTERFLY HIKE** at High Ridge Scrub



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