

# July 2020 Project Status Report

## Department of Environmental Resources Management



**Reef Deployments:** This year, the Andrew 'Red' Harris Foundation (ARHF) is donating 4,540 tons of limestone boulders and funding a portion of their deployment. In July, 2,500 tons of this donated material was placed in four locations near Jupiter, just south of the ARHF's existing reef, in 60 ft. of water. Fish and sea turtles have already made themselves at home at these newly deployed reefs. The remainder of the donated material will be deployed in August.



### DEPLOYED REEF (GROUPEL SOLD SEPARATELY)



**Tarpon Cove:** Approximately 12,000 cubic yards (cy) of the anticipated 84,500 cy of sand from the Town of Palm Beach Marina project have been placed at Tarpon Cove to date. Despite being under construction, the project has already demonstrated success by attracting a nesting pair of black skimmers which have hatched 4 chicks. The birds, listed as threatened in Florida, prefer to nest on open sand or gravel beaches, but have been relegated to rooftops in recent decades due to coastal development. The Tarpon Cove black skimmers are the only pair recently observed nesting on native habitat in Palm Beach County.

### TARPON COVE BLACK SKIMMERS



**Loxahatchee Slough Paddle Trail Closure:** The paddle trail at Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area is temporarily closed due to nesting activity by the endangered Everglades snail kite. Snail kites have been protected under state and federal law through the Endangered Species Act since 1967, making it illegal to harass, kill or capture them. This includes protection from activities that disrupt breeding, feeding or sheltering. The trail is expected to reopen in approximately 2 months and will be announced on social media. ERM staff is working with the University of Florida Snail Kite Project Team to document nests and to monitor nesting success.



### 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

**LRW Hydrological Refinement:** Field explorations for the Loxahatchee River Watershed (LRW) Hydrological Refinement have begun. The purpose of this project is to quantify the benefits of seepage barriers along Hungryland Slough Natural Area and Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area as part of a watershed-based effort to protect and restore the Loxahatchee River. The project covers 17 linear miles and would benefit 13,400 acres.



LOXAHATCHEE SLOUGH  
PADDLE TRAIL

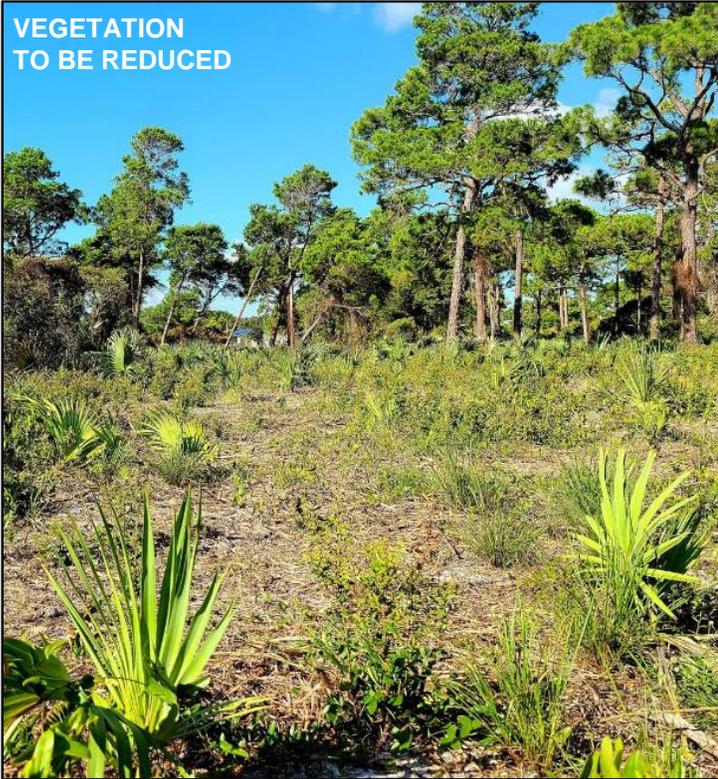
**Fuel Reduction Continues:** ERM has begun work at Jupiter Ridge, Juno Dunes, and Frenchman's Forest Natural Areas to reduce vegetation using mechanical tools. Such fuel reduction reduces the risk of wildfire activity and improves the health of the ecosystem.



GREEN TREE  
FROG

**Herpetofaunal Survey Protocol:** ERM staff is in the process of developing a herpetofaunal (reptile and amphibian) survey protocol to perform at Palm Beach County Natural Areas. These surveys will help inform staff about wildlife biodiversity on the sites they manage. In addition, these animal communities are helpful indicators of ecosystem integrity, and monitoring their composition can be useful in evaluating the health of the ecosystems. Preliminary evening surveys have identified several species not previously seen at various sites.

**VEGETATION  
TO BE REDUCED**



**Swallow-tailed Kite Research:** In partnership with Avian Research Conservation Institute and Palm Beach Zoo & Conservation Society, ERM staff tagged 3 swallow-tailed kites and attached GPS transmitters. Tracking their movements allows researchers to learn about breeding behavior, habitat use, roosting locations, their migratory path, and winter activity ranges in South America. Swallow-tailed kites will be migrating back to South America in August and you can follow the migration story at <http://www.swallow-tailedkites.org/>.



SWALLOW-TAILED  
KITE



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