

May 2020 Project Status Report

Department of Environmental Resources Management



Beaches: ERM's Coastal Resources Program recently wrapped up a busy construction schedule in preparation for the start of hurricane season. Beaches are open for business countywide and ready to protect our 47 miles of Atlantic coastline from future storm impacts.



RETRIEVING THE
TEMPERATURE SENSORS



OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Sand Temperature Study: In partnership with Florida Atlantic University's Department of Geosciences, ERM staff members are monitoring the temperature of beach sand in Jupiter. The purpose of the study is to determine how different types of sand impact sea turtle habitat. In particular, the sex of sea turtle hatchlings is known to be influenced by the temperature of the sand around the nest. Staff collect data from multiple temperature logging sensors, which are buried in the sand at varying locations and depths.

Tarpon Cove: The next phase of the project will begin with the placement of donated sand from the Town of Palm Beach marina expansion project. The sand will be used to create two mangrove islands, a bird nesting island, and seagrass habitat. The project is located north of the previously-constructed islands, between Barcelona Road and Sunset Road. Placement is expected to continue for at least a year.



VOLUNTEER
MANGROVE PLANTING



TARPON COVE

Lake Worth Lagoon Volunteer Planting: Sixteen members of Sea Turtle Adventures' iCare program spent a week planting mangrove seedlings at ERM's Ibis Isle restoration site. The mission of the non-profit program is to provide nature-based programs and life skills training to adults with disabilities.



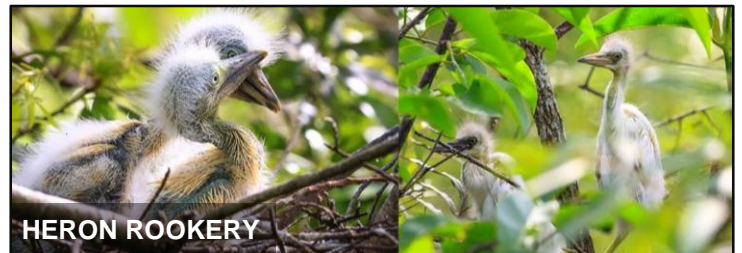
Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners

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

Virtual Field Trips: Staff conducted a series of live virtual field trips for the Palm Springs Middle School Science Department. The trips took students through numerous natural areas and introduced them to the flora and fauna of different habitats.



Derelict Vessel Removal: Palm Beach County received a grant from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to fund the removal of three derelict vessels. Two are near the north end of Peanut Island and one is at the Munyon Island docks. The grant covers 100% of the removal costs, and the vessels are slated to be removed in July.



Heron Nesting: Staff documented a record nesting season at a heron rookery in the Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area. 158 nests were found, more than double the 74 that were observed last year. Restoration efforts like Loxahatchee Slough provide critical habitat for these species, which in recent years have suffered sharp nesting declines throughout South Florida.

Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative Legislative Funding Request: The 2021 Legislative Funding Request application period is open through July 31, 2020. Municipalities and special taxing districts located along the Lagoon and within its watershed are encouraged to submit shovel ready projects such as environmental restoration, septic-to-sewer conversions and stormwater system improvements aimed at improving the water quality and habitats of the Lagoon. Please visit <http://discover.pbcgov.org/erm/LWLagoon/Funding-Request.aspx> for more information and to download the application, or contact ERM-LWLI@pbcgov.org with any questions.

Based on Palm Beach County (PBC) Emergency Order No. 2020-005, all PBC Natural Areas have been reopened to the public. Such areas shall be open for the safe, responsible enjoyment of passive and limited active use. Such activities shall be done in accordance with CDC Guidelines and in compliance with the requirements set forth in Attachment 4 of the Emergency Order.

ERM will continue to monitor the status of the COVID-19 pandemic in our area and will communicate any changes in the status of our PBC Natural Areas as those changes are made.

Please be safe and continue to monitor our social media (@PBCERM on Facebook and Instagram) and website (www.pbcerm.com or www.pbcnaturalareas.com) for updates on the status of our PBC Natural Areas. For updates on other PBC operations and services, please visit the county's dedicated COVID-19 page: <http://discover.pbcgov.org/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx>.



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