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AND DUKE ENERGY
MARICULTURE
CENTER

HABITAT
HERO

BISCAYNE
BAY REDFISH
RELEASE

2025

STAR



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THE ALL-NEW YAMAHA 4.3L V6 OFFSHORE F350.



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THE PUBLICATION DEDICATED TO CONSERVING AND PROTECTING FLORIDA'S MARINE RESOURCES

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For additional information, please visit REDFISHTag.com



Withdrawal of Vessel Speed Reduction Rule Clears Way for Technology-Centered Solution for Marine Mammal Protection

Following the formal withdrawal of the proposed expansion of the 2008 North Atlantic Right Whale Vessel Strike Reduction Rule, the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) released the following statement:

"This is a huge step forward for American boat manufacturers, coastal economies, and outdoor enthusiasts across the U.S.," said Frank Hugelmeyer, President and CEO of the National Marine Manufacturers Association, the largest trade association in North America for the recreational boating industry. "The way this rule was drafted gave rulemaking a bad name and created an entirely preventable dynamic. Coastal communities are part of the fabric of this nation, and their livelihoods should never be put at risk by the federal government."

"Now the work begins by the federal government to create a durable solution that uses state-of-the-art technology to protect our endangered whale species without jeopardizing the livelihoods of hardworking American businesses and families that rely on access to the Atlantic Ocean."

The rule faced mounting criticism

from NMMA and the recreational boating and fishing community for its reliance on flawed data and disregard for technological advancements. The proposed rule would have led to widespread economic harm and safety concerns without significantly benefiting marine conservation efforts.

"ASA is happy to see the draconian vessel speed rule sent back to NOAA so that we can find a collaborative, long-term solution that effectively mitigates the potential for vessel strikes and incorporates innovative safety technologies," said Mike Leonard, Vice President of Government Affairs at the American Sportfishing Association (ASA). "We look forward to working with the Trump Administration, Congress, and other stakeholders to protect North Atlantic right whales, anglers, boaters and the \$230 billion sportfishing industry."

NMMA was joined in its opposition to the rule by a chorus of charter captains, manufacturers, local and federal policymakers, small business owners and community leaders who expressed concerns about how the proposed rule would have jeopardized



the more than 810,000 American jobs and the \$230 billion in economic contributions supported by the recreational boating industry – far exceeding NOAA's estimates. Furthermore, the proposed rule was projected to cancel or alter 122,000 recreational fishing trips annually, a key economic driver for many coastal communities.

"We are hopeful NOAA will join with us to develop a durable, practical approach to this critical issue. But it is noteworthy that NOAA's withdrawal notice today highlighted only the Administration's time running out without acknowledging the numerous flaws in their approach. NOAA can do better, and we expect more from America's science agency," said Jeff Angers, president of the Center for



**WE LOOK FORWARD
TO WORKING
WITH THE TRUMP
ADMINISTRATION,
CONGRESS, AND
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS
TO PROTECT NORTH
ATLANTIC RIGHT
WHALES, ANGLERS,
BOATERS AND
THE \$230 BILLION
SPORTFISHING
INDUSTRY.**

Sportfishing Policy (CSP). “We strongly encourage the federal government to work alongside stakeholders on a science-driven plan that genuinely protects the NARW; supports the sustainability of our oceans, and ensures public access to America’s public waters.”

Instead of implementing blanket speed restrictions, NMMA and the recreational boating community continue to emphasize the need for technology-driven solutions to safeguard both marine life and coastal economies. Innovations such as infrared imagery detection, 3D sonar mapping, and innovative marine radar algorithms can offer targeted, effective protection for endangered marine life without imposing crippling economic consequences or creating safety risks for boaters.





NOAA Drops Solution in Search of a Problem with Secretarial Amendment

Federal agency insists significant restrictions are necessary to recover booming red snapper fishery

NOAA Fisheries released Amendment 59 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic last week, which would among other things, prohibit bottom fishing for 55 species, including red snapper, off much of the Florida Atlantic coast for three months of the year. The proposed Secretarial Amendment was prepared by NOAA Fisheries as part of a legal settlement that requires the agency to take action to end supposed overfishing of red snapper in the South Atlantic primarily by recreational discards, which has been regularly disputed by the recreational angling community.

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council has long been frustrated by the lack of reliable information on both recreational fishing effort and on the present status of the red snapper population in the South Atlantic (read more at *Feds Poised to Close Door on Bottom Angling in the South Atlantic*).

“NOAA has essentially asked anglers and the Council to accept dramatic management action for a wildly expanding red snapper population based on information that managers know to be incorrect and/or highly uncertain,” said Bill Bird, CCA’s National Government Relations Committee Chairman. “Having failed to provide substantive information to the South Atlantic Council to justify radical management measures, NOAA has now published a Secretarial Amendment that circumvents the fishery management process entirely.”

The South Atlantic red snapper fishery has evolved into one of the most frustrating and exasperating fishery management debacles in the country. Regardless of what is in the Secretarial Amendment, the fact that it has come to this is a very telling statement on the state of federal fisheries management. It is failing. If NOAA has to resort to an end-run around the Council because rational people can’t bring themselves to make decisions on the faulty information NOAA is providing, the system is failing. If managers can’t get basic stock assessment information in a timely fashion, the system is failing. If there is no trust between anglers and the federal management system, the system is failing.

The current debacle over South Atlantic red snapper is, at its core, a paper crisis driven almost entirely by how NOAA chooses to extrapolate recreational discards from its discredited data program, but NOAA officials have stubbornly pursued unnecessary, draconian management measures rather than admit its models and procedures are deeply flawed.

Amendment 59 was posted to the Federal Register on

Friday, Jan. 10 and the public has 60 days to provide comments. We are hopeful that the State of Florida and the new Administration will engage on this matter to come to a sensible, state-driven solution to the endemic problems in federal management of the recreational angling sector.

The following are some of the proposals in the Secretarial Amendment (Amendment 59):

Raising the Recreational Annual Catch Limit

For many years, the recreational annual catch limit has been 29,656 red snapper based on the previous assessment which contained information through 2019. NOAA has apparently completed a remarkably fast, remarkably stealth update assessment – SEDAR 73 – with information through 2024 that would raise the recreational annual catch limit to 85,000 fish. The South Atlantic Council has been asking for this exact type of assessment update for years to no avail and it will be interesting to learn how NOAA was able to finally produce it in time to support its Secretarial Amendment.

Change in the fishing season

The current fishing year for South Atlantic red snapper is January 1 through December 31. The proposed rule would change the recreational and commercial fishing season to May 1 through April 30. The current recreational season has been weekends only, with weekends defined as Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The proposed rule redefines weekends to just Saturday and Sunday. For the 2025-2026 fishing year, this proposed rule would change the start of the recreational fishing season to begin on the second Saturday in July.

Snapper-Grouper Discard Reduction Season

From December 1 through the end of February, private recreational or for-hire fisherman “would not be allowed to fish for, harvest, or possess a species in the South Atlantic snapper-grouper fishery management unit (FMU) from the South Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) that were harvested with hook-and-line fishing gear.” There are 55 species in the snapper-grouper management complex and so this is in effect a three-month bottom closure. It would be in place during that time and from the Florida/Georgia state border to Cape Canaveral, Florida. NOAA estimates this would reduce recreational discards by 24 percent.

Season Length

NOAA projects that these measures would increase the recreational fishing season length from 1-2 days to 5-9 days.



Ingredients

Extra virgin olive oil

Salt and pepper

- 9 mini red, orange and yellow sweet peppers, seeded and sliced (3 of each color)
- 3 jalapeño, seeded and sliced
- 1 12 oz. can evaporated milk
- 1 12 oz package quesadilla melting cheese
- 4 oz cream cheese
- 1 tsp Cajun seasoning
- 1 clove garlic, grated
- 1 c green onion, thinly sliced
- 12 oz fresh lump crab meat
- 2 bags thick tortilla chips
- 2 c shredded Monterey jack cheese

Garnish: lime wedges, cubed avocado, sliced green onion

Cajun Crab Nachos

RECIPE & PHOTOS BY HEATHER PETEREK JOINCCA.ORG/RECIPES

Directions

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Arrange sweet peppers and jalapeño on a large baking sheet, drizzle with the olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake for about 10 minutes to soften. Remove from oven and set aside for assembly. Leave oven on for cooking nachos.

In a medium saucepan, heat evaporated milk until hot, but not boiling. Slowly add in cheeses, Cajun seasoning and garlic, and whisk continuously until smooth. Once all ingredients are thoroughly combined, gently stir in crab and green onions. Remove from heat and set aside.

Distribute a layer of chips on a 14"x19" sheet pan, greased and lined with parchment paper. Spoon desired amount of the crab mixture over the chips then top with another layer of chips. Spoon over more of the crab mixture, then top with the shredded Monterey jack cheese. NOTE: you will have enough crab mixture to make two full 14"x19" sheet pans full of nachos.

Bake in the preheated oven for 15 to 20 minutes or until the cheese is melted.

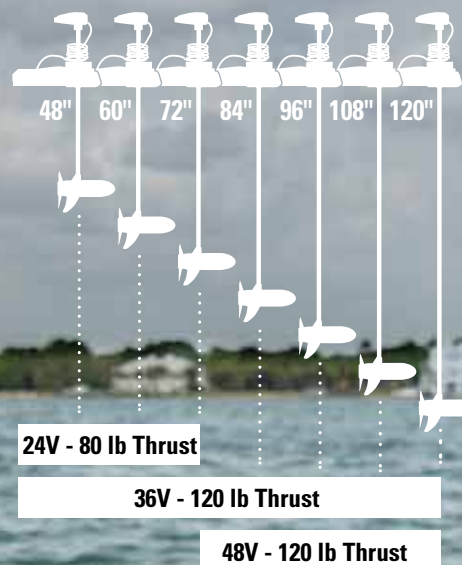
Remove from oven and top with roasted peppers, avocados and green onion. Serve immediately with lime wedges. SERVES A CROWD.



SET IT, FORGET IT, CATCH MORE FISH.

WITH RHODAN'S LATEST, REIMAGINED
PRECISION GPS-GUIDED TROLLING MOTOR

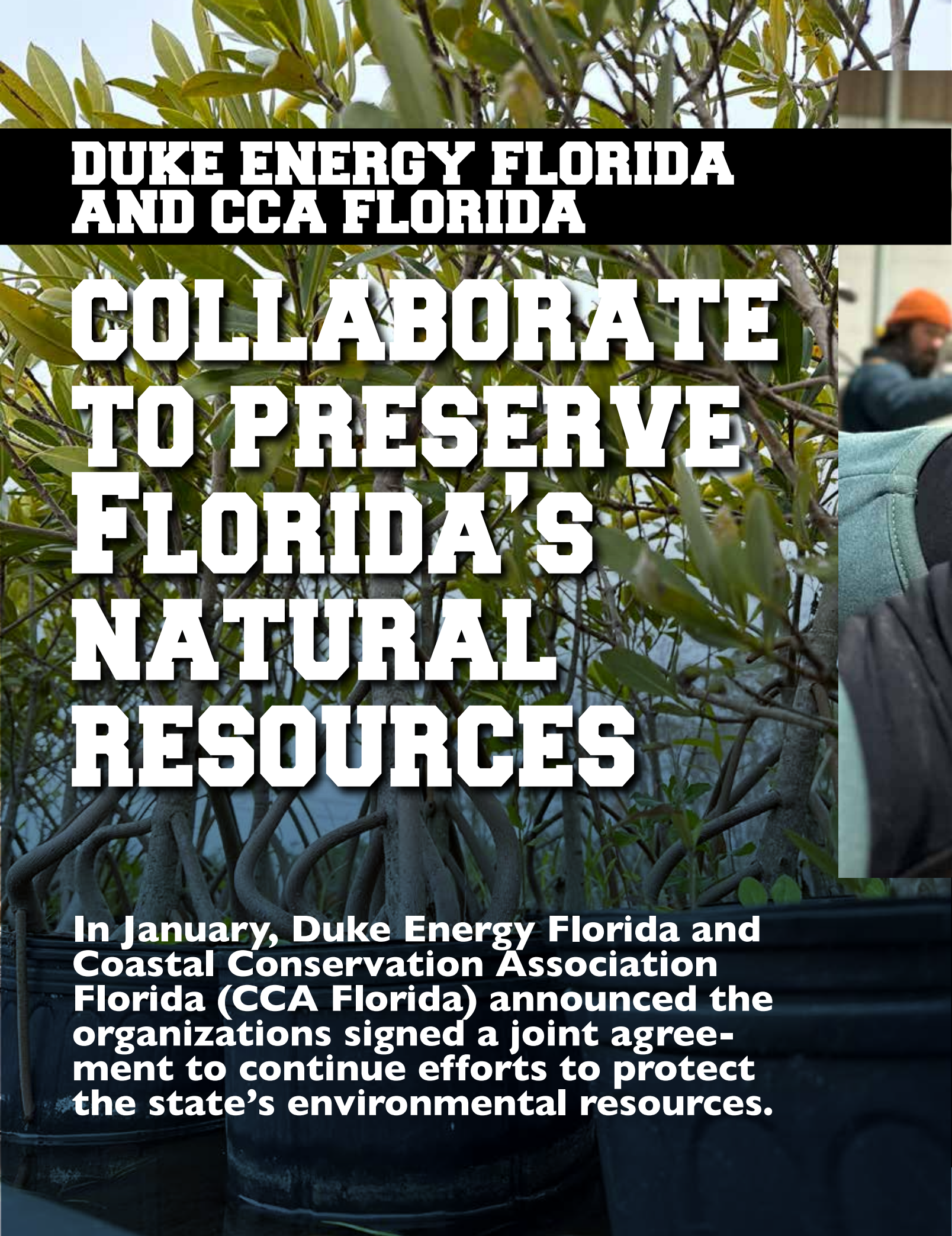
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WITH RAYMARINE, SIMRAD, & LOWRANCE.**



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The background of the entire graphic is a photograph of mangrove trees with their characteristic prop roots. On the right side, there is a vertical inset photograph showing a person wearing an orange hard hat and a blue wetsuit, likely engaged in environmental work.

**DUKE ENERGY FLORIDA
AND CCA FLORIDA**

**COLLABORATE
TO PRESERVE
FLORIDA'S
NATURAL
RESOURCES**

In January, Duke Energy Florida and Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida) announced the organizations signed a joint agreement to continue efforts to protect the state's environmental resources.



Additionally, Duke Energy Florida is providing \$100,000 to CCA Florida to ensure CCA Florida can increase its conservation efforts across the Sunshine State.



CCA Florida, the state's leading organization dedicated to marine fisheries and conservation, education and advocacy, first established a relationship with the company in 2017 with a shared vision of responsible environmental stewardship.



**THIS NEW
AGREEMENT
SOLIDIFIES A
CONTINUED
COMMITMENT
TO WORK
TOGETHER
IN FLORIDA'S
COMMUNITIES
TO RESTOCKING
AND CULTURING
FISH SPECIES,
RESTORING
HABITATS AND
PROTECTING
THE OVERALL
HEALTH OF
THE STATE'S
NATURAL
RESOURCES.**

"CCA FLORIDA IS FOCUSED ON IMPROVING AND CREATING SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES, COASTAL HABITATS AND WATERWAYS IN FLORIDA."

**CCA FLORIDA EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR BRIAN GORSKI SAID**

"TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT EXTENDS OUR COMMITMENT WITH DUKE ENERGY FLORIDA AND OUR MUTUAL DEDICATION TO PROTECTING FLORIDA'S MARINE HABITAT FOR TODAY AND GENERATIONS TO COME."

Duke Energy Florida's Crystal River Mariculture Center has been in operation for more than 30 years, establishing itself as one of Florida's most successful hatcheries.

Together with CCA Florida, it has released more than 5.3 million fish and crustaceans along Florida's coast. The Mariculture Center's aquatic habitat restoration initiatives planted 40 million clams in the Indiana River Lagoon and more than 100,000 eelgrass, mangroves and marsh grass.





“Duke Energy Florida values environmental stewardship and the important benefits it provides to the communities we serve,” Melissa Seixas, Duke Energy Florida state president said. “This new agreement with CCA Florida demonstrates our commitment to preserving Florida’s habitat and restoring precious natural resources.”



2025 **STAR** ARE YOU READY?

This summer 2025 CCA Florida STAR presented by Yamaha will have anglers across the state on the hunt for tagged redfish & dolphin sporting a green tag! Since the event's launch on Memorial Day weekend 2015, Florida's largest family-friendly fishing competition has awarded 18 boats, two trucks, \$1 million dollars in college scholarships and 100 prizes annually to total nearly \$4.2 million dollars in prizes. The 2025 CCA Florida STAR competi-

tion will offer even more exciting opportunities to win!

That's right! Participants will have the opportunity to win a boat, motor and trailer package without having to catch a fish. 2025 STAR will provide those participants who register before April 30th two raffle entries (\$100 value) in the Triple Header Drawing for a Dek Kat Trilogy, Spyder Vapor FX19 and a Carolina Skiff all powered by Yamaha. But the opportunities don't stop there



THE 2025 CCA FLORIDA STAR COMPETITION WILL OFFER EVEN MORE EXCITING WAYS TO WIN!

... if you register after April 30th and before May 24th participants will receive 1 raffle entry in the Triple Header Drawing. The drawing will be held on September 4th and STAR will give away all three boats. Pretty exciting!

Last year, STAR simplified the competition to make the winning easier. By having an inshore and offshore division with three entries per day for each division which includes most species and offers 12 winners

per division. The signature Tagged Redfish Division presented by T H Marine offered 7 different boats up for grabs and had 14 tagged redfish recaptured but none of the anglers were registered in the competition and a CCA member. The Tigress Tagged Dolphin Division offered \$10,000 cash or scholarship but had no winner. This year's STAR competition will release tagged

(continued on page 24)

STAR HAS ADDED
A NEW DIVISION
**THE DRUM SPOTS
“LOTS-A-SPOTS”**
DIVISION PRESENTED
BY GULF STATES
AUTOMATION.
CATCH THE REDFISH
WITH THE MOST
SPOTS AND WIN!

redfish on the east and west coast on average four tagged redfish per coastal county and 8 in Charlotte and Citrus Counties and 20 tagged Dolphin in the lower keys. Catch a winning tagged fish, submit the photo with the 2025 STAR identifier to win boats and prizes but the angler better be registered and a CCA member or it will just be another SAD fish story.

If catching a STAR tagged redfish is something you

just don't think you will ever do, STAR has added a NEW Division. The Drum Spots “Lots-A-Spots” Division presented by Gulf States Automation. Catch the redfish with the most spots and Win a cool SUP Customs LIVEwatersports Hybrid Skiff with Yamaha motor and Minn Kota trolling motor and replica of your fish from Ross Currington art. There are other great prizes in this division for anglers to

(continued on page 27)

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Fish Bites

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Beyond the Surface

Thrash Can Bucket Topper

Carolina Skiff

STAR





win just by catching a redfish with “Lots-A-Spots”.

Just remember, your catch doesn’t have to have a tag or spots to win, ANY non-tagged species can win some great prizes in the Inshore, Offshore, Kayak and Conservation Divisions. If fishing is not your thing, the Costa Kick Plastic Division presented by Papa’s Pilar allows STAR registered, CCA members the ability to collect plastic and trash from the coastal waters and shoreline

and submit a photo of every full 5-gallon bucket they collect. All trash must include the 2025 STAR identifier in the photo to earn a shot at a trip to Key West, Costa sunglasses, \$250 gift certificate from West Marine or community service hours for youth anglers.

Youth anglers can submit their catch entries into STAR with an opportunity to win a share of \$100,000

(continued on page 28)

STAR



For more information on
STAR visit our website.
www.ccaflstar.com



in college scholarships in the Youth Scholarship Division presented by Realtree Fishing and if they catch a tagged redfish they can win one of two tiller skiff boats with Yamaha and trailer.

CCA Florida STAR presented by Yamaha and their partners continue to find ways to make the winning easier and to offer amazing prizes in the Tagged Redfish

& Dolphin division, NEW "Lots-A-Spots", Inshore and Offshore Divisions, Native Watercraft Kayak, Power Pole Conservation Division, Youth Scholarship Division and the Costa Kick Plastic Trash Division. Now is the time to get registered to take advantage of the entries in the Triple Header Raffle and to make your summer fishing more rewarding.



*Start up
with ease.
Every time.*

*Run faster,
cleaner,
smoother.*

*Store with
confidence
between use.*

**START
RUN
STORE**



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PROTECTION + PERFORMANCE

2025 STAR



A GREAT REASON TO FISH AND A GREAT WAY TO WIN! REGISTRATION TODAY FOR THE 2025 CCA FLORIDA STAR COMPETITION PRESENTED BY YAMAHA

2025 STAR begins May 24. Get registered today and if you recapture any year's STAR tagged redfish you will win a \$1,000 gift card from Engel Coolers.

To win, just snap a picture of the tagged redfish with the tag still in the fish, submit your photo via our FaceBook page, report to the phone number on the tag and be a current member and registered for 2025 STAR before you catch the fish for the win.

Start planning your fishing trips now to Citrus County (www.discovercrystalriver.com) or Charlotte County, Englewood/ Punta Gorda (www.pureflorida.com) they are all our destination counties and have more tagged redfish than any other counties.

STAR is Florida's largest family-friendly fishing competition giving anglers of all ages endless summer-long fun!

For more information on STAR, please visit www.CCAFLSTAR.com

**CONTRIBUTED
\$12 MILLION**



SINCE 2010, CCA FLORIDA, CCA'S BUILDING CONSERVATION TRUST AND ITS PARTNERS HAVE CONTRIBUTED \$10 MILLION TO REBUILD FLORIDA'S MARINE HABITAT

**100 TONS
OF OYSTERS**



WERE SAVED FROM WASTE BY CCA FLORIDA IN THE LAST THREE YEARS. THUS FAR, 80 OF THE 100 TONS HAVE BEEN RECYCLED AND REDEPLOYED TO CREATE ARTIFICIAL REEFS



**MORE THAN 19,000 MEMBERS
ACROSS FLORIDA'S 67 COUNTIES**

IN LAST 10 YEARS

48

ARTIFICIAL
REEFS



100

HABITAT
PROJECTS



**ADVOCATED
GAMEFISH
STATUS FOR
REDFISH**

ADVOCATES AND CREATES
**AWARENESS
FOR IMPROVING
STATEWIDE
WATER QUALITY**

**WORKED
WITH FWC TO
ENSURE MAXIMUM
ANGLER ACCESS
FOR RED SNAPPER**

**PROTECTING
FLORIDA'S MARINE
RESOURCES AND ANGLERS'
ACCESS FOR MORE
THAN 35 YEARS**

**INITIATED NET BAN
CONSTITUTIONAL
AMENDMENT**

HELPED CONGRESS
INTRODUCE DESCENDING
DEVICE BILL AND
**FORAGE FISH
CONSERVATION ACT**

HELPED BAN LONGLINES
**FOR BILLFISH
AND PELAGIC SPECIES**



**\$1,000,000 IN CCA FLORIDA YOUTH
COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS HAVE BEEN AWARDED SINCE 2015**



\$25 FROM EACH TAG GOES
DIRECTLY TO CCA
FLORIDA'S STATEWIDE
WATER QUALITY, HABITAT AND
RESTOCKING INITIATIVES

**CCA FLORIDA WORKED
WITH THE FLORIDA
LEGISLATURE
TO CREATE THE
CONSERVE FLORIDA'S
FISHERIES FLORIDA
LICENSE PLATE**

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Scan to watch how to prepare
at @catch_cook on Instagram.

"On a blackened snapper kick over the weekend, maybe mainly because my new YETI cast iron pans make it so easy. Kinda obsessed. I made my own blackening spice, but you can buy store-bought and is just as good. Dip in melted butter, coat with spice, put in a screaming hot pan and baste with even more butter. About 3 minutes per side and done. Serve with lemon wedges and throw in some cheesy raters au gratin for good measure."



Blackened Red Snapper with Au Gratin Potatoes

AU GRATIN POTATOES:

- 4 russet potatoes, sliced into 1/4" medallions
- 1 1/2 c heavy cream
- 1/2 c whole milk
- 1/4 c all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp garlic salt
- 2 c grated sharp or mild Cheddar

BLACKENED RED SNAPPER:

- 4 large red snapper fillets
- 1 stick unsalted butter
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 3-4 tbsp blackening spice (store-bought or recipe below)

Avocado or canola oil for cooking

GARNISH:

- Lemon wedges
- Fresh parsley

BLACKENING SPICE:

(Combine all thoroughly.)

- 1 tbsp paprika
- 2 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp cayenne
- 2 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano

AU GRATIN POTATOES: Preheat oven to 400° and grease an 8" cast iron skillet (I used the new YETI cast iron skillets for this recipe, amazing quality!) or baking dish.

In a large bowl whisk the cream, milk, flour and garlic salt until well-incorporated. Stack the potato medallions to the prepared baking dish and pour the cream mixture evenly all over the top.

Cover the skillet with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake another 20-30 minutes. Just before serving, top dish with cheese and return it to the oven until the cheese is melted and bubbly, about 5 minutes.

BLACKENED RED SNAPPER: Heat a 10" cast iron skillet over high heat for about 3-5 minutes, until very hot. While your skillet heats, prepare your fillets.

Place butter and minced garlic in a microwave-safe dish and heat in microwave until completely melted. Dip each fillet in melted garlic butter then generously coat on both sides with seasoning. Repeat with all fillets until all are coated.

Add about 2 tablespoons of oil to your hot skillet (oil will likely smoke). Gently place fillets in skillet without overcrowding. After about 2 minutes of cooking, spoon over about 1 tablespoon of the melted garlic butter over each fillet. Cook an additional 2 minutes or until the underside looks charred. Carefully flip fillets and again spoon over about 1 tablespoon over each and cook an additional 1-2 minutes or until fish is cooked through. Transfer to a warm oven and repeat with remaining fish.

TO SERVE: Add a generous portion of potatoes and 1 or 2 fillets to a plate. Top entire plate with a spoonful of the melted garlic butter, squeeze of lemon, fresh parsley and chopped green onion.

Substitutions or notes: The red snapper can be substituted with any white, flaky fish. If your fillets are very large, you can cut them in half.

Featured Pairing from WINE FOR THE PEOPLE

Wine For the People's 2022 La Valencia Sauvignon Blanc, grown in the mountains of West Texas, is a perfect match for Gulf Red Snapper. Bright with baked citrus notes, a creamy texture, and clean finish will balance the cheesey potatoes and smoky, charred fish.



COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION FLORIDA
AND THE DUKE ENERGY MARICULTURE CENTER

50,000 REDFISH RELEASED IN BISCAYNE BAY



restocking

The partners released 50,000 in-phase redfish along Florida's East Coast to continue its **Release the East** initiative

(continued on page 32)





On March 5, Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida), the state's leading organization dedicated to marine fisheries conservation, education and advocacy, joined the Duke Energy Mariculture Center to continue its redfish restocking initiative, "Release the

50,000 REDFISH IN BISCAYNE BAY

Today's release marks a pivotal moment in our ongoing efforts to restore and protect one of Florida's most sought-after inshore species

In collaboration with **Duke Energy and **CCA Florida's Dade and Homestead Chapters**, releasing 50,000 redfish in Biscayne Bay will help replenish this iconic fishery for today and future generations.**

**CCA Florida Executive Director
Brian Gorski**

East,” and released 50,000 in-phase, hatchery-reared, juvenile redfish (averaging 4 inches in length) in the waters of Biscayne Bay in an effort to combat the decreasing population along Florida's East Coast.

In recent years, the redfish population has drastically declined as a result of water

quality issues and loss of habitat. To counteract these effects, CCA Florida and its partners have taken a proactive approach to habitat restoration, water quality initiatives, fisheries management and restocking

(continued on page 34)

FISH HOW YOU WANT
ALL DAY



The Power-Pole CHARGE Marine Power Management Station does the work of three devices — a traditional battery charger, a charge-on-the-run and an emergency start system — all in one compact unit. The CHARGE automatically manages your power supply to all of your batteries and with the C-Monster app, you can monitor those batteries in real time, giving you the power to fish how you want for as long as you need to without having to worry about your power supply.

For complete details or to find a dealer, go to power-pole.com.



A man in a blue t-shirt and a grey baseball cap is leaning over the side of a white boat. He is holding a large, silver metal mesh net that is filled with many small, silvery fish, likely redfish. He is in the process of releasing the fish into the dark water. In the background, several other people are visible on the boat, some looking towards the camera and others looking at the fish. The scene is outdoors, likely on a body of water.

restocking

50,000
REDFISH
IN BISCAYNE BAY

**The redfish population
has drastically declined as a result
of water quality issues and loss of habitat.**

restocking

50,000 REDFISH IN BISCAYNE BAY

efforts for one of Florida's most sought-after inshore fish, the redfish.

"Today's release marks a pivotal moment in our ongoing efforts to restore and protect one of Florida's most



sought-after inshore species,” CCA Florida Executive Director Brian Gorski said. “In collaboration with Duke Energy and CCA Florida’s Dade and Homestead Chapters, releasing 50,000 redfish in Bis-

cayne Bay will help replenish this iconic fishery for today and future generations.”

The latest restocking efforts for the nonprofit-corporate partnership are part

(continued on page 38)



of a multifunctional and multiyear strategy to rebuild and maintain game fish stocks. Since 2018, CCA Florida and Duke Energy have released more than 400,000 redfish along Florida's coasts to help provide abun-

dant recreational fishing opportunities.

"Duke Energy remains committed to conserving and improving the water quality, biodiversity and the overall environment across the state where Floridians



restocking

50,000
REDFISH
IN BISCAYNE BAY

live, work, and play,” said Melissa Seixas, Duke Energy Florida state president. “Thank you to the dedicated staff and members of CCA Florida for working alongside Duke

(continued on page 41)



P O W E R Y O U R P U R S U I T

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restocking

Duke Energy remains committed to conserving and improving the **water quality, biodiversity and the overall environment** across the state where Floridians live, work, and play.

Melissa Seixas
Duke Energy Florida State President

(continued on page 42)

50,000
REDFISH
IN BISCAYNE BAY



restocking



Energy's Crystal River Mariculture Center for the last five years to ensure the 'Release the East' campaign became the success we celebrate today."

The release was held at Matheson Hammock Park. Together, the partners released 50,000 redfish from the CCA Florida Duke



50,000 REDFISH IN BISCAYNE BAY

Energy Mariculture Center. Nearly 100 volunteers, FWC Chairman Rodney Barreto and Captain Rick Murphy, host of Florida Insider Fishing Report and Sportsman's Adventures, attended and support the effort.

"Conserving the redfish population is a shared goal. The collaborative redfish re-

stocking efforts between FWC, CCA Florida, and Duke Energy are already showing promising results, ensuring abundant recreational fishing opportunities for future generations," said FWC Chairman Rodney Barreto. "This is a testament to the power of collective action in preserving our natural resources."

HABITAT HERO



CAPTAIN CHUCK GLEICHMANN







Crunchy Dijon-Maple Salmon

Cozy up with this wintertime dish that only takes about 30 minutes to prepare. A toasted nut and crunchy panko crust perfectly pairs with a sweet-tangy glaze that looks and tastes impressive.

Ingredients

SALMON

- 4 salmon fillets, skin removed
- ½ c finely-chopped pecans
- ½ c panko breadcrumbs
- 1 tsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tbsp butter, melted
- Salt and pepper
- Fresh parsley, chopped

GLAZE

- ½ c pure maple syrup
- ¼ c Dijon mustard
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ tsp black pepper

Directions

Preheat oven to 425° F. Grease and line a baking sheet with foil.

In a bowl, stir together pecans, panko, thyme, butter, brown sugar and a pinch or two each of salt and pepper. Set aside.

In a small pot or sauce pan, whisk together maple syrup, Dijon mustard, garlic, and black pepper.

Place salmon fillets on the prepared baking sheet, skin side down. Season with salt and pepper, and spoon over some of the glaze mixture, just enough to lightly coat each fillet. Then top each with equally divided amounts of the crust mixture, gently pressing to adhere.

Place salmon fillets in the oven and roast for about 12 minutes, until the fish flakes easily with a fork, or to your desired doneness. Once cooked through, move your pan to the lowest rack and broil for 1-2 minutes to further toast the crust. Be sure to watch during this step, it will burn easily if left too long.

While the salmon is roasting, bring the remaining glaze mixture to a boil over medium heat, stirring frequently. Reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring often, until the glaze thickens to syrupy consistency, about 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste if desired.

Once salmon is finished in the oven, serve immediately. Plate by placing each fillet onto your plate and drizzle with as much or as little glaze as you'd like. Serve with your favorite side dish and garnish with chopped fresh parsley. SERVES 4.

RECIPE & PHOTOS BY HEATHER PETEREK | JOINCCA.ORG/RECIPES

CAPTAIN CHUCK GLEICHMANN

HABITAT HERO



Several years ago, CCA Florida began recognizing our members who have gone above and beyond with regard to habitat restoration in SeaWatch Magazine. In this edition we are recognizing Capt. Chuck Gleichmann of the CCA Mid Coast Chapter as the next Habitat Hero. Capt. Chuck, originally from Queens, NY, has loved fishing for as long as he can remember. It all started around age seven or so, when Chuck's father started taking him to the Great South Bay to fish for fluke. This became an annual trip and it didn't take long for Chuck to win the local tournament with a 15lb. fluke. From there, Chuck began fishing all throughout Long Island for everything from striped bass to scallops. He later married into a fishing family which led him to offshore fishing, targeting tuna and sharks off the coast of Montauk. Him and his wife Patricia of 53 years, later moved to Miami, FL in 1980. As expected, Chuck brought his boat and started fishing the gulf stream regularly and made frequent trips to the Bahamas.

In 2000, Chuck bought a house in Ormond Beach, FL and discovered "skinny water fishing" as he calls it. He then acquired his captains license and started running charters full time for about 10 years. Still to this day, Chuck's favorite fish to catch is a tie between redfish and snook. Chuck commented, "redfish for their bull strength and beauty, and snook because they are smarter than redfish...". Chuck and his wife, Patricia, now live full time in Ormond Beach and they enjoy fishing together, good food and wine, and the beautiful place they live. They have one daughter, Tricia, and two grandsons, Nick and Jack. One grandson likes to fish and one plays golf, both of Chuck's favorite hobbies.

Chuck originally pursued a degree in Applied Thermodynamics from NY Institute of Technology. He started working as a design engineer and was employed at a number of major A/C manufactures throughout his career. He eventually made his way into sales and finally

retired as VP of Sales. Chuck is now a CCA FL Life Member, and integral part of the Mid Coast Chapter. He joined CCA shortly after he moved to Ormond beach and realized how quickly the marine resources were declining. Him and his wife both became dedicated to do what they can to ensure their grandkids and future generations will be able to fish. They both still serve on the STAR committee and continue to help with the tournament year after year. Chuck originally helped collect and release redfish for the tournament while he was serving as the president of his local fishing club. His efforts now go above and beyond that, while continuing to assist CCA's restocking efforts on the east coast. He has also volunteered at the Whitney Lab in St. Augustine, helping them raise redfish to restock the waters of Volusia and Flagler County.

Last but not least, Chuck has recently gone above and beyond once again to improve the waterways of his local community. Chuck mentioned that he is for-

tunate enough to live on the ICW in Ormond Beach, but it is not the same as it once was. "When we moved here almost 20 years ago, I could walk out to the end of my dock and count the pebbles. Today you can't even see the bottom!", Chuck states. Ormond Beach suffers from many of the same issues as other coastal communities around the state. The area is affected by poor storm water control, eutrophication, and is also twenty miles from the nearest inlet reducing the influx of clean water from the Atlantic. On top of that, the water quality issues in the area seem to garner very little attention as opposed to other areas such as Mosquito Lagoon.

Early last year, Chuck read an article about vertical oyster gardens (VOGs) being used to help clean up the waters of Tampa Bay. Shortly after, Chuck reached out to CCA to see if this was something that would be possible in Ormond Beach. Since then, Chuck and the "Oysters for your Neighborhood" team, have assem-



HABITAT HERO



CAPTAIN
CHUCK GLEICHMANN



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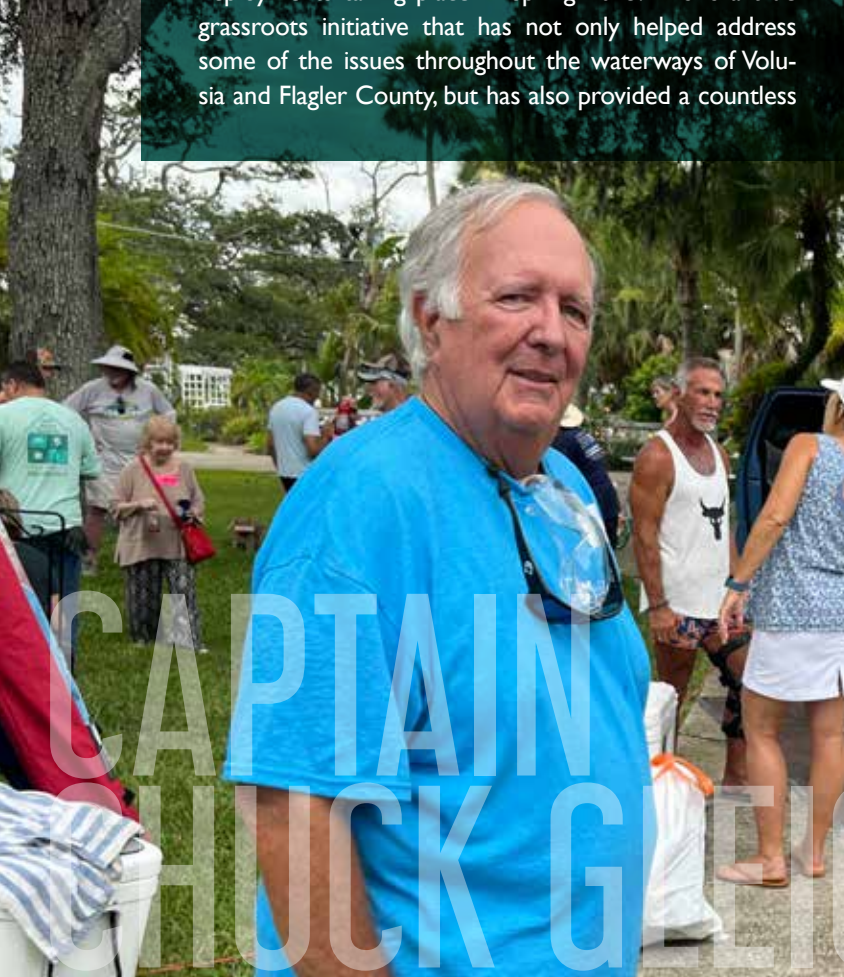
HABITAT HERO

A photograph of an older man with white hair, wearing a blue and white checkered button-down shirt, sitting at a dining table. Next to him is a woman with short white hair and glasses, wearing a dark purple V-neck shirt. They are both smiling at the camera. In the background, other people are seated at tables, and a glass of red wine is visible on the table in the foreground.

bled and deployed over 500 VOGs throughout the ICW in Ormond Beach! The initial interest Chuck received from his local community was overwhelming. It soon became evident that this was turning into something much larger than just Ormond Beach. This led to the Mid Coast Chapter being awarded one of the first "Million Dollar Habitat Pledge" Grants from CCA FL. This grant is now being used to fund VOG workshops outside of Ormond Beach, to help deploy VOGs all throughout the ICW of Volusia and Flagler County. This initiative is just now making way up in Flagler County with the first workshop and deployments taking place in Spring 2025. This is a true grassroots initiative that has not only helped address some of the issues throughout the waterways of Volusia and Flagler County, but has also provided a countless

number of students with community service hours while educating them about the importance of our marine resources. Their motto, "We want our river back!"

Chuck was asked what he would like to see in the future in terms of habitat restoration from the Mid Coast Chapter. He plans to continue to expand the "Oysters for your Neighborhood" VOG program throughout 2025, and also would like to see a mangrove planting on one of their local spoil islands. "I am humbled by this opportunity but our real success is in our volunteers and their passion. Without them none of this could have happened so they should get the credit," Chuck added. He urges anyone that loves the water and our environment to come out to a VOG workshop and get involved regardless whether you fish or not.





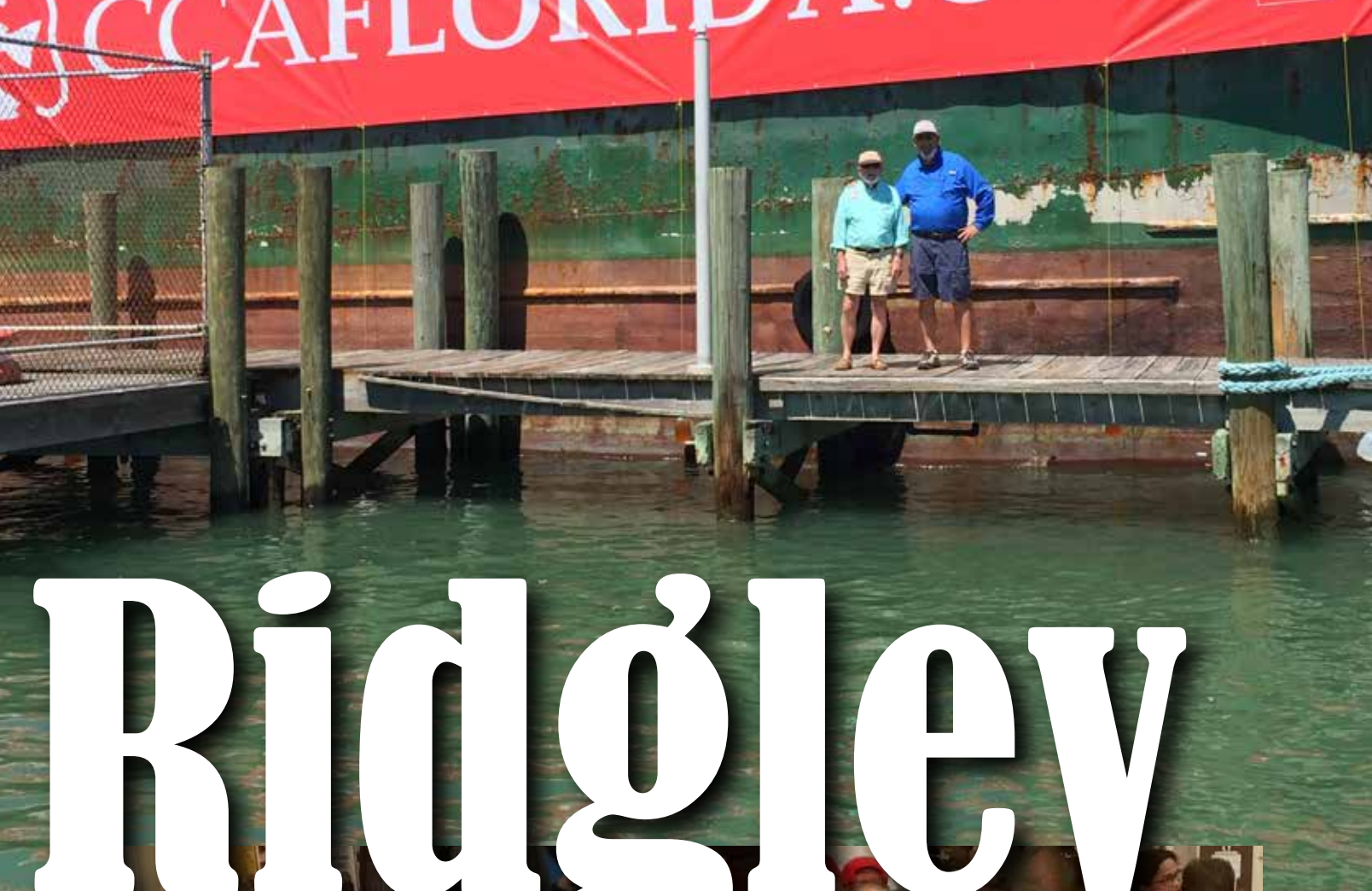
Norm

A Legacy of Dedication To Coastal Conservation

After decades of unwavering commitment to the preservation of Florida's coastal ecosystems, Norm Ridgley is retiring from his volunteer involvement with the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) Florida, having contributed significantly to the organization's efforts at both the local Treasure Coast chapter and the state board level. Ridgley's retirement marks the end of a chapter in his life dedicated to the health and sustainability of Florida's marine habitats, but his impact will continue to be felt by the organization and the communities that benefit from its advocacy.

Ridgley's involvement with CCA Florida began long ago when he realized the urgent need to protect Florida's natural coastal resources from overfishing, habitat destruction, and pollution. Ridgley's passion for safeguarding the state's rich aquatic biodiversity propelled him into volunteer leadership roles at CCA.

As a longtime member of the Treasure Coast chapter, Ridgley spearheaded numerous initiatives aimed at improving local water quality and protecting the habitats that are vital for the region's marine life. His leadership was particularly influential in the



Ridgley





Norm Ridgley

One of the most notable achievements of CCA Florida, with Ridgley's support, has been the organization's focus on habitat restoration projects.

organization's efforts to conserve estuaries, seagrass beds, mangrove forests, and salt marshes—critical habitats that sustain a variety of fish species, including the prized redfish, snook, and trout.

One of the most notable achievements of CCA Florida, with Ridgley's support, has been the organization's focus on habitat restoration projects. These efforts include restoring seagrass meadows, rebuilding oyster reefs, and enhancing coastal wetlands—all of which contribute to cleaner water, healthier fisheries, and more resilient ecosystems. Ridgley's passion for these initiatives was clear in his tireless work on behalf of the organization's mission, ensuring that future generations will have access to the rich natural resources that make Florida's coasts so unique.

Ridgley's retirement may close one chapter of his journey

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Norm Ridgley

with CCA Florida, but it marks the beginning of a new era for the organization, one that will continue to rely on the legacy of leadership and dedication that Ridgley has built. As he steps away from active involvement, the Treasure Coast chapter and CCA Florida's state-wide efforts will undoubtedly carry on his vision of a thriving coastal environment.

For those who have worked alongside him, Ridgley's contributions will never be forgotten. His leadership, passion, and unwavering commitment to the conservation of Florida's coasts have left an indelible mark on CCA Florida and the future of the state's natural resources. His legacy will continue to inspire others to take up the mantle of coastal conservation, ensuring that Florida's coastal habitats remain protected for generations to come.



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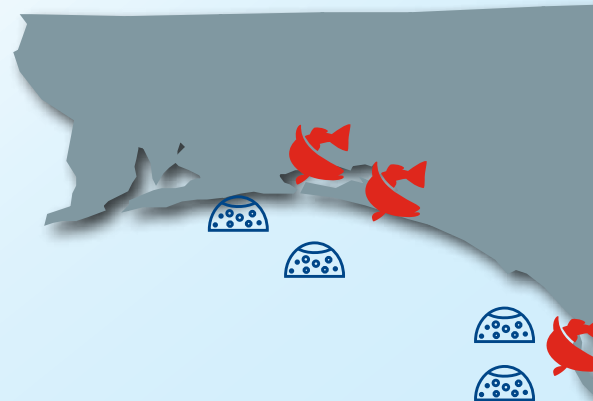
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COMPLETED HABITAT PROJECTS



Since 2010, CCA Florida in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust and our partners, have contributed over \$12 million in habitat projects statewide. Join us in these efforts!



Artificial Reefs



Coastal Cleanups



Research/Monitoring



Clam Restoration



Oyster Restoration



Mangrove Restoration



Seagrass Restoration



Living
Shorelines



Redfish Stock Enhancement
Locations - 490,000 (3"- 30")



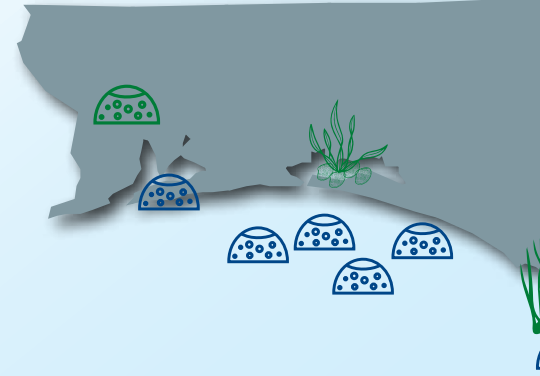
Snook Stock Enhancement
Locations - 5,150 (4"- 6")



Spotted Seatrout Stock
Enhancement Locations -
150,000 (4"- 6")



UPCOMING & ONGOING HABITAT PROJECTS



Since 2010, CCA Florida in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust and our partners, have contributed over \$12 million in habitat projects statewide. Join us in these efforts!



Artificial Reefs



Coastal Cleanups



Research/Monitoring



Clam Restoration



Oyster Restoration



Mangrove Restoration



Seagrass Restoration



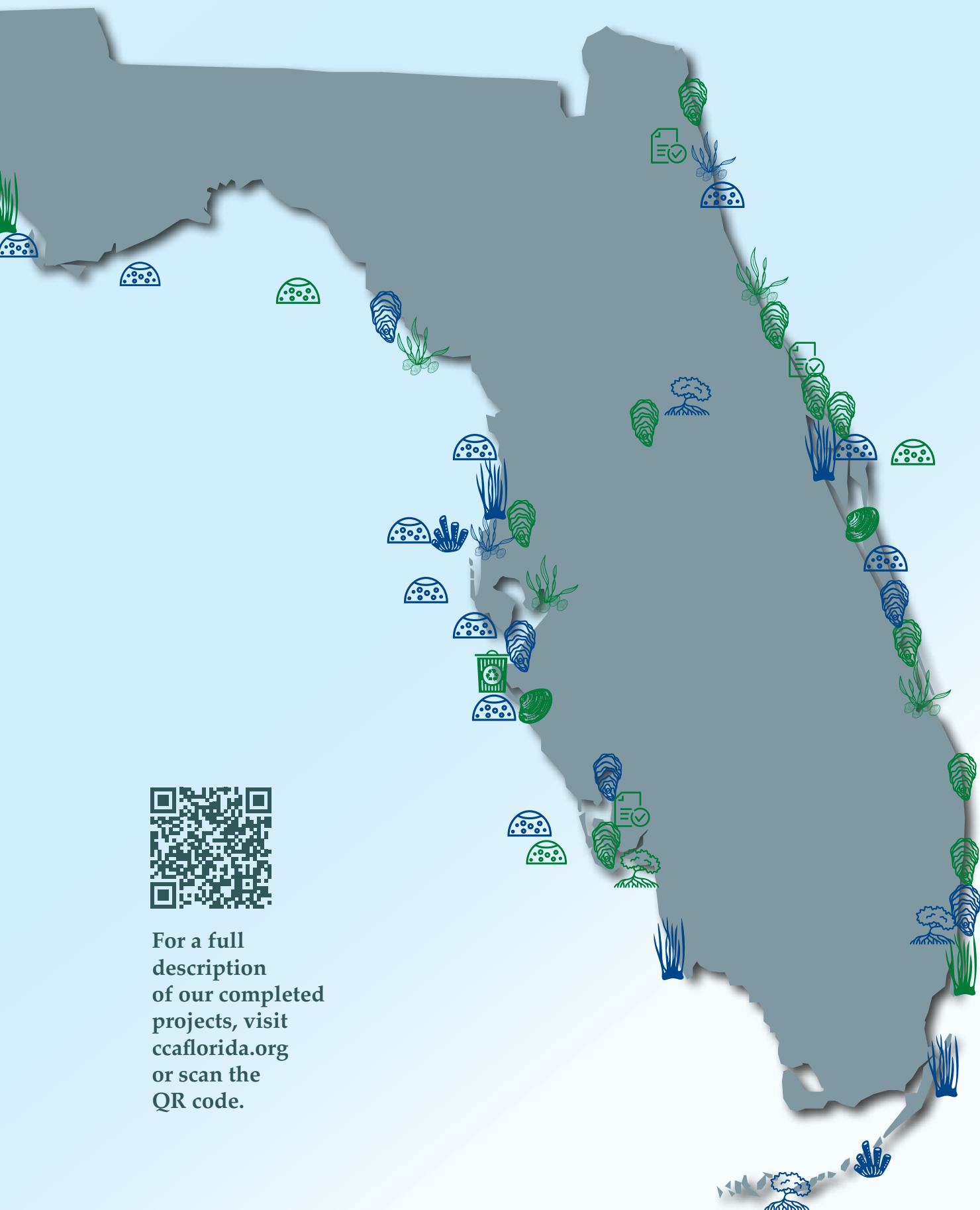
Living
Shorelines



Coral/Sponge
Restoration

● Upcoming

● Ongoing



For a full
description
of our completed
projects, visit
ccaflorida.org
or scan the
QR code.

THE \$1,000,000 HABITAT

Welcome to the future of environmental conservation in Florida. CCA Florida is proud to announce the launch of a monumental grass-roots initiative – The \$1,000,000 Habitat Pledge.

OUR GOAL Elevating Conservation

At the heart of this initiative is a clear and compelling goal: to substantially elevate CCA Florida's conservation commitment through the successful completion of 20 additional coastal habitat projects across the state. These projects represent more than just environmental restoration; they symbolize our collective commitment to conserving Florida's natural beauty and biodiversity for future generations.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW A Statewide Call to Action

Spanning over two years, this initiative places a strong emphasis on engaging our statewide CCA chapters in meaningful local habitat projects. It's an invitation for chapters to actively participate and contribute to our statewide conservation efforts.

Throughout the duration of the program, CCA Florida is set to disburse 20 grants, each valued at \$50,000, to CCA chapters that successfully complete the grant application process and receive approval from our Director of Habitat and Environmental Restoration. This initiative has been made possible through the generous donations of CCA Florida members and our dedicated partners, reflecting a community united in its passion for conservation.

1,000,000 PLEDGE



Launched in January 2024, this groundbreaking effort marks a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to sustainable coastal habitat restoration.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

A Snapshot of Our Commitment



A Pledge of \$1,000,000: We've dedicated a substantial sum to support the success of CCA habitat projects across the state.

Focus on CCA Statewide Chapters: CCA Florida chapters are encouraged to participate and make a difference in their local communities. All grant applications must be approved and submitted by a local CCA Chapter committee.

A Two-Year Initiative: This is a sustained effort, supporting long-term conservation measures and stakeholder engagement.

Annual Donations: \$500,000 will be allocated each year, reflecting our ongoing commitment to this cause.

Selecting 20 Projects: CCA Florida will select 20 habitat projects, each will receive a \$50,000 grant to spearhead this conservation commitment.





PICTURE





PICTURE



RAFFLE PACKAGES RETURN

Choose from the Grander, \$500, \$250 or \$100 raffle pack for the ultimate selection of tickets!

GRANDER - Six (6) Contender 28T tickets, Seven (7) Pathfinder 2200 TRS tickets, Seven (7) Contender 24S tickets and nine (9) Hewes Redfisher 16 tickets (a \$480 savings)

**INTRODUCING VARIETY
RAFFLE PACKAGES**



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Pathfinder 2200 TRS
7 tickets \$350 value

Hewes Redfisher 16
9 tickets \$180 value

Contender 24S
7 tickets \$350 value

THE \$1000 TICKET PACK
29 TICKETS - YOU SAVE \$480

CCA FLORIDA

\$500 - Three (3) Contender 28T tickets, Four (4) Pathfinder 2200 TRS tickets, four (4) Contender 24S tickets and Six (6) Hewes Redfisher 16 tickets (\$320 savings)

**INTRODUCING VARIETY
RAFFLE PACKAGES**



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Hewes Redfisher 16
6 tickets \$120 value

Contender 24S
4 tickets \$200 value

THE \$500 TICKET PACK
17 TICKETS - YOU SAVE \$320

CCA FLORIDA

March

27
Tampa Banquet and Auction

Charlotte County
Banquet and Auction

April

3
Polk County Banquet and Auction
Homestead Banquet and Auction

4-6
Tortuga Music Festival

10
Big Bend Banquet and Auction

11-12
Sarasota All Release and BBQ

17
Lake County Banquet
and Auction

North Brevard Cocktails
at the Cape

24
Hernando County
Banquet and Auction

May

3
Naples Banquet and Auction

6
Sarasota Tarpon Tournament

8
Emerald Coast Banquet and
Auction

9
Orlando BBQ and Auction

14-17
Life Member Outing

June

5-8
Inter-Chapter Challenge

9-12
The CCA Florida Fred Crabill
Youth Scholarship Program
presented by Mud Hole Custom
Tackle Education Program

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\$250 - One (1) Contender 28T ticket, Two (2) Pathfinder 2200 TRS tickets, Two (2) Contender 24S tickets and four (4) Hewes Redfisher 16 tickets (\$135 savings)

**INTRODUCING VARIETY
RAFFLE PACKAGES**



CCA FLORIDA
RAFFLES

THE \$250 TICKET PACK
9 TICKETS - YOU SAVE \$135

CCA FLORIDA

\$100 - One (1) Pathfinder 2200 TRS ticket, One (1) Contender 24S ticket and Two (2) Hewes Redfisher 16 tickets (\$50 savings)

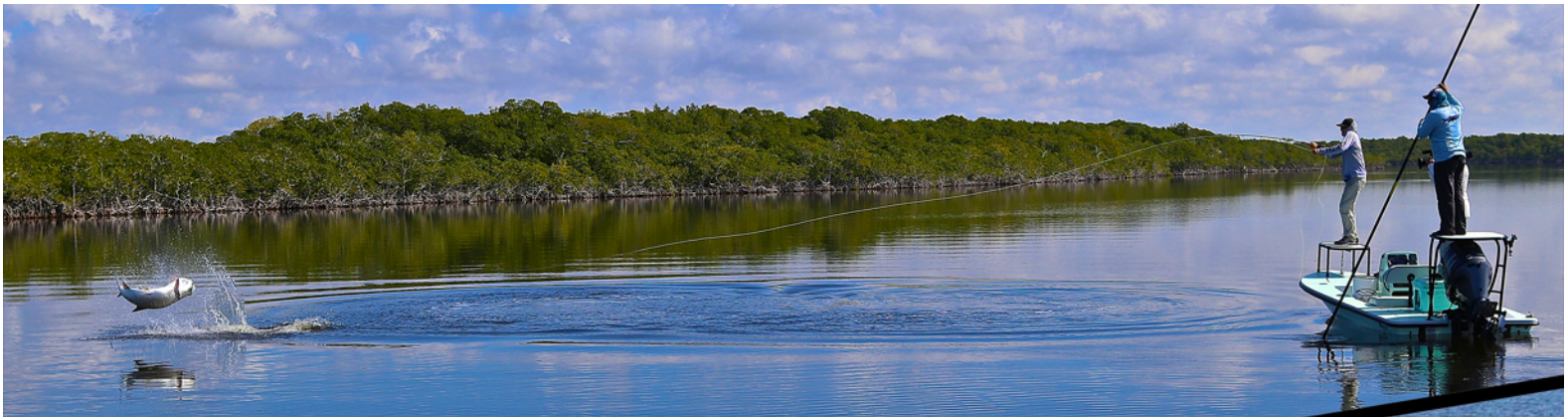
**INTRODUCING VARIETY
RAFFLE PACKAGES**



CCA FLORIDA
RAFFLES

THE \$100 TICKET PACK
4 TICKETS - YOU SAVE \$50

CCA FLORIDA



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