

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

SEAWATCH

SUMMER 23

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REDFISH RESTOCK

2023

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John Hadley
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator & Fishery Economist
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
North Charleston, SC 29405

RE: Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 (recreational permitting & reporting)

Dear Mr. Hadley,

Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 options for private recreational vessel permits to fish for snapper grouper species and to revise private recreational reporting requirements.

CCA has long supported the concept of recreational fishing licenses to better define the universe of participants and improve accountability and reporting for recreational harvest. We believe that licenses are key to better understanding the economic potential of the recreational sector and to providing socio-economic information which, ideally, would be used to base fishery management decisions for the vast portion of the public that participates in marine fisheries.

The need for improved recreational data is a hot-topic issue in the South Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico, but it is critical to point out that the recreational sector has supported these efforts for decades and the results to date from NMFS have been disappointing. In almost every instance, recreational anglers were the driving force to improve their own data and they have been frustrated by the lack of a cohesive plan to utilize it properly. Compounding that frustration, in some aspects of the federal fisheries management system the recreational sector is often portrayed as almost defiantly unaccountable and as a problem to be controlled rather than as partners with which to collaborate. The end result is that while anglers most certainly see the need for better data, they are growing suspicious of efforts like A46 that propose yet another permitting process without any indication that it will be any more acceptable or useful than previous federal efforts.

A cursory review of relevant and relatively recent events across the nation shows the extent to which recreational data problems have been identified repeatedly and yet no satisfactory, systemic solution has been presented:

Summer Flounder

- 1991- is declared overfished. Quality of recreational data in the fishery called into question.
- 2000 - National Resources Defense Council sues NMFS over summer flounder quotas. Anglers demand better data as it is discovered that some MRFSS estimates are driven by single intercepts.

- 2008 - State of New York sues NMFS over MRFSS claiming that state-level allocations that harm the state are based on flawed data.
- 2010 - Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) demands MRFSS be scrapped. Letter signed by scientists and state directors states, "Closures based on fatally flawed data have deep and broad economic consequences."



Black Sea Bass

- 2009 - Mid-Atlantic black sea bass closure based on unsure science. Anglers demand a survey that is actually useful for management.
- 2017 - The black sea bass debacle ongoing. New York State managers write letters to the Mid-Atlantic Council complaining about the poor-quality MRIP data being used to take drastic management action.

Gulf Red Snapper

- Late 1990s - the Gulf red snapper debacle begins in earnest, with tighter regulations and shorter seasons impacting rec anglers. Quality of recreational data comes into question.
- 2006-2017 - Gulf red snapper debacle intensifies. Progressively shorter and shorter seasons, culminating with a three-day season in 2017. Gulf states go largely non-compliant with federal regs. Anglers demand better data.
- 2013-2016 - Gulf States begin development of independent surveys for reef fish. Angler-funded response to NMFS inaction - Alabama Snapper Check, Louisiana LA Creel, Florida Gulf Reef Fish Survey (now State Reef



Fish Survey) and Mississippi Tails 'n Scales.

- 2014 - Louisiana expands LA Creel to all species, fires MRIP. Fed up with drastic management action based on unsure science, Louisiana goes the way of the West Coast to improve reporting time and estimate precision. Angler funded.
- 2017 - Gulf Amendment 50: State Management. Due to lack of confidence in federal data, responsibility for private boat recreational data collection and management delegated to Gulf States. Rec angling fees pay for better data and state reporting systems widely supported by anglers.
- 2017 - 2018 - MRIP certifies LA Creel, Alabama Snapper Check, Mississippi Tails N Scales, and Florida Gulf Reef Fish Survey. Angler funded; license-endorsement based. Provides high-precision, in-season estimates that MRIP cannot.
- 2020 - NMFS insists that Gulf state level estimates must be made equal to MRIP estimates. State surveys are widely viewed as better data collections - more timely and higher precision. National Academy of Sciences disagrees with NMFS calibration strategy.

South Atlantic Red Snapper

- 2009 -South Atlantic red snapper -Amendments 17a, 17b and 18 consider closures based on suspect, imprecise red snapper harvest numbers. Still ongoing and closures still threatened.
- 2010 -Massive red snapper bottom closure threatened in South Atlantic. First stock assessment declares stock overfished using very low-precision MRFSS data. Anglers call for better data collection.
- 2022 -South Atlantic red snapper closures under consideration again. Successful recovery but suspect discard data indicates stock may still be overfished. Anglers demand better catch and discard data.

West Coast Fisheries

- 1998-2002 -West Coast groundfish disaster. Nine stocks are declared overfished. Rebuilding plans implemented with major shelf closures. MRFSS data is found to be imprecise and delivered on the wrong time scale. Anglers and states demand change, and West Coast states develop their own recreational angler surveys.

- 2004-West Coast states ask NMFS for basic changes to MRFSS surveys. NMFS refuses, and West Coast states "fire" NMFS and MRFSS from the recreational data collection process entirely.

Federal Legislation

- 1996 -The Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA) Passes, putting sideboards on stock recovery and demanding action for overfished stocks. The Act pushes councils towards in-season quota and anglers call for better data to meet the needs of the Act.
- 2006-2007 -Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) passes. Forces drastic action and short rebuilding timelines, eliminates management flexibility. A complete redesign of MRFSS is ordered to meet management needs. Requires angler license frame. States are given the choice of either developing an acceptable recreational license system or using the federal registry. Virtually every coastal state eventually develops its own recreational licensing system.

MRFSS to MRIP

- 2008 -MRFSS begins producing annual implementation plans in a partial response to MSA. Redesign plans are mostly out-reach. Constituent drumbeat for better data reaches a crescendo. NMFS conducts extensive "listening sessions" with recreational stakeholders.
- 2010 -MRFSS re branded as MRIP in response to MSA, but though millions of dollars are spent, there is no real change in precision or timeliness of data.

National Academy of Sciences Reviews

- 2006-First National Academy of Sciences review of MRFSS finds it to be fatally flawed for in-season quota management of the sort demanded by SFA and MSA, and nearly useless for rare-event or offshore species. Lays out recommendations for improvement.
- 2017 -Second National Academy of Sciences MRIP review finds MRIP still not acceptable for in-season quota management and still too imprecise for reef fish and other offshore species.
- 2021 -Data Management Strategies for Recreational Annual Catch Limits, another National Academy of Sciences review, concludes that MRIP is not suitable for in season quota monitoring. It finds no real changes in precision across important species.

This is by no means a comprehensive list and is only meant to demonstrate that recreational data issues are not new. Federal managers have long been aware of systemic problems in federal recreational data collection systems, first with MRFSS and now with MRIP, and yet here we are again grappling with the same issue in Amendment 46. Millions of dollars have been spent "improving" the federal data system, and yet the South Atlantic Council is debating a new permit to address the same

(continued on page 8)



fundamental recreational data problem that the Mid-Atlantic Council faced in 1991. In every region, except the West Coast which seems to have successfully divorced itself completely from federal recreational data systems, federal fisheries find themselves caught in a seemingly endless loop of the same predicaments over recreational data, with no end in sight.

CCA is committed to the concept of licenses to better define the universe of recreational anglers and improve recreational data and accountability, but the body of evidence indicates that permits alone will not solve the problem. How the federal government gathers data

from the recreational sector and how it manipulates and uses those data in management are huge factors in the efficacy of a recreational permit, and for at least the last three decades the federal government has failed those functions.

It is difficult to comprehend how a new permit for anglers in the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery will introduce data into a federal system that the National Academies of Science has found deficient three times since 1991 and produce a different, satisfactory result.

If there is a lesson to be learned in the events listed previously, however, it is that recreational permits are most effective when the role of the federal government is diminished to the greatest extent possible, and the states are given the greatest control and responsibility over the recreational fishery. The West Coast effectively solved its recreational data problems in 2004. The Gulf States were on track to solve most of the recreational data problems in the red snapper fishery in 2017 until NMFS insisted on calibrating state data back to its own MRIP data with a calibration method that the NAS concluded was ill-suited for the purpose.

CCA FLORIDA response

John Hadley
January 13, 2023

It is CCA's belief that the only realistic chance that a permit for recreational anglers in the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery will succeed in the applications for which it is intended is if the states are given complete authority for administering the program.

States are responsive to anglers and tend to treat recreational anglers as clients because recreational license expenditures and excise taxes on equipment and fuel support their management activities. That engenders a trust and a willingness to work with the data collection and regulatory arms of the states that benefits data quality and compliance. To the second point, states can elect to keep angler permit funds from disappearing into a general fund and instead may direct those funds to specific programs like enhanced data collection, enforcement, infrastructure investments or stock enhancement. The federal government cannot. Additionally, states are much more efficient and frugal with stakeholder funds. As proven through the federal experience with administering a saltwater license, the states could make money on their license programs, charging similar fees, while the federal system never broke even. Finally, many anglers are concerned, and rightly so based on comments from NMFS staff in the region and many commercial and for-hire organizations, that a federal boat permit is the first step in limiting recreational entry to public fisheries. Limiting entry is a non-starter for state managers, recreational anglers and the recreational fishing industry.

CCA is confident that a properly constructed permit for snapper grouper anglers in the South Atlantic could provide information critical to improved management of the fishery. However, the federal government's track record of recreational data-gathering and management indicates that such a permit should be administered and run by the South Atlantic states.

While such a system is not a panacea to the problems that continue to plague recreational management at the federal level, state control of data gathering at the very least would provide a check and balance to federal use of both the data and the permit itself.

Regards,

Bill Bird, Chairman
CCA National Government Relations Committee Chairman

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Mr. Dale Diaz
Chairman
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
4107 West Spruce Street, Suite 200
Tampa, Florida 33607

Dear Chairman Diaz and I Members of the Council,

The American Sportfishing Association, Center for Coastal Conservation, and the Congressional Sportsman's Foundation would like to communicate our positions and concerns about the processes and outcomes related to the MRIP-CHTS to MRIP-FES conversions. In our view the Council's approach to handling the conversion process has resulted in a significant misunderstanding of outcomes, particularly as it is applied to allocations. The result has been increased divisiveness and animosities across the fishing sectors and within the Council itself. The sectors and the Council members themselves have expressed confusion and dissatisfaction with the process. It is our hope that the Council will recognize that continuing to handle the conversions in the same way without bringing a greater understanding of how the conversions are made, will further increase confusion and divisiveness.

Our Understanding of the MRIP-CHTS to MRIP-FES data and assessment conversions:

The upgrade from recreational MRFSS to MRIP and the changes from a telephone (CHTS) to mail (FES) survey has been in process for a number of years. The intent of the new system is to increase the accuracy of the recreational data as applied to stock assessments and management. For each species managed, recreational catch and effort data are calibrated across the two data systems so historical data collected using CHTS can inform stock assessment models and to generate a new overfishing limit (OFL), acceptable biological catch (ABC), and annual catch limit (ACL) based

on FES currency. Simply put, because the CHTS is no longer in use or considered best scientific information available (BSIA), the old CHTS data are no longer useable or of value in the management process without conversion to the current FES survey. Pre-existing allocations between sectors that are based on a time-series of CHTS-based historical landings face the same problem. After the conversion from CHTS to FES is made for a species that results in a new OFL, ABC, and total ACL, the old allocation values, based on the uncalibrated CHTS historical landings, are simply no longer valid and have no objective basis for being used nor can they be used to compare allocation changes. The allocations must be recalculated based on the recalibrated FES landings for the same time series used in the pre-existing allocations to match the recalibrated ACL. This is probably the most misunderstood and thus controversial issue associated with each species data conversions. Unfortunately, the misunderstanding is reinforced by the terminology used to describe the allocations by all of us including the fishing public, Council staff, and Council members. On occasion, NOAA legal staff try to clarify the terminology, but it seems to go unheeded.

The Allocation Issue

Understanding that allocation will be controversial no matter how it is presented, we recommend that the Council determine how to focus on the complete conversion of management targets and thresholds such as catch limits and allocations that are based on old CHTS data to MRIP-FES, and that this be handled separately from allocation decisions. This approach has been discussed in Council but dismissed because of lack of understanding or ignoring the fact that the recalibrated allocations based on the same time series represent a straightforward mathematical change from the old CHTS to the new FES system. Allocations converted to FES should be considered the base-line allocation and any changes from that a re-allocation. This was simply

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explained by staff using the example of a change in currency. As an example, if we were to change a currency system from pesos (CHTS) to dollars (FES) you have to change the entire system to dollars. You can't purchase a \$10 fish with 10 pesos because a peso is only worth 50 cents. It is the same with these data conversions. You can't leave allocation in pesos while now operating in dollars and furthermore a percent of allocation in CHTS is not the same as a percent of allocation in FES. A statement by Dr. Roy Crabtree at the August 2015 Council meeting summarizes this problem:

"Imagine you had a stock with two sectors fishing it, and each sector catches 100 pounds per year. The total allowable catch is 200 pounds and this goes on for a while. The catches are estimated by a survey and so imagine you discover, through looking at the survey, that in fact one sector has actually been catching 200 pounds a year all along. Now, so the original allocation was 50/50, 100 pounds each and the TAC was 200. Now you realize in fact you've been harvesting 300 pounds all the time and so the TAC really is 300 pounds. Now, if you say we're going to stick with the original allocation of 50/50, everybody gets 150 pounds and so one sector that's only been catching 100 all along gets a bonus of fifty pounds. The sector that's been catching 200 pounds all along now is getting cut, because they are only getting 150 pounds from now on. That is what happens if you readjust the historical timeframe and the productivity but you don't make a shift in the allocation.

It is a de facto reallocation away from the sector whose catches have been recalibrated to the other one and I say that is very oversimplified, probably, but that gives you the gist of it."

Greater amberjack, (Reef Fish Amendment 33), provides a good illustration of our position. For this amendment the Council agreed to the new FES conversion for setting the OFL, ABC, and ACLs. As part of that total conversion, a recalculated allocation based on the original recalibrated historic landings resulted in an allocation of 84% recreational and 16% commercial. The old, and no longer relevant, allocation was 73% recreational and 27% commercial. Many argued that the recreational sector was getting a huge jump in allocation and thus taking away fish from the commercial sector. There was an immediate effort in the amendment alternatives to "stop the steal." The fact is, we went from pesos to dollars and a percent of allocation in CHTS is not the same as a percent of allocation in FES. The old allocation of 73%-27% simply has no validity or basis for existing in the new system. In fact, from a straightforward data recalibration perspective, if the old allocations were kept in the new FES system in Amendment 33, the recreational sector would be giving up 11% of its allocation based on using the original time series. The outcome of Amendment 33 was the use of a different time series that resulted in a 4% reduction to the recreational sector. While this was not our preferred outcome, we agreed to it because we could see that the Council did not fully comprehend that even this was a reduction to the recreational sector. There was still a latent misconcep-

tion that the old CHTS allocations of 73%-27% were the base for comparison in considering reallocation and not the new 84%-16%.

Further complicating the process and outcomes is the fact that many of the conversions from CHTS to FES also coincide with a determination of overfishing or overfished status determination, which triggers significant management actions and results in large cuts in annual catch limits for all fishery components. The result has been a misconception, again, that the recreational sector is trying to take allocation from the commercial sector when in fact we are simply trying to maintain the status quo when making the conversions.

Recent Relevant Court Case

In a recent court ruling (Civil Action No. 22-1260 TJK), with a summary judgement in favor of NOAA on all claims, the following statements, among many, support our understanding of the FES conversions and allocation. These statements also seem to support our recommendations related to treating the FES based allocation calibration the same as the OFL, ABC, and ACL calibrations.

On Page 16, when discussing the validity of using the CHTS time series converted to FES allocation for red grouper (Amendment 53) the following was stated: The Service selected that alternative after concluding that allocation would pre-serve the basic policy of A30B while updating the limits based on the best scientific information available, apply the necessary reduction in total catch roughly equally among the sectors, and cause "the greatest net economic benefits" among the possible allocations. AR 7995.

On page 36 when discussing economic benefits the Court noted the following: The record reflects

that the Service selected A53's allocation mainly because it wished to keep its policy consistent by basing the allocation on "the same timeframe as [A30B]" while also using "FES landings" to set the limits—not because of its projected economic effects. AR 7967.

On page 20, when discussing the CHTS to FES conversions and how allocation is treated and particularly that the CHTS determined allocations are no longer relevant the following was stated: If

the Service is right about the relationship between CHTS estimates and FES estimates, the now-immutable use of FES for estimating recreational catch means that preserving the prior nominal allocation would actually have reduced real-world recreational fishing opportunities dramatically.

Allocation Policy

There is a second issue that arises when considering actual reallocation in addition to making the conversion to MRIP-FES. The Council has seemingly abandoned its new policies and processes for considering allocation changes. The Council's allocation policy, which is located on the Council website, sets a process for allocation decisions that includes time

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schedules, a review panel, data and information gathering, application of more than just landing series, and a measured approach to determining the need for an allocation change. The fact that these policies have been effectively abandoned confirms our original concerns that the policies have no binding effect on the Council and were, in fact, designed to give the Council free will to abandon them. The recreational community pushed hard for over a decade to have accountable and objective policies and procedures for determining allocations and we have yet to see them applied during a time when multiple allocation changes have been occurring. While there has been an attempt to connect some of these allocation decisions to the allocation policy (i.e. greater amberjack), the Council has seemingly cherry-picked pieces of the policies and guidelines while leaving out others, all without following its process. This approach has exacerbated the perception that the recreational sector is trying to take commercial allocation when in fact we are just advocating for maintaining status quo in the new, BSIA currency as these conversions are carried out.

The NOAA Fisheries Transition Plan for the Fishing Effort Survey published May 2018 attempted to provide guidance on approaches to effectively managing the FES conversions and calibrations. While providing good guidance for handling the conversions, it did not provide adequate guidance to councils for handling the allocation conversions. There was an acknowledgement that proper messaging and outreach was needed to avert public misunderstanding and misconceptions with the conversions, and it seems that this has not been fully accomplished. It was also acknowledged that allocation would be a significant challenge, but we don't see that the magnitude of that challenge was understood nor has an effective outreach plan been employed. Most importantly, a defined policy on how the Councils and NOAA should approach the allocation conversions has not been developed which continues to lead to confusion, misunderstanding, and thus a catalyst to unnecessary contention within the Council related to allocation.

Summary and Recommendations

We are concerned that the conversion process from MRIP-CHTS to MRIP-FES has become unnecessarily divisive because the allocation conversions are being misunderstood as a reallocation when in fact, they are simply a mathematical change that converts the old CHTS to the equivalent FES allocations. This direct conversion is not a reallocation, and we will continue to strongly oppose reallocations during these conversions. While we understand that there are issues tied to the CHTS to FES conversions, these data are considered the best scientific information available and are being used as the basis for assessment and management decisions. We also understand that the conversions and concurrent overfishing and overfished findings present an illusion that the resultant recalibrated allocations are taking fish from the commercial sector when that is not the case. With that

in mind, we offer the following specific recommendations for your considerations:

1. Better educate and continually re-educate all of us on the CHTS to FES conversions with focus on the allocation conversion. For example, how can you convey that a percent of allocation in CHTS is not the same as a percent of allocation in FES.
2. Develop consistent terminology for discussing CHTS to FES conversions and allocations.
3. Currently, terminology and explanations for allocation, used in public materials and amendments and frameworks, reinforce the confusion about FES converted allocation values and should be better articulated to reduce the confusion.
4. The Council should separate the FES conversion process from allocation decisions. The FES conversion should include the recalibrated historic data, OFLs, ABCs, ACLs and the recalibrated allocation. The recalibrated allocation should be the new base allocation.
5. With the FES base allocation, the Council should either determine that no further action is required, and allocation will be evaluated as scheduled in current policy or that an allocation review is needed and initiate the allocation review process as adopted by the Council. If changes from the base-line allocation are warranted, the allocation process should result in a separate allocation amendment.
6. A Policy should be developed for the FES conversions, including the FES allocation conversion and that Policy should include other similar conversions (ie. State data conversions, SEFHIER, future improvements to MRIP FES).
7. For allocations based on historical landings, consider setting allocations as a formula in which current BSIA landings currencies are inserted to arrive at allocations rather than codifying allocations as fixed percentages.

Council members, thank you for your consideration of our concerns and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Martha Guyas
American Sportfishing Association

Ken Haddad
American Sportfishing Association

Ted Venker
Coastal Conservation Association

Chris Horton
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation



2023 STAR



TAKE A SHOT AT WINNING!

In just a few weeks, the 2023 CCA Florida STAR competition presented by Yamaha will wrap up, and so far, 12 tagged redfish have been recaptured and there has only been one winner. This means, all boats and packages, with the exception of the Contender with the Yamaha outboard, are still available!

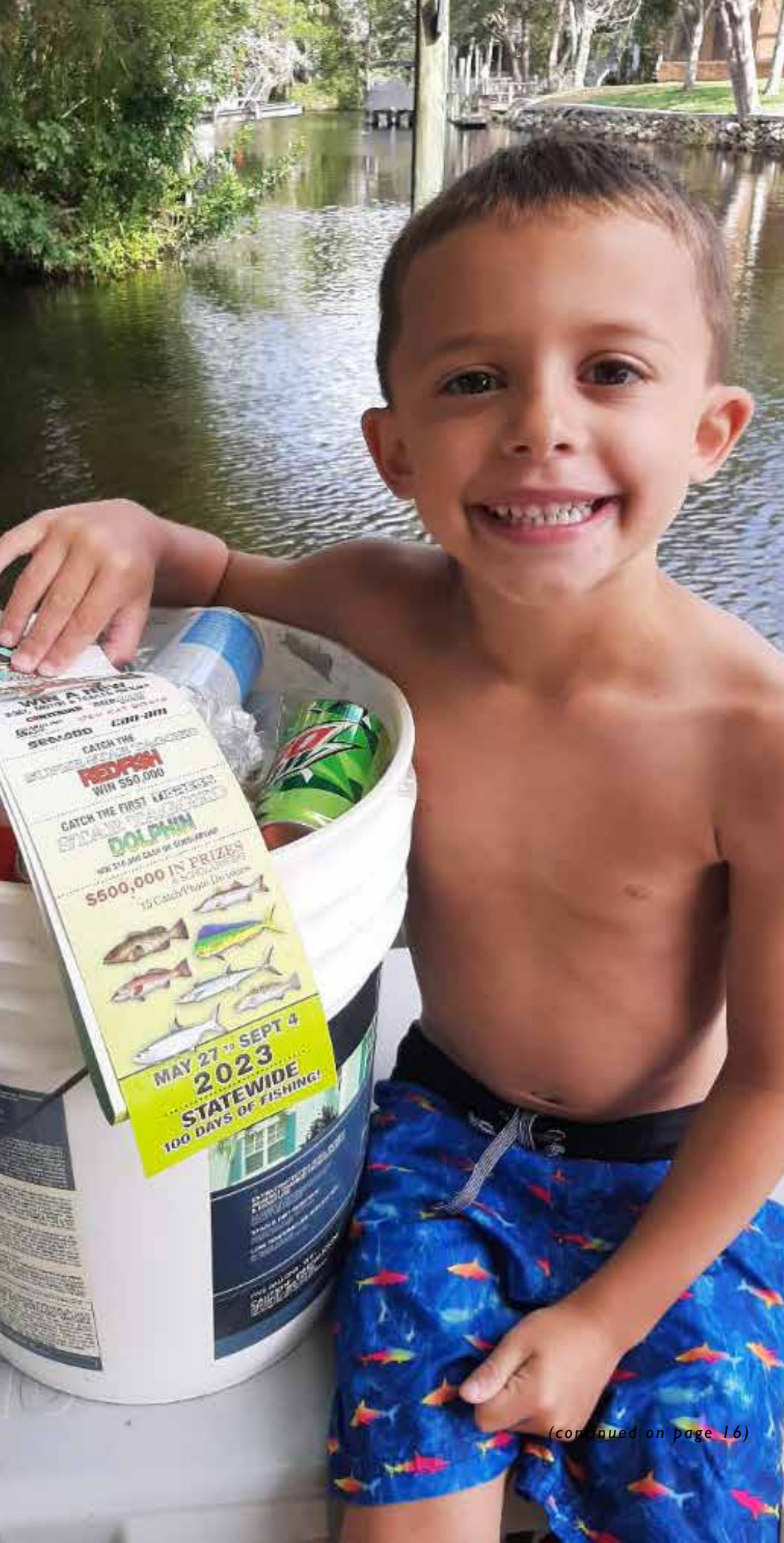
"Every year we have lots of tagged redfish recaptured by unregistered anglers who are not members, we hoped that this year with more prizes we would see more winners." CCA Florida STAR Director Leiza Fitzgerald said. "The youth participation has been heartwarming and to date STAR has awarded \$800,000 in youth scholar-

ships plus in 2021 two Youth anglers won a boat motor and trailer package that consisted of a 16-foot skiff, 25hp Yamaha, Minn Kota Trolling motor and trailer. Every year there are over 100 winners in the STAR competition, get registered and you could be one of them."

The CCA Florida STAR competition presented by Yamaha has a division for everyone, from the non-angler to the experienced angler. It is comprised of 15 divisions targeting 12 inshore and offshore species plus the Kick Plastic Trash Division presented by Papa's Pilar which encourages cleanup of trash from Florida's coastal waters.

STAR's signature Tagged Redfish Division offers seven winners, five adults and two youth, the choice of a Contender Boats 22 Sport, Pathfinder Boats 2200 TRS and STAR would like to welcome back Carolina Skiff offering the 162 JLS. STAR has additional new Tagged Redfish sponsors with Dek Kat Boats offering a 27 Flat Kat and Sea Doo and Can-am offering a fun package of a Sea Doo Fish Pro Trophy and the can-am Defender. Each boat will be powered by a Yamaha, the competitions presenting sponsor. The first winning tagged redfish angler, Blake Beltz of St.

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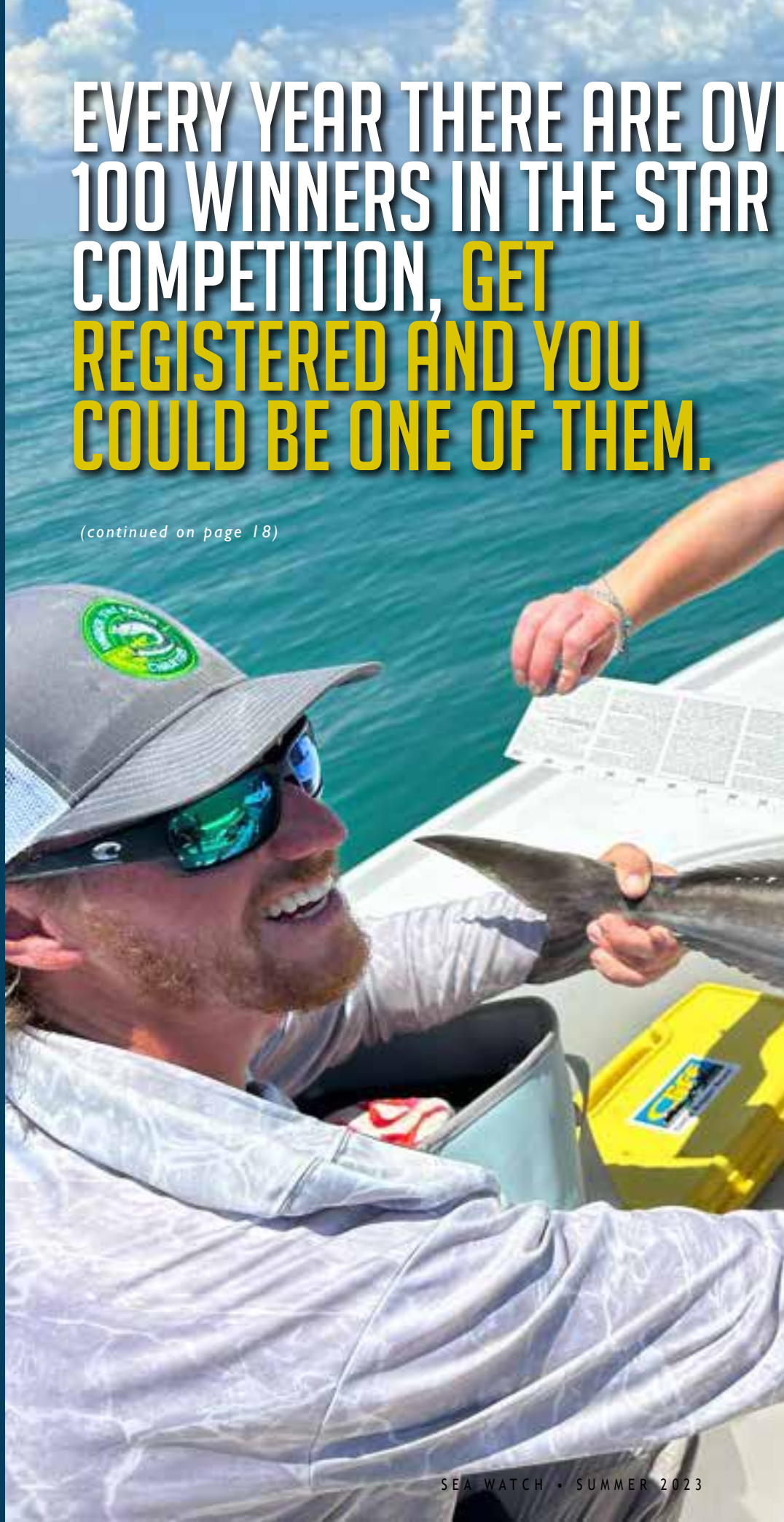
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REGISTERED AND YOU
COULD BE ONE OF THEM.**

(continued on page 18)





2023 STAR



STAR

continued from page 17

Augustine choose the Contender Yamaha package, so the next winning angler will have their choice of all the remaining prize packages. The ALTA SUPER STAR tagged redfish is still swimming in Florida waters and if it is recaptured, the winner will receive \$50,000 cash! For the first two youth anglers who win in this division, prizes include a tiller boat powered with Yamaha Outboard, trailer, Minn Kota trolling motor and Humminbird electronics. Each of Florida's coastal counties have on average four tagged redfish for a total of over 160 prize winning fish. The best opportunity to catch one of this year's tagged redfish is in Citrus and Charlotte Counties, STAR's 2023 Destination Counties which each have eight tagged redfish in their coastal waters. For the offshore anglers, the Tigress Outriggers and Gear Tagged Dolphin Division offers one winner a \$10,000 cash prize. The first STAR registrant and CCA Florida member who catches one of the tagged dolphin will win. Twenty dolphin (Mahi Mahi) were tagged and released for STAR in the lower keys of Florida.

STAR is a family-friendly competition, and CCA Florida youth members (ages 6 to 17) can participate for free. Kids are encouraged to submit entries in the Youth Scholarship Division presented by Realtree Fishing for an opportunity to win one of twelve scholarships totaling \$100,000. Other

(continued on page 20)



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.





STAR

continued from page 17

divisions include the Power Pole Conservation Division, Bonafide Kayak Division and Ladies Division as well as the Yamaha Guides Division which allows guides to participate when they are not on a charter for hire. Since most division winners are determined by a random drawing, it is not about catching the biggest fish, any size fish can win. Remember, it is very simple really, every fish you catch between now and Monday, Labor Day offers the CCA member who is registered in STAR the opportunity to win their share of \$500,000 in prizes and scholarships. But you can't win if you are not registered.

Not only is the STAR competition a wonderful way for participants to win amazing prizes, the fisheries win too! STAR is a tool to gather catch data, it creates awareness for conservation, our sponsors and CCA Florida. Launched in 2015, the competition has set the bar for other fishing tournaments to

follow by implementing conservation friendly alternatives such as a catch-photo-release format and a trash division. Florida STAR focuses on conservation with its technology-based, CPR format and dedicated smartphone app which promotes the proper handling of species and allows participants who are members of CCA and registered in the competition to upload photos of their catch or trash buckets in the STAR competition and be rewarded for their efforts. In order to win participants must take their entry photo on the 2023 CCA FL STAR Official Measuring device which can be picked up for free in any West Marine store or one of the many other STAR distribution locations throughout Florida. Find them listed on the STAR website. This eliminates the requirement that some traditional tournaments have to harvest or capture and transport fish to win. CCA Florida also provides ac-



cess to the data collected from the app to other conservation organizations and universities to help educate the public on the importance of protecting Florida's marine resources and for use in their studies on conservation, habitat and stock assessments.

You can still register for STAR 2023. You have until Labor Day and great boats and packages are still available. To receive additional information on divisions, prizes and more, visit ccaflstar.com or Facebook.

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



**START
RUN
STORE**

**Start up
with ease.
Every time.**

**Run faster,
cleaner,
smoother.**

**Store with
confidence
between use.**



WWW.STARTRON.COM
PROTECTION + PERFORMANCE



2023 STAR

REGISTRATION FOR THE 2023 CCA FLORIDA STAR COMPETITION PRESENTED BY YAMAHA IS OPEN

STAR 2023 runs Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day, giving participants 100 days of fishing and the opportunity to win more than \$500,000 in prizes and youth scholarships.

Register Now: \$40 for current CCA Florida Members | \$80 for 18+
(includes one-year CCA Florida membership)

FREE for current, youth CCA Florida Members | \$10 for youth, ages 6 to 17
(includes New Tide Membership)

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



COASTAL
CONSERVATION
ASSOCIATION
FLORIDA

CONSERVATION | HABITAT | RESTOCKING | ADVOCACY

CONTRIBUTED
\$9



MILLION

SINCE 2010, CCA FLORIDA, CCA'S BUILDING CONSERVATION TRUST AND ITS PARTNERS HAVE CONTRIBUTED \$9 MILLION TO REBUILD FLORIDA'S MARINE HABITAT

90 TONS OF OYSTERS



WERE SAVED FROM WASTE BY CCA FLORIDA IN THE LAST THREE YEARS. THUS FAR, 30 OF THE 90 TONS HAVE BEEN RECYCLED AND REDEPLOYED TO CREATE ARTIFICIAL REEFS



**MORE THAN 17,000 MEMBERS
ACROSS FLORIDA'S 67 COUNTIES**

IN LAST 10 YEARS

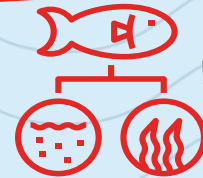
42

ARTIFICIAL
REEFS



70

HABITAT
PROJECTS



**ADVOCATED
GAMEFISH**

STATUS FOR REDFISH

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

INITIATED NET BAN
CONSTITUTIONAL
AMENDMENT

ADVOCATES AND CREATES
AWARENESS
FOR IMPROVING
STATEWIDE WATER QUALITY

HELPED CONGRESS
INTRODUCE DESCENDING
DEVICE BILL AND FORAGE FISH
CONSERVATION ACT

WORKED WITH FWC TO
ENSURE MAXIMUM
ANGLER ACCESS
FOR RED SNAPPER

HELPED BAN LONGLINES
FOR BILLFISH
AND PELAGIC SPECIES

5,000 SNOOK
RESTOCKED AND RELEASED

235,000 REDFISH
RESTOCKED AND RELEASED

110,000 SEA TROUT
RESTOCKED AND RELEASED



**\$800,000 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**

**ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOALS FOR FLORIDA'S FISHERIES. CONTACT
ENDOWMENT@CCAFLOIDA.ORG TO LEARN MORE**

2023

**IN JUNE, WE
CELEBRATED
THE 20TH ANNUAL
INTER-CHAPTER
CHALLENGE (ICC)
IN JENSEN BEACH!**

**MORE THAN 100
ANGLERS JOINED
US FROM ACROSS
THE STATE TO
ENJOY THE
FESTIVITIES.**



Winners were announced during Saturday's Awards Ceremony, and the **Naples Chapter** was named the **Alex Jernigan Inshore Grand Champions** and the **Rufus Wakeman Offshore Grand Championship** went to the **Treasure Coast Chapter**.





3
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3



Thank you to everyone who participated, and special shout out to **River Palm Cottages** for hosting such a memorable ICC event.

WE CAN'T WAIT FOR NEXT YEAR!



CAAS

In July, CCA Florida was proud to return to ICAST at the Orange County Convention Center! During the three-day event, we joined fellow leaders in the fishing industry to see the latest products and innovations.

The WINNER of the 2023 Hewes Redfisher raffle was announced by Captain Rick Murphy.

2023



In addition, our team participated in numerous meetings with state, federal and local officials as well as conservation organizations regarding water quality, habitat restoration and fisheries management.



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt and blue patterned shorts, stands at a booth. She is holding a stack of brochures and looking towards the camera with a smile. In the background, a man in a light blue shirt is also at the booth, and a large, cylindrical, perforated metal object is visible in the foreground. The setting appears to be an indoor event space with other people and structures in the background.

CCA's highly interactive booth highlighted redfish releases, oyster reef restoration work, offshore and near shore reef projects, fundraising opportunities, boat partners and much more.



Thanks to everyone who stopped by the booth. **We cannot wait for next year's show.**







Ingredients

- 15 oz whole cherry tomatoes
(I used 1 pint plus ½ pint)
- 4 fresh garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ c extra virgin olive oil
- 2 medium salmon fillets
(I used 10 oz fillets)
- 1 8 oz block feta cheese
- 1 tbsp Italian herb seasoning
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 c fresh basil, chopped
- ½ lb dry pasta of choice
(I used an 8.8 oz bag of DeLallo egg pappardelle)

Salt and pepper

Feta Tomato-Basil Salmon Pasta

RECIPE & PHOTOS BY HEATHER PETEREK JOINCCEA.ORG/RECIPES

Directions

Preheat oven to 400°F.

To a medium size baking dish, add tomatoes, olive oil, salt, pepper, Italian seasoning, garlic and block of feta cheese. Gently toss all together until seasoning is evenly distributed and tomatoes and cheese are coated in oil. Place in the oven uncovered and bake for 20 minutes.

Season salmon fillets with a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Remove dish from oven and place salmon fillets directly on top of tomatoes, on either side of the block of feta. Return dish to oven and bake an additional 10-15 minutes or until salmon is cooked to your liking.

While salmon is cooking, boil your pasta according to package directions. Drain and reserve about ½ cup of the pasta water for later. Return pasta back to the pot used for boiling and cover.

Remove dish from the oven and using a fork, mash together the tomatoes and cheese, making the sauce. Next, with the fork, carefully combine the salmon fillets into the sauce, taking care not to break apart too much, leaving larger chunks intact.

Once your salmon and sauce are combined, pour mixture into pot with cooked pasta. Add the fresh basil and fold all together gently. If your dish needs more liquid, add in some reserved pasta water until you get consistency to your liking. Add salt and pepper to taste and serve immediately. Serves 4.



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- Proprietary software and design construction
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February 6, 1951 – April 17, 2023

FRED CRABILL



Honoring CCA Florida's Friend, Conservationist and Legacy Member

Through his love of the outdoors,
whether work, hunting or fishing, Fred
gathered a lifetime of friends.





FRED CRABILL

Starting with squirrels in the Virginia woods (of which the tails could be mailed in and get back 5 cents each), he loved hunting. Eventually, choosing game birds and waterfowl as his targets. But fishing was his real love. Living in Polk County in the 70's, every marl pit and lake must have had a line in it. Bass fishing on the pro circuit occupied him for a while, but then he turned to saltwater. Landing a 10-pound bonefish in the Bahamas was just one highlight. Achieving the inshore Grand Slam of Permit, Tarpon and Bonefish, all caught in one day, was another. And then he found Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) Florida or maybe CCA found him.

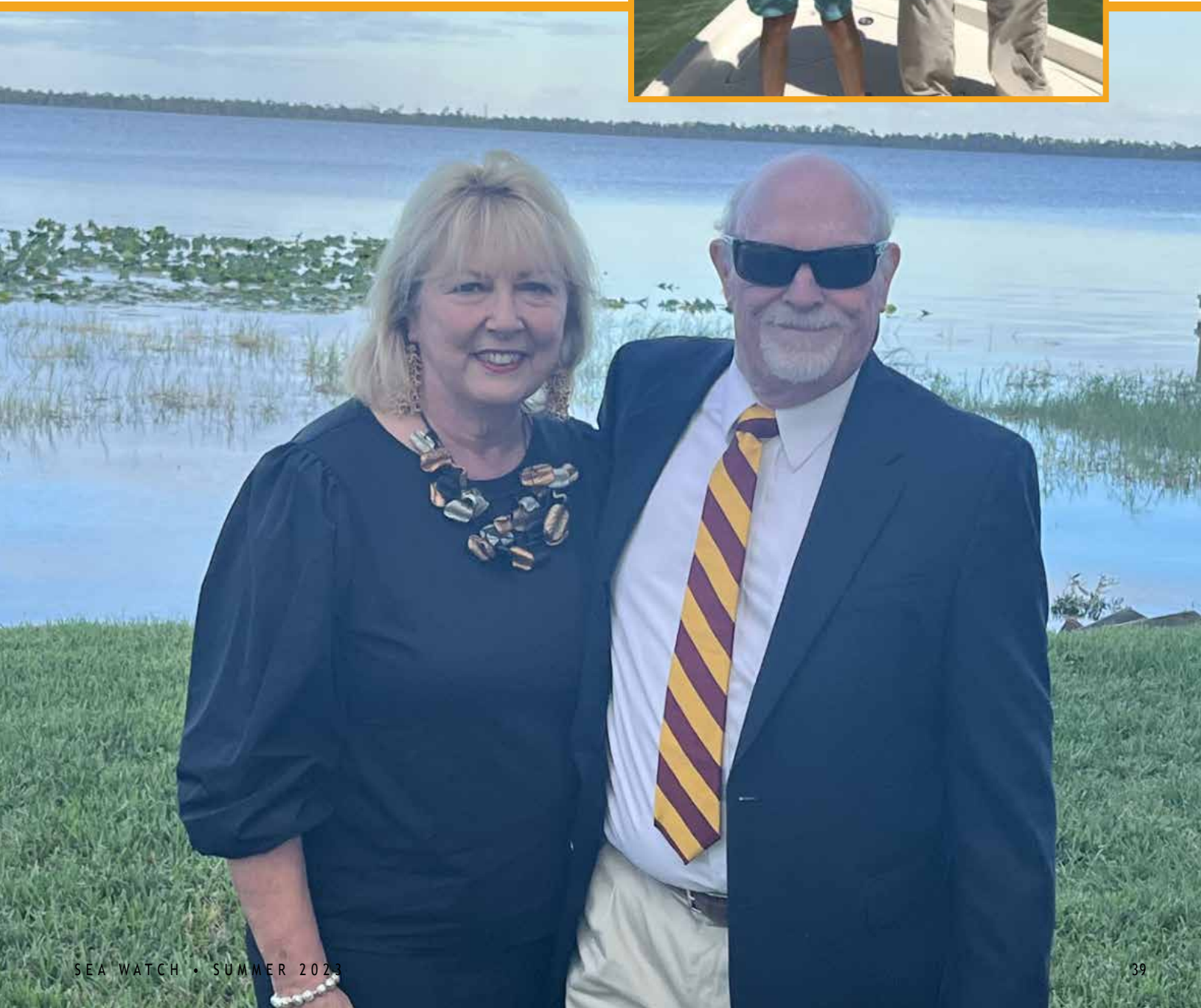
Fred spent more than 20 years volunteering for the Polk County Chapter and the state office. Fred held the Chapter President position for numerous years before he started getting more involved on a state level. Fred climbed the ranks quickly and assumed the elected positions of Presi-

dent and Management Committee Chairman in 2012 and Vice Chairman in 2013. In 2014, Fred was elected to CCA Florida's highest position, Chairman of the Board. Fred was re-elected to Chairman of the Board again in 2021. He is one of six board members to hold the Chairman's role for a second term. He is one of only 28 Legacy members in the state of Florida and gifted numerous life memberships to deserving individuals. He was the heart and soul of CCA and his pride in CCA was boundless.

Although Fred's life came to an end before we were ready, the time that he spent in our lives was memorable and full of joy. Fred's smile was contagious, and he was one of the most thoughtful and caring people you would ever meet. He was a true gentleman, role model, mentor and conservationist. He made a positive impression on everyone he met and was always the first one to help wherever he could. Our loss

is Heaven's gain. He was truly a remarkable individual and legendary member of CCA for his devotion and leadership, which he shared so generously. We will all miss Fred and his contribution to our organization and his community. He loved kids and sponsored STAR scholarships since day one. He was the first person to contribute to the newly formed Youth Scholarship Program (Y.S.P.). Fred's CCA Florida legacy will live on for eternity with the newly named "Fred Crabbill Youth Scholarship Program."

While we mourn the loss of such a great friend, we must also smile knowing that Fred has been reunited with his forever love, Jan. Please be sure to give her a big hug for all of us, Fred. We miss and love you both more than you can imagine. Until we meet again... RIP



2023 CCA & MUD H SCHOLARSHIP WINN



OLE NERS ANNOUNCED

The CCA Florida Youth Scholarship Program presented by the Mud Hole Custom Tackle Education Program kicked off an exciting week of activities and competition for ten Florida high school students pursuing college funding and an opportunity to make a positive impact to the environment and their communities.

(continued on page 42)





This year's winners were announced and celebrated at the annual awards banquet, held at Mud Hole's Oviedo, Florida headquarters. First place was awarded to Samuel Bernbaum of Maitland, who takes home a \$3,000 scholarship. Carson Smith of Panama City earned the \$2,000 second place prize, and the \$1,000 third place award went to Emma Hoelle of Sarasota. Students were graded throughout the week based on their attention, focus, creativity, speeches, and overall engagement as they experienced a wide variety of activities, including tours of the Duke Energy Mariculture Center in Crystal River, Sea Life Orlando Aquarium, and Bajio Sunglasses in New Smyrna Beach, fishing for barramundi at Osceola Outback Adventures, and building a custom fishing rod at Mud Hole, of course.

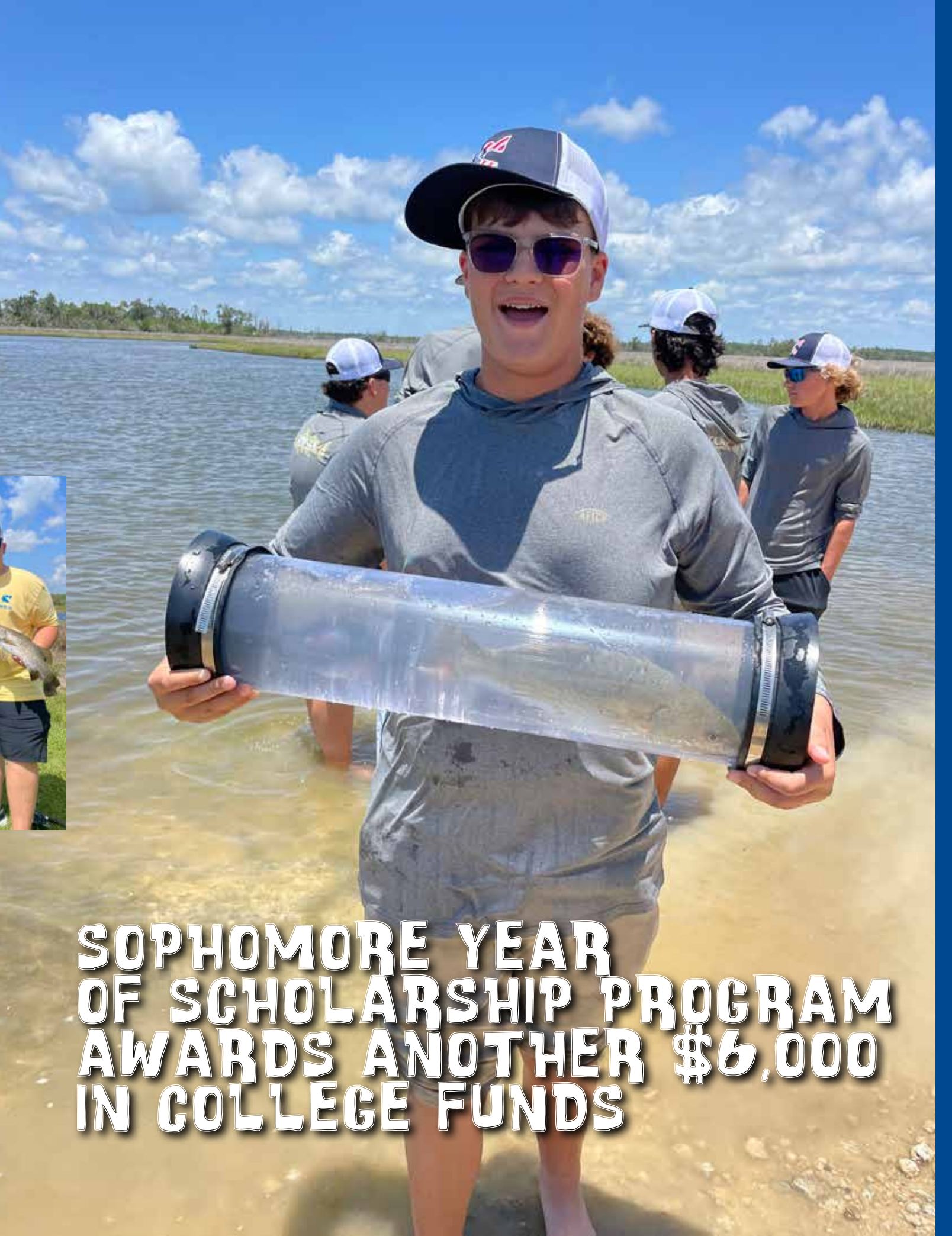
"Mud Hole's Education Program was designed to reach kids through hands-on learning and to add value to their education experience," said Anthony Youmans, Mud Hole Custom Tackle Education Program Director. "Working with CCA on this exciting week of activities and seeing the students fully engaged in the conserva-

tion-focused program is extremely rewarding and fulfilling to our mission. We are looking forward to continuing our support of this valuable scholarship initiative."

Beyond hosting the program's kick-off and banquet events, and documenting the week's itinerary with CCA Florida, Mud Hole commits the \$6,000 in scholarship funds as part of the Matt McGuffee College Scholarship Initiative, honoring the beloved former employee who passed away at an early age in 2022.

"We're really proud of the opportunities this program brings to high school students across Florida," CCA Florida Youth Scholarship Program Director, Amanda McLennan said. "In only the second year of the program, we've identified so many amazing students that have a true commitment to conservation and environmental awareness. The partnership between CCA and Mud Hole is really making a difference to the future of our state's natural resources."

(continued on page 44)



**SOPHOMORE YEAR
OF SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
AWARDS ANOTHER \$6,000
IN COLLEGE FUNDS**





As with last year's inaugural program, this year's ten participating students now have the opportunity earn the \$5,000 Grand Scholarship by returning to their high schools to create conservation-focused programs that positively impact their communities. For more information and a video of the scholarship program's week of activity, visit <https://mudhole.com/blogs/news/2023-Scholarship-Winners-Announced>.





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CCA FLORIDA, THE DUKE ENERGY
MARICULTURE CENTER AND THE FWC

CONTINUE REDFISH RESTOCKING EFFORTS ALONG WEST COAST

(continued on page 48)



restocking

**THE PARTNERS
RELEASED 250
SLOT-SIZED
REDFISH ALONG
FLORIDA'S
WEST COAST TO
SUPPORT STOCK
ENHANCEMENT**

**REDFISH
RESTOCKING
EFFORTS**



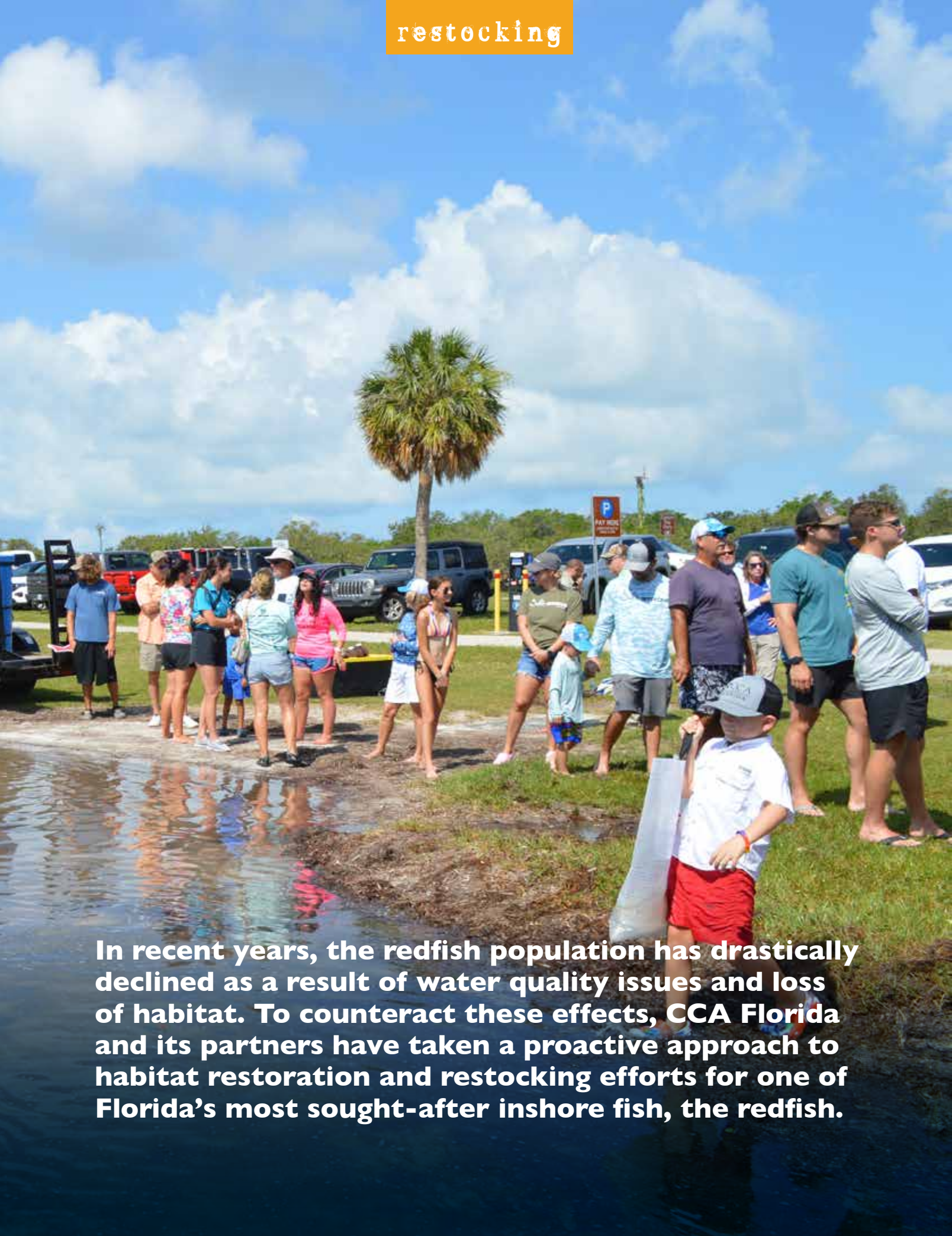
In June, Coastal Conservation Association Florida (CCA Florida), the state's leading organization dedicated to marine fisheries conservation, education and advocacy, joined the Duke Energy Mariculture Center and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to continue their restocking efforts and release 250 hatchery-reared, adult redfish (averaging 18 to 27 inches in length) off the waters of Pinellas County in effort to combat the decreasing population along Florida's West Coast.

A group of people, some wearing blue shirts, are standing in shallow water next to a blue trailer. They appear to be participating in a redfish restocking effort. The background shows a clear blue sky with some clouds and palm trees.

**“WE ARE PROUD TO
CONTINUE PARTNERSHIPS
WITH THE DUKE ENERGY
MARICULTURE CENTER
AND FWC AND EXTEND
OUR COMMITMENT TO
HELPING PRESERVE AND
PROTECT FLORIDA’S
MARINE RESOURCES
ALONG THE WEST COAST.
REDFISH IS AN ESSENTIAL
SPECIES TO OUR STATE
AND WE MUST WORK
TOGETHER TO CONSERVE
THIS FISHERY FOR THE
NEXT GENERATION.”**

**BRIAN GORSKI
CCA FLORIDA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**REDFISH
RESTOCKING
EFFORTS**



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



Redfish Restocking

continued from page 51

The latest restocking efforts for the nonprofit-corporate partnership are part of a multifunctional and multiyear strategy to rebuild and maintain game fish stocks, and releasing adult, slot-sized redfish makes a quicker impact to the fishery as it significantly increases the chances for spawning.

“Duke Energy Florida appreciates our long-standing relationship with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and CCA Florida. Together we have made significant impacts across the state,” said Melissa Seixas, Duke Energy Florida state president. “We understand the importance of environmental stewardship and the economic benefit it provides to the communities we serve.”

In the past five years with support from FWC, CCA Florida and Duke Energy have released more than 275,000 redfish and spotted seatrout (4 to 30 inches) along Florida’s East and West Coasts to help provide abundant recreational fishing opportunities.

“We work really hard to maintain our world class fisheries here in Florida. Thanks to important partnerships like the ones we share with CCA Florida and Duke Energy, we are able to celebrate conservation successes like the release of slot sized redfish today,” said Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Executive Director Roger Young.

The release was held at 27°38' 37.4"N 82°42'54.0"W directly across the street from the entrance to the Fort De Soto boat ramp. Together, the partners released about 250 slot-sized redfish from the Duke Energy Mariculture Center.



REDFISH RESTOCKING EFFORTS



VACATION HOME SITTING EMPTY?

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We host events throughout the year and can keep your property full.

Our members are your target audience.

Whether you need to fill one week or 50, we can help.

Contact Adam Miller at (941) 270-0895



CCA SOLIDO SUN MASK



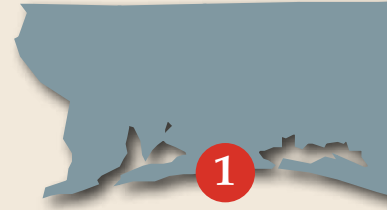
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COMPLETED HABITAT PROJECTS



Since 2010, CCA Florida in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust and our partners, have contributed over \$9 million in habitat projects statewide. Join us in these efforts!

1. CCA/South Walton Artificial Reef Association, Inc. Reefs
2. CCA Reef/MBARA
3. CCA/Duke Energy Reef – Mexico Beach
4. CCA/Ocean Aid 360 Apalachicola Ghost Trap Rodeo
5. CCA/FDEP/Duke Spartina Grass Replanting
6. CCA/BCT Billy's Barge Artificial Reef
7. CCA Dr. Bart Carey Memorial Reef
8. CCA R.Z. "Sandy" Safley Reef
9. CCA NCBS Lone Cabbage Reef Fish Monitoring
10. CCA/UF/IFAS Centipede Bay Oyster Reef Restoration
11. CCA/Hernando Co. Ghost Ship Reef
12. CCA/BCT/Tampa Bay Watch Fantasy Island Oyster Restoration
13. CCA/BCT/Tampa Bay Watch 2D Island Oyster Restoration
14. CCA Duke Energy Red Tide Research Project
15. CCA/FWC Suncoast Youth Conservation Center Saltwater Pond
16. CCA/Ocean Aid 360 Tampa Bay Ghost Trap Rodeo
17. CCA/UCF De Soto National Memorial Living Shoreline Stabilization
18. CCA/BCT Sean Gucken Memorial Reef
19. CCA/Manatee County Larry Borden Artificial Reef
20. CCA/Lee County USS Mohawk CGC Reef – Veterans Memorial Reef
21. CCA/BCT/Lee County Punta Rassa Oyster Restoration
22. CCA/BCT/Lee County San Carlos Bay Oyster Restoration
23. CCA/LBHS Seagrass Restoration Project
24. CCA Turtle Bay Oyster Reef
25. CCA/Naples Bay Oyster Restoration Project
26. CCA Florida Bay Seagrass Restoration
27. CCA/UNF Florida Bay Turtle Grass Research Project
28. CCA/Eagle Scout Andrew Hall Dragon Reef
29. CCA Broward Chapter Pilot Oyster Project
30. CCA/No Shoes Reef 4
31. CCA Bob Burton Memorial Reef
32. CCA/BCT Goggle Eye Reef
33. CCA/BCT Andrew "Red" Harris Foundation Reef
34. CCA/BCT Andrew "Red" Harris Foundation "No Shoes" Reef
35. CCA/Florida Oceanographic Society Seagrass and Oyster Restoration
36. CCA/MCAC Brause Girls Reef
37. CCA/Wildlife FL/FWC Eelgrass Restoration Project
38. CCA Curtis Bostick Reef
39. CCA/Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Seagrass Restoration
40. CCA/Indian River Land Trust Solar Aeration Project
41. CCA Indian River Lagoon RISSA Seagrass Buoys and Oyster Restoration
42. CCA Treasure Coast Chapter Revegetation Project
43. CCA/BTT/IRL Land Trust Tarpon and Snook Impoundment Tagging
44. CCA Spotted Seatrout Acoustic Study
45. CCA/City of Satellite Beach Samsons Island Restoration Project
46. CCA/BCT Lady Philomena Cargo Ship - Volusia County Reef Site No. 12
47. CCA/UCF/NPS Canaveral Nat'l Seashore Indian Midden Living Shoreline Restoration
48. CCA/BCT Starship II Reef
49. CCA/UCF Tomoka State Park Indian Midden Living Shoreline Restoration
50. CCA/Heineken/UCF Tomoka State Park Indian Midden Living Shoreline Restoration
51. CCA/City of Fernandina Living Shoreline Oyster Restoration
52. CCA/BCT Starship Reef
53. CCA/BCT Jacksonville River Reef



COASTAL
CONSERVATION
ASSOCIATION
FLORIDA

CONSERVATION | HABITAT | RESTOCKING | ADVOCACY

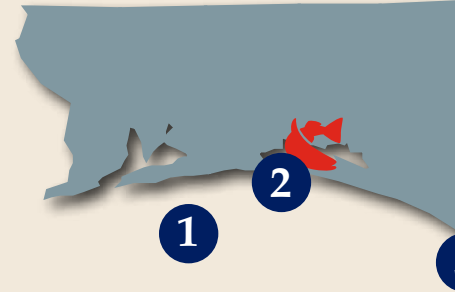


BUILDING
CONSERVATION
TRUST

CCA's Habitat



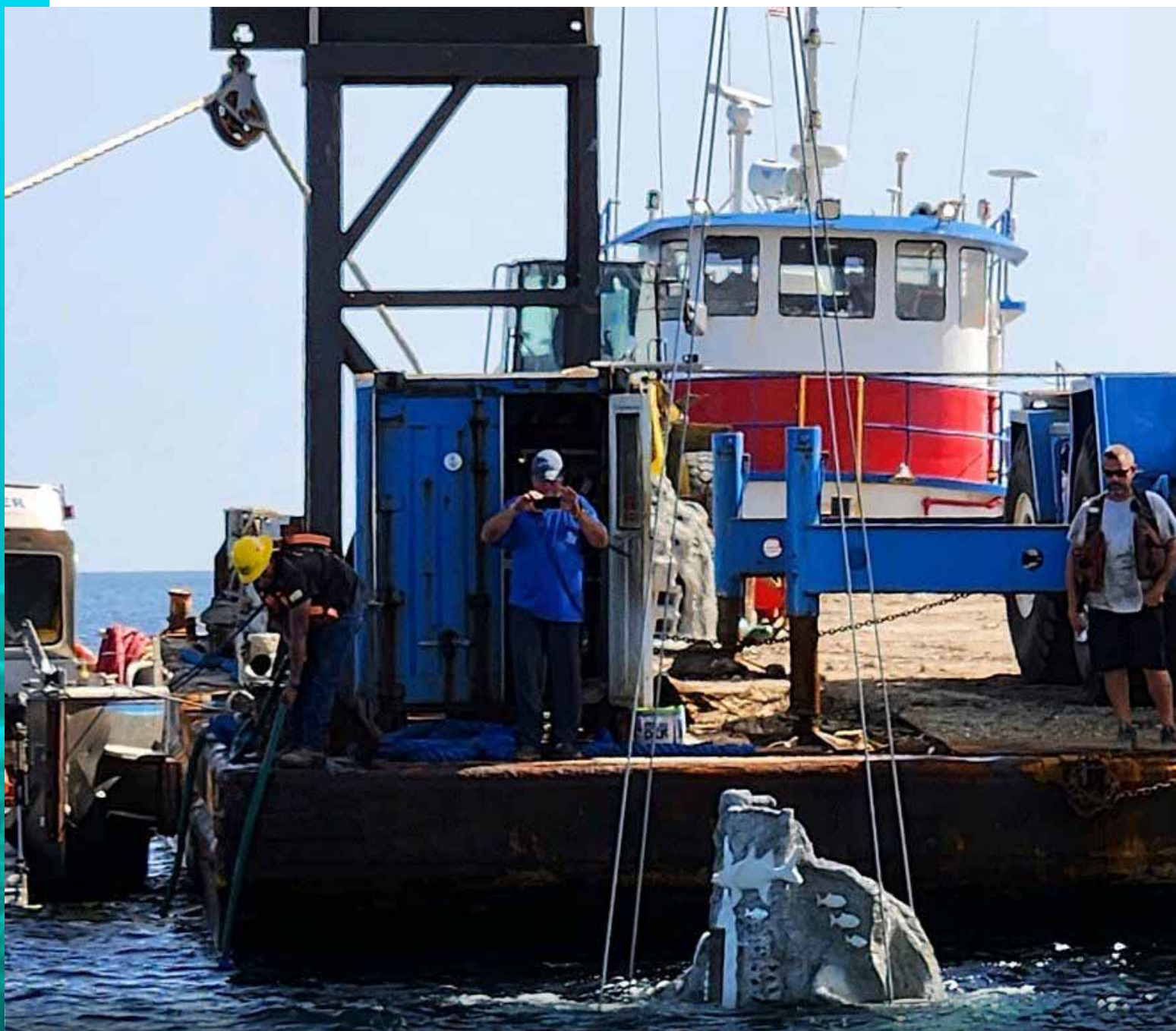
ONGOING & UPCOMING HABITAT PROJECTS



Since 2010, CCA Florida in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust and our partners, have contributed over \$9 million in habitat projects statewide. Join us in these efforts!

1. CCA/Tri-County Deep Stim III Reef
2. CCA Choctawhatchee Bay Shoreline Restoration Project
3. CCA St Andrew's Bay Seagrass Restoration Project
4. CCA/FDEP Sea Urchin Round-up Project
5. CCA/Duke/UF Living Shoreline
6. CCA/Duke Energy/Reef Innovations/Citrus County Inshore Reef
7. CCA Homosassa River Restoration Project
8. CCA/Hernando County Bendickson Reef
9. CCA/Hernando County Jenkins Creek Living Shoreline
10. CCA/Pinellas County Reef
11. CCA/Larry Borden Reef
12. CCA/Manatee County Oyster Habitat Restoration Project
13. CCA Sarasota Bay Artificial Reef
14. CCA/Sarasota Bay Watch Clam Restoration
15. CCA/Charlotte County Artificial Reef
16. CCA/Lee County Phoenix Reef
17. CCA Turtle Bay Oyster Reef Restoration
18. CCA/St. James City Oyster Gardening Project
19. CCA/John Pennekamp Park Seagrass Restoration Project
20. CCA/Biscayne Bay Seagrass Restoration Project
21. CCA John Michael Baker Memorial Reef - Broward County
22. CCA/Impact 100 PBC Reef
23. CCA/Loxahatchee Eelgrass Restoration Project
24. CCA Treasure Coast Living Docks Project
25. CCA 10-Mile Creek Eelgrass Restoration Project
26. CCA/BWO/FWC/UF Indian River Lagoon Clam Restoration
27. CCA/NE Florida Realtors Clam Restoration Project
28. CCA/Brevard County Artificial Reefs
29. CCA/UCF Mosquito Lagoon Oyster Restoration
30. CCA/University of North Florida Living Shoreline Restoration Project
31. CCA Jacksonville Barge Reef
32. CCA Oyster Shell Recycling Program



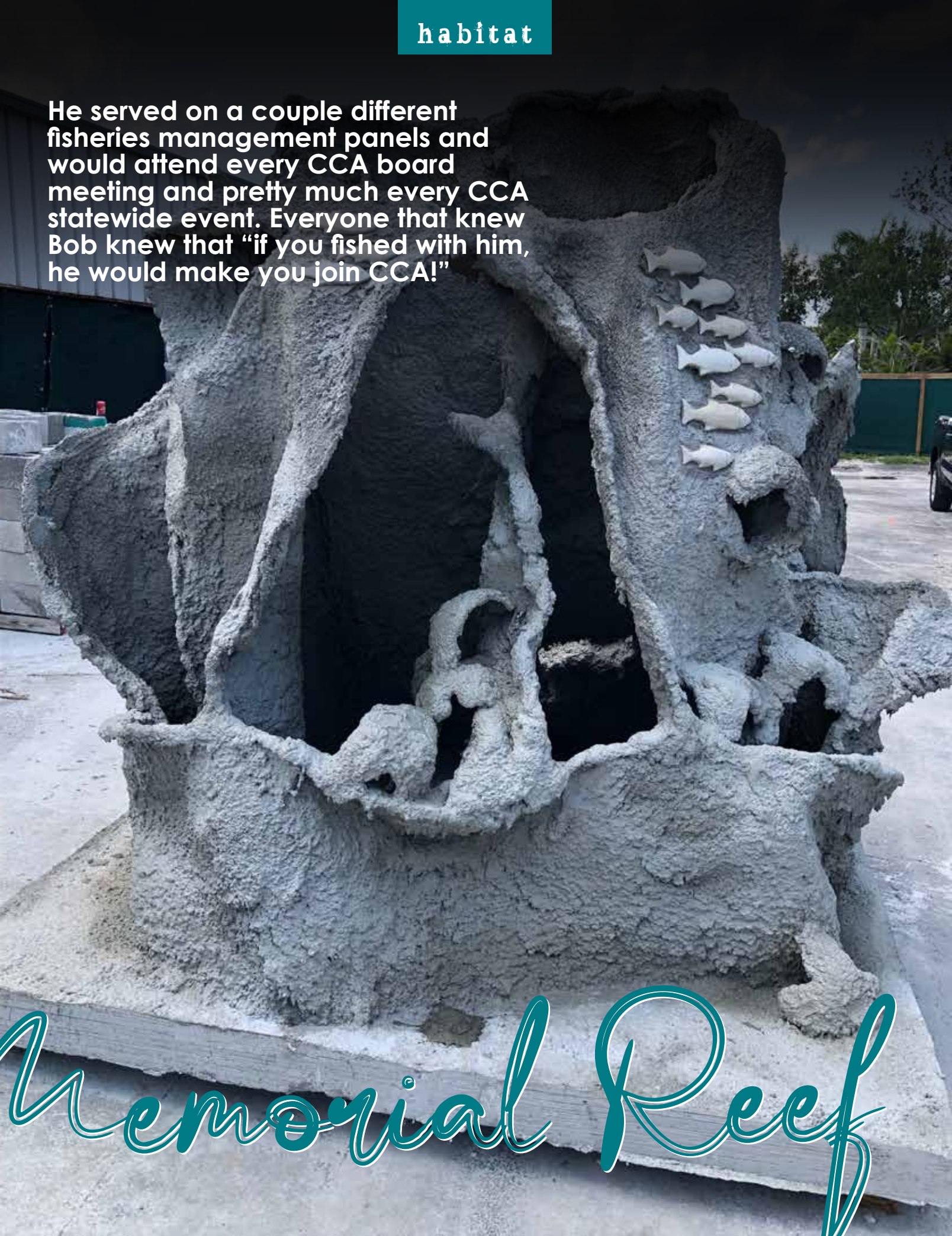


In July, the **Bob Burton Memorial Reef** was successfully deployed off the coast of Delray Beach with the family and CCA in attendance. **Bob Burton was a CCA Life Member from Palm Beach, Florida and was one of the most active volunteers CCA has ever known.**

Bob Burton V

He served on a couple different fisheries management panels and would attend every CCA board meeting and pretty much every CCA statewide event. Everyone that knew Bob knew that “if you fished with him, he would make you join CCA!”

Memorial Reef



In addition to serving as a living memorial for Bob, this reef will provide long-term ecosystem services to a wide variety of marine life and it will create sustainable live-bottom habitat where none currently exists.

The memorial reef was deployed approximately 1½ mile off Delray Beach in 65 feet of water and is surrounded by limestone boulders. Many thanks to the Palm Beach County Environmental Resource Management Department, McCulley Marine Services, the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the many donors for making the project a success!



Where would you like to fish today?

AT MAVERICK, WE THINK THERE ARE NO BETTER WORDS TO START A MORNING. THAT'S WHY WE'VE BEEN A PROUD SUPPORTER OF CCA FLORIDA FROM THE BEGINNING. BECAUSE WE WANT ALL FUTURE FISHING PARTNERS TO BE ABLE TO ASK EACH OTHER THIS VERY QUESTION.



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X50 CR MOV 15 High Carbon German Steel



A Cut Above

Rhineland Cutlery founded in 1995

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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.



SUMMER HABIT



MAY

TURTLE BAY OYSTER
DEPLOYMENT

In May, CCA Florida completed its third installment of the Turtle Bay oyster project by deploying an additional 22.5 tons of recycled oyster shell to the reef. Since 2021, six dump trucks of recycled oysters have been deployed on the reef, which boosts water quality, enhances marine fisheries and improves recreational angling in Charlotte Harbor.

Special thanks to Clermont Oyster Bar, Ingman Marine, Abbott Construction, Lee Reefs, Gasparilla Island Conservation and Improvement Association (GICIA), Capt. Jay Withers, Oyster Boys Conservation and Lake County for their continued support on this project.

EELGRASS PLANTING IN
ST. LUCIE RIVER

MAY



AT HIGHLIGHTS



In May, CCA Florida Chairman Andy Steinbergs joined CCA staff and volunteers, the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida, FWC and Sea & Shoreline to plant eelgrass along an oxbow of the St. Lucie River. An estimated 500 four-inch eelgrass pots were planted and covered by 100 fence exclosures. The eelgrass will be fenced off for three to six months to prevent foraging and allow it to establish.



MAY LIVING SHORELINE HABITAT RESTORATION EVENT

In May, volunteers from CCA Florida, UCF Marine Biology, the Marine Discovery Center and Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program finished this year's Mosquito Lagoon living shoreline stabilization. This proven science-based multifaceted project is protecting Native American shell middens from erosion while providing outstanding fishing habitat that will also help to filter the water. These efforts are really paying off allowing seagrasses to return.

SUMMER HABIT



MAY

CCA FLORIDA DONATES \$10,000 FOR "LIVING SHORELINE - OYSTER REEF"

In May, CCA Florida and the Northeast Florida Association of REALTORS (NEFAR) partnered with the University of North Florida Coastal and Marine Biology program to develop an experimental "Living Shoreline - Oyster Reef" project in northeast Florida.

CCA Florida donated \$10,000 and NEFAR donated \$17,568 to this project designed to rebuild historic oyster populations, provide and increase habitat for oyster spat, reduce wave energy and shoreline erosion, improve water quality and increase local opportunities for fishing.

AT HIGHLIGHTS

In June, CCA Florida and the Indian River Land Trust (IRLT) joined efforts on a pilot project to improve Indian River Lagoon health and the health of iconic fish populations. A solar-powered aeration system, partially funded by CCA Florida, was successfully installed in an IRLT-owned impoundment to reduce stress on fish and seagrasses. The project is designed to improve the health of important nursery habitats for fish and seagrasses that are threatened by poor water quality, specifically low oxygen and high sulfides. *For more information, please contact fgidus@ccaflorida.org.*

IRL SOLAR POWERED AERATION SYSTEM

JUNE





PICTURE



FALL EVENTS SAVE THE DATE

August

18
Pasco County
Banquet and Auction

September

7
Palm Beach Banquet
and Auction

14
Gainesville Banquet
and Auction

22
Sarasota Banquet
and Auction

22 and 23
Tampa All Release
Tournament

28
Space Coast Banquet
and Auction

30
Florida Cracker
Invitational

October

5
Orlando Banquet
and Auction

7
STAR Banquet
and Auction

12
Pensacola Banquet

22
Planation Redfish
Classic

19
Peace River Banquet
and Auction

Polk County BBQ
and Auction

26
Forgotten Coast
Banquet and Auction

Jacksonville
Banquet and Auction

November

2-5
Life Member Outing

9
Clermont Banquet
and Auction

Pinellas County
Banquet and Auction

16
Treasure Coast
Banquet and Auction

Dade County
Banquet and Auction

30
South Walton
Banquet and Auction

Lake Mary
Banquet and Auction

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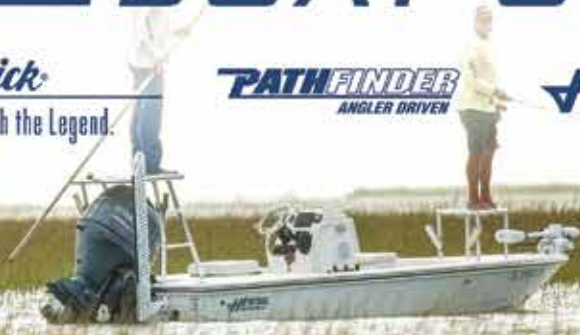
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