

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



SEAWATCH

SUMMER 26

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2026
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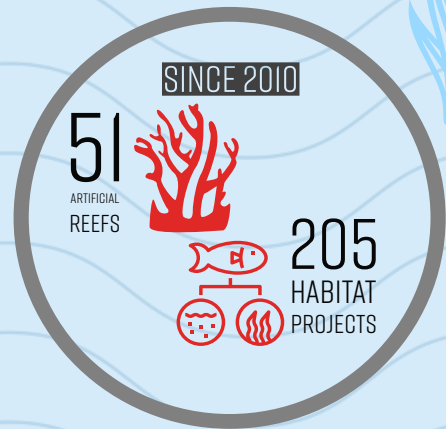
**200 TONS
OF OYSTERS**



WERE SAVED FROM WASTE BY CCA FLORIDA IN THE LAST THREE YEARS. THUS FAR, 156 OF THE 200 TONS HAVE BEEN RECYCLED AND REDEPLOYED TO CREATE ARTIFICIAL REEFS



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



**96 TONS
OF TRASH REMOVED**



**125,000
MANGROVES & SPARTINA
GRASS PLANTED**



**58 MILLION
CLAMS DEPLOYED**

**ADVOCATED
GAMEFISH
STATUS FOR
REDFISH**

**PROTECTING
FLORIDA'S MARINE
RESOURCES AND ANGLERS'
ACCESS FOR NEARLY
40 YEARS**

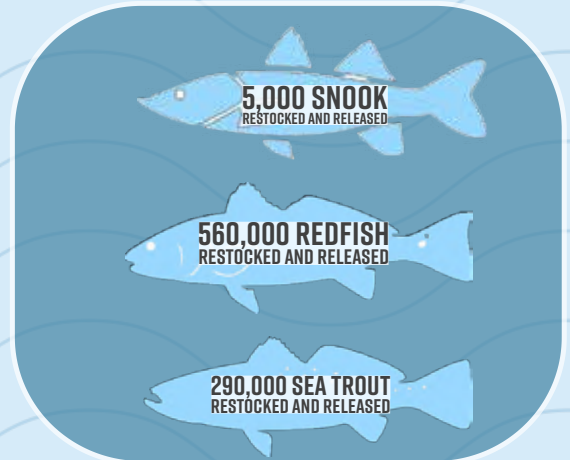
**INITIATED NET BAN
CONSTITUTIONAL
AMENDMENT**

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

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

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

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



**\$1,100,000 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**



ASA and CCA Intervene in South Atlantic Red Snapper Lawsuit to Defend Recreational Fishing Access

The American Sportfishing Association (ASA) and Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) have jointly moved to intervene in litigation challenging the National Marine Fisheries Service's approval of state Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs) for the 2026 South Atlantic red snapper season.

The lawsuit seeks to overturn a landmark pilot program that will allow Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina to implement expanded recreational red snapper seasons while collecting critical fisheries data to inform future management improvements.

ASA and CCA filed their motion to intervene in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to ensure recreational anglers and the recreational fishing industry have a voice in defending the EFPs and the access opportunities they provide.

"For years, anglers have faced extremely limited red snapper seasons despite the stock rebuilding far ahead of schedule," said Glenn Hughes, president and CEO of the American Sportfishing Association. "These pilot programs represent a transformational opportunity to improve recreational data collection, expand reasonable public access and advance state-led management approaches that have already proven successful in the Gulf. ASA is intervening to help protect that progress for recreational anglers and the sportfishing industry."

"These pilot programs are about creating an improved recreational data collection and management framework for recreational fisheries while maintaining strong conservation standards," said CCA President Pat Murray. "Recreational anglers have waited years for management that reflects the stock's rebuilt status and current abundance trends. The states are stepping up with more responsive management and better data collection, and we believe that effort deserves strong support."

South Atlantic red snapper harvest was closed in 2010 as part of a rebuilding plan. Conservation measures and angler compliance helped the stock rebound nearly two decades ahead of schedule, and the fishery is no longer considered overfished or undergoing overfishing. However, federal recreational harvest estimates continued to drive extremely short seasons, including a one-day season in 2024 and a two-day season in 2025.

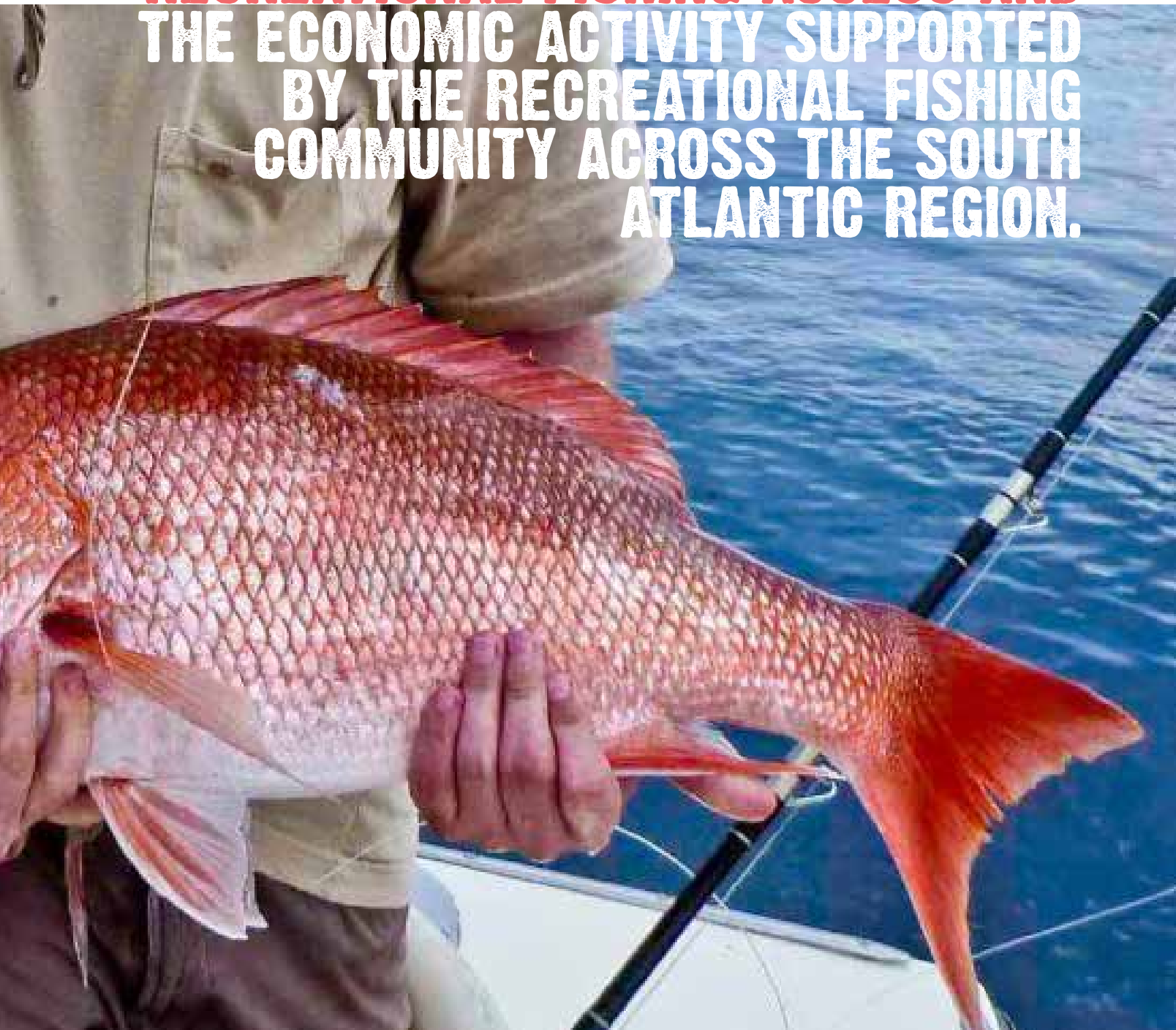
Both organizations emphasized that improved recreational access and strong conservation standards can and should work together.

Under the approved EFPs, Florida's recreational season will span 39 days split between summer and fall, while Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina will each have 62-day seasons beginning July 1. The states will also collect catch and effort information from anglers and for-hire operators to evaluate improved recreational management approaches.

ASA and CCA noted that similar state-led pilot programs in the Gulf of America helped pave the way for long-term state management of Gulf red snapper beginning in 2020, resulting in expanded fishing opportunities while still meeting federal conservation requirements.



**THE ORGANIZATIONS EMPHASIZED THAT
THE LAWSUIT DIRECTLY THREATENS
RECREATIONAL FISHING ACCESS AND
THE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY SUPPORTED
BY THE RECREATIONAL FISHING
COMMUNITY ACROSS THE SOUTH
ATLANTIC REGION.**





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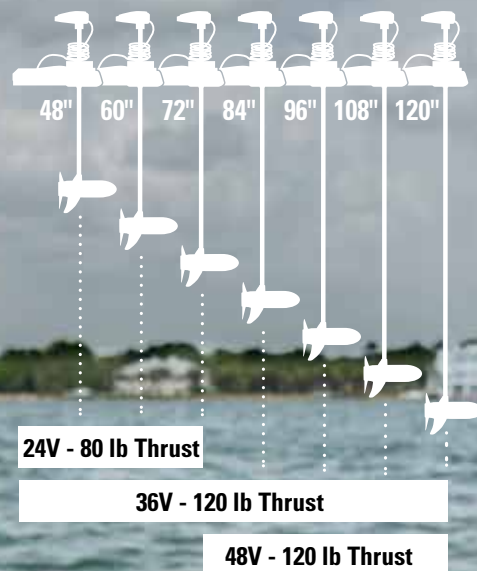


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“We appreciate this new willingness of NOAA to form more collaborative relationships,” said Ted Venker, conservation director.

NOAA Leadership Announces Major Reforms

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Administrator Dr. Neil Jacobs announced a series of agency actions last week during the Discover Boating Miami International Boat Show:

- Advancing state-led fisheries management through Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs);
- Revisiting long-standing regulatory policy on vessel speed, and
- Establishing a new pathway to modernize recreational fishing data.

NOAA announced that the South Atlantic states' EFPs have met agency requirements and been published in the Federal Register, opening a public comment period as part of the evaluation process. Publication represents an important next step toward final approval and reflects a growing reliance on state expertise, regional collaboration and data-driven management approaches.

The agency also announced it will reopen the vessel

speed rule finalized in 2008 through an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM). The deregulatory process will invite public comment on both the original rule and future direction and allow updated information and data, including private-sector technology solutions, to be placed on the record.

NOAA also outlined plans to establish a new on-ramp allowing willing states and regional commissions to contribute data and help design a modern replacement for the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP). The effort, initially called the Recreational Angler Partnership Improvement Directive, or RAPID, is intended to improve data accuracy, transparency and confidence in recreational fisheries management by incorporating state expertise and regional collaboration.

“Administrator Jacobs deserves real credit for his leadership at NOAA,” said Jeff Angers, president of the Center for Sportfishing Policy. “Advancing state-led fish-

“An open, transparent process is what we need that work for everyone and all of the different pathways to address long-standing issues.”

We are hopeful this signals a new era and look forward to supporting these efforts.

ess – this new leadership – at ve partnerships with stakeholders,” r for Coastal Conservation Association.

State-Led Fisheries Management Advances; Review of Vessel Speed Rule Announced; Recreational Data Modernization Heralded

eries management and taking a hard look at a deeply flawed vessel speed rule reflects a thoughtful, practical approach to policy that has been missing for far too long. The states have asked for better data and a stronger role in management. Inviting collaborative federalism by opening the door for states and regional partners to help design the next generation of recreational data collection is a major step toward restoring confidence in fisheries management and getting better results on the water. We look forward to participating in the public process and supporting these smart solutions that strengthen conservation; improve confidence in fisheries data, and ensure practical management of America's public waters."

"Over the past week, we saw more advances in federal marine fisheries management than in the past several years combined," said Mike Leonard, the American Sportfishing Association's vice president of Government Affairs. "In total, these actions on South Atlantic red snapper, the vessel speed

rule and recreational data collection prove NOAA leadership's commitment to addressing longstanding problems that have limited recreational fishing access. The sportfishing industry is committed to working with NOAA to advance these and other priorities that will improve the nation's \$78.4 billion saltwater recreational fishing economy."

"The recreational fishing community has been asking for practical, science-based solutions to the enduring challenges we face, and we very much appreciate the leadership shown by NOAA in responding to those concerns," said Chris Horton, Senior Director of Fisheries Policy for the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation. "Administrator Jacobs and his team at NOAA have demonstrated a clear commitment to working with states, anglers, and industry to improve confidence in fisheries management while ensuring conservation outcomes that are both effective and workable on the water."

the only way to arrive at solutions ese announcements outline better g, unnecessarily contentious issues. w era in fisheries management and orting these and other initiatives."



CCA and ASA Remain Committed to Achieving a Viable South Atlantic Red Snapper Season

The American Sportfishing Association (ASA) and Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) are deeply disappointed by the decision issued by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia granting a preliminary injunction against the 2026 South Atlantic red snapper Exempted Fishing

Permit (EFP) pilot programs approved by NOAA Fisheries for Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. This preliminary injunction was issued just hours before Florida's Atlantic red snapper season under their EFP was set to begin, leading to immediate confusion, frustration and economic disruption for anglers, for-hire operators, marinas, tackle shops and coastal communities that had prepared for the opening of the 2026 season.

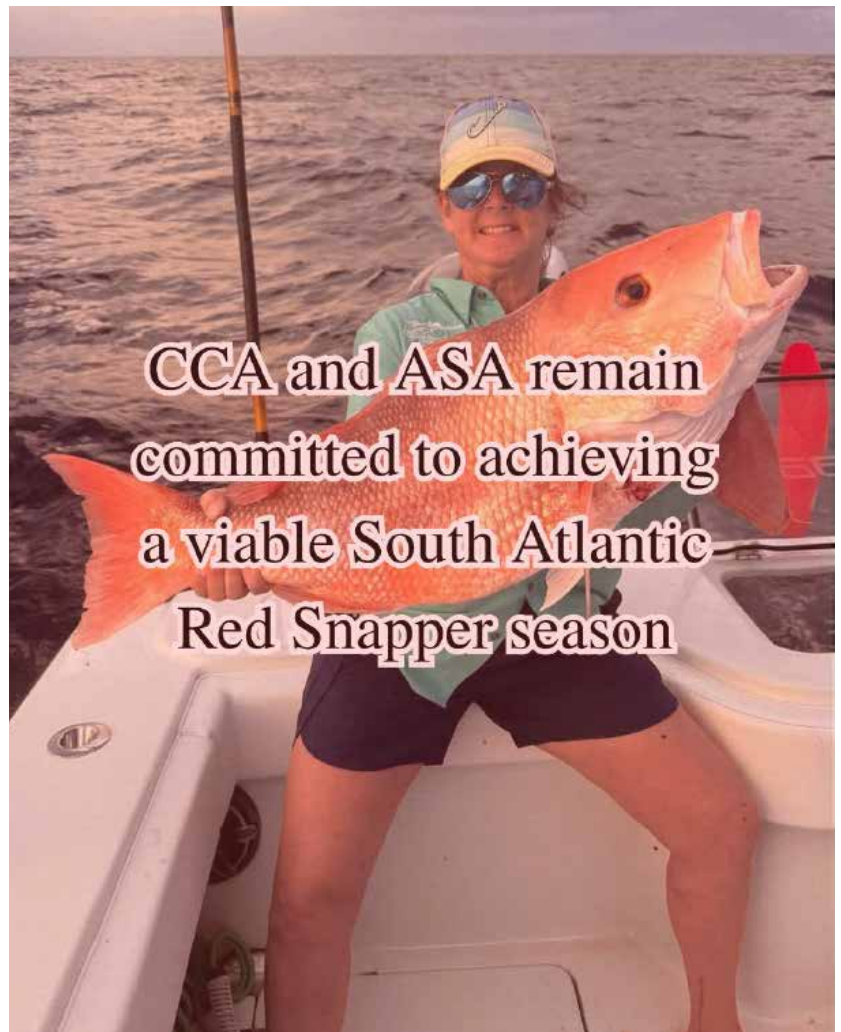
The Court's decision temporarily blocks implementation of the state-led pilot programs, which were designed to test key recreational data collection improvements and a state-led management approach while providing expanded recreational access to the South Atlantic red snapper stock, similar to previous efforts in the Gulf.

South Atlantic red snapper is not a stock in jeopardy. Anglers and managers have worked for years to rebuild this fishery, and those efforts have been wildly successful. The latest stock assessment confirms what anglers see on the water – the Atlantic red snapper stock is as abundant now as ever. Despite this success, the recreational fishery in recent years has been limited to one- or two-day federal harvest seasons, which has led to excessive discard mortality estimates and a derby-style fishery that results in foregone yield, poses safety risks, and erodes public confidence in

South Atlantic federal fisheries management. The EFP pilot programs were specifically designed to collect the science necessary to move beyond these management challenges through partnership with anglers and for-hire businesses.

Economic consequences of this decision will be substantial throughout the South Atlantic region. ASA and CCA are currently working with partners and stakeholders to gather information that demonstrates the full scope of these impacts.

ASA and CCA continue to stand with NOAA Fisheries and the participating states as they evaluate all available options moving forward. We remain committed to advancing science-based recreational fisheries management that supports conservation, improves data collection and provides reasonable public access to healthy fisheries.





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2026
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SUPER PRIZES FOR
SCHOLARSHIPS, COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS AND

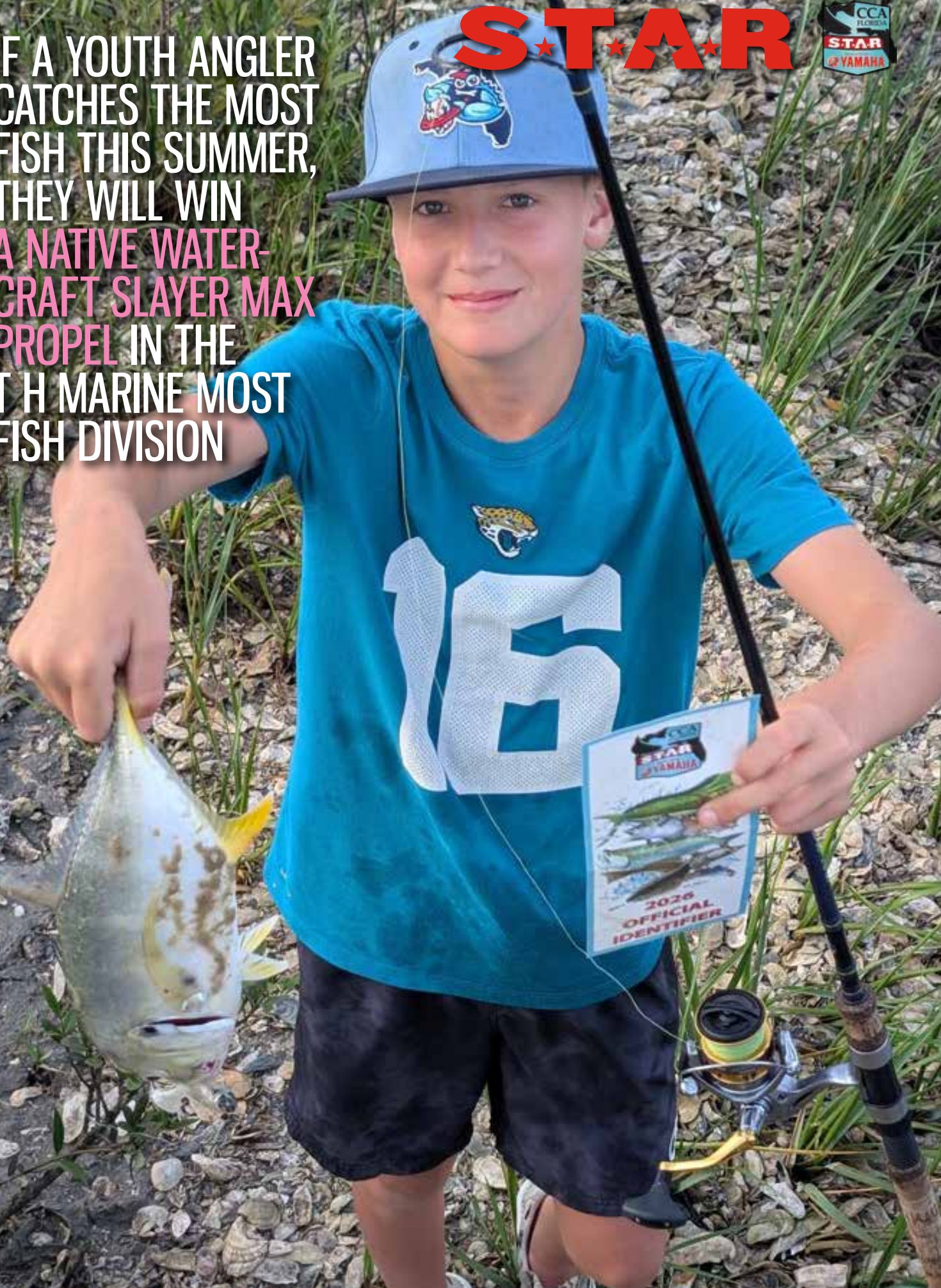


FISHING FUN AND YOUNG ANGLERS

GREAT PRIZES FOR YOUTH AGES 6-17

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CATCHES THE MOST
FISH THIS SUMMER,
THEY WILL WIN
A NATIVE WATER-
CRAFT SLAYER MAX
PROPEL IN THE
T H MARINE MOST
FISH DIVISION

STAR





This summer the 2026 CCA Florida STAR Youth Fishing competition presented by Yamaha will have young anglers across the state fishing for scholarships, boats and community service hours!

Since the event's launch on Memorial Day weekend 2015, Florida's largest family-friendly fishing competition has awarded 18

boats, two trucks, \$1.1 million dollars in college scholarships to total nearly \$4.2 million dollars in prizes. The 2026 CCA Florida STAR competition will continue the tradition of awarding prizes to anglers but has changed its format to engage more youth in the sport of fishing and conservation by offering them exciting opportunities to win!

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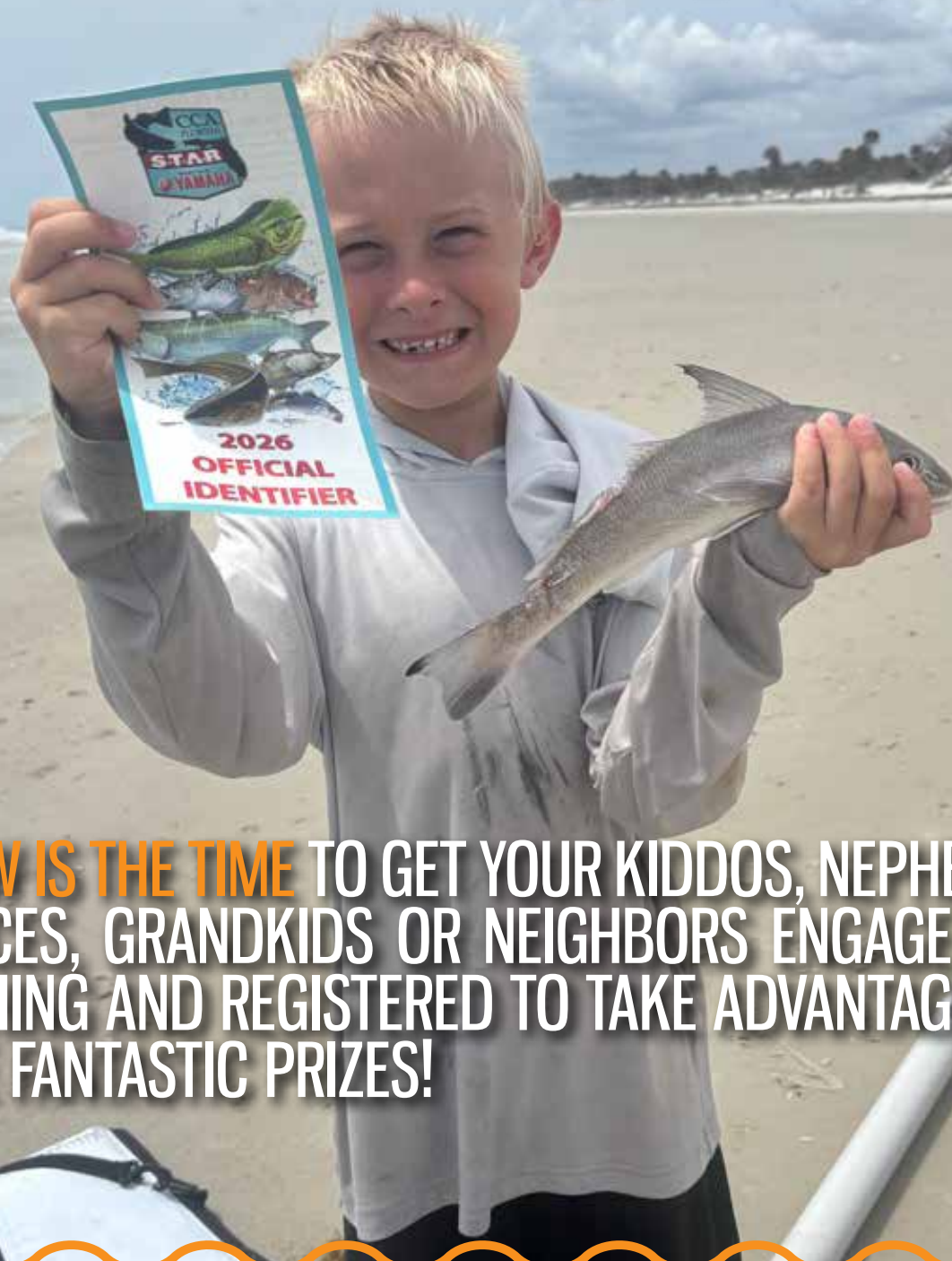
Kingsailfish Mounts

Solid State Marine



That's right! Youth participants ages 6-17 will have the opportunity to win a share of \$100,000 in college and vocational school scholarships from Guy Harvey Foundation, Realtree Fishing, Academy Sports + Outdoors, Digital Sportsman, Millers Marine, Florida Sportfishing Association, West Ma-

rine plus their own custom fishing jersey from Tailin Toads Customs, a rod from Bull Bay Rods and pliers from danco Sports. There are boat, motor and trailer packages from Yamaha, Carolina Skiff, Custom Gheenoe, Minn Kota & Power Pole as well as prizes and Community Service hours for gathering



NOW IS THE TIME TO GET YOUR KIDDOS, NEPHEWS, NIECES, GRANDKIDS OR NEIGHBORS ENGAGED IN FISHING AND REGISTERED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FANTASTIC PRIZES!

and disposing of Trash from the local Florida waters. But the opportunities don't stop there..... if a youth angler catches the most fish this summer, they will win a Native Watercraft Slayer Max Propel in the T H Marine Most Fish Division. So many ways to get our youth engaged and winning this summer. The

competition began Saturday May 23rd and will end Labor Day September 7th for over 100 days of fishing. Youth anglers can still register in the 2026 STAR competition, catch any size, saltwater species, submit a photo with the 2026 STAR identifier in the iAngler app to win. Winners are determined by a

random drawing so youth of all skill levels, fishing from a dock, shoreline or boat have a shot at winning some amazing prizes.

If you are a big kid (over the age of 17), CCA Florida has something for you too! The Drum Spots "Lots-A-Spots" tournament presented by Gulf States Automation.



Catch the redfish with the most spots to win weekly prizes and the fish with the most spots at the end of the summer will win a Cool Custom SUP Skiff with Yamaha motor, Minn Kota trolling motor and Power Pole Micro. There are 6 places paid out with over \$25,000 in other great prizes from Solid

State Marine, King Sailfish Mounts, Relentless Knives and more for anglers to win just by catching redfish with "Lots-A-Spots".

The tournament can be found in the iAngler tournament app Lots-A-Spots | iAnglerTournament

CCA Florida STAR presented by Yama-

ha and their partners continue to find ways to make the winning easier. Now is the time to get your kiddos, nephews, nieces, grandkids or neighbors engaged in fishing and registered to take advantage of the fantastic prizes available to make your summer fishing more rewarding. www.ccaflstar.com



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LONG**

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STAR**

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\$100,000 in scholarships and prizes will be awarded to kids who are CCA Florida members and STAR registrants. STAR is proud to be the largest saltwater tournament in the state dedicated Florida's youth anglers. STAR runs Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day, and your young angler could be one cast away from a college scholarship, amazing prizes and a whole new future!



**For competition details, please visit
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Additional 3.5 million clams were be deployed by

CCA FLORIDA AND PHILLIPS JOINED TOGETHER TO SURPASS 100 MILLION CLAMS DEPLOYED IN INDIAN RIVER LAGOON

In May, CCA Florida joined Phillips to deploy 3.5 million clams in the Indian River Lagoon (IRL), marking a major milestone by surpassing 100 million clams released as part of the organization's Billion Clam Initiative.



habitat

drone to continue the Billion Clam Initiative

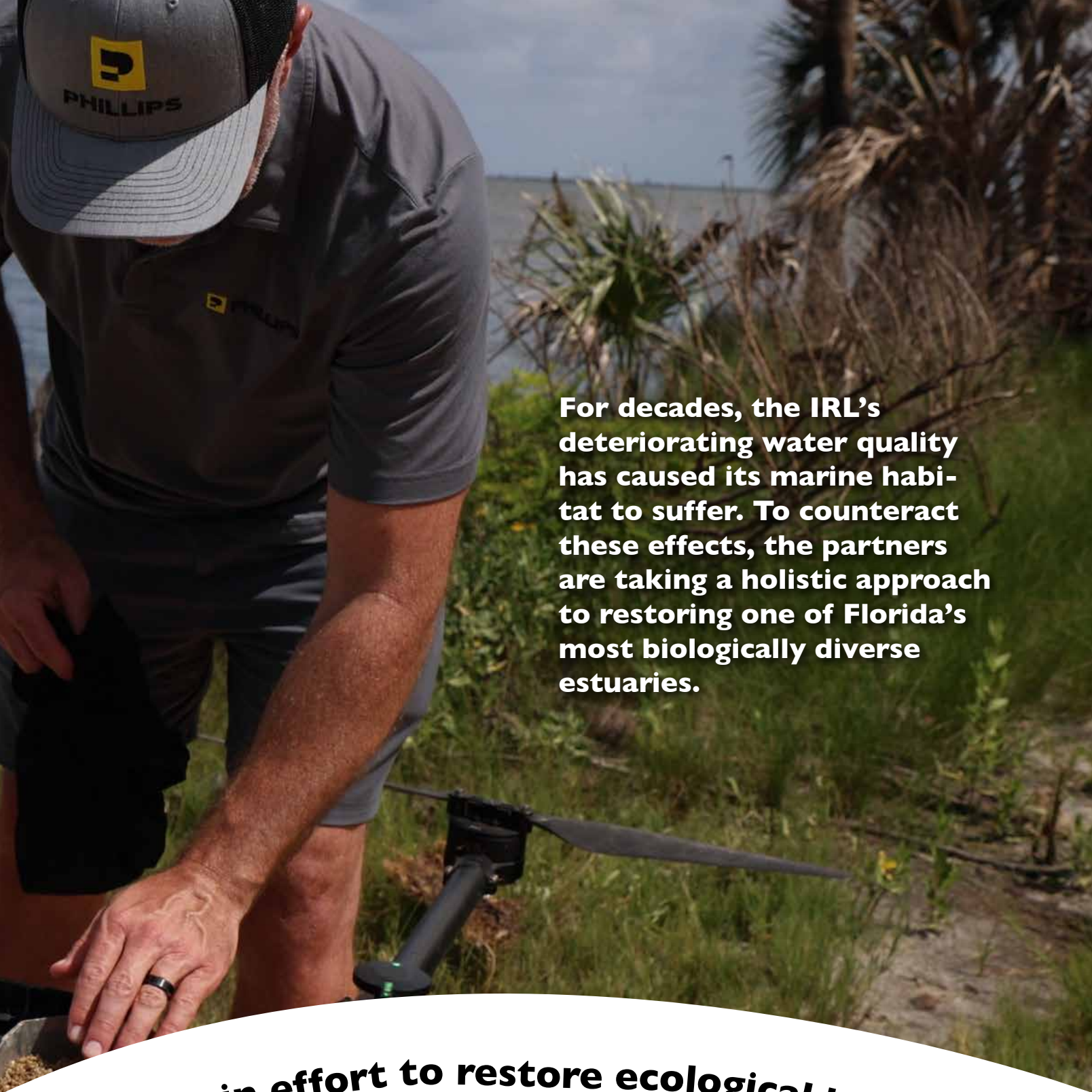


The clam deployment was part of the ongoing Billion Clam Initiative, a large-scale restoration effort launched through a partnership between the Coastal Conservation Association Florida, Capt. Blair Wiggins, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the University of Florida Whitney Laboratory for Marine Bioscience. The initiative uses state-of-the-art technology to deploy clams in effort to improve water quality and restore ecological balance throughout the IRL.



“CCA Florida is proud to join forces with Phillips to deploy 3.5 million clams and continue the Billion Clam Initiative,” CCA Florida Executive Director Brian Gorski said. “Today’s achievement reflects our shared commitment to restoring water quality, enhancing marine habitat and protecting one of Florida’s most ecologically significant waterways for future generations.”

The initiative uses state-of-the-art technology to de



For decades, the IRL's deteriorating water quality has caused its marine habitat to suffer. To counteract these effects, the partners are taking a holistic approach to restoring one of Florida's most biologically diverse estuaries.

Deploy clams in effort to restore ecological balance



habitat

habitat



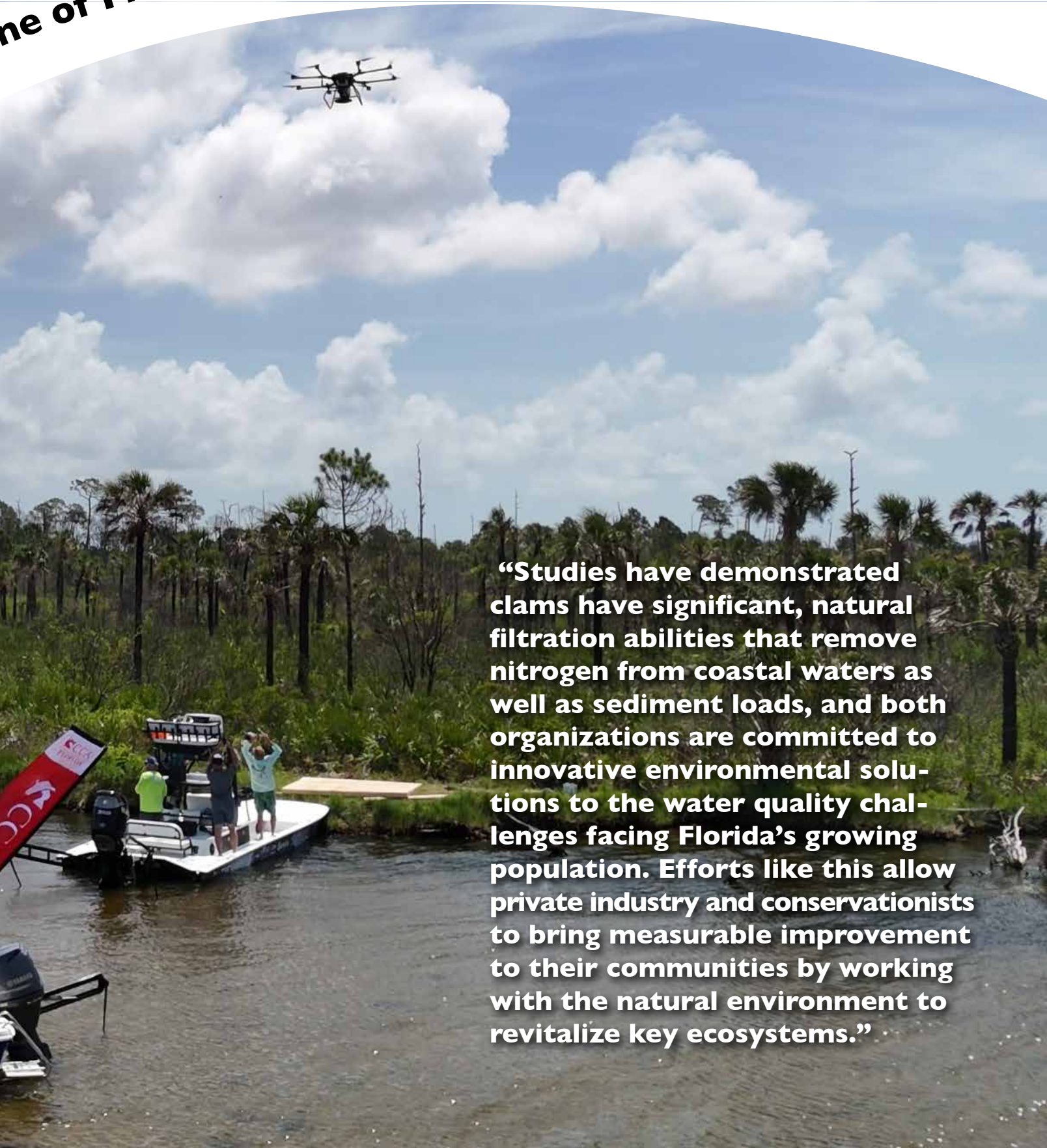
Partners are taking a holistic approach to restoring o

**Phillips is
proud to
partner with
the CCA
Florida on an
initiative
releasing
clams into
Florida
waterways.**

**Matt Eidson
Phillips Senior Vice President**



one of Florida's most biologically diverse estuaries



“Studies have demonstrated clams have significant, natural filtration abilities that remove nitrogen from coastal waters as well as sediment loads, and both organizations are committed to innovative environmental solutions to the water quality challenges facing Florida’s growing population. Efforts like this allow private industry and conservationists to bring measurable improvement to their communities by working with the natural environment to revitalize key ecosystems.”

The clams were deployed by drone, a cutting-edge approach that increases survival rates by reducing predation pressure and allowing for more precise placement in targeted restoration areas. Drone deployment also enables optimal planting densities, accelerating clam maturation and maximizing their water filtration benefits compared to traditional manual distribution methods.



habitat

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DUKE
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HABITAT HERO

MEET ERIC LA

Several years ago, CCA Florida began recognizing members and partners who have made extraordinary contributions to habitat restoration and fisheries conservation through SeaWatch Magazine. In this edition, we are proud to recognize Enrique “Eric” Latimer, a CCA Florida Legacy Life Member, as our next Habitat Hero.

For more than three decades, Eric has dedicated his career to restoring and enhancing Florida’s marine resources. As manager of the CCA Florida Duke Energy Mariculture Center, he has helped transform the facility into one of the state’s most influential fisheries enhancement and habitat restoration programs. Through decades of innovation and collaboration, Eric has helped position the center as a cornerstone of CCA Flor-

ida’s conservation efforts. Through his leadership, innovation, and relentless commitment to conservation, millions of fish and countless acres of habitat have been given a second chance.

Eric’s passion for aquatic resources began long before his professional career. After studying fisheries and aquaculture at both Texas A&M University and the University of Florida, he joined the Mariculture Center when it opened in 1991. What started as his first job after graduate school quickly became a lifelong mission.

Over the years, Eric has built a reputation as one of Florida’s foremost fisheries enhancement professionals. Since taking the helm at the facility, he and his team have cultured and released over five million finfish and crustaceans into Florida waters. redfish, spotted seatrout, blue crabs, stone crabs, mullet, pinfish, pigfish, and numerous other species have all benefited from the center’s efforts.

More importantly, Eric established a standard of excellence that has made the facility widely respected among fisheries managers, conservation organizations, and researchers throughout the state.

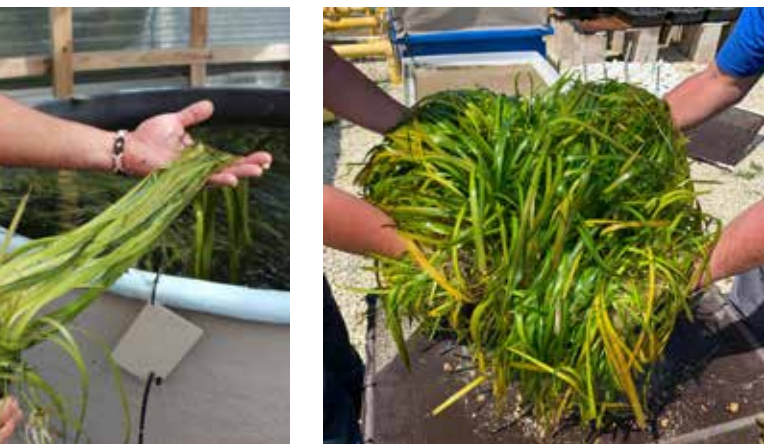
“What started out as a favor to help fulfill our needs for STAR tagged redfish turned into a very special friendship and CCA partnership” said CCA Florida Executive Director Brian Gorski. “Eric lives and breathes the Mariculture Center and his commitment to stock enhancement, conservation and Florida’s marine resources is unparalleled.

While many conservation efforts focus on protecting existing resources, Eric has spent much of his career helping rebuild them.

Working alongside CCA Florida and numerous state and local partners, Eric has played a central role in stock enhancement programs designed to strengthen populations of some of Florida’s most iconic inshore species. Through these efforts, hundreds of thousands of hatchery-raised redfish and spotted seatrout have been released into Florida waters, helping offset losses caused by red tide events, habitat degradation, water quality challenges, and other environmental stressors.

Eric’s impact extends beyond stock enhancement releases alone. From 2017 through 2025, Eric and the CCA Florida Mariculture Center provided all of the tagged west coast redfish used in CCA Florida’s Statewide Angler Rodeo (STAR) Tournament. These specially tagged fish became one of the signature components of the tournament, creating excitement for anglers while generating valuable data on fish movement, survival, and recruitment. The program showcased how conservation and recreational fishing can work hand-in-hand to promote stewardship of Florida’s fisheries.

One of Eric’s most ambitious projects involved expanding stock enhancement efforts beyond the Gulf Coast. Recognizing the need to support struggling redfish populations on Florida’s Atlantic coast, he worked closely with CCA Florida to establish a first-of-its-kind east coast redfish broodstock program. The initiative required collecting genetically appropriate broodstock from



ATIMER

MEET ERIC LATIMER

the Atlantic coast, transporting them to Crystal River, and developing a successful spawning program capable of producing future generations for release.

The program demonstrated Eric's ability to combine science, innovation, and collaboration to address emerging conservation challenges.

"Our ongoing efforts with CCA Florida are helping repopulate a fishery that is iconic to the Sunshine State," Eric said. "Every redfish we release is a step in the right direction, and if we can help be the solution to restocking this fishery, then we are helping restore our entire marine environment."

Looking ahead, Eric and his team are helping pave the way for another exciting chapter in stock enhancement through the development of tripletail culture and future restocking efforts. Tripletail have become one of Florida's most sought-after gamefish, but their unique life history has made large-scale culture challenging. Through continued research and collaboration with conservation partners, the CCA Florida Mariculture Center hopes to expand its successful stock enhancement model to include tripletail in the years ahead. If successful, the program could provide another valuable tool for supporting Florida's recreational fisheries while further advancing Eric's legacy of innovation and conservation.

Although fish stocking often receives the most attention,

Eric has long understood that healthy fisheries depend on healthy habitat.

Under his leadership, the CCA Florida Mariculture Center expanded its mission beyond aquaculture to include restoration of critical coastal habitat. The facility now supports projects involving seagrass, mangroves, oysters, and salt marsh vegetation throughout Florida. Through partnerships with CCA Florida and numerous conservation organizations, Eric has helped provide the habitat-building blocks necessary to support thriving fisheries long after fish are released.

One of Eric's most notable innovations was the development of what became known as the "eelgrass burrito," a collaborative project with researchers at the University of Florida. The technique involved wrapping eelgrass plants with sediment and nutrients into compact units that could be deployed efficiently across restoration sites. The approach improved planting success while reducing the need for extensive diver involvement.

The center has also established donor marshes and mangrove nurseries that provide plant material for living shoreline projects throughout the state. These efforts have helped communities restore habitat damaged by hurricanes, poor water quality, shoreline hardening, and other environmental impacts. In recent years, the CCA Florida Mariculture





WORKING ALONGSIDE
CCA FLORIDA AND
NUMEROUS STATE
AND LOCAL PARTNERS,
ERIC HAS PLAYED A
CENTRAL ROLE IN
STOCK ENHANCEMENT
PROGRAMS DESIGNED
TO STRENGTHEN
POPULATIONS OF SOME
OF FLORIDA'S MOST
ICONIC INSHORE SPECIES.



HABITAT HERO

MEET ERIC LATIMER

Center has supplied mangroves, seagrasses, oysters, and spartina grass for restoration projects across Florida, making it an invaluable resource for organizations working to improve coastal ecosystems.

In addition to supporting habitat restoration projects directly, Eric and his team have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of aquatic vegetation to conservation initiatives across Florida, helping expand restoration efforts far beyond the boundaries of Crystal River.

Eric's relationship with CCA Florida spans many years and countless conservation projects. From red tide recovery efforts to stock enhancement programs and habitat restoration initiatives, he has consistently worked alongside CCA staff, volunteers, and community partners to advance the organization's conservation mission.

For years, CCA Florida and the Eric's team have worked side-by-side to advance stock enhancement and habitat restoration efforts across the state. Together they have released hundreds of thousands of redfish and spotted seatrout, supported large-scale habitat restoration projects, and helped build the foundation for future tripetail enhancement efforts.

That dedication has not gone unnoticed. In recognition of his extraordinary contributions to Florida's marine resources and his decades of conservation leadership, CCA Florida recently named an artificial reef deployment in his honor: the Latimer Reef.

The recognition serves as a fitting tribute to a man whose career has been defined by creating opportunities for future generations to enjoy healthy fisheries and thriving marine habitat.

When asked why he continues to devote so much of his life to conservation, Eric's answer is simple.

"There's something to be said for leaving a legacy of conservation."

Even after 35 years of service, Eric remains focused on the future. The challenges facing Florida's marine resources continue to evolve, from habitat loss and water quality issues to changing environmental conditions. Yet his commitment to finding solutions remains as strong as ever.

"That's the beautiful thing about what Duke Energy is doing," Eric said. "It's not just about our service territory anymore. It's about what's good for the state."

For CCA Florida, Eric represents the very definition of a Habitat Hero. Through fisheries enhancement, habitat restoration, scientific innovation, and an unwavering commitment to Florida's natural resources, he has helped shape the future of conservation across the state.

As Brian Gorski puts it, "That's what it's all about. It's about the future of Florida fisheries, and it's an honor and a privilege to be a part of it."

Few people have done more to secure that future than Eric Latimer.



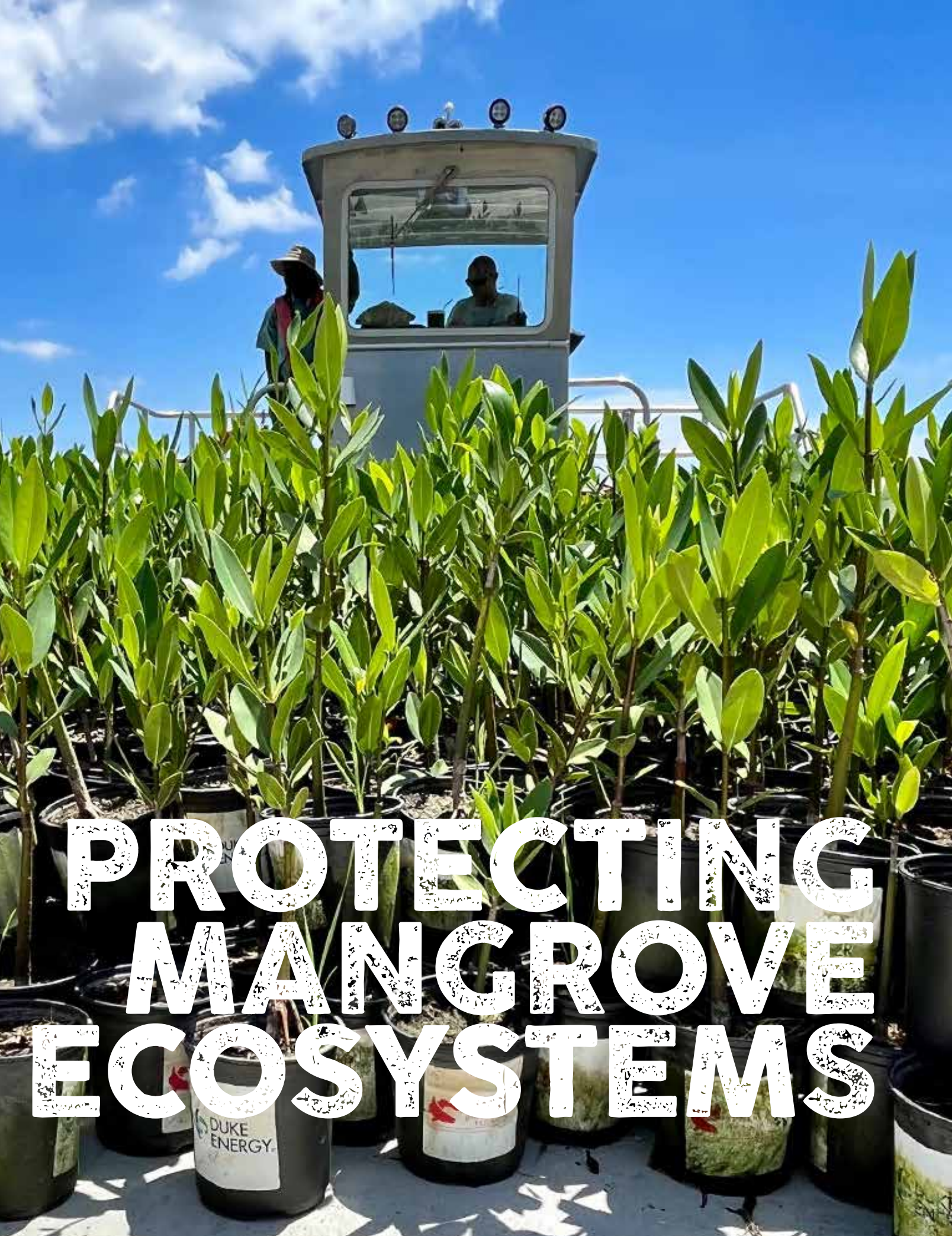




Along Florida's coastlines, mangrove forests create one of the state's most important and distinctive ecosystems. Found along coastal shorelines and estuaries, mangroves are uniquely adapted trees that thrive in and around saltwater environments. With their tangled roots rising from shallow waters, these amazing trees protect shorelines from erosion, provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife, and help maintain the health of coastal environments. This article explores the vital role mangroves play in Florida's environment and economy, highlighting why these extraordinary plants deserve both our attention and our stewardship.

Mangroves are salt-tolerant trees that grow in tropical and subtropical coastal regions. Florida is home to three native species: the red mangrove, black mangrove, and white mangrove.





PROTECTING MANGROVE ECOSYSTEMS



Each species occupies a slightly different role along the shoreline and has developed unique adaptations to survive in salty, aquatic soils. While all three are fairly similar, each species can be recognized by a distinct physical feature. Red mangroves are often recognized by their arching prop roots, which help anchor the tree in soft sediments and often appear red in color. Black mangroves have unique “finger-like” roots called pneumatophores that vertically protrude from the soil, allowing the tree to absorb oxygen. White mangroves typically grow farther inland and therefore lack a unique root structure, instead they possess specialized glands that excrete excess salt.





As part of a true grassroots effort, CCA Florida has planted over 20,000 mangrove plants throughout the state of Florida.



These glands are located at the base of each leaf and can be key to identifying white mangroves.

Together, they create a living barrier that supports biodiversity, filters pollutants, and stores significant amounts of carbon. Mangrove forests serve as nurseries for countless marine species. Juvenile fish, shrimp, crabs, and other organisms find shelter among the roots, where they are protected from predators. Birds also rely heavily on mangrove ecosystems, numerous migratory species routinely use these forests for nesting, feeding, and resting. One of the most valuable services provided by mangroves is shoreline protection. Their extensive root systems trap sediments, reduce erosion, and stabilize coastlines. During storms and hurricanes, mangroves act as natural barriers, absorbing wave energy and helping reduce flooding and property damage. As sea levels rise and extreme weather events become more frequent, healthy mangrove forests play an increasingly important role in enhancing coastal resilience.

As Florida grows, coastal development continues to reshape shorelines, understanding and protecting mangrove ecosystems has become more important than ever.



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Although Florida's mangroves are protected under state regulations, they continue to face numerous challenges. Coastal development, dredging, pollution, and habitat fragmentation can damage or destroy mangrove forests. Since 2015, CCA Florida has worked to actively combat habitat loss and restore mangrove populations throughout the state, focusing on all three species of native mangroves. As part of a true grassroots effort, CCA Florida has planted over 20,000 mangrove plants throughout the state of Florida. Every year, local CCA members and volunteers collect thousands of mangrove propagules, which are then potted by CCA staff and grown at the CCA Florida - Duke Energy Mariculture Center in Crystal River. These mangroves grow in the nursery for approximately two years before they are utilized for a mangrove or shoreline restoration project somewhere in the state of Florida. Volunteers then have the opportunity to get hands-on





With their tangled roots rising from shallow waters, these amazing trees protect shorelines from erosion, provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife, and help maintain the health of coastal environments.



and help plant the mangroves along the shoreline, making this restoration process a true full-circle moment.

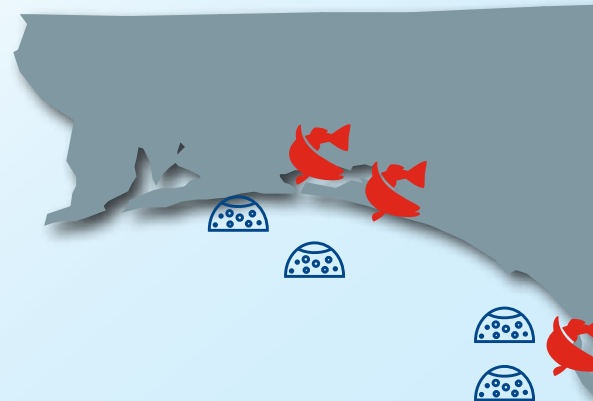
Florida's mangroves are far more than coastal trees that grow along the shoreline. They are essential components of a healthy environment, supporting wildlife, and protecting coastal communities. Their resilience and ecological value make them one of the state's most important natural resources. As Florida's coastlines continue to evolve, preserving mangrove forests will remain critical to maintaining the environmental and economic well-being of the Sunshine State. CCA Florida will continue to be on the frontlines of mangrove restoration, but we need your help to make the difference!





Mangrove forests serve as nurseries for countless marine species. Juvenile fish, shrimp, crabs, and other organisms find shelter among the roots, where they are protected from predators.

COMPLETED HABITAT PROJECTS



Since 2010, CCA Florida in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust and our partners, have contributed over \$26 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



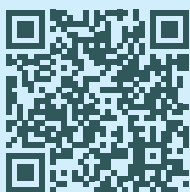
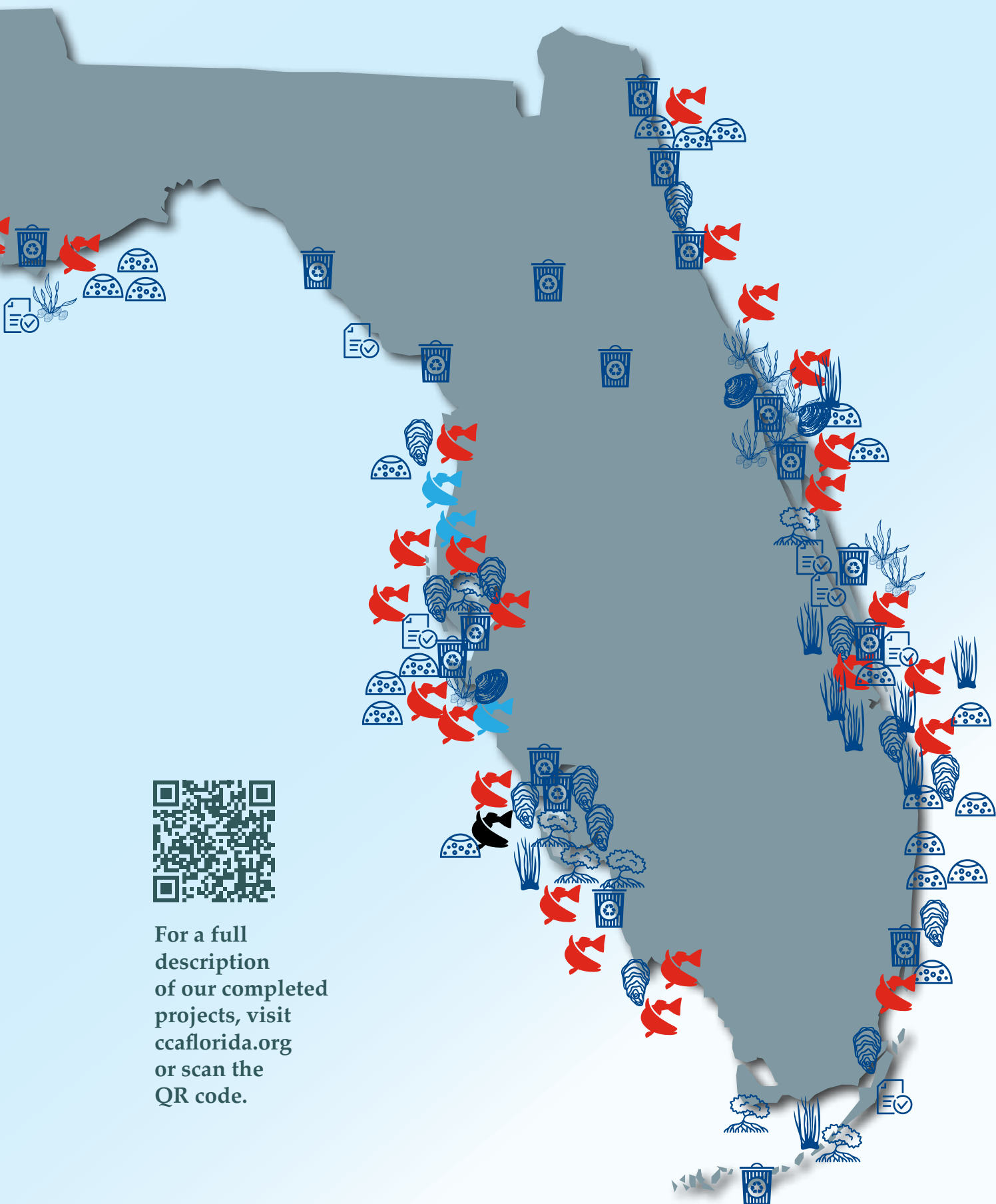
Redfish Stock Enhancement
Locations - 490,000 (3"- 30")



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

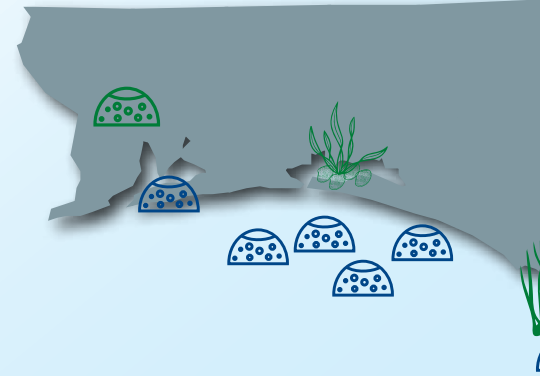


Spotted Seatrout Stock
Enhancement Locations -
150,000 (4"- 6")



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of our completed
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UPCOMING & ONGOING HABITAT PROJECTS



Since 2010, CCA Florida in collaboration with the Building Conservation Trust and our partners, have contributed over \$26 million in habitat projects statewide. Join us in these efforts!



Artificial Reefs



Coastal Cleanups



Research/Monitoring



Clam Restoration



Oyster Restoration



Mangrove Restoration



Seagrass Restoration



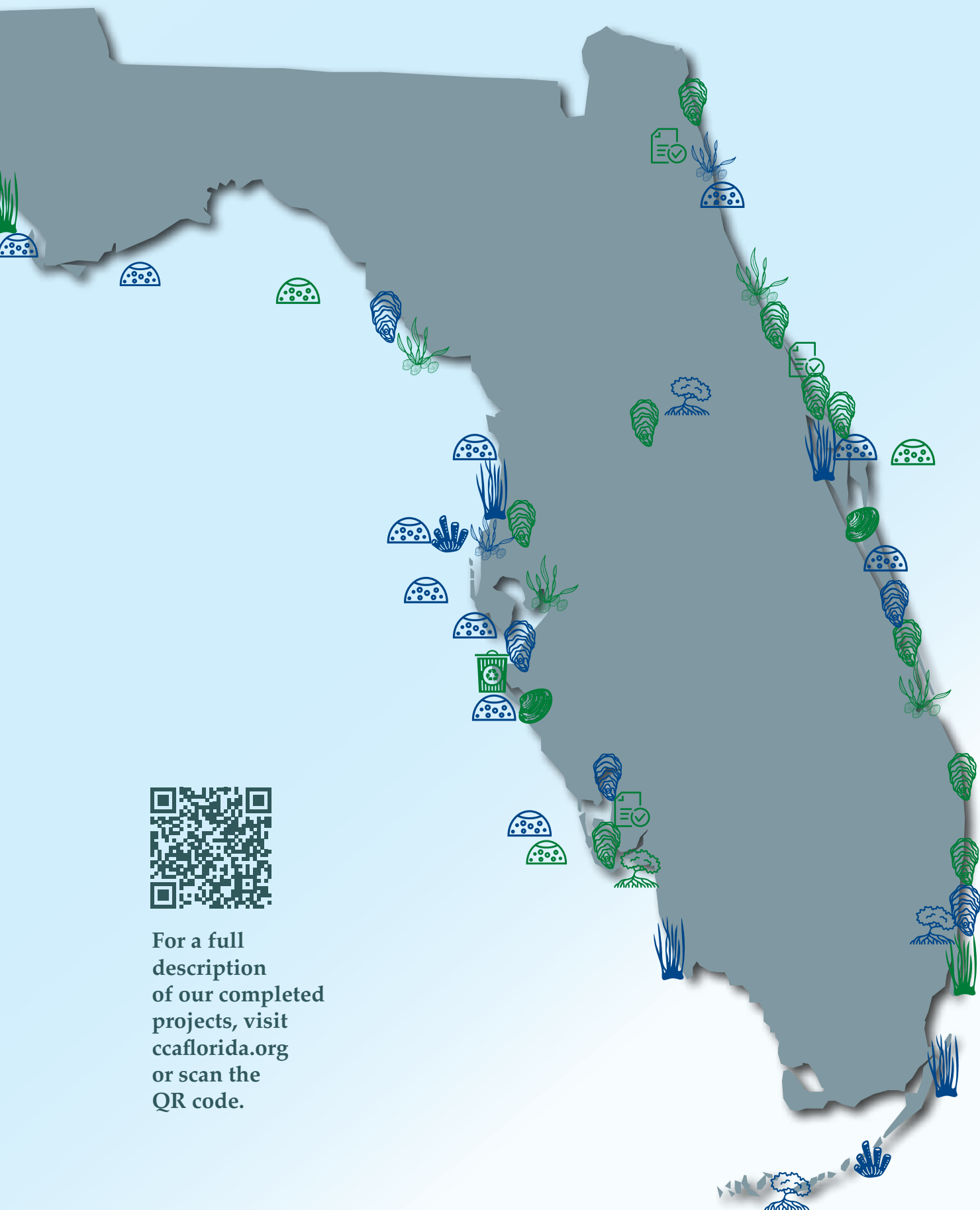
Living
Shorelines



Coral/Sponge
Restoration

 Upcoming

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habitat

CCA FLORIDA AND PARTNERS MADE SIXTH OYSTER DEPLOYMENT IN TURTLE BAY



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In May, Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) Florida partnered with Ingman Marine, Abbott Construction, Traverse Construction, Gasparilla Island Conservation and Improvement Association (GICIA), Capt. Jay Withers, DZ & Steel Worx, Clermont Oyster Bar and Lake County to deploy four dump truck loads of recycled oyster shells in Charlotte Harbor for its sixth installment of the Turtle Bay Oyster Reef, further advancing one of the largest recycled oyster reef restoration projects in Florida.

“The sixth oyster deployment in Turtle Bay reflects CCA Florida’s ongoing commitment



20 TONS OF RECYCLED OYSTER SHELLS



to restoring and enhancing Florida's marine habitat while highlighting the incredible dedication of our partners, volunteers and members who share a common vision for a healthier, more resilient Charlotte Harbor," CCA Florida Chief Operating Officer Adam Miller said. "Every oyster shell deployed is an investment in the future of our coastal ecosystems by creating critical habitat, improving water quality and helping ensure these natural resources thrive for generations to come."

The recycled oyster shells, donated by the Clermont Oyster Bar, are first dried for six



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months to kill any potential pathogens at CCA Florida's Oyster Recycling Facility in Lake County. The oysters are then transported to Placida, loaded onto a barge provided by Abbott Construction and deployed in Turtle Bay at a pre-permitted location.

"To date, nearly 140 tons of recycled oysters have been deployed in Turtle Bay," CCA Florida's Director of Habitat and Environmental Restoration Frank Gidus said. "With an estimated 85% loss of oyster reefs worldwide, we are proud to expand the Turtle Bay Oyster Reef for the sixth

20 TONS OF RECYCLED OYSTER SHELLS



time in effort to restore the habitat and water quality in Charlotte Harbor, and we could not do it without the support of our community partners and members.”

The Turtle Bay project is one of the most extensive oyster reef restoration efforts in Florida providing vital habitat for marine species, enhancing water quality and boosting recreational angling. Oyster reefs filter pollutants, create habitat for a variety of marine species and reduce turbidity which aids in seagrass growth.

ENGEL COOLERS

For more than 60 years, Engel has been a trusted name among anglers, boaters, hunters, and outdoor enthusiasts who depend on reliable performance in demanding conditions. Since pioneering portable refrigeration technology in 1962, Engel has built a reputation for producing some of the most durable and dependable coolers and refrigeration products available today.

Known as the gold standard in high-performance cooling solutions, Engel's product lineup includes rotomolded hard coolers, soft-sided coolers, live bait coolers, dry boxes, and portable 12-volt refrigerators designed to withstand years of use on the water and in the outdoors. Their commitment to quality, innovation, and durability has earned the loyalty of generations of sportsmen and women across the country.

While anglers appreciate Engel products for their exceptional ice retention and rugged construction, CCA Florida values Engel for something equally important: their commitment to conservation.

As a longtime supporter of CCA Florida, Engel helps make it possible for our organization to continue advancing fisheries conservation, habitat restoration, education, and advocacy efforts throughout the state. Support from partners like Engel directly contributes to initiatives that restore oysters, mangroves, seagrasses, and salt marsh habi-

CCA Florida values Engel

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

tats, enhance fish populations through stocking programs, deploy artificial reefs, and protect Florida's marine resources for future generations.

The impact of sponsorship extends far beyond a single event or program. Every habitat project completed, every fish released, every volunteer engaged, and every conservation victory

achieved is made possible through the support of dedicated partners who share our vision for healthy fisheries and abundant marine resources.

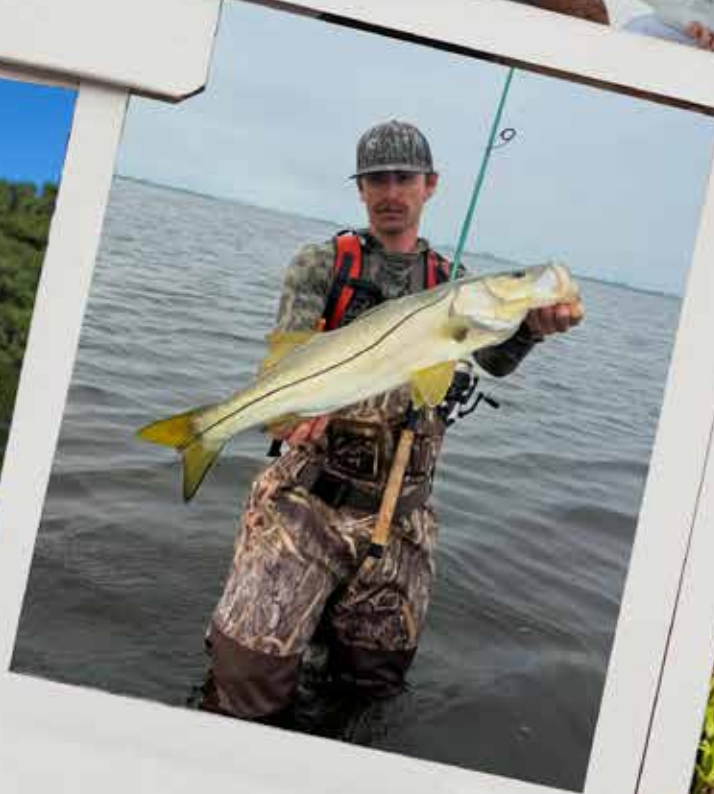
CCA Florida is proud to partner with companies that not only serve the outdoor community but also invest in its future. Engel's continued support demonstrates a shared commitment

to ensuring that future generations can enjoy the same fishing opportunities and coastal experiences that make Florida such a special place to live, work, and recreate.

We thank Engel Coolers for their partnership, their support of conservation, and their ongoing commitment to Florida's fisheries and coastal habitats.



for their commitment to conservation.





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RAFFLE PACKAGES**



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

CCA FLORIDA

Pathfinder 2200 TRS
1 ticket \$50 value

Hewes Redfisher 16
2 tickets \$50 value

Contender 24S
1 tickets \$50 value







JOIN TODAY

As a CCA Florida Life, Heritage or Legacy member, you help support Florida's marine fisheries, habitat, waterways, coasts and more. Join us as we continue to work toward enhancing these resources and Florida's fishing future.

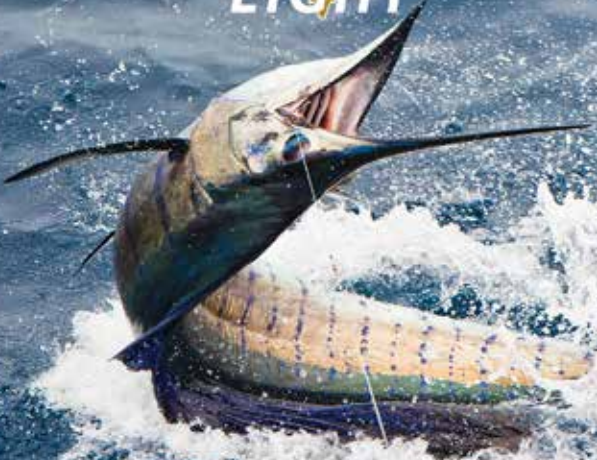
FISHING SUNDAYS

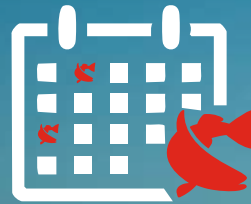
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- 3** CLERMONT OYSTER ROAST
- 10** GAINESVILLE BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 17** PALM BEACH BANQUET AND AUCTION
- SARASOTA BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 24** SPACE COAST BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 25-26** TAMPA BAY ALL RELEASE
- 27** FORT MYERS FUN-A-MENT
- 1** BROWARD BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 8** NORTHEAST BANQUET AND AUCTION
- FORGOTTEN COAST BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 15** ORLANDO BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 15** POLK COUNTY BBQ
- 17** SARASOTA ALL RELEASE
- 29** PENSACOLA BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 5** PEACE RIVER BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 12** TREASURE COAST BANQUET
- CLERMONT BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 19** DADE COUNTY BANQUET AND AUCTION
- PINELLAS BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 3** LAKE MARY BANQUET AND AUCTION
- 7** BLACK DIAMOND

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RECIPES FROM TIDE TO TABLE

Recipe and Photo by Heather Peterek



Scan to watch how to prepare,
at @catch.cook.eat on Instagram.



Seafood and Chorizo Paella

PAELLA:

- 4 ½ c chicken stock
- ½ tsp saffron threads
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- ½ red bell pepper, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 oz chorizo sausage, either ground or links sliced into thin half-moons
- 3 c Jasmine or short-grain rice
- 1 14 oz can fire-roasted diced tomatoes, not drained
- 1 c frozen green peas
- 1 lb large shrimp, peeled, deveined
- 1 lb mussels, rinsed, scrubbed
- 1 lb clams, rinsed, scrubbed

GARNISH:

- 1 c fresh parsley, chopped
- Lemon wedges

On your stovetop, bring the chicken stock to a boil. Stir in the saffron and turn off the heat. Let the saffron steep for at least 15 minutes while you prep the other ingredients. Season with salt if needed.

In a 12 or 14-inch cast iron pan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion, bell pepper and chorizo and cook for about 7 minutes, or until the onion is translucent. Stir in the garlic and sauté another 3 minutes.

Pour in the rice and fry, stirring often, for about 5 minutes, until the rice is coated with oil and combined.

Slowly pour in the stock, tomatoes and peas and lightly stir to combine.

Make sure the rice is evenly distributed over the bottom of the pan. Cover the pan and simmer the rice without stirring for 15 minutes, or until the rice absorbs most of the stock. If your pan does not have a lid, seal with foil.

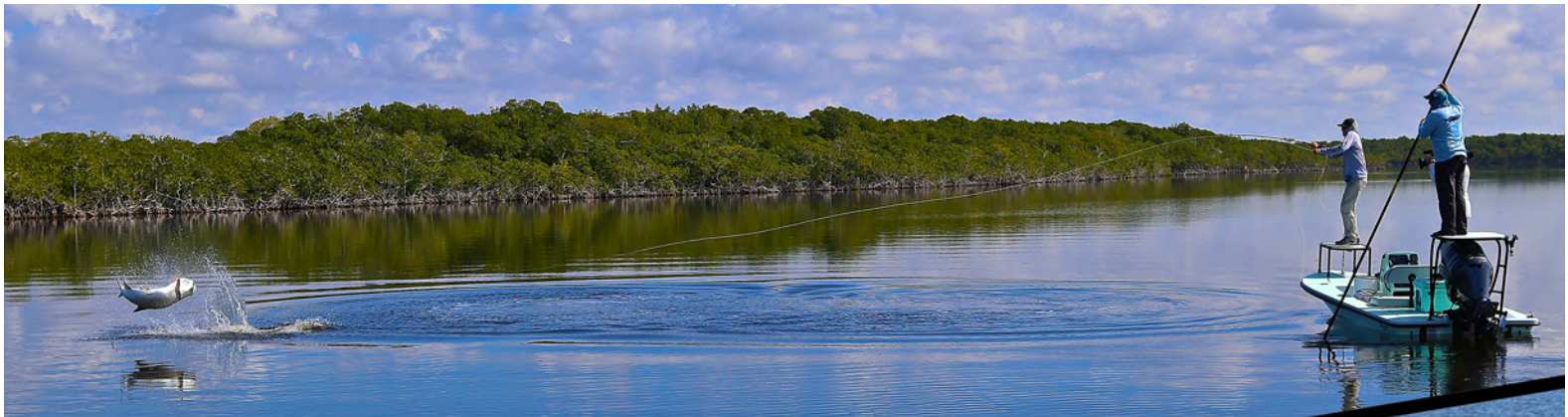
Burrow the mussels and clams down into the rice with the hinge sides up so they release their juices into the rice. Then place the shrimp on top of the rice, arranged evenly around the shellfish.

Cover the pan again and cook for 5 to 10 minutes longer, until the rice and shrimp are both cooked through and the mussels and clams are open. (Discard any shellfish that stayed tightly closed once everything else is cooked.)

Using a spatula, check the bottom of the paella to see if you have achieved a golden brown crust. If not, set the pan over the heat, uncovered, for a few minutes to lightly caramelize the rice on the bottom. This crunchy, browned crust or the “socarrat” is considered a key element of a well-made paella.

Garnish with parsley and lemon wedges and serve immediately, family-style.

Substitutions or notes: The above recipe is adapted for cooking on an indoor stovetop, but I made this dish on an outdoor grill over hot coals. Either works great as long as you have consistent heat, a good cast iron pan and a lid. To make this dish more impressive, add in a few lobster tails, squid rings or scallops on top when you place in the seafood.



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