

# Florida Habitat Restoration

CCA has been very busy this year with Habitat Projects around the state. We currently have 9 projects that members from chapters all around the state are working on. It is very rewarding to see our members identify projects in their area, go to work on them and see projects come to fruition. Take a look at the projects listed below with the email address for the CCA volunteer that is coordinating the project and send them a note if you would like to get involved.

**Project: St. Johns River Inshore Reefs**  
**Chapter: Jacksonville**  
**Contact: Peyton Scheppe**  
**Email: [paytonscheppe@me.com](mailto:paytonscheppe@me.com)**

This project began in the fall of 2011 when the Jacksonville Chapter was attracted to the goal of a habitat project in the St. Johns River. The Chapter in coordination with the City of Jacksonville and several other organizations in Jacksonville decided to build 2 reefs just south of the Fuller Warren Bridge (I-95 Bridge) in downtown Jacksonville. The City of Jacksonville handled the permitting and the final approval will be in hand soon.

The Jacksonville chapter proposed naming the reefs after George Holt, a very active and influential member of the chapter and the other one for CCA. The request was approved and the reefs are officially named the George Holt Reef and the Coastal Conservation Association Florida Reef.

This project is projected to start in the fourth quarter of this year and finish the first quarter of 2014.

**Project: Near Shore Artificial Reef**  
**Chapter: South Palm Beach**  
**Contact: JD Dickenson**  
**Email: [jdickenson@cozen.com](mailto:jdickenson@cozen.com)**

The South Palm Beach Chapter is working on a near shore reef on hard bottom in 20 to 30 feet of water just north of the S. Palm Beach Inlet (Boynton Inlet). The reef will be created by depositing 700 tons (approximately 1/2 acre) of reef materials.

The reef will create numerous recreational opportunities for S. Palm Beach residents. The site is located off a public beach so it can be readily accessed by all, providing near shore rec-

reational opportunities such as fishing, snorkeling and diving. Anglers and divers can utilize aggregated populations of marine species. Florida specific studies have shown that these activities create increased economic benefits.

The reef is permitted and the chapter is working on funding to complete the project.

**Project: South Walton Artificial Reef Association (SWARA)**  
**Chapter: South Walton**  
**Contact: Andy McAlexander**  
**Email: [andy@macfarmsfl.com](mailto:andy@macfarmsfl.com)**

This is more than a project. Andy McAlexander, from the South Walton Chapter has setup a non-profit association to build reefs and oyster habitat restoration projects along the gulf shores of Walton County in the Panhandle. SWARA has plans for multiple oyster habitat projects and near shore snorkeling and fishing reefs. The long term goal of SWARA is to improve the water quality, increase tourism and enhance the life style of the local residents and visitors. SWARA is working on some local funding to get the projects off the ground with the majority of the funds coming from BP monies set aside from the Deepwater Horizon disaster.

SWARA has ambitious plans for the area and will be a huge asset for CCA in the Panhandle for years to come.

**Project: Oyster Enhancement Project Indian River County Rotary Initiative for Submerged Seagrass Awareness (RISSA)**  
**Chapter: Treasure Coast**  
**Contact: Capt. Paul Dritenbas**  
**Email: [edbvero@bellsouth.net](mailto:edbvero@bellsouth.net)**

The Treasure Coast Chapter is working the Vero Beach Rotary Club on two projects on the Mooring Flats in the Indian

River. The first phase is to place Mooring Buoys around the designated area this year and the second phase is surround an existing Oyster Bar, that currently has an area of approximately 400 square feet with approximately 1,200 16" x 16" black poly mesh mats. Each mat will contain approximately 36 oysters predrilled and secured with black UV inhibited zip ties. The mats will be weighted down at the four corners with concrete irrigation head donuts and zip tied to each mat. The 1,200 mats will enlarge the oyster bar area to approximately 2,500 square feet (inclusive of the existing 400 square foot oyster bar).

**Project: Punta Rassa Mangrove Shoot Planting and Oyster Mat Placement**  
**Chapter: Ft. Myers**  
**Contact: Adam Miller**  
**Email: [amiller@ccaflorida.org](mailto:amiller@ccaflorida.org)**

The Ft. Myers Chapter is planning a project at the Punta Rassa Boat Ramp. The plan is to plant mangrove shoots and dispatch oyster mats in the area. The project is scheduled for August 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. The plan is to build the oyster mats on Friday August 9<sup>th</sup> and deploy them on the 10<sup>th</sup>. The chapter expects to have 30 to 40 volunteers to show up for the project. The City of Ft. Myers is handling the permitting for the project. Anyone interested in helping please contact Adam Miller 941-270-0895.

**Project: Saddle Creek Cleanup**  
**Chapter: Polk**  
**Contact: Arvilla Stokes**  
**Email: [jimarvilla@gmail.com](mailto:jimarvilla@gmail.com)**

The Polk Chapter had their very first Habitat Project on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Fifty-seven

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