



# CITIZENS FOR FLORIDA'S WATERWAYS

Volume 23 - Issue 6

October/November 2016

*Citizens For Florida's Waterways promotes the need for responsible use of Florida's waterways. Our primary objective is to encourage coexistence among recreational and commercial boaters, the marine industry, property owners and the environment. Citizens For Florida's Waterways advocates education in the safe and considerate use of watercraft with respect for our marine environment and conservation.*

## President's Message by Bob Atkins

**We've had a Good Year** -Happy Holidays and may the New Year bring great joy and success to each of YOU. I hope you had a chance to participate in or enjoy the passing of the decorated boats at the CFFW Merritt Island Christmas Boat Parade or any one of several others that take place this time of year. What a unique way we have to celebrate "winter" holidays.

As is tradition, we like to look back on the year that passed and remind ourselves that the efforts we continue to make have some value. The real measure of success for CFFW will always be "How many Manatee Zones have been reduced or eliminated?" and on that metric here in Brevard, we've failed to date. We have had other successes and are still working diligently on our main goal. I'd like to thank all of you, and especially your Board Members for all the time and effort that has been volunteered during our 22nd year.

**Manatee Protection Zones** – Here in Brevard, CFFW strongly encouraged and endorsed a resolution requesting FWC readdress the Brevard MPP and reevaluate the manatee zones in Brevard for effectiveness and necessity. The County Commissioners unanimously approved the resolution in January and forwarded it on to Tallahassee. In May, the FWC returned a non-responsive reply that was not well received by the Commission. The effort to get FWC to work with the County on this issue is ongoing. We are confident that there will be positive results – at last.

We supported the successful Pacific Legal Foundation (PLF) and citizen's challenges to the FWC rulemaking effort in Western Pinellas. These challenges resulted in two key watersports areas that were designated to be slow zones to remain unregulated.

**Manatee Reclassification** – Those of us who have worked so long and relentlessly to get the manatee removed from the endangered species list were finally rewarded for our efforts when USFWS announced its intention to re-classify the manatee from endangered to threatened in January. Although this does not remove the species from the ESA, it takes us one giant step forward. We expect a final decision to be announced by USFWS prior to the end of January 2017.

**Local, State and Federal Government Participation** – CFFW Board Members have fostered and maintained close relationships with key members of each layer of government through formal and active participation in several key organizations

Brevard Marine Advisory Council (BMAC)

Brevard, District 2 Dredging Committee

FWC/USFWS Manatee Forum

Governor's Boating Advisory Council

IRL Council Citizens Advisory Committee (Community Ambassador)

In addition, we made a very strong but unfortunately unsuccessful legislative effort to amend the Manatee Sanctuary Act. The current form of the Act dates back to the days of the perceived extinction crisis and therefore is completely open ended with respect to how much protection is enough. Our effort was to try and close the door to protect the FWC from continuous threats of frivolous legal actions from the Save the Manatee Club (\$MC) and others for not doing enough to protect manatees. These are the impetus for the continued death to open

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## Please Mark Your Calendars!

Please call Bonnie Zimmerman at 856-220-2476 for more information.



- » **Dec. 5, 2016 CFFW Board of Directors Meeting** - 6:30 pm Karen Rood Bldg. (near the boat ramp) at Kiwanis Island, Merritt Island. Open to public.
- » **Dec. 7, 2016 District 2 Canal Dredging Committee Meeting** - 6:00 pm Karen Rood Bldg. (near the boat ramp) at Kiwanis Island, Merritt Island.
- » **Dec. 15, 2016 Brevard Marine Advisory Council** - 6:00 pm 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way Building C, 2nd Floor, Florida Rm., Viera, FL 32940
- » **Jan. 4, 2017 District 2 Canal Dredging Committee Meeting** - 6:00 pm Karen Rood Bldg. (near the boat ramp) at Kiwanis Island, Merritt Island.
- » **Jan. 9, 2017 District 2 Canal Dredging Committee Meeting** - 6:30 pm Karen Rood Bldg. (near the boat ramp) at Kiwanis Island, Merritt Island. Open to public.
- » **Jan. 19, 2017 Brevard Marine Advisory Council** - 6:00 pm 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way Building C, 2nd Floor, Florida Rm., Viera, FL 32940

## Newsletter Delivery Mode *E-Newsletters Now Available*

CFFW is offering all members the option to receive all future newsletters by email instead of a hard copy by mail. The Board of Directors have reviewed the expense logs for the past few years to determine where we could save money and this is the biggest expense we have.

If you wish to save your club money on printing and postage, please reply to [info@cffw.org](mailto:info@cffw.org) and we will add you to the email list for your newsletters! You will receive an email stating your E-Newsletter is ready for viewing. If at any time you wish to receive the hardcopy again, just send us a note at the same email and you will again receive the hardcopy.

You can view the same exact version online at [CFFW.org](http://CFFW.org) and click on "newsletters" tab and the issue you would like to view. ❖

**When Does Your  
Membership Expire?**  
*(See Back Cover)*

# President's Message

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waterways by the death of a thousand cuts – more and more zones.

We made a significant contribution to the advancement of understanding carrying capacity and optimum supportable populations and have pushed the subject from something we seemed to be the only ones concerned and working to one that at least is getting some attention. We continue to emphasize how much more important and dire consequences will result from a catastrophic over-grazing than were ever possible from the truly statistically insignificant watercraft mortality which has mistakenly remained the agency focus for over 40 years.

**Community Outreach** – It's hard measure how much we have influenced public opinion away from the obsolete anti-boating mantra of the \$MC, but there is no doubt that there has been a marked change in the conversation and thinking of many government officials within FWC, USFWS, USGS and MMPA with respect to the manatee. To hear those officials speak about distribution issues resulting in potential local over-population, and recognition that in our zeal to protect the species, we have made decisions and chosen alternatives that have resulted in negative unintended consequences (re: artificial warm water outflows disrupting natural migration habits), is no less than encouraging. Over the year, in addition to all the government officials we have visited with and shared our thoughts and data, we have made presentations to the Manatee Forum, the Cocoa Beach Sail and Power Squadron, the BMAC and the Seminar at Boaters Exchange.

Now that the funding has been approved and the initial IRL restoration planning is in place, we will continue to work with the IRL Council to encourage the very necessary elimination of the man-made warm water outflow (pollution in every sense of the term) at the FPL plant in Port St John to encourage the 2,000 or so manatees that winter here on 48,000 acres of stressed seagrass to return to a natural migration farther south where 1,600,000 acres of seagrass lie in naturally warm waters. Look for a very well written article on the subject in the coming months of the Florida Sportsman. For those of you who don't have access, we will seek permission to reprint it here in an upcoming issue.

Please remember to visit the pages of our website (cffw.org) and friend us on Facebook so that you can keep up with us and join in the fun. ❖



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# Will Florida Finally Settle Its Anchoring Issues?

By Ryck Lydecker

After navigating a difficult but methodical public process some 10 years in the making, the Florida legislature may be about to forge a commonsense anchoring policy that would apply throughout Sunshine State waters. Maybe ....

Until a dozen or so years ago, if you'd been cruising in Florida waterways and wanted to overnight at anchor, you'd look for a secure, out-of-the-way spot and just drop the hook, right? Well, yes, back then. But in recent years, it's become more complicated, and even contentious.

Cruisers, with increasing frequency, came to dread a nighttime "thump on the hull" from someone in uniform aboard a local law-enforcement patrol boat. The encounter could range from a semi-friendly "Sorry, captain, you can't anchor here" to handing the skipper a citation for "anchoring illegally" in city or county waters.

Huh? These are navigable waters, aren't they?

Correct, but under federal law, the state retains jurisdiction over most of its bottomlands, and in Florida, the state let local jurisdictions exercise that authority. In the case of navigation, that turned into increased regulations — even prohibitions — on anchoring. Snowbirds passing through, who for years had anchored unmolested in the same spot, suddenly found themselves on the wrong side of a law they knew nothing about, and even some resident boaters, to their surprise, became lawbreakers.

Confusion and outright conflict increasingly confronted responsible cruising boaters as local jurisdictions began to exercise authority, and write regulations, to control or, worse, ban anchoring outright. Florida, or at least certain parts, began to lose its "boater-friendly" reputation, and that's bad news in a state where recreational boating is the third largest industry — a \$32 billion economic engine even bigger than the citrus industry, according to the National Marine Manufacturers Association, which represents boat, marine-engine, and accessory manufacturers nationwide.



*Florida boaters are asking the state for reasonable anchoring rules, rather than a jumble of inconsistent local laws. (Photo: Thinkstockphotos.com/amedved)*

Call it a confluence of crossed purposes and unintended consequences in the early years of the new millennium. Boating boomed, registrations increased, and Florida became a bucket-list cruising ground for both natives and out-of-staters. At the same time, waterfront home construction took off, but increasing numbers of tax-paying, high-end home owners decided they didn't like to see boats constantly anchored within

view. So they began putting pressure on their local governments to, essentially, "get rid of them."

And to be sure, in some places vessels dropped anchor and stayed, and stayed, eventually being abandoned by owners who couldn't keep them up, leaving them as an eyesore to those who enjoy the waters or the view. Then the spate of hurricanes in 2004 and 2005 made Florida's derelict-vessel problem even more trying for local governments, as owners walked away from uninsured or underinsured storm-trashed boats.

## Who's In Charge?

The anchoring issue really came to a head in 2006, when Miami Beach passed a city ordinance limiting boats to seven days at anchor. That led other cities, like Sarasota, Marco Island, and Fort Lauderdale, to pass their own rules. A 2007 test case by a local boater against the Marco Island ordinance led to a two-and-a-half-year legal battle. The city ultimately lost the case and chose not to appeal it, thanks in part to a change in state law that BoatUS, in alliance with several boating-industry groups, convinced Tallahassee lawmakers to pass in 2009.

"It's fair to say the piecemeal patchwork of laws proved as confusing and frustrating to law enforcement as it did to boaters," says BoatUS government affairs manager David Kennedy. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), the state agency that regulates boating and waterways, had been dealing with the fallout from this jumble of regulations for several years, Kennedy notes, and the agency

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# Will Florida Finally Settle Its Anchoring Issues?

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supported the 2009 law limiting local government authority to regulate anchoring.

“The law gave control back to the state and prohibited local anchoring ordinances,” Kennedy adds. “But it also charged FWC to go a step further and explore solutions to the anchoring conundrum through what’s called the Anchoring and Mooring Pilot Program.”

## **Weighing Anchor Toward Solutions**

FWC selected five local governments to participate: Saint Augustine, Stuart/Martin County, Saint Petersburg, Sarasota, and Monroe County, which includes most of the Florida Keys. The pilot program required each jurisdiction to have a designated public mooring field (or at least one under construction) in order to test policies and develop workable regulations for anchoring in open waters outside those mooring fields. Within that overriding goal, the pilot program aimed to develop tools that would, for example, establish reasonable anchoring setback distances from shoreline property, from such maritime infrastructure as piers and launching areas, and from sensitive marine habitat.

Another important objective: prevent boats left on the hook from falling into disrepair and becoming hazards to navigation and the marine environment, which dovetailed with FWC’s separate and successful At-Risk Vessel Program started in November 2010. Also, the pilot programs are intended to lead to more and better-managed public mooring fields, a benefit to local boaters and transients alike.

“One critically important component spelled out in the law in each pilot jurisdiction is that all planning and regulatory development had to include consultation with local stakeholders, including boaters,” says Kennedy, who helped organize BoatUS members and other recreational boaters to speak up en masse in open public meetings, surveys, and in writing.

While the pilot program developed over several years, the 2009 law establishing it addressed an immediate problem by defining the term “liveaboard vessel” as one “used solely as a residence and not for navigation.”

“That went a long way toward reducing the hassle factor for legitimate cruising boaters, even while the pilot program was underway,” Kennedy says.

Nonetheless, several years later some South Florida cities tried to convince state lawmakers to exempt their jurisdictions from the 2009 law, and that would have, in essence, put the anchoring issue back to square one in those waters. In the 2014 legislative session, and again in 2015, several South Florida counties lobbied — unsuccessfully, it’s worth noting — to change the 2009 law so they could go back to regulating local anchoring.

In the 2016 legislative session, the proponents narrowed their focus and convinced state lawmakers to enact a state ban on overnight anchoring in three specific areas. Despite an outcry from boaters, in March, Florida governor Rick Scott refused to veto that bill, and the law banning overnight anchoring in three specific areas of Broward and Miami-Dade counties went into effect on July 1 of this year. While that played out in Tallahassee, however, BoatUS and the same boating coalition that developed the 2009 law convinced the legislature to add language nullifying the overnight anchoring ban in the two counties once the state enacts a consistent anchoring policy.

## **Next Step: Find Good Holding Ground**

“Now we have to take the lessons learned during the entire seven-year pilot program and ensure that they lead to commonsense solutions,” says Kennedy. “Because of boater involvement, this has been a very comprehensive review of options. We expect the work of the five pilot jurisdictions to present a real-world blueprint that the legislature can use to craft equitable state law that will ensure that active, responsible boaters have the mooring and anchoring options they need when cruising in the waters of the Sunshine State.”

A final report from FWC to the governor and the legislature is due January 1, 2017. Go to [BoatUS.com/Gov](http://BoatUS.com/Gov) to view it and to keep up to date on this evolving issue. Legislative action to implement program recommendations is expected during Florida’s spring legislative term. ❖

# Does Your Boat Scare The Fish?

By Lenny Rudow

Some boats scare fish worse than others, but there are several things you can do to fix your fishing machine.

You say you want to fill that cooler with fish? Then stop scaring them away! We anglers scare off fish far more often than we realize, thanks to sound, vibration, and other factors we may not be taking into account. A big issue here is a failure to understand our quarry. Fish “hear” sounds and “feel” vibrations via their lateral line, which is a series of special sensory organs called neuromasts running along the fish’s flanks. Inside a neuromast are tiny hairs in a jelly-like medium. And with those tiny hairs, a fish can sense movement and vibrations in the water. In other words, fish aren’t quite as thick as you think, and when you stomp on the deck or slam that cooler shut, every finned critter within casting distance knows something may be amiss.

**TIP:** Rig with care! Dropping a lead sinker or jighead on deck is almost as bad as slamming a hatch

One important thing you can do to boost your catch rate is to reduce the amount of noise you make. Unfortunately, no matter how careful you are, your own boat may be sabotaging these efforts. Some boats alarm fish more than others. But take heart, savvy angler: once you know about these five common fish-scaring flaws, you can institute corrective measures. Here’s how:

## 1. Engine Noise

Engines scare fish. But all engines are not equally noisy. The biggest offenders are two-stroke outboards. Particularly when in neutral, they create a real racket. You can hear the clickety-clack of metal parts hitting one another, right? That sound travels through the water, too. In shallow waters and calm conditions, when stealth becomes imperative, the best workaround is to plan your approach to hotspots so you can shut down the engine while it’s still in gear, then drift into position.

One of the loudest sounds made below the waterline by most other engines — electric trolling motors included — is prop noise, directly related to prop speed. In other words, slow down. You can significantly cut the level of noise simply by backing off on the throttle. Another noise no-no you create with your power plant is the “thunk” of shifting in and out of gear. Again, this metal-on-metal sound travels well underwater, and fish don’t like it. Though I haven’t



*Slow down! The first step to not scaring the fish is a stealthy approach.  
(Photo: BoatingPhotography.com)*

experimented with the new shift-dampening props (such as the SDS by Yamaha) or smoother-shifting stern drives (like the new Mercury 4.5L, which incorporates a new lighter flywheel for smoother shifting), I’ve observed firsthand how many species flee when boats are shifted into gear.

It’s worth noting that in some cases, specifically with large inboard diesels, the deep thrumming of the motor may actually bring fish to your boat.

There’s more than mere anecdotal evidence to support this claim; according to marine biologist and author Daniel Bagur (*Where the Fish Are*, International Marine Press, 2009), certain predators are attracted to some long-wavelength vibrations. A few years back, I recorded the underwater sounds made while trolling on a 50-foot sportfish, and I sent the recordings to Bagur. He confirmed that many predators should find the type of sound created by the big diesels swinging large props attractive, as opposed to scary.

## 2. Chine Slap

The sound of water slapping against a hull, particularly one with reverse chines, can be so bad for fishing that a few boatbuilders actually design “quiet” chines. Of course, if your boat doesn’t have specially designed chines and you can’t get a bite while listening to that slap-slap-slap all day long, you’re more interested in finding a solution than in what some boatbuilders may or may not do.

Positioning your boat properly is the first step. If you can keep the stern into the seas safely, you’ll eliminate the problem to a large degree. But this isn’t always convenient, safe, or even possible. Another measure you can take is to weight down the bow a bit. On some boats, moving a full cooler (or an extra angler) onto the bow is enough to completely submerge the offending chines. And on some others, shifting weight to one side or the other will eliminate the slap.

Another trick that works on certain boats (while adrift or at anchor) is to slide a foam pool noodle under the chine, then push it far enough back that water pressure holds it in place. Be sure to tie a piece of fishing line to the noodle and secure it to the boat so it doesn’t float away if a wave rocks it free.

*... (Continued on Page 7)*



# Does Your Boat Scare The Fish?

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## 3. Fishfinders

I know lots of people will say I'm wrong about this (especially the fishfinder manufacturers), but at least some species of fish can hear or otherwise sense your fishfinder — and may even alter course to get away from the pings. Even though many experts disagree, I say this because I've seen it with my own eyes, when I launched a boat rigged with several fishfinders in the quarter-million-gallon habitat tank at the National Aquarium in Baltimore.

While an observer watched from two stories below and we stayed in contact via FRS radio, I tried using the fishfinders in an attempt to differentiate between species. That part of the experiment was a complete failure; I couldn't even tell the difference between a tarpon and a sea turtle. But the surprise lesson was that when the fishfinders were active, some of the fish, and especially the sharks, would go around the boat instead of swimming under it. When all the units were turned off, however, they would swim under the boat without hesitation.

Sure, there are many variables that my less-than-scientific experiment didn't address: power level, transducer frequency, and the artificial environment, for example, could all affect the result. And it stands to reason that in certain situations with certain species, your fishfinder pings could even serve to attract fish rather than repelling them. But the bottom line is this: some fish can sense some fishfinders at least some of the time, and they may even avoid them, so you and I have to consider that a fishfinder may be a potential problem.

## 4. Slamming Hatches

While I listened beneath the water's surface with a hydrophone, the loudest of all the potential fish-frightening sounds I heard was a slamming fishbox hatch. The noise created by fiberglass banging fiberglass is akin to a gunshot underwater, and it's certainly enough to scare every living creature within casting distance. Fortunately, this is a fairly easy item to fix. If your boat has a hatch or lid that slams, buy a roll of sticky-back foam rubber at your local marine supply store and make a gasket. Apply it to the offending contact points, and you'll turn that slam into a muted thump.



*You use a fishfinder to spy on the fish, but it may be alerting them to your presence as well.  
(Photo: Lenny Rudow)*

## 5. Electrical Discharge

Some fish can detect even minute amounts of D.C. current, which is harmless to humans. In fact, some species are attracted to certain electrical fields and are repelled by others. There are even a few fishing-tackle manufacturers that have capitalized on this phenomenon by building items (such as the Pro-Troll and the Mako Magnet) intended to bring fish to your boat via

electrical discharge. Unfortunately, there's very little reliable science on this subject, and different species of fish seem to react differently to electrical current. Many boats leak a stray electrical current into the surrounding waters, so for all you know, you could be chasing your potential catch right out from under your hull. True, you could just as easily be inadvertently attracting them, but unless you're the marina fishing star, it seems prudent to eliminate all electrical interference.

The safest bet is to test your boat to make sure it's electrically sound. Not only is this good for the fishing; it'll also ensure your running gear doesn't suffer from the corrosive effects of electrolysis. Hook the negative lead of a voltmeter (set to a DC scale of zero to 1 volt, or a scale with tenths of a volt) to the negative terminal of your battery; attach the positive lead to a bare wire. Turn off everything on the boat and lower the wire five or six feet down in the water. Now, turn on your boat's electrical items one at a time while you watch the meter. If it jumps by more than a tenth of a volt, you have a significant electrical leak — and a potential fish problem to deal with. Most of the time, such a leak is due to cruddy connections, bad grounds, and/or bad bonding associated with whatever electrical item causes the voltage change.

Of course, there are other things, aside from your boat, which will still freak fish out. Your own voice at a regular conversational level, for example, can be heard a good 15 to 20 feet below the waterline. Screech like a banshee when you miss a bite and you're going to send the fish scurrying. Even casting a shadow across the water will spook some fish, which live in fear of attack from above via osprey or eagle. But at least now you know what to do to make your boat less of a fish deterrent — and with a little luck, the next time you hit the water, you'll come home with a full cooler. ❖



## Keep Your Boat Under Lock And Key

### Restore That Lock

When the padlock you use to lock your trailer's receiver gets stiff from too much exposure to salt and water, soak it for 30 minutes in a solution of one part vinegar to four parts water. Allow it to dry and spray it inside and out with WD-40 or similar. The lock will work like new.

### Take The Legs Off

There is a wide variety of locks and security plates for trailers. Nothing is totally theft-proof, and many thefts occur when the thief simply removes the coupler latch bolt and tows the trailer away without a latch attached. If you're putting your boat away for any length of time, consider removing one or all of the wheels from your trailer. This will make it hard to steal, and it will extend the life of your trailer tires because they won't be exposed to the elements.

### Protect Your Prop

Expensive propellers attract thieves; prop locks can discourage them. Some prop locks, such as those made by McGard, work on the same principle as locking nuts, and replace the prop nut. Others, such as those made by SecureProp and BSafe, secure and cover the prop nut to prevent tampering. The nuts on through-bolted outboard motors and sterndrive lower units can be removed and replaced with locking nuts

similar to the locking lug nuts used on expensive automotive wheels. With items that are relatively easy to remove like props, putting up any barrier is likely to cause the thief to move on to an easier mark.

### Special-Purpose Locks

Trailer tongue locks, like those offered by Master Lock, Reese, and Steal Shield, will keep a thief from attaching a vehicle to the trailer. Some work by preventing the coupler mechanism from opening or closing, some lock the coupler over a ball and secure a flat surface to the bottom of the tongue, and some completely enclose over the tongue and coupler. If you have a removable tongue, you can remove it, but some thieves carry trailer tongues with them! One alternative is to find a way to lock the tongue to the trailer; another is a wheel lock like those made by Trimax or The Club.

### Lights Off

Make up a removable set of lights that hang on your transom for towing (see "How To Build A Light Bar"). If you can hang your trailer's license plate there, even better. When storing your boat, remove the lights and plate. Thieves know that towing a trailer at night — when it's most likely to get stolen — without lights or license plates is a sure way to attract law enforcement.



## Today at the Forum

Today at the Forum – Carrying Capacity (October 25/26, 2016)

Finally, 2½ years AFTER we presented our first results on Carrying Capacity (CC) at the May 2014 Forum, the agencies brought forward the work that they have been doing to address this subject. There are two relevant measures of population, from a management perspective, CC and Optimal Sustainable Population (OSP). In simple, and not totally technically correct terms, CC is the capacity of the environment to support and still sustain viability as an environment where OSP has more to do with population maintenance. Although much of the impetus for protective measures comes from the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which specifically addresses these measures, very little actual results have been published or brought forward until now.

We presented an analytical approach using specific numerical values for the Indian River Lagoon (IRL). We considered the number of manatees we are seeing here in the winters, approximations of how much seagrass they consume and approximations of how much seagrass is available in a typical IRL acre of seagrass. Some of you have seen similar assessments before. This is a complete rework and update and can be seen here.

(<http://cffw.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/IRLCarryCapacity-1016.pdf>)

We also took a quantitative look at the long-term affects of seagrass uprooting. The bottom line is that there is still some margin between the numbers of manatees (around 2,000) that winter here in Brevard, attracted by the FPL warm water outflow and the total available seagrass. But if you talk to the residents of Northwest Merritt Island, local area seagrass has been largely depleted and disappeared. The bottom line is that continual uprooting on any level, results in some permanent depletion of the seagrass resource unless there is an equally productive restoration effort in place.

We calculate that somewhere in the THREE to TEN healthy ACRES of IRL Seagrass are required to

support EACH Manatee that winters in Brevard and still maintain the seagrass resource. (ranges similar

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An advertisement for a dentist. It features a background image of a toothbrush and a dental chair. The text is on the right side.

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An advertisement for ATlass Insurance. It features the ATlass logo and Progressive logo. There are four small images: a house, a boat, a car, and a motorcycle. The background is a blue ocean.

## Today at the Forum (Continued from Page 9)

to that for Florida cattle on native pasture land). At this rate, we are between 10 and 50% capacity based on sustaining 48,000 acres of seagrass and 2,000 manatees. Unfortunately, seagrass acreage is diminishing and the manatee population is increasing and therefore the margin in capacity is shrinking.

Additional presentations were made by the government and the SMC but from an more qualitative than analytical or mathematical perspective, the agencies presentations on the subject provided results that were much more general, philosophical and theoretical than numeric or quantitative. But, at least, after many of us having asked the question “How Many is Enough?” as early as the mid 80s, they are addressing the issue.

One very informative presentation on the Status and Trends of Florida Seagrass was made by the researchers at the FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI). This showed types and quantities of Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV or Seagrass) from the western extreme of the Panhandle all the way around the peninsula to Jacksonville. This very clearly illustrated that we have artificially encouraged 2,000 animals to winter here in Brevard where there are 48,000 acres of seagrass and yet there are 1,600,000 acres of seagrass in naturally warm water to the South. Makes you wonder – WHY do we continue to disrupt the natural migration? ❖

## Don't Risk Putting the Wrong Fuel in Your Boat



Due to the Federal Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), more gasoline containing 15% ethanol (E15) is being forced out into the marketplace, and boaters need to increase their vigilance against putting the wrong fuel in their boats. It is a violation of the Clean Air Act to use any fuel with more than 10% ethanol in a marine engine. Additionally, E15 has been shown to cause serious damage to boats' motors and will void warranties if used.

BoatUS, along with others trying to protect engines, recently called on Congress to work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to improve the program and prevent the misfueling of boats. We have already gotten a good bi-partisan response to our appeal to improve this part of the RFS policy. While broader reform is still needed, getting the EPA to act now on the Misfueling Mitigation Program should help protect your boat.

For updates on this and other government affairs topics, please visit [BoatUS.com/gov](http://BoatUS.com/gov). For updates on this and other government affairs topics, please visit [BoatUS.com/gov](http://BoatUS.com/gov). ❖

# CFFW Member Recognition

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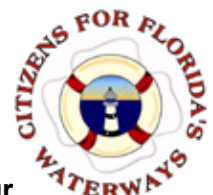
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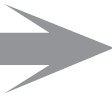
## Citizens For Florida's Waterways

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