



# Citizens For Florida's Waterways

Established 1994

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November/December 2019

*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 the marine environment.*

## President's Message

**'Tis the Season.** Thanksgiving is just a few days away. Call me a traditionalist, but this is when I think the Holiday Season begins.

Christmas in Brevard really kicks off the very next week. Saturday night, December 7<sup>th</sup>, is the Merritt Island Christmas Boat Parade. Over the last couple of years this event has grown in size and popularity. Not only is the Parade itself a great event, the Captain's Party on Thursday the 5<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at the Waterfront Café and Bar in Cocoa Beach is its own major event. Believe me, this is not just for the Captains!! It's a true happening with lots of sponsorship, and TONS of prizes in an epic raffle!

Attendance is mandatory for all competitors in the boat decorating and house party competitions. For all of you parade route creek and canal front homeowners, start thinking about hosting ALL of your family and friends for viewing the parade on Saturday evening, since there is limited public viewing available along the route.

And if that's not excitement enough, the Cocoa Beach Christmas Boat Parade is the following Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. So, those of you who are considering decorating your boats, this gives you twice the opportunity to share some holiday cheer with thousands of Brevard residents.

There are a few other holiday boat parades around the county – so check with your local knowledge experts and media sources for dates and times.

There's really something magical about the Christmas Boat Parades.❖

**Happy Holidays to ALL  
From all of us at CFFW**



## CFFW Officers

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ratkins@cffw.org

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### Membership

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sreynolds@cffw.org

### Government Liason

*Steven Webster*  
swebster@cffw.org

## Please Mark Your Calendars!



- » **November 21: Brevard Marine Advisory Council** 6:00 pm  
Viera Government Center, Bldg. C, 2nd Floor. Open to the public.
- » **December 2: Board of Directors Meeting** 6:30 pm Lighthouse Christian Church on N. Banana River Dr. Open to the public
- » **December 4: District 2 Dredging Committee Meeting** 6:00 pm Karen Rood Bldg (near the boat ramp) at Kiwanis Island, Merritt Island. Open to the public.
- » **December 7: Merritt Island Christmas Boat Parade** hosted by Stingray Boats and Blue Marlin Realty. Stay tuned to Merritt Island Christmas Boat Parade FB page or CFFW.org for more info.
- » **December 14: Cocoa Beach Christmas Boat Parade.** Stay tuned to CFFW.org for more info.
- » **December 19: Brevard Marine Advisory Council** 6:00 pm Viera Government Center, Bldg. C, 2nd Floor. Open to the public.
- » **January 8: District 2 Dredging Committee Meeting** 6:00 pm Karen Rood Bldg (near the boat ramp) at Kiwanis Island, Merritt Island. Open to the public.
- » **January 16: Brevard Marine Advisory Council** 6:00 pm Viera Government Center, Bldg. C, 2nd Floor. Open to the public.
- » **April 4-5: CFFW Marine Flea Market** at Harbor Town Marina-Free Parking and Free Entrance!

## 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.

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 can view the same exact version online at CFFW.org and click on "newsletters" tab and the issue you would like to view. ❖

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

# Dredging Update

## ***Derelict Vessels***

CFFW would like to report that Derelict Vessel removal operations continue county-wide. Brevard County has removed 24 vessels since June with a total of \$450,000 in funding and will continue with removal of vessels cleared by FWC.

## ***Dredging***

Muck dredging projects continue moving forward with the Grand Canal dredging project ready to start pre-dredging site work and the Mims dredging project nearing closure. The Milford Point (Merritt Island) maintenance dredging project is expected to go out to bid this month.

## ***Working Waterfronts***

Blue Crab Cove Phase II is moving forward into the land acquisition phase with a \$1.5 Million Stan Mayfield Working Waterfront Grant. The State has purchased Sutton's Pool location and the 2 lots adjacent to it, and will be turning it over to Brevard County for management. ❖



## Ask A Friend To Join CFFW

### Here's Your Opportunity To Buy A One Of A Kind Waterfront Property!

This Is The LAST Available Direct St Johns River Lot In Brevard County. There Will Never Be Another One Like This! Beautiful 1.7 Acre Lot On Lake Poinsett With Water On Three Sides And No Speed Zones. Enjoy Boating, Fish From Your Yard Or Just Enjoy The View. A New \$200,000 Seawall Was Just Built! This One Of A Kind Property Is Ready For You To Build Your Dream Home.

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## Today at the Forum

The Manatee Forum just keeps rolling on. We usually meet face to face each Spring and Fall, alternating between FWC offices in Tallahassee and St Pete (FWRI). Today, the fall meeting was web-based. Although the agenda was abbreviated by comparison, the topics were important.

### ***Indian River Seagrass***

The folks at the St Johns River Water Management District are the authority on the state of seagrass in the IRL. Even though the manatee mafia will not even address carrying capacity and the potential detrimental impact an ever-increasing local manatee population can have on IRL seagrass, they are concerned that the loss of seagrass is bad for manatees. The good news from SJRWMD is that overall seagrass abundance in the IRL (Ponce to Jupiter Inlets) observed in 2019 is similar to the last estimate in 2017. Also, we have not been impacted by significant algae bloom other than the brown algae in the Banana River. The bad news is that seagrass abundance is still less than 50% of the 2009 assessment and that while a few locations have shown improvement, the Banana River has nearly no seagrass.

There are three recurring activities performed by FWC and others that are fairly expensive. Over time the value propositions of these activities have matured to a point that they need to be reassessed for their cost benefit. These activities are the basis for manatee

mortality statistics, synoptic surveys (manatee counting) and rescue and recovery.

### ***Manatee Mortality***

In 1974 the scientific community was convinced that the manatee was on the verge of extinction based on the fact that there had never been a serious effort to count the population, the crude estimates were that only about 1200 of the mammals remained and dead ones were being observed. At that point, an all out effort was mounted to recover, salvage and necropsy (determine cause of death) the dead animal carcasses. So, over the last 45 years, that is exactly what we have done.

You can imagine the cost of deploying scientists to recover, determine transportation destination and methods and either perform necropsy on location or transport the carcass to the necropsy lab at FWC/ FWRI facilities in St. Petersburg. During the 70s and 80s, the number of carcass recoveries grew from a couple dozen to around 150 per year. Today, there are more than 500 and as many as 800 carcasses involved in the recovery and necropsy effort each year. In fact, the staggering truth is that over 11,000 dead manatees have been recovered and evaluated since 1974. But the issue is at what continuing cost and for what continuing value? Clearly, it's time to evaluate these questions and during the forum, a summary of just such an evaluation was presented. Unfortunately,

... *(Continued on Page 5)*



and this has been CFFWs observation for years, the evaluation was done incestuously – there were no non-advocate participants nor independent cost estimates. The foxes successfully guarded the henhouse and we can expect no radical or even significant changes to the overall effort – only some minor efficiency tuning. You can read more about mortality recovery and necropsy efforts at [myfwc.com/research/manatee/rescue-mortality-response/statistics/mortality/](http://myfwc.com/research/manatee/rescue-mortality-response/statistics/mortality/)

### **Manatee Population Estimating**

Even though the mortality numbers were growing throughout the 70s and 80s and creating great alarm, no effort had ever been made to count how many there actually were. The 1200 unsubstantiated “guesstimate” from from the late 70s prevailed and combined with the growing mortality numbers – well – there was a lot of hair on fire. It was not until 1991, 16 years after we started counting and cataloguing dead manatees, that we made the initial effort t to count the living ones. Obviously, one cannot assume that all of them have ever been counted but when those initial counts were inconsistent with the assumption of a declining population lots of strange rationales were propagated. Over the nearly 30 years since, the counts have demonstrated rapidly growing results. The effort to accomplish these annual counts is phenomenal. A virtual army of observers pans out across the state for two days on



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land, sea and in the air and count animals one by one. By 2010, the counts had surpassed 5,000. Of course, they miss some (a lot) and the real question remained - how many are there? A group of scientific and statistical experts set out to determine a realistic population number and late in 2015 published a “population assessment” that when we counted 5,000 there were most likely (with 95% confidence) over 6,000. Based on continued annual counts that now exceed 6,000 the most recent population assessment in late 2018 determined that there are most likely around 9,000 manatees in the Florida waterways. We continue to perform annual counts, but the weather conditions have such an impact on the ability to observe and count that the results have a limited correlation to the real population. Again, although there was great value in the initial counts stemming the ‘extinction crisis”,

... (Continued on Page 6)

## Today at the Forum

*Continued from Page 5*

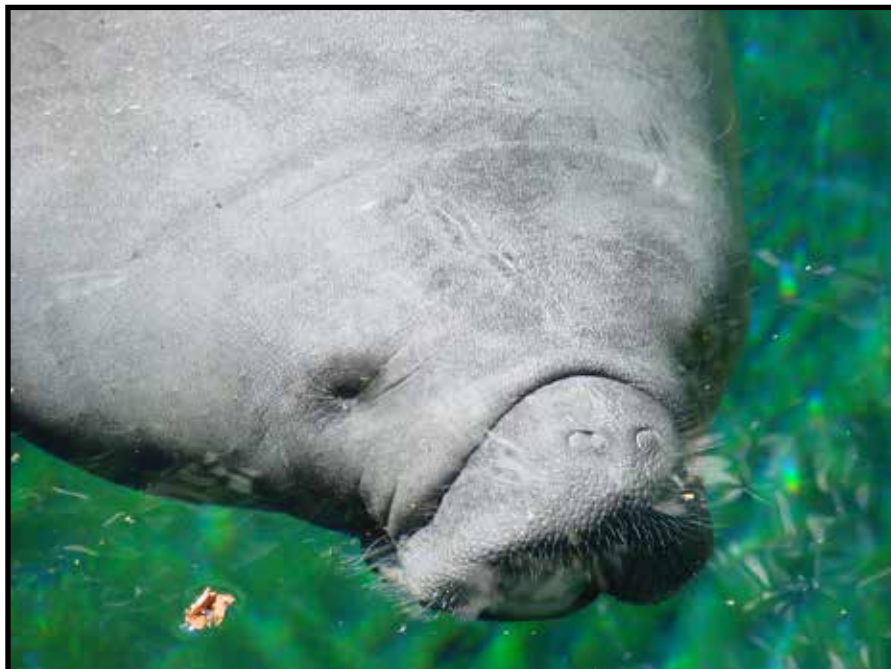
what is the cost benefit of these annual surveys today. Have you ever noticed that the Save the Manatee Club only ever refers to the number of manatees dying? I must admit, as long as we are going to count EVERY dead manatee, we better continue to count the living.

There is an abundance of information on manatee abundance here [myfwc.com/research/manatee/research/population-monitoring/](http://myfwc.com/research/manatee/research/population-monitoring/)

### ***Manatee Rescue and Recovery***

Consider the effort to locate, capture, treat, prepare, transport, care for, rehab and re-release a sick or injured manatee. Call me insensitive, even callous, but other than the “feel good” response of those involved in the effort and intervention for the specific manatee, the entire program has little cost benefit. Unfortunately, the program is expanding up the eastern seaboard and across the Gulf. More manatees are “exploring” farther from their safe south Florida wintering waters. And, just like here in Brevard, they are being lured into warm outflows (many manmade). Most of which will not sustain manatee survival temperatures throughout the winter. While I do not question the use of private funding (Sea World, Save the Manatee Club and others) to support rescue and recovery, I see no need for sustaining an increasing public expense. For more information about rescue and rehab <https://myfwc.com/research/manatee/rescue-mortality-response/rescue/>

One last question: For what other species do we spend as much time, energy and money as the manatee? Is it really so wrong to ask? Would the species survive without it?❖



# Boaters: What's Your Vision of the Future for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary?

*Boat US says recreational boaters and anglers need to speak up now on restoration plan*

MIAMI, Oct. 22, 2019 – For the first time since its creation in 1990, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is giving recreational boaters and anglers the unique opportunity to help shape its future by commenting on the draft Restoration Blueprint. The plan could expand the sanctuary's boundary, update regulations, modify and establish new marine zones, and revise its nonregulatory management plan.

So, what do boaters want?

Boat Owners Association of The United States urges recreational boaters to speak up now to have their voices heard at upcoming public meetings held in the Sunshine State through December 10. Boaters unable to attend a meeting may also send comments online, or mail to Sarah Fangman, Sanctuary Superintendent, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, 33 East Quay Road, Key West, FL 33040. Comments will be accepted through January 31, 2020.

“Recreational boaters and anglers want the continued ability to recreate on these pristine waters,” said Boat US Manager of Government Affairs David Kennedy, “However, boater/ anglers are just one of many different constituent groups on the restoration plan. It's important we speak up on what we want the future to look like. Habitat threat from hurricanes, disease, rising ocean temperatures, pollution and human interactions will all be addressed.”

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Restoration Blueprint proposal public meetings will be held from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. in Coral Gables, Fort Myers and Marathon and will accept oral and written comment. Coral Gables and Fort Myers meetings also will provide information and answers to written questions.

October 28, Coral Gables: University of Miami Newman Alumni Center, 6200 San Amaro Drive

November 4, Fort Myers: Holiday Inn Airport at Town Center, 9931 Interstate Commerce Drive

November 6, Marathon: Marathon Middle High School, 350 Sombrero Beach Road

Additionally, on December 10 a NOAA Sanctuary Council Advisory Meeting will be held from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Islander Resort, 82100 Overseas Highway, Islamorada. RSVP is required, and the public may provide oral or written comment. Boaters may also view the Sanctuary Advisory Council's live-streamed meetings on its YouTube channel. ❖

# Boat US Applauds Legislators for Helping to Ensure Taxes Paid by Boaters Will Fund Boating Programs

## *Reps. Cunningham, Graves introduce bipartisan Sport Fish Restoration and Recreational Boating Safety Act of 2019*

SPRINGFIELD, Va., Oct. 29, 2019 – The explosive growth of paddle sports including stand-up paddle boarding, kayaking and canoeing has local, state and federal governments working to ensure there's plenty of paddler access, including paddle craft-only launches that make it easy to launch a kayak, increasing efforts to ensure paddler safety, and minimizing user conflicts with traditional boaters.

The question is, who pays for it?

Under a nearly seven-decade-old federal funding mechanism, the answer is recreational power, sail, and fishing boat owners. A newly introduced bipartisan bill, the Sport Fish Restoration and Recreational Boating Safety Act of 2019, aims to give the Government Accountability Office an opportunity to examine and report on the increasing use of non-motorized vessels and their impacts on recreational boat launches, and look at user conflicts and how funds are used to support non-motorized boating safety programs. It will also look at boat recycling, a concern for some waterfront communities.



The nation's advocacy, services and safety group for recreational boat owners, Boat US, applauds bill authors Rep. Joe Cunningham (D-SC) and Rep. Garret Graves (R-LA) for their sponsorship.

"Any way you can get on the water is a good thing," said Boat US Manager of Government Affairs David Kennedy. "However, we can't ignore the continued, successful growth of paddling participation in America and the need to have equitable funding for access and safety programs. Our thanks to Reps. Cunningham and Graves for looking to better understand today's waterway user and ensure everyone is investing in their future."

Created in 1950, the Sport Fish Restoration Program follows a "user pays – public benefit" model of funding that uses excise taxes paid on boat motors, motorboat fuel and fishing equipment to fund boating access sites, fishery and conservation programs, as well as state and local boating safety and clean water programs. The newly-introduced bill will also extend the authorization of the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund to 2024. ❖



# U.S. Government: Recreational Boating Is a Big Deal in the U.S.

## *'Outdoor Recreation' significant economic driver; How does your state line up?*

SPRINGFIELD, VA, Oct. 9, 2019 – A September 20 report from the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) has reaffirmed that outdoor recreation activities are a significant driver of economic activity in the country, making up 2.2% (\$247.2 billion) of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

When looking at "conventional" outdoor recreation activities, "boating/fishing" was the largest conventional activity for the nation as a whole at \$20.9 billion in current dollar value added, surpassing RVing, motorcycling, hunting, and snow activities. Dollar value includes all economic contributions by marinas, boat dealers, repair shops, in-state boat manufacturers and additional impacts.

At the state level, the BEA report cited boating/fishing as the largest conventional activity in 29 states and the District of Columbia, led by Florida (\$2.7 billion) and California (\$1.8 billion). Adding to the report, BEA statistics show the top 5 states where outdoor recreation (as a whole) accounted for the largest percentage of total U.S. GDP are California, Florida, Illinois, Texas and New York.

"Clearly it's time to give outdoor recreation, and in particular, recreational boating and fishing, its due," said Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS) Manager of Government Affairs David Kennedy. "This is no longer just about having fun outdoors. Having this data gives legislative bodies across the country the information and standing to ensure our interests are protected and nourished."

Added Kennedy, "The next time a community needs money to repair or maintain a boat launch ramp, a new marina is proposed, or onerous legislation that could negatively affect boaters and anglers is being debated, the BEA report shows that supporting boating and fishing interests, as well as other outdoor activities, pays real dividends in local economies."❖



## Boat Safe Reimbursement Program

**CFFW** promotes the need for responsible use of Florida waterways.

Our primary objective is to encourage coexistence among recreational and commercial boaters, the marine industry, property owners, and the environment.

**CFFW** advocates education in the safe and considerate use of watercraft with respect for our marine environment and conservation.

If you would like to receive reimbursement for the class fees charged by the Coast Guard Auxiliary or the Cocoa Beach Power Squadron, you can contact a **CFFW** Board member and present your certificate of completion, and receive your reimbursement. **CFFW** funds are limited, but at this time we should be able to accommodate a relatively large class.

Because we do have a finite amount of money,  
it is on a first come, first served basis.

You can visit our website at [www.cffw.org](http://www.cffw.org) for more info.

You may also contact Kelly Haugh **CFFW** V.P. at  
321-543-6970 for more information.

Enjoy safe boating!



# CFFW Member Recognition

## Diamond Level (\$100 per year)

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Charles & Susan Frazier	Richard Sproc
Gary & Kelly Haugh	Robin & Kathy Turner
Philip Holtje	Herbert C. Vitt III
Keith & Tamasine Houston	Thumper Volkmer
Russell Jamieson/Atlass Insurance	Debra Warner
Doug Jaren	Willie & Peggy Wehrman
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George & Majel Legters	Robert Wille
Mike & Kris Moehle	Jess H. Yates, DMD
Tom Mott	Gerd Zeiler
Don Nesbitt/Waterfront Solutions	Dave & Bonnie Zimmerman

## Gold Level (\$50 per year):

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Bubba & Paula Beyer	Paul & Tammarra Mycoskie
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Don & Annette Doerr	John & Elizabeth Picardi
Glen & Sherry DeJong	Ron & Donna Pritchard
Scott Ellis	Thomas Raftican
William Eells	Robert Rusk
David Falabella	Gary & Debra Sawicki
John .C. Farley	Cliff & Diana Schommer
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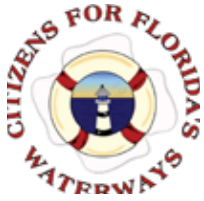
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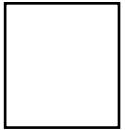
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CFFW is a 501(c)4 organization. Donations and  
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**Citizens For Florida's Waterways**

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