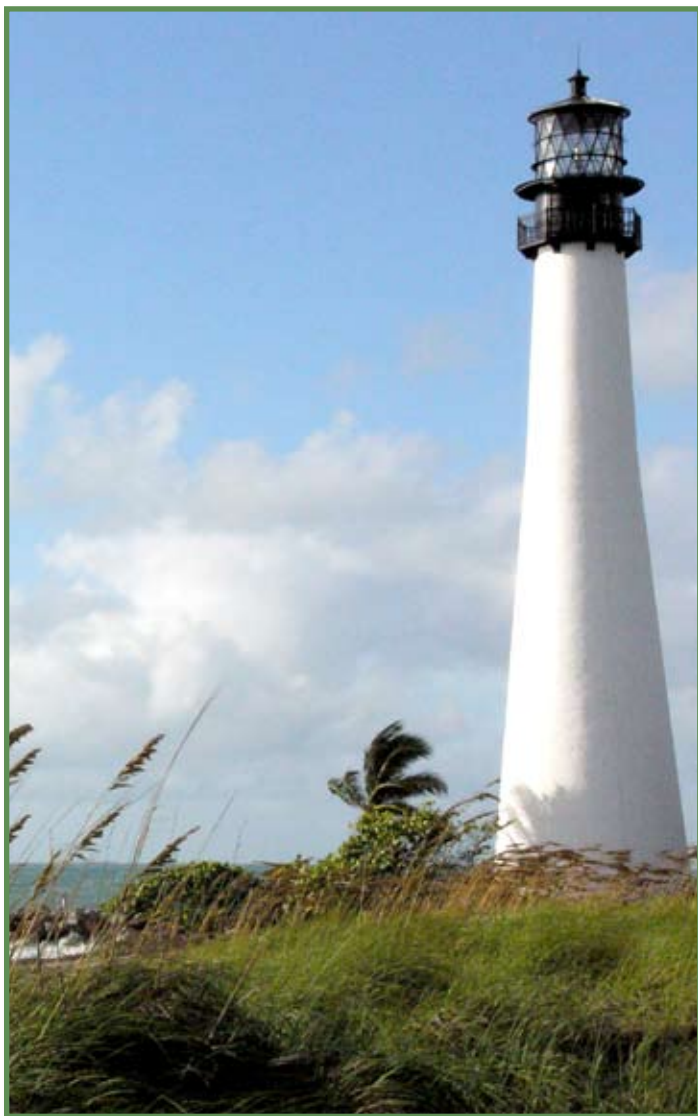


# Coastal Currents

Florida Coastal Management Program E-News  
Summer 2008



Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park

## Florida's Beach Access Guide

Florida's pristine sandy beaches have always been a major attraction for residents and visitors, and beach visitation continues to be one of the top activities of those who come to Florida. Although there are hundreds of miles of sandy beaches, the locations of all public access points are not well known to visitors and many residents alike.

(Beach Access continued on page 4)

## Envisioning the Future of Coastal Management

The Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972 created a unique partnership between federal and state governments with the goal of balancing the conservation of coastal environments with the responsible development of economic and cultural resources. Pending reauthorization of the CZMA has prompted discussions within the coastal community on ways to improve coastal management in the U.S. In response, NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, which administers programs created by the CZMA, and the Coastal States Organization (CSO) undertook a project to engage coastal managers and

(Envisioning continued on page 4)



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# CZMA Performance Measurement System

The **National Coastal Zone Management Program**, authorized by the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), is a partnership between the federal government and the 34 states and territories with coastal management programs. At the direction of Congress, the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** developed the CZMA Performance Measurement System (CZMAPMS) to track the effectiveness of coastal management programs and **National Estuarine Research Reserves** at the national level. The Florida Coastal Management Program (FCMP) reports two types of data to CZMAPMS:


(1) Contextual indicator data - used to determine the environmental and socioeconomic factors affecting coastal management program actions, and

(2) **Performance measure data** - used to monitor FCMP activities in the following CZMA priority areas

- *Public Access*
- *Government Coordination and Decision Making*
- *Coastal Water Quality*
- *Coastal Habitats*
- *Coastal Hazards, and*
- *Coastal Dependent Uses and Community Development*

The first phase of national CZMAPMS implementation began in 2005, with coastal management programs reporting on two of the six measures. The final phase of implementation will be completed in 2008. This flexible approach enabled programs to capture and report data for the six performance measures in phases and prepare for annual reporting of all measures in 2008 and beyond.

In 2008, the FCMP will report for the first time on *Coastal Hazards* and *Coastal Dependent Uses and Community Development* while simultaneously providing 2008 updates on the four measures previously reported. In order to capture data for the new measures, FCMP conducted a survey of the 203 coastal communities. Summary results of the survey will be provided in the next issue of *Coastal Currents*.

The data and information gathered for the CZMAPMS will also be used by the FCMP in developing public information products about trends in Florida's coastal environment and to determine funding and outreach priorities. 



*Queen's Island Lagoon Access Project*





## Oceans Day and Earth Day Events

**Oceans Day** at the Capitol is an annual event to promote awareness and stewardship of Florida's ocean resources. This year's event, held at the Capitol on March 12, focused on Florida's commitment to protecting its oceans while sustaining its economy. The Florida Coastal Management Program coordinates the state's review of a variety of offshore activities occurring around Florida. At the Oceans Day event, the FCMP exhibited information about these activities, the marine habitats that can be affected by them, and how Florida ensures that its marine resources are protected.

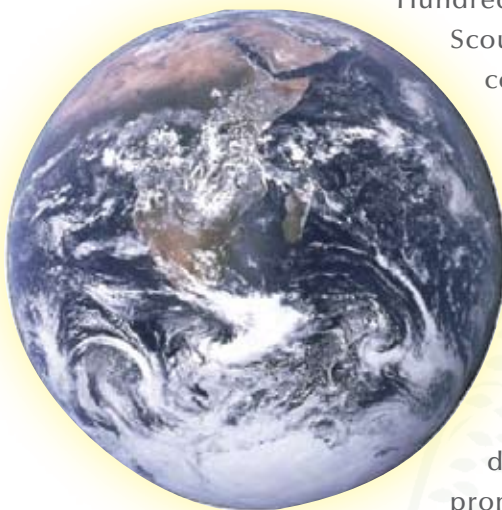
Posters depicted the locations of offshore dredged material disposal sites, existing and proposed natural gas pipelines, proposed deepwater ports, oil and gas lease tracts in the Gulf of Mexico, and offshore alternative energy concepts that are being considered in southeast Florida. The FCMP also exhibited educational materials on its beach safety program.



*Students attend Earth Day activities at the Capitol*

Hundreds of Florida students, including groups of Girl and Boy Scouts, attended the **Earth Day** event on April 22 in the Capitol courtyard. The event celebrated environmental citizenship -- in our communities, homes, workplaces, and schools -- and provided the Florida Coastal Management Program a great opportunity to encourage children to learn about beach safety.

FCMP staff presented educational material and distributed promotional items illustrated with rip current



and beach warning flag information. Visitors in the FCMP booth were able to view a video showing beachgoers how to recognize and escape from dangerous rip currents, which can pull even the strongest swimmers out to sea. 🌊

*Earth Day at the Capitol provided the Florida Coastal Management Program a great opportunity to teach children about beach safety.*

## Florida's Beach Access Guide (from page 1)

Last year the Florida Coastal Management Program began a multi-year project to develop a public beach access guide. The guide will be a new feature on the FCMP web site, providing general information about each access area and a map showing specific access locations and amenities such as parking, rest rooms, walkways and fees.



Grayton Beach State Park, Florida

The access guide will be developed in three phases and added to the web site as each phase is completed. The first phase, currently underway, will compile information in the Panhandle; phase two will focus on the remainder of the west coast; and phase three will cover the east coast. The FCMP will provide updates in the newsletter as each phase is completed. 🌊

### Beach Access Guide Development

- PHASE 1 — PANHANDLE
- PHASE 2 — WEST COAST
- PHASE 3 — EAST COAST

## Envisioning the Future of Coastal Management (from page 1)

stakeholders to envision the future of coastal management. The goal of the visioning process was to gather feedback on priority issues and innovative ideas for improving the CZMA and the National Coastal Management Program.

In the fall of 2007, NOAA and CSO released a joint report on cornerstones and core principles for the next generation of coastal management. The four cornerstones serve as a foundation for 13 Core Principles for Better Coastal Management. These are presented in the final report *Envisioning Our Coastal Future: Principles for Advancing the Coastal Zone Management Act*. The report and other information about the visioning process can be found [online](#).

NOAA and CSO will urge Congress to authorize a new CZMA built on the cornerstones, core principles, and options presented in the report. A key theme in the report is the need to strengthen mechanisms to engage local governments in the management of our coasts.

All those interested in coastal management should monitor proposals to reauthorize the CZMA and other related legislation. The FCMP will provide information about CZMA reauthorization as it becomes available. 🌊





## *NOAA Approves Florida's Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program*

On March 27, 2008, Florida's Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program was fully approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency, which jointly administer the program created in Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990. The Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program focuses on pollution prevention rather than cleaning up already contaminated water, and also encourages pollution control efforts at the local level.

*Florida is the 21st of 34 states and territories to receive full federal approval of its coastal nonpoint pollution control program.*



*Hollywood Marina, Hollywood, Florida*

*The Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program focuses on pollution prevention rather than clean up.*

All coastal states and territories with federally approved coastal management programs are required to develop coastal nonpoint programs that employ a set of management measures, backed by enforceable state authorities, to protect wetlands and riparian areas and to control coastal nonpoint pollution from urban areas, marinas, agriculture, forestry, and modifications to shoreline and stream channels.

Florida's management measures include all of the ongoing nonpoint pollution prevention and regulatory activities of the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Health, the Water Management Districts, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and other partner agencies that are in line with federal expectations and requirements. Florida has used Section 6217 grant funds for activities to reduce nonpoint pollution that are being conducted with state funds and other federal funds, such as [Clean Marina Program](#) activities and projects to improve septic tank maintenance and management. ♪

# Spanish Plate Fleet Shipwreck National Register Nomination

In 1733, thirteen ships of the Spanish Plate Fleet were sunk along 80 miles of the Florida Keys during a hurricane. These shipwreck sites represent some of the oldest artificial reefs in North America, supporting a complex assemblage of marine life. To preserve this



*Diver measures the Herrera, one of the 13 ships of the Spanish Plate Fleet*



*Historical marker at the San Pedro site*

significant historical coastal resource, the Florida Coastal Management Program provided grant funds to the Florida Department of State, Bureau of Archaeological Research to explore, document and assess the sunken vessels in support of a multiple property nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination was successful, and the National Park Service listed the 1733 Spanish Plate Fleet in the National Register in June 2006. 🌿

## Museums in the Sea

FCMP funds also supported the design and printing of an interpretive guide booklet and development of a web site titled "Museums in the Sea." Last month, a new virtual dive feature was added to the "Museums in the Sea" web site which allows everyone with Internet access to visit Florida's living underwater museums. Other programs benefiting from this project include Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Biscayne National Park, Florida Park Service and the National Register of Historic Places. 🌿



*The Half Moon two-masted, 366-ton steel schooner was seized as a prize of war in 1914. It sank off Key Biscayne in the early 1930s.*



## *The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program*

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) was created in 2002 by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to assist coastal states and territories with acquiring and protecting coastal and estuarine properties having significant ecological value or that are threatened with conversion to other non-natural uses. Since inception, the program has conserved approximately 35,000 acres of coastal and estuarine land by providing grant awards for selected projects in participating states and territories, matched by non-federal funds at a 1:1 ratio. The long-term success of the program will depend on Congressional appropriation of funds; an in-depth look at [CELCP funding history](#) is available online.



In order to participate in the national, competitive process, states must have at least a draft plan that identifies priority areas for land acquisition, procedures for land acquisition, and the entities authorized to hold title to properties acquired under the program. The Florida Coastal Management Program (FCMP) submitted a draft [CELCP plan](#) in October 2006 and is expecting to submit the final draft plan for NOAA approval by Summer 2008. Florida's plan works in concert with the property evaluation and ranking process used by the highly successful *Florida Forever* acquisition program.

CELCP guidelines allow each state to submit a maximum of three projects for consideration by a review committee in an annual nationwide competition. The FCMP participated in the 2006 and 2007 application cycles, and although no projects were funded, overall rankings of the Florida projects improved. The latest funding cycle began in May 2008 and, once again, the FCMP will submit three projects for consideration. The FCMP will continue to refine the strategies for project submissions in this and successive competitions. *Next Coastal Currents issue: FCMP anticipates having news about the status of the final CELCP plan and the projects selected and nominated in the 2008 national competition.*

## National Beach Safety Week

Highlighting May 19-26 2008 as *National Beach Safety Week* Governor Charlie Crist urged

all Floridians and visitors to enjoy our coastal resources while taking appropriate measures to protect themselves and their families from danger.

“Florida has some of the most beautiful and desirable beaches in the world but they cannot be enjoyed and appreciated unless we make sure beach safety is a top priority for the state,” said Florida Department of



Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Michael W. Sole. “Public awareness of safe swimming procedures can help ensure a joyful beach experience for friends and family during the summer season and all year long.”

National Beach Safety Week, promoted through a partnership between DEP, the Florida Beach Patrol Chiefs Association and the Southeast and South Atlantic Regions of the United States Lifesaving Association, reminds visitors to use caution when swimming at the beach. Refraining from alcohol consumption before swimming, swimming in groups, supervising children, and observing beach safety warnings are a few of the many ways to enjoy a safe recreational experience.

In 2002, the Florida legislature recognized the importance of beach safety by requiring the *Florida Coastal Management Program* to develop a uniform statewide Beach Warning Flag System. Florida’s beach warning program uses flags in four colors accompanied by interpretive signs along the beach to explain the meaning of each color.

### BEACH WARNING FLAGS

BANDERAS DE ADVERTENCIA EN LA PLAYA



**Water Closed to Public**  
Agua Cerrada al Público



**High Hazard**  
High Surf and/or Strong Currents  
Peligro Alto, Resaca Alta y/o Corrientes Fuertes



**Medium Hazard**  
Moderate Surf and/or Currents  
Peligro Medio, Resaca Moderada y/o Corrientes Fuertes



**Low Hazard**  
Calm Conditions, Exercise Caution  
Peligro Bajo, Condiciones Calmas, Tenga Cuidado



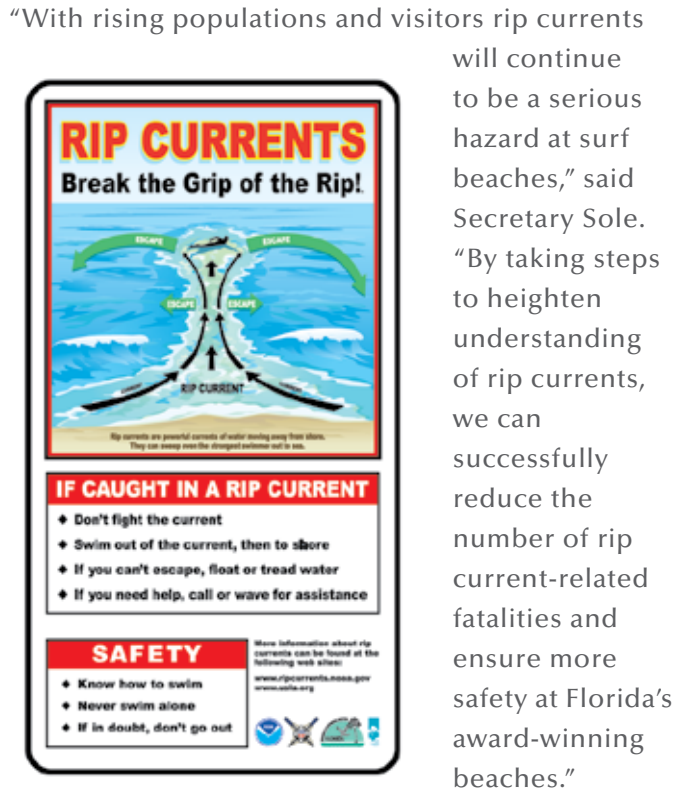
**Dangerous Marine Life**  
Vida Marina Peligrosa

Absence of Flags Does Not Assure Safe Waters  
La Ausencia de Banderas No Asegura Aguas Seguras



## Rip Current Awareness Week

Governor Crist also proclaimed June 1 – 7, 2008, *Rip Current Awareness Week* to promote education and understanding of rip currents in our coastal waters. He encouraged “all Floridians and visitors know what to do if caught in a rip current.”



Rip Current Awareness Week reminds beach visitors to be alert and knowledgeable about rip currents at surf beaches. Beachgoers are advised to know how to swim, never swim alone, and if in doubt, don't go out into the water. Many National Weather Service offices post **daily rip current** forecasts indicating low, moderate, or high threat. “People need to understand their abilities and heed posted surf advisories,” said State Emergency Management Director Craig Fugate. “The dangers of this natural hazard can be avoided by following basic safety steps and respecting the power of water.”

Rip currents are powerful channels of water flowing away from shore, and can occur at any beach with breaking waves. They typically extend from the shoreline, through the surf zone, and past the line of breaking waves. More than 80 percent of rescues performed by beach lifeguards are caused by rip currents.

If caught in a rip current:

- *Remain calm.*
- *Don't fight the current.*
- *Remember it is a channel and that you can swim out of it to a calmer area and then to shore.*
- *Float or tread water if you cannot escape. If you need help, call or wave for assistance.*

Florida Coastal Management Program distributes **rip current educational signs and beach warning flags and signs** to local governments and public parks throughout Florida free of charge. During the annual ordering period each November, coastal communities may order flags and signs from the FCMP for use on public beaches. 🌊

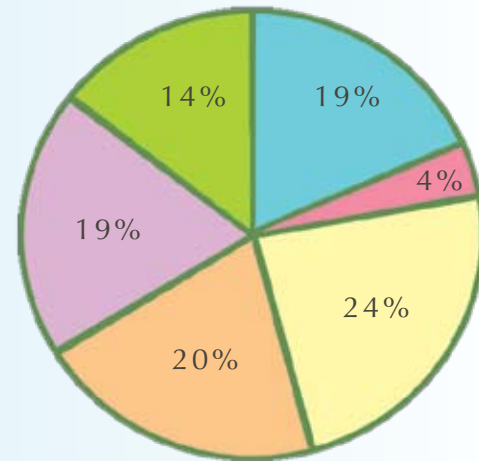


## Coastal Zone Management Funding

The need for greater protection of coastal ecosystems continues to grow as coastal areas face more management challenges each year, challenges particularly daunting in Florida, given its size, elevation, length of coastline, and the vulnerability of its natural environment.

In February 2008, DEP Secretary Michael Sole joined other states and the Coastal States Organization in urging Congress to increase funding for coastal zone management in Fiscal Year 2009, particularly to meet the needs of coastal communities. ♻️

## How were federal CZMA funds spent?



### Community Planning and Development - \$399,806

- Public forums to develop management strategies for the Gulf of Mexico
- Waterfront revitalization plans

### Coordination & Public Involvement - \$519,986

- Brevard County boating study
- Offshore oil & gas projects, alternative energy development, artificial reefs
- 8,500 federal consistency reviews

### Public Access - \$656,731

- Statewide public beach access guide
- Website for virtual dives to historic shipwrecks
- Boardwalks in public parks
- City and county park improvements
- Coastal Maritime Center

### Coastal Hazards - \$100,000

- Model post-disaster redevelopment plans
- County-specific harmful algal bloom response plans

### Coastal Water Quality Protection - \$565,787

- Microbial pathogen indicators at public beaches
- Maintenance & management of septic tanks
- Aquaculture best management practices
- Geological studies of groundwater and coastal water interactions

### Coastal Habitat Conservation & Restoration - \$542,579

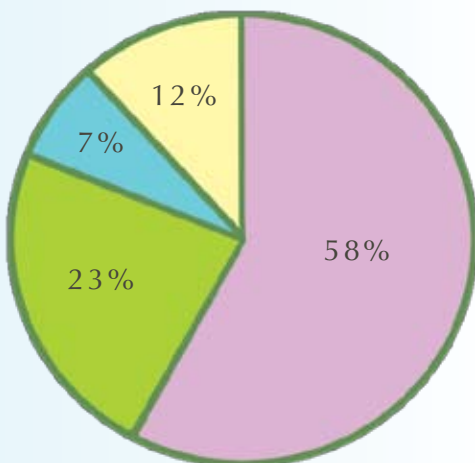
- Restore beach dune and forest, submerged habitat, and reefs
- Eradicate invasive species
- Preserve archaeological resources
- Protect sea turtles and marine habitat
- Map seagrass and reef habitats in the Florida Keys



# Florida Coastal Management Program

## Fiscal Year 2007

*Who received the funds?*



### *State Partners - Community and Other Technical Assistance - \$649,322*

- FCMP – beach access and rip current warning flags/signs; coastal clean up
- Department of Community Affairs – Waterfront community vision plans and post-disaster redevelopment plans
- Department of Health – harmful algal bloom response plans
- Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission – boating and waterways access study
- Agriculture Commission – aquaculture coordination and monitoring
- Department of Environmental Protection – septic tank maintenance and management

### *Community Grants - \$323,779*

- Monroe County – habitat restoration and public access
- Brevard County – park access and facility improvements
- St. Lucie County – Indian River Lagoon access
- Tampa – shoreline restoration



*Matanzas Pass removal of debris*

### *Other Partners - \$205,000*

- Rookery Bay NERR – Gulf of Mexico Alliance support activities
- Neighbors Ensuring Sea Turtle Survival – conservation stewardship program
- The Nature Conservancy – restoration site assessment & invasive species outreach
- Big Bend Maritime center - project planning

### *State Partners - Resource Protection & Management - \$1,606,788*

- Department of Health – microbial pathogen & indicator studies
- DEP Recreation & Parks – dune and habitat restoration; seagrass mapping; boardwalk construction
- Department of Environmental Protection – seagrass salvage & oyster reef restoration; groundwater and radon geological studies; aquatic preserve management plans
- Department of State – website for virtual dives to historic shipwrecks
- FCMP – coordination of offshore energy facilities, pipelines, artificial reefs, aquaculture facilities



## *Upcoming Events*

**August 14-16** - Florida League of Cities 82nd Annual Conference, Tampa

**Late August** – FCMP funding opportunity notice for the Coastal Partnership Initiative published in the Florida Administrative Weekly

**Early September** – FCMP funding opportunity notice for state agencies & water management districts published in the Florida Administrative Weekly

**September 20** - International Coastal Cleanup

**November 17-20** – Coastal Cities Summit, St. Petersburg

***Coastal Currents*** is a publication of the Florida Coastal Management Program to update our partners on issues and projects of interest to the coastal community.

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