



Marine Extension Newsletter – August 2009

Volume 1, Issue 3

Success Stories



Bryan Fluech -- Bryan collaborated with the USFWS's South Florida Coastal Program, Rookery Bay NERR, and the Gulf of Mexico Alliance to host a Living Shoreline Workshop in Naples this past May. More than 90 people from diverse professions in academia, biology, code enforcement, permitting and environmental management attended the full day session. Sixteen speakers covered the fundamentals of living shorelines and shoreline alternatives including cost, maintenance, Florida-specific coastal processes, permitting and regulatory requirements as well as funding opportunities and best practices. Ninety-four percent of the attendees indicated they increased their understanding of Living Shorelines as an erosion control strategy and 74% indicated they increased their knowledge of the regulatory considerations for Living Shorelines projects. Eighty five percent said they would incorporate what they learned in their work; examples included educating clientele on shoreline stabilization alternatives, collaborating more with regulatory agencies on potential LSL projects, and implementing recommended LSL practices. The agent helped coordinate planning meetings, recruit speakers, and facilitate the workshop. For more information contact

Bryan also conducted two week-long sport fishing camps in June/July targeting local youth in Naples and Marco Island. Twenty-nine students attended the camps. Camp content focused on basic fishing skills such as knot tying, casting, and tackle and fish identification as well as proper catch and release practices, fishing line recycling, habitat protection, and fishing regulations. Based on feedback from previous camps the agent brought in local fly fishing experts to teach casting and fly tying skills as well. A member of the agent's advisory committee who is the general manager of a local yacht club donated shrimp and boats for the camps. 85% of students said their confidence in properly handling fish and correctly reading the fishing regulations increased significantly as a result of the camps. Each student received a rod/reel combo and tackle box as a result of donations received from Fish Florida.



Betty Staugler and Joy Hazell -- Betty and Joy conducted, in cooperation with the area's commercial crabbers, three volunteer blue crab trap cleanup events during the gear closure for our region. A goal of the event was to build local capacity among commercial fishers to conduct future cleanup events. We also aimed to strengthen the relationship between Florida Sea Grant, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the areas commercial fishermen. The event built upon a training exercise and train the trainer held in Charlotte County April 6th, 2009. 200 traps were recovered from Charlotte Harbor, including Lemon Bay to Estero Bay, the Peace, Myakka and Caloosahatchee rivers during the three events. Our future endeavors include a traveling road show to train new trainers in the Panhandle prior to their gear closure in January 2010.



Bryan Fluech, Joy Hazell, Betty Staugler and John Stevely -- Collier, Lee and Charlotte counties are working on strengthening our collaborate programs. We held in partnership with FGCU a three county coordination meeting on July 7th, 2009. Participants included member of our advisory committees. In anticipation of the meeting and acknowledging Sea Grant programs are based stakeholder input, we developed a survey instrument, based on the survey that FSG used to develop its 5 year state strategic plan, but modified to get more of a SW Florida and Extension perspective. Fisheries and healthy coastal ecosystems were identified in the survey results as priority issues. A facilitated afternoon session, lead by Stevely resulted in ideas for future regional programs based on survey results. Agents in the South central District will be meeting on a regular basis to implement proposed programs. Survey link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=OrgowkXvLO%2bM7KP6pXb3Vg%3d%3d>.

Doug Gregory -- Doug taught the fourth 40-hour solar photovoltaic installation class through the Florida Keys Community College. Classes have been held in Key West, Marathon and Key Largo. To date 51 local electricians, contractors and others have completed the course with 21 going on to attain the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners "Photovoltaic Entry-Level Certificate of Knowledge" by passing a national exam. This effort is in collaboration with the Florida Keys Community College and the Florida Solar Energy Center Alternative Energy Banner Program. In that regard I arranged for the FKCC to partner with the FSEC train the trainer grant program for 2009-2010 that should help the college to develop a solar based industry training program for solar electric and solar hot water systems. To date, these classes have helped to create at least two new businesses.

Leslie Sturmer -- The 6th Annual CLAMerica Celebration, selected as one of the top 20 events for July 2009 in the southeastern U.S. by the Southeast Tourism Society, was held on the 4th of July in Cedar Key. Hosted by the Cedar Key Aquaculture Association and the UF IFAS Shellfish Aquaculture Extension Program, this food festival



celebrates the positive economical and environmental impact of clam farming in the area. CLAMerica featured educational and clammy activities for all ages. The 6th Annual Cultured Clam Cookoff, with 13 clam dishes entered from amateur chefs as far away as Tampa and Ft. Myers, showcased clams as a versatile seafood that can be prepared in a variety of recipes. Seven local restaurateurs competed in a new event this year, Clam Challenge Italia, in which the public tasted and voted upon the best dish. Attendance was at an all time high, with an estimated 10,000 visitors to the island community



Lisa Krinsky -- The Kids Fish Friday's program started this month with great success. This pilot program will run for a total of 5 weeks until the start of the school year. The program is designed to promote the sport of fishing by making the party boat experience more accessible to children and parents alike while encouraging ethical angling and an appreciation for the marine environment. These fishing trips are all catch-and-release and include an educational briefing which discusses: understanding the saltwater rules and regulations, using circle hooks and de-hooking tools, and proper handling and release techniques. On board, participants learn about fish identification and get practice using the aforementioned techniques. We had over 100 participants during our first two weeks (a total of 62 kids and 45 adults). Results of a survey indicate that an average increased confidence rate of 64% for understand the State's Rules and Regulations and 57% for ability to properly handle fish. 70% of participants were more likely to use circle hooks and de-hooking tools after the event. This event will also include a socio-economic survey of all adult participants. 4-6 months after participation, adults will be asked to complete a survey which will be used to determine 1) how much they'd be willing to pay for such programs, 2) how often they'd be willing to participate, 3) what other types of fishing programs would they be interested in, etc. Results will be presented to charter boat captains to promote the Kids Fishing Events as an alternate source of income during the slow season.

Leroy Creswell – Leroy is completing the program planning for the upcoming 62nd Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute to be held in Cumana, Venezuela in November 2009. He is finalizing the editing, formatting, and publication of the Proceedings of the 61st Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute, which was held in Gosier, Guadeloupe, FWI, November 2008. He completed an invited publication for USDA/Southern Regional Aquaculture Center titled "Phytoplankton Culture"

With the help of over 40 volunteers, and in collaboration with St. Lucie County Artificial Reef program and Florida Oceanographic Society, Leroy helped to establish an oyster reef off of a spoil island in the Indian River Lagoon. The project used about 800 mesh bags filled with oyster shell collected from local area restaurants to form an intertidal oyster reef that will eventually attract oyster larvae and repopulate the area with these filter



feeding mollusks. Oyster reefs not only provide suitable habitat for fish and other marine life, but new oysters will help improve the water quality of the IR Lagoon because of their ability to filter copious amounts of water through their gills. Once completed, the reef will be monitored quarterly for the next two years.

Leroy also collaborated with other UF/IFAS faculty and aquaculture scientists from Hillsborough Community college and Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution to hold two day-long workshops dedicated to aquaculture education in the public schools. This was a teacher in-service program funded by FDACS and was available to science and agriculture teachers throughout Florida. Eighty-two teachers attended the in-service, which was held live at the Indian River Research and Education Center in Fort Pierce and broadcast via Polycom to other IFAS facilities throughout the state. Over 20 presentations were given each day on topics ranging from recirculating systems, nutrition, water quality, mollusk culture, and aquaculture as a teaching tool in the classroom. In addition to the in-service instruction, the team of collaborators developed a complete Aquaculture curriculum for public schools, lesson plans, laboratory exercises, and documentation for Florida "Sunshine Standards". The curriculum is posted on the website: <http://irrec.ifas.ufl.edu/teachaquaculture/>. As the 2009-2010 school year commences, we will be working with participating teachers to design an appropriate aquarium and/or aquaculture demonstration so that they can implement the curriculum they received during their in-service training.

Upcoming Events

Bryan Fluech -- Working with the FWC and Fish Florida, Bryan will present at the Annual Florida Parks and Recreation Conference in Orlando, on Florida August 29th, on how to run a successful sport fishing camp. The session will focus on providing participants with skills and resources to reconnect youth to nature and develop lifelong ethical anglers. Participants will get the opportunity to practice catch and release practices, learn about food webs and habitats, and demonstrate basic sport fishing skills.

Chuck Adams -- The survey development for the FWC / WCIND-funded project dealing with the economic impact of artificial reefs in SW Florida continues. The surveys are about to be administered via surface mail and email/website contact to registered boaters, for-hire operators and for-hire patrons. In addition, postcards will be provided to marine agents in the region for distribution to a select group of guides, charter, and party boat operators for distribution to patrons when they depart from the vessel following a trip. The survey will provide information on the economic impact of artificial reef programs in the SW Florida area, and will hopefully provide information necessary for the continued funding of artificial reef programs during these difficult economic times.

The acceptance of cultured sun-ray venus clams by local sushi restaurants will be tested soon. Clams cultured at the Cedar Key sites will be provided sushi restaurants in the Gainesville area. A brief table-side survey will be utilized for the testing consumer acceptance. The information gathered will be utilized to help establish the overall market acceptance of cultured Sunray Venus clams in the Florida market. The work will be conducted in the late summer or early fall.

Betty Staugler -- Saturday, September 12th from 9am until noon. Join the University of Florida Sea Grant program in Charlotte County, by participating in the 1st Great Bay & Sound Scallop Search, a resource-monitoring program where volunteers snorkel, looking for scallops in select areas within Gasparilla Sound and lower Lemon Bay. The purpose of this program is to monitor and document the health and status of the bay scallop population. Modeled off of the successful Great Bay Scallop Search conducted in Tampa Bay since 1993, this event is designed to be a fun family event. Reservations are required to participate in the event. Space is limited so reserve your spot today.

Leslie Sturmer -- The annual Clam Industry Workshop will be held this fall (date yet to be finalized) in Cedar Key. Updates on various applied research projects, such as genetic improvement through hybridization, culture and market potential of the sunray venus clam, and water quality monitoring, will be provided by UF and FAU research and extension faculty. The workshop also allows presenters and industry members to break out into smaller groups for feedback and discussion.