

Volusia Shorebird Partnership
Wednesday November 1, 2017, 1:00- 4:00 p.m.
Beach Safety Headquarters, 3rd floor conference room
515 S. Atlantic Ave. Daytona Beach, FL

Meeting Minutes

1:00-1:15pm: Introductions -All

Meeting Attendees:

Jennifer Winters, Becki O'Keefe, Rob Walsh (Volusia County Environmental Management), Alex Kropp, Jean Olbert, Michelle VanDeventer, Logan McDonald (FWC), Michael Brothers (Marine Science Center), Mary Chris Anderson, Neal Folsom (Canaveral NS Volunteers), Mike Cooper (Canaveral National Seashore), Don Picard (SE Volusia Audubon), David Hartgrove (Halifax River Audubon), Amber Stevenson (Ecological Associates, Inc.), & Steve Vannortwic (FWC LEO)

1:15-2:25pm: Volusia Nesting/Summary of effort during count windows. Discuss challenges and successes from the 2017 season. Discuss hurricane Impacts. –All partners to provide updates (5-10 minutes each)

Alex:

- Review of the route coverage summary maps and count windows.
- Reminder of the importance of surveying/entering data for sites with “zero” resights.
- **Tanger Outlet Mall:** In the 2017 breeding season this site was under construction with active bulldozers and equipment present. As a result, a new Least Tern (LETE) ground colony ended up nesting at the construction site. Some flight capable juveniles were produced. With the completion of development, it is unlikely to see nesting here in the future. The area was first discovered by Michael Brothers and posted with the assistance of Alex, Michael and David. The posted area was removed after the season.
- **Port Orange:** Brown Pelicans (BRPE) and American Oystercatchers (AMOY) nested around the Port Orange area and across from it during the 2017 breeding season. Additional signs may be needed at this site for the 2018 breeding season.
- **Rookery Islands 2:** There is an increasing population of White Ibis at this location which is attracting other species to the area. The following species have been observed nesting at this site: Brown Pelicans, Little Blue Herons, Tricolored Herons, and Double-crested Cormorants, etc.

David:

- **Together Unisex Salon** (rooftop): In previous years this site has been popular with LETE but has experienced high rates of predation (Boat-tailed Grackles are suspected). This year LETE came in early to the site but abandoned shortly after.
- **City Island Library** (rooftop): Successful nesting year for LETE.
- **Volusia County Correctional Facility** (rooftop): This site has not been used for about 8-9 years. Currently it is unclear if the entire roof has been replaced or just a portion of the roof (with the second half scheduled for future replacement). County EM staff to try to follow up to find out if re-roof was completed.

- **Waterway Condo in New Smyrna (Rooftop):** Danny Young was scheduled to cover this site. Unclear if birds were present for the 2017 breeding season.

Don:

- **Dolphin View:** Due to miscommunication, this site was not surveyed during the count windows except for in April 2017. Don was on vacation after May 6th for the season.

Mike:

- **Canaveral National Seashore:**
- **Nest Success:** There were 28-32 successful Wilsons Plover (WIPL) nests this year. This increase in nesting was likely the result of amplified predator control efforts. No activity was observed on “Bird Island” this season. One small LETE ground colony was observed on an oyster bar but it was subsequently washed out by a high tide event.
- **Survey Routes:** A new survey route will be established in the 2018 breeding season (Lagoon Route). Starting in 2018 a new survey protocol will be implemented to avoid issues of double counting Volusia and Brevard, instead they will be counted on the same day. CNS does not mark their shorebird nesting sites to avoid drawing attention to the sensitive areas. They also halt beach clean-ups and ATV training on the beach during the nesting season.

Becki, Jennifer and Amber:

- **Atlantic Beaches (N Route and S Route):** No nesting was observed on these routes
- **Smyrna Dunes Park (A Route), NSB):** There were chicks identified at this location. However, the original nest was not observed.
- **Bethune, New Smyrna Beach (B Route):** There were Five WIPL nests identified during the 2017 breeding season starting in June. One of these nests did not produce chicks. However, the other four nests produced some downy and/or flight capable chicks but it is unknown if they fledged or not. Nests may have failed at this location potentially due to coyote predation and sea turtle nests were impacted in this area and tracks were seen in the vicinity of bird nests.
- **Disappearing Island:** Some WIPL and Willet (WILL) territorial behavior was observed but nesting was not confirmed. LETE courtship was observed but no nesting. Hurricane Irma altered the nesting habitat at this site, potentially opening more WILL nesting habitat.
- **Rattlesnake Island:** No nesting was observed here this year.

Steve (FWC Law Enforcement):

- Routine patrols were completed for designated areas this year.
- No serious dog reports or major issues were reported for the 2017 breeding season in Volusia.
- Alex received e-mail complaints about disturbances to Port Orange Rookery approximately 1/month-he shared those with Michelle (CWA coordinator).
- Need to have a follow up discussion about alternate options to the CAD system for reporting LE shorebirds routes as there appears to be a location discrepancy of self-reporting vs. radio/dispatch reporting in St. John’s County.

2:25-2:35pm: 10 Minute Break

2:35-2:55pm: Critical Wildlife Areas Update: Michelle Vandeventer, FWC CWA Coordinator

- See Power Point slides
- Port Orange Rookery- The Nov 16th meeting topic was pulled and is now to be discussed at the Dec 6, 2017 meeting in Gainesville, FL. It has been determined that FDEP owns the site and is supportive of the CWA designation. Once an area is designated, FWC would like to target monthly year round surveys. To help with CWA monitoring, contact Michelle.

2:55-3:15pm: Shorebird Program Update - New funds, goals, and staff! -Alex, FWC

- See Power Point slides

3:15-3:30pm: Rookery Island monofilament removal effort- Jennifer Winters, Volusia County

- The best time for monofilament removal is in December.
- The last cleanup was about 12-15 years ago (8-10 pounds of monofilament removed).
- Volusia County is looking for volunteers.
- Follow-up- The 2017 monofilament clean-up effort has been scheduled for Dec 7th at 9 am. Meet at the Dunlawton Boat Ramp

3:30-3:45pm: Marine Plastics, Neil Folsom, Canaveral

- There is now evidence of copepods consuming plastics in the wild.
- Testing indicates that 80% of our water supply is showing evidence of plastic fibers.
- PCBs have been found in eggshells of sea turtles.
- Removal ideas:
 - Hand/mechanical sifting mechanisms for smaller plastics
 - Volusia County Adopt a Beach program could potentially work with volunteers on helping with hand sifting for smaller plastics.
- Neil is looking into mechanical sifting options that could work on a larger scale (more information needed on how this would disrupt the beach ecosystem).
- Michelle noted that on the great lakes region they have found an increase in coliform bacteria as the result of beach raking activities.
- The CWCI Initiative, might be a good resource for more info on this topic. Follow up: contact is Fara Ilami

Coastal Wildlife Conservation Initiative Coordinator
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
3377 East US Highway 90
Lake City, FL 32055
Office: [386-754-1668](tel:386-754-1668)
Mobile: [386-688-7348](tel:386-688-7348)
fara.ilami@myfwc.com <mailto:fara.ilami@myfwc.com>

3:45-4:00pm: Open Discussion and Updates/ Wrap-up/Action Items- Jennifer Winters, Volusia County

Bird Day – Marine Science Center, Nov 4th

- Sea Turtle day is scheduled for April 28th, 2018 at the Marine Science Center.
- FWC may be able to set up a shorebird booth for the upcoming event.

Action Items:

- Jennifer will be following up with potential dates for monofilament removal on Rookery Island.
- If there is any information regarding marine plastics that you would like to share with the group please send it to Jennifer.
- FWC staff should be in communication with Michael about the April 28th Sea Turtle day.

Adjourn