

SAVE THE MANATEE® CLUB

The Voice For Manatees For Over Thirty Years

2011 HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Save the Manatee Club is an award-winning 501(c)(3) nonprofit conservation organization, established in 1981 by singer/songwriter Jimmy Buffett, and former Florida Governor and U.S. Senator Bob Graham. The Club's mission is to protect manatees and their aquatic habitat for future generations. To accomplish its mission, the Club works closely with federal, state, and local governments, as well as with the public at the grass roots level, and supports policies that are based on the best scientific data available. The Club raises public awareness; educates; sponsors research, rescue, rehabilitation, and release efforts; supports land acquisition; promotes aquatic habitat protection; advocates for improved protection measures, and supports education and conservation efforts in other countries. In 2011, Save the Manatee Club (SMC):

Education and Public Awareness Efforts:

- Produced and distributed a new public service announcement featuring SMC's Co-Founder, Jimmy Buffett, about the importance of sea-grasses within the aquatic ecosystem.
- Developed manatee webcams at Blue Spring State Park to broadcast live and recorded videos of manatees over the Internet to dramatically increase public awareness to classrooms and others worldwide.
- Distributed important press releases, advisories, opinion editorials, and public service messages to state and national media about SMC and urgent conservation issues.
- Launched the Skype Manatee Education Project bringing SMC's scientific experts into classrooms across America and internationally using video conferencing software.
- Produced waterproof boater education cards in four languages in cooperation with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission.
- Produced and distributed education materials, including SMC's Educator's Guide, free to the public, to schools, state parks, marinas, businesses, and libraries.
- Produced and distributed public awareness waterway signs and boat decals free to boaters and shoreline property owners.
- Educated the public through a Volunteer Corps of over 1,500, providing information at festivals and giving presentations to schools and civic groups.
- Created and produced waterway signs and boat decals for Alabama residents and visitors to report manatee sightings, and to warn boaters to slow for manatees.
- Started a manatee adoption program with Dauphin Island Sea Lab's Manatee Sighting Network in Alabama to provide additional funding for the manatee stranding program.
- Participated in the Blue Spring State Park summer Manatee Watch. SMC volunteers helped to prevent manatee harassment by swimmers.
- Increased outreach to clean marinas, water taxis, tour operators, and boat rentals in coastal counties and offered SMC's free education materials for their patrons.



Conservation and Advocacy Efforts:

- Led efforts to ensure the successful funding for Florida's Manatee Critical Care Program in the state budget while funding for other programs was reduced or cut.
- Aggressively campaigned for a permanent federal rule in Kings Bay to better protect manatees from speeding boats and from harassment by divers and swimmers.
- Conducted a research project on boater compliance rates and manatee observations in Kings Bay, Crystal River.
- Provided SMC research data to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service documenting harassment of manatees seeking refuge from the cold at Three Sisters Springs.
- Conducted the life history research of the Blue Spring manatee population. Staff was able to identify 344 individual manatees who took refuge during the winter.
- Hired a staff biologist to assist in addressing conservation and education issues both within the U.S. and internationally.
- Strongly advocated for improvements to Broward County's boat speed zone rule, most of which was adopted by County Commissioners.
- Advocated to keep proposed Flagler County boat speed zones strong and to oppose weakening the Dade County Facility Siting Plan allowing for increased boat traffic in sensitive manatee habitat.
- Actively supported improvements to Sarasota County's manatee protection measures, which were approved by County Commissioners.
- Rallied grass roots support for various issues affecting manatees and their aquatic habitat, and started a petition drive for more manatee protections in Crystal River.
- Was part of a technical working group for Blue Spring formed by the water management district to ensure ample habitat at the Spring for wintering manatees.
- Expertly engaged in a water management district stakeholder group to set minimum flows and levels for the Weeki Wachee, Chassahowitzka, Homosassa, and Crystal Rivers.



Helen Spivey, Co-Chair of the Club's Board of Directors (front row, 5th from left), and Patrick Rose, the Club's Executive Director (front row, 3rd from left), were honored by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service with its Regional Director's Conservation Award, along with other members of the Three Sisters Land Acquisition Team.

- Reviewed and supported efforts to determine the outcomes of the Gulf Restoration Ecosystem Task Force to help ensure that BP's Gulf restoration funding goes to the highest priority projects.
- Provided funding for two gates at Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park, allowing hundreds of wild manatees access to the Spring during the winter.
- Raised funds toward a net for the Marine Mammal Stranding Center in New Jersey to rescue wayward manatees in the northeast region during cooler months.
- Sponsored new critical care pool doors at Lowry Park Zoo to isolate sick and injured manatees for treatment.
- Donated a radar gun to law enforcement to enforce boat speed zones in Kings Bay and Citrus County waters.

International Efforts:

- Aided ecotourism efforts in Casamance, Senegal to provide immediate alternatives to continuing traditional manatee hunting.
- Provided funding for supplies for dugong research to the Dugong Emergency Protection Project-Endangered Wildlife Trust in Mozambique.
- Assisted Wildtracks rehabilitation center in Belize – provided food and medicine for Twiggy, an orphaned manatee there, and helped with infrastructure needs.
- Traveled to Jamaica to assess the health status of semi-captive manatees and offered SMC's support for their manatee education and research activities.
- Sent food, medical supplies, and funding for an orphaned calf named Victor in Mayumba, Gabon, West Africa.

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www.savethemanatee.org

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To view Save the Manatee Club's Highlights of Activities and Accomplishments for prior years, go to www.savethemanatee.org/smcinfo.



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