

# HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2009

- Advocated successfully for new regulations protecting seagrasses in saltwater aquatic preserves from boating activities.
- Petitioned the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, along with conservation partners, to revise the manatee's critical habitat designations. The Service will now conduct a full scientific review to determine if additional protections should be adopted.
- Partnered with other conservation groups to oppose a 400-slip marina, which would have prevented restoration of the Ocklawaha to a free-flowing river that could offer additional habitat to wintering manatees.
- Advocated for new speed zones, which will be implemented in the Chokoloskee Bay area of Everglades National Park.
- Produced and distributed outdoor signage with the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens educating the public about manatee harassment. Signs were distributed to local and state parks and to numerous boat ramps and marinas.
- Increased online public awareness by creating a Club presence on MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook social networks.
- Raised funds to help purchase the Three Sisters Springs parcel in Crystal River. The parcel is adjacent to two manatee sanctuaries and would make a priceless future sanctuary.
- Partnered with conservation groups to advocate for the Florida Forever program, which purchases conservation lands.
- Supported a legislative initiative to protect Florida's springs through improved regulation of nonpoint-source pollution.
- Distributed radio and television public service announcements to national media centers featuring Alec Baldwin, Jimmy Buffett, Carl Hiaasen, and John Lithgow.
- Provided educational information to the public at large through our volunteer corps at scores of festivals and events in Florida and across the U.S.
- Called on the public in northeastern and Gulf Coast states through media alerts to report any sightings of manatees outside their normal autumn and winter range to initiate rescues if necessary, and disseminated protection tips.
- Distributed public awareness banners to boaters and aluminum signs to shoreline property owners to alert boaters that manatees may be present.
- Created a public service advertisement for outdoor billboards in Central Florida donated by Clear Channel Outdoor Orlando.
- Advocated for the use of cameras as a law enforcement tool that has the potential to significantly raise boater compliance with posted speed zones.



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- Monitored the repowering of Florida Power & Light Company's Riviera Beach power plant, as well as Brevard County's Canaveral plant. Manatees will have a more secure source of warm water for the short-term.
- Participated in the Manatee Awareness Group, which coordinates education and outreach activities within Palm Beach, Broward, and Dade Counties; the Manatee Awareness Coalition that operates in the Tampa Bay region, and Volusia County's Blue Spring Working Group.
- Led efforts to revise the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission's imperiled species classification system, and associated draft state rule, based on the best available science.
- Cooperated with local, state, and federal agencies to eliminate the Kings Bay seasonal water sports zone in Crystal River, Florida, and to reduce the incidence of manatee harassment by snorkelers, divers, and swimmers.
- Worked successfully to prevent the closing of state aquatic preserves offices and cuts to Florida's state parks' budgets, in tandem with other conservation groups, during the state legislative session.
- Led the successful effort to maintain Florida's manatee critical care programs at current funding levels.
- Monitored numerous proposed shoreline development projects in manatee habitat and made recommendations for improved protection measures to authorizing agencies, notably a 545-acre mixed-use waterfront development in the Florida Barge Canal.
- Provided funding for the continuing care of orphaned manatee calves in Belize.
- Assisted with health assessments of manatees in Belize and initiated a program to build community support for manatee conservation efforts.
- Supplied educational materials to the National Park of Guadeloupe to educate local residents about manatees and a reintroduction program in the Lesser Antilles.
- Initiated the development of strategies to reduce threats to dugongs in Mozambique, including the by-catch of dugongs in the shark fin fishery.
- Provided funding toward the enforcement efforts of park rangers at the first manatee sanctuary established in the Dominican Republic.
- Participated in the Manatee Rehabilitation Partnership, which tracks and monitors rehabilitated manatees.



**Save the Manatee® Club**

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