



Info

Release

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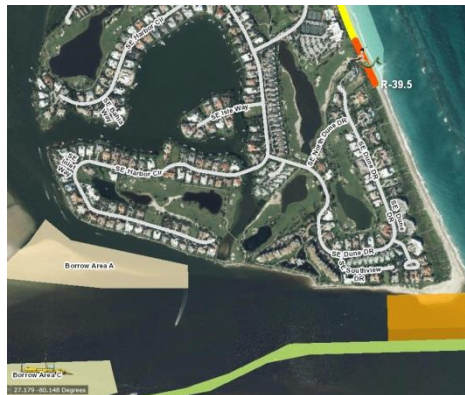
Restoration and construction work begins on Bathtub Reef Beach and Sailfish Point

Construction began this week on a beach renourishment project that will create a new and improved Bathtub Reef Beach – a Martin County local treasure and favorite beach for generations of families. The project is expected to be completed in May 2016, prior to the start of the new sea turtle nesting season. The northern half of Sailfish Point Beach is also part of the beach renourishment project.

Ferreira Construction has moved the Lori Hill Dredge to the east side of the area in the St. Lucie Inlet known as Borrow Area C. The pipe used to pump sand from the nearby flood shoals to the beach is in place.

Through mid-March, dredging will be in Borrow Area C within the St. Lucie Inlet flood shoals and work from east to west. The pipeline corridor will cross the Inlet and the pipeline will be submerged as it crosses the navigation channel and re-emerges onto the beach at the North Jetty moving north. Therefore, it is extremely important that boaters take notice of the buoys that are marking the pipeline to ensure safe navigation.

The booster pump will be floating just west of the shoal in the impoundment basin in the St. Lucie Inlet. Sand placement will begin at Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) R-monument 39.5 (as seen on the construction map below) working south to north and adding on to the pipeline as necessary.



The entire Bathtub Beach parking lot will be closed during the construction project. The beach itself will have extremely limited access for the next several months as well. It is suggested that residents use Stuart and Santa Lucea beaches until

restoration work at Bathtub Reef Beach is completed. The initial timeline below shows where and when construction activities will be taking place and will be updated on a weekly basis so the public remains informed about the progress that is being made to minimize inconveniences during the construction.

As part of Martin County's efforts to keep the public informed about this important beach renourishment project, a Bathtub Beach project [website](#) and [Facebook page](#) have been created. Information about beach and parking lot closings, access and construction and restoration updates will be provided in a timely basis by going to www.bathtubbeachmartin.com, <https://www.facebook.com/BathtubBeachMartin> or email coastal@martin.fl.us.

About the Bathtub Reef Beach/Sailfish Point Renourishment Project

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is funding nearly 40% of total project costs through their Beach Management Funding Assistance Program. Martin County and Sailfish Point will each pay 50% of the remaining project cost. A FEMA reimbursement from hurricane damages sustained in 2012 is also under review and may provide additional funding.

Martin County's Coastal Engineering Division plan for the restoration effort is the most cost-efficient as well as the most environmentally sensitive approach. Sand will be dredged from the flood shoals and the impoundment basin of the St. Lucie Inlet located immediately south of these beaches. This will help maintain the safety and navigability of the Inlet for local boaters. The sand will then be piped to the beach and distributed from that point across 4,900 feet of coastline, from just north of Bathtub Beach and extending south into Sailfish Point. This approach provides a high quality recreational beach, increased storm protection and is designed to protect the integrity of the fragile Sabellariid worm reef that serves as both a critical marine habitat and protective barrier at Bathtub Beach.

Part of the project will restore at least 100 parking spaces in the Bathtub Beach parking lot which had been lost over the last several years as the beach eroded and sand had to be piled up in the parking area. Upon completion of the project, residents and visitors will be able to enjoy a bigger and better Bathtub Reef Beach – one that more closely resembles the way the beach used to be.

About Bathtub Reef Beach

Martin County's Atlantic beaches span nearly 22 miles along our coast and include Jensen Beach, Stuart Beach, Sailfish Point, St. Lucie Inlet State Preserve, Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge, and the Town of Jupiter Island.

These beaches are an integral part of the quality of life in Martin County, generate considerable revenue to the economy of Martin County, and support homes, businesses and related infrastructure (roads, utilities) for many residents and visitors. Bathtub Reef is located just offshore at Bathtub Beach Park and is a popular spot for snorkelers due to the large numbers of marine creatures and fish that congregate there. Its presence is also a key factor in creating the "bathtub effect" of very shallow waters during low tide that make it such a favorite swimming location for families with young children. Bathtub Reef is a fascinating reef system, created by tiny tube-building Sabellariid sea worms. It is not only an incredibly unique system, but also an extremely fragile one. The worms cement sand grains together, creating a vast network of tube dwellings. Colonies build on top of one another over time and create

a reef system that helps break waves and reduce beach erosion. This habitat is used by more than 500 marine species including endangered sea turtles that forage on and around the reef.

Bathtub Beach Construction and Renourishment Timeline

February 17

- Pipe that will be used to pump sand from the dredge in Borrow Area C will be submerged and marked with buoys as necessary.

February 18

- The Lori Hill Dredge moved on location to the east side of an area in the St. Lucie Inlet flood shoals known as Borrow Area C.

February 19 through March 19

- Dredging begins on the east end of Borrow Area C within the St. Lucie Inlet and work its way from east to west.
- The booster pump will be floating just west of the shoal in the impoundment basin in the St. Lucie Inlet. This pump is used to increase the velocity at which the sand is pumped the long distance from the dredge to the beach.
- Sand placement will begin at FDEP R-monument 39.5 (as seen on the map) working south to north and adding on to the pipeline as necessary.
- The pipeline corridor will cross the inlet. The pipeline will be submerged, crossing the navigation channel and re-emerging onto the beach at the North Jetty moving north as the project continues.

March 16 through March 23

- At the same time sand is being dredged from Borrow Area C of the St. Lucie Inlet, pipe will also be run to Borrow Area A to allow transition from one borrow area to another depending on the weather within the inlet .
- The pipeline will continue to be submerged across the navigation channel and remain on the beach starting at the North Jetty and continuing north to the construction area along the beach. Beach fill will continue from south to north.

March 24 through April 8

- Upon completion of dredging from Borrow Area C of the Inlet, the dredge will be moved to Borrow Area A. Dredging of Borrow Area A will be performed from east to west.

April 9 through April 14

- The dredge will move to the navigation channel moving from west to east. Beach fill will continue from south to north.

April 15 through April 21

- The dredge will begin dredging in the impoundment area starting from west to east. Beach fill will continue from south to north.
- Dune reconstruction and sand placement north of Bathtub Reef Beach will occur through mechanical placement using dozers and off road trucks to transport the material from the stockpile and place directly on the beach. This is due to the reef being so close to shore.

April 22 through April 30

- Piping that was placed along the beach will be removed and the new sand that has been placed on the beach will be tilled so as to create a better environment in which sea turtles can dig their nests.

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GBF/ADM

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