



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEA & SHORELINE LEADS INDIAN RIVER LAGOON RESTORATION WITH 16 PROJECTS AND A NEW DEDICATED SEAGRASS NURSERY

WINTER GARDEN, FLA, March 1, 2024 / PRNewswire / -- Today, on World Seagrass Day, Florida's leading aquatic restoration firm [Sea & Shoreline](#) announced the unveiling of a new seagrass nursery in Melbourne Beach, Fla., with the sole intent of **growing over one million seagrass plants** annually to plant in the Indian River Lagoon (IRL), as well as a seagrass planting initiative that includes 16 projects in the IRL and its tributaries aimed at restoring seagrass beds to improve water quality and provide critical habitat for fish, manatees, and other Lagoon life.

For years, there have been concerns about declining water quality in the IRL caused by multiple factors including development, septic systems, stormwater runoff, and warming temperatures from climate change. Hence, the IRL, which spans 156 miles and five counties, has experienced a devastating loss of seagrass in recent years that has resulted in the starvation of over 1,000 manatees, critical loss of essential fish habitat, and compromised nutrient cycling which has led to algal blooms and poor water quality.

Sea & Shoreline received funding from the IRL Council and [Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program](#) (IRLNEP) to expand the IRL seagrass nursery network and implement pilot-scale seagrass restoration projects. Under this funding initiative, Sea & Shoreline partnered with IRLNEP and [Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute](#) to create the nursery to ensure that a continual source of plant stock would be available for seagrass restoration projects in the IRL.

Additionally, Sea & Shoreline has also partnered with the Fish & Wildlife Foundation of Florida, Coastal Conservation Association Florida, Angler Action Foundation, Fort Pierce Utilities Authority, the Manatee Center, the Treasure Coast Manatee Foundation, and several Florida counties, water management districts, state agencies, and utilities to demonstrate restoration success. Project funding was provided by these organizations as well as the Florida Legislature with support from Senator Debbie Mayfield, Representative Dana Trabulsy, Representative Kaylee Tuck, and Senator Erin Grall. According to IRL Basin Management Action Plans, "The ROI from achieving water quality and seagrass restoration goals is 33:1."

Seagrass restoration project locations are as follows:

1. Fort Pierce Inlet State Park (Tucker Cove) - Installed
2. Fort Pierce - Installed
3. Fort Pierce Yacht Club - Installed
4. Banana River - Installed
5. Moore's Creek - Installed
6. Merritt Island – Installed
7. Bethune-Cookman/Brevard Mosquito Impoundment - Installed

(more)

8. Goat Creek – Installed
9. St. Sebastian River - Installed
10. Taylor Creek - Installed
11. Crane Creek - Installed
12. North Fork of the St. Lucie River Aquatic Preserve - Installed
13. North Fork of the Loxahatchee River - Installed
14. Titusville Causeway – Upcoming Project
15. Preachers Hole – Upcoming Project
16. Big Slough – Upcoming Project

Seagrasses are essential to maintain a healthy, thriving, and sustainable aquatic ecosystem. Seagrass communities provide:

- Critical habitat and food for many species including fish, manatees, dolphins, and turtles
- Essential nutrient cycling to clean and oxygenate the water column to reduce algal blooms
- Sediment stabilization to prevent sediment resuspension and flooding, and
- Climate regulation through carbon sequestration for millennia

According to Carter Henne, president of Sea & Shoreline, “These ‘green’ seagrass projects, coupled with ‘grey’ projects such as septic-to-sewer conversions, will help to reverse water quality decline and jump start native vegetation. Nature will reach a tipping point where it takes over and 100 acres of seagrass can naturally expand to 400 acres in planted areas.”

ABOUT SEA & SHORELINE

Sea & Shoreline is a Florida-based aquatic restoration firm that specializes in improving water quality and making communities more resilient to the effects of climate change. Services include environmental dredging, seagrass/submerged aquatic vegetation restoration, natural stormwater filtration, oyster reefs, artificial reefs, living shorelines, wave attenuation devices, rip rap, vegetated retaining walls, wetland plantings, invasives control, project design, surveying, permitting, and funding. For more information, please visit seaandshoreline.com, or follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).

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