

Information from FWC Requested by the LRRC on 4/22/14

At the first meeting of the Local Rule Review Committee (LRRC) for western Pinellas County, LRRC members requested additional information concerning several items. Each of the requests is addressed below. I would appreciate it if you would please pass this information on to the LRRC.

[1] Maps and/or additional information regarding boat-related mortality and how many were described as being the result of acute injuries as opposed to chronic injuries.

Some information on this topic is discussed in the data document provided to the LRRC members – see A.5.a on page 2. A death is considered to be acute if the nature of the injuries is such that it is likely the manatee died immediately or within 24-48 hours after the injuries were sustained. Specific assessments of whether a death was likely acute or chronic were not made on a routine basis prior to the early 2000s. As a result, the mortality database does not include an assessment for most deaths that were recovered prior to 2003, although the necropsy reports and database often include additional information about the nature of the injuries. A searchable mortality database is available on the FWRI website at:

<http://myfwc.com/research/manatee/rescue-mortality-response/mortality-statistics/>.

Of the 45 boat-related manatee deaths recovered in the western Pinellas County area, 22 are listed as being acute while 8 are listed as chronic and 15 do not include an assessment. Maps of the recovery locations, with summary information, are attached.

[2] Information on the number of manatees seen during the synoptic surveys, both statewide and in Pinellas County.

Information on the synoptic surveys is available on the FWRI website at:

<http://myfwc.com/research/manatee/projects/population-monitoring/synoptic-surveys/>, including the total number of manatees seen during each survey that has been flown since this survey effort began in 1991. The highest count obtained so far was 5,077 manatees in January 2010. The most recent survey was conducted in January 2014 and resulted in a total statewide count of 4,824 manatees.

As discussed on the FWRI website, the synoptic surveys are flown in winter and cover areas manatees are known to use on a regular basis in winter. Survey areas are focused on manatee aggregation sites, including power plants, natural springs, and other areas that provide warm water. The only portion of the western Pinellas County area that is included in the synoptic surveys is the lower Anclote River, including Spring Bayou and the power plant area near the mouth of the river (in Pasco County). The highest count obtained in this area is 27 manatees on 2/14/06, followed by 21 on 1/21/09, 20 on 2/1/07, and 19 on 3/6/99. A total of seven manatees was seen during the most recent synoptic survey (1/24/14).

In addition to the Anclote River area, the synoptic surveys include portions of eastern Pinellas County, primarily in the vicinity of the Bartow power plant south of Gandy Boulevard. The highest count obtained in this overall area (including the Anclote River area from above) is 119 manatees on 1/26/05, followed by 88 on 2/20/04. A total of 71 manatees was seen during the most recent synoptic survey. Other high counts were 66 on 2/23/99 and 51 on 3/6/99.

[3] Composite maps showing the existing boating regulations as well as the areas identified for LRRC review

The documents provided to the LRRC members included a series of large scale maps for the areas that have been identified as possibly warranting manatee protection zones. A companion map for each area also was provided showing the existing boating regulations. A set of composite maps is attached, with one map for each area and the existing zones shown with hatch patterns instead of solid colors.

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