

**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Jason E. Brown, County Administrator

THROUGH: Richard B. Szyrka, P.E., Public Works Director

THROUGH: Eric Charest, Natural Resources Manager

FROM: Melissa Meisenburg, Lagoon Plan Environmental Specialist

SUBJECT: Completion of April/May 2022 Derelict Vessel Removal

DATE: May 25, 2022

This is an update to inform the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), Indian River County's (IRC) residents and visitors of the completion of the April/May 2022 derelict vessel removal project in the Indian River Lagoon.

DESCRIPTION AND CONDITIONS

Derelict vessels are defined by the state in section 823.11, F. S. as vessels that are left, stored or abandoned in a wrecked, junked or substantially dismantled condition upon the waters of the state, at a port without the consent of the agency or upon private property without the consent of the owner. Vessels under the derelict designation are sinking, degraded and inoperable, creating navigational hazards and pose threats to the environment. Officers from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission investigate abandoned vessels to determine derelict status in accordance with Florida Statutes, 705.101 (3) and 823.11. The derelict vessel designation from FWC allows the County to remove and dispose of abandoned vessels, improving boater safety, removing hazards to navigation and to the environment.

Indian River County Coastal Division staff routinely monitor the Statewide FWC Derelict Vessel database for information on vessels within the County undergoing derelict status investigations. In February 2022, updates to FWC's database indicated six (6) vessels within the County had attained derelict status and were available for removal and disposal. Outlaw Maritime, LLC (Outlaw Maritime) provided a cost proposal to the County of \$34,300.00 to remove all six (6) derelict vessels in accordance with FWC Best Management Practices.

County Coastal Division staff applied for a Derelict Vessel removal grant from FWC in February and were awarded with a \$34,300.00 Bulk Derelict Vessel Removal Grant (Agreement 21255) to cover the costs associated with the removal and disposal of the six (6) derelict vessels from the Indian River Lagoon. The grant agreement was approved by the Board of County Commissioners on March 15, 2022. Prior to the removal start date, County staff received an authorization letter from FWC for the removal of an additional derelict vessel. The Bulk Derelict Vessel Removal Grant did not cover the costs associated with the removal of the 7th vessel. Outlaw Maritime provided a separate proposal to remove the 30' sailboat at a cost of

\$4,500.00. The County supported the removal of the vessel outside of grant reimbursement to minimize impacts to the environment and improve boater safety.

Coastal Division Staff met with the team from Outlaw Maritime on April 12th to view the seven (7) derelict vessels and establish a removal plan. At the time of viewing, the team was unable to locate derelict vessel six (6). After communicating with FWC, it was determined derelict vessel six (6) had been towed to St. Lucie County for removal by the vessel owner.

Outlaw Maritime began derelict vessel removal on April 12, 2022. The removal process was completed on May 2, 2022. Six (6) vessels were removed from the water following Best Management Practices set forth by FWC. The contractor disposed of the vessels at an authorized landfill per Agreement 21255, providing the County with documentation of removal and disposal. County staff are now completing the grant reimbursement request to seek reimbursement for five (5) of the derelict vessels identified in the FWC Agreement 21255.

FUNDING

Reimbursement Grant funding was awarded to the County for the removal of the original six (6) derelict vessels identified in the FWC Grant Application. One (1) of the identified vessels had been removed by the owner prior to the County's April/May 2022 Derelict Vessel removal event, therefore the County requested that FWC apply the unused grant funds to cover the cost of removing derelict vessel seven (7). Since FWC grants are specifically issued to cover identified vessels and cannot be transferred within the grant, the County's request to receive reimbursement for the removal of Derelict Vessel seven (7) was denied. The County has paid Outlaw Maritime for the removal of six (6) derelict vessels and is currently seeking reimbursement in the amount of \$29,600.00 from FWC for the removal of five (5) vessels identified in Grant Agreement 21255. The removal and disposal costs associated with the vessel not covered by the grant has been paid out of the Florida Boating Fund, Other Contractual Services Account, Act # 13321072-033490 in the amount of \$4,500.

RECOMMENDATION

There is no BCC action needed under this Derelict Vessel Project update.

ATTACHMENTS

IRC DV Removal Map

APPROVED AGENDA ITEM FOR JUNE 7, 2022