



News Release

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First Annual Treasure Coast Waterway Cleanup has Tons of Success

Stuart, FL – (July 31, 2008) — The Marine Industries Association of the Treasure Coast (MIATC) conducted its first Treasure Coast Waterway Cleanup on Saturday, July 19, 2008. Thanks to sponsorship from the Florida Inland Navigation District, MIATC, along with hundreds of volunteers, came out and collected trash along the waterways of Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River Counties this summer.

Despite a muggy 90 degree morning, more than 700 volunteers and 250 boats collaborated to cover over 125 miles of waterways in the region. The cleanup extended to inlet dives at Sebastian and Ft. Pierce, conducted by Operation Blue Streak; and an offshore reef dive, conducted by Florida Oceanographic Society and the Port Salerno Commercial Fishing Dock Authority in Martin County.

“The effort was spectacular,” said Marty Laven, President of the MIATC. “Everyone came away from the event feeling we really made a difference. We made a BIG difference. As of today’s date, we have recorded 6.6 tons of trash and debris collected and disposed of; much of which was recycled. There were several reports of trapped fish and crabs being released successfully. Unfortunately, also reported were a few species that perished in discarded nets.”

Overall 52 fishing nets were retrieved, along with literally miles of fishing line. Some of the more unusual items include 25 anchors retrieved from the Martin County reef dive, a foreign hand gun, a bag of marijuana, a tiki hut, a boat bow, a piñata, several home made toilets, a solar panel, a mattress and box spring, a Christmas tree, several bicycles, street signs and a kitchen sink. Also noted by several cleanup teams was quite a bit of hurricane debris, including insulation, mobile home pieces and window glass. They also reported finding chairs and buckets high up in the mangroves.

Volunteers will be recognized at a Bar-B-Que at the Ft. Pierce Yacht Club on Sunday, August 3rd. “Everyone is anxious to hear the three county totals and we really want to show appreciation for their hard work”, said Laven. “This was a real success and we are already planning for 2009.”

For more information regarding our sponsors or to view pictures visit the MIATC web site at www.miatc.com .For more information please contact Vera Locke, 772-692-7599.

*The Marine Industries Association of the Treasure Coast, Inc. (MIATC) is a not-for-profit trade association representing Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties. MIATC is dedicated to the promotion of pleasure boating and its related industries. The Industry’s economic impact in Florida--**\$18.4 billion annually**— more than citrus and the cruise ship industry combined. Its annual economic impact upon the Treasure Coast **is \$930 million providing approximately 7,600 jobs.***