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i. Permit issued for pilot program from Florida  
Department of Environmental Protection



**Crystal Mansell**

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**From:** City of Sanibel - Administration Dept. [email-list@mysanibel.com]

**Sent:** Sunday, September 09, 2007 5:46 PM

**To:** Crystal Mansell

**Subject:** FDEP Issues Conditional Permit to City of Sanibel for Pilot Algae Management Testing

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**City of Sanibel**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Press Release****Sanibel, Florida - September 9, 2007**

City of Sanibel

News Release - For Immediate Release

September 9, 2007

For More Information

Contact City Manager Judie Zimomra: (239) 472-3700

**FDEP ISSUES CONDITIONAL PERMIT TO  
CITY OF SANIBEL FOR  
PILOT ALGAE MANAGEMENT TESTING**

On Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) issued a Conditional Permit to the City of Sanibel to conduct pilot testing of various equipment to remove algae from Sanibel beaches. This permit is effective through February 15, 2008 and includes 23 conditions and a caveat due to the unique nature of Sanibel's beaches.

According to the Sanibel- Captiva Audubon Society, more than 32 species of shore birds utilize Sanibel's beach habitat. Of these species, nine are classified by the State of Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission as endangered, threatened, or a species of special concern. Sanibel's beaches are also the most active for sea turtle nesting in Lee County.

The FDEP Conditional Permit includes fifteen conditions regarding sea turtle protection, 8 conditions regarding shorebird protection and the caveat specifies that the Permit to conduct pilot testing does not imply further approval after the testing is completed.

To date, the City has received proposals from six vendors who are interested in testing equipment on Sanibel beaches.

"Fortunately, we have enjoyed pristine beaches this summer," said City Manager Judie Zimomra. "This permit positions us to be able to test equipment to manage algae if and when it appears."

[Click here to view a copy of the Permit conditions.](#)

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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
COASTAL CONSTRUCTION CONTROL LINE PROGRAM**

**FIELD PERMIT NUMBER: -DRAFT 8/21/07 802 2080 -LE**

**Project Location:** Tarpon Bay Road Beach between R-149.4 and R-150.5, Donax Street Beach Access between R-161 and R-162.7 and Lighthouse Beach between R-172.7 and 175.5, all in Lee County, City of Sanibel.

**Project Description:** A pilot program to test mechanical equipment for the removal of red drift algae from Tarpon Bay Road Beach (+/- 1000 linear feet), Donax Street Beach (+/- 1500 linear feet) and Lighthouse Beach (+/- 2200 linear feet). Equipment authorized for experimentation under this permit are: 1. John Deere Tractor (model #4520) with TR3 Rake (model #300); 2. Takeuchi TC130 rubber track loader with rake/fork attachment; 3. Barber Surf Rake (model 600HD) with Morooka rubber track dump bed trucks; 4. 4-wheel drive tractor with bay rake, baler and flat bed; 5. 4-wheel drive tractor with Cherrington Model 4700 XL Beachcleaner; 6. 4-wheel drive tractor (John Deere model # 5520 or Kubota model M-900) with rake and front end loader; and, 7. John Deere 544J Loader, Case 580 SL Backhoe/Loader, and Caterpillar 416C Backhoe/Loader.

**Special Permit Conditions for Sea Turtle Protection**

1. Prior to commencement of experimental beach cleaning activities authorized by this permit, a preconstruction conference shall be held at the site among the contractor, the owner or authorized agent, the local avian authority and a staff representative of the Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems to establish an understanding among the parties as to the items specified in the special and general conditions of the permit. Contact Ms. Jennie Cowart at toll free message center (1-877-314-1329) to schedule an appointment. The proposed experimental beach cleaning sites, access and staging areas shall be staked out for the conference.
2. Only existing access sites shall be used. Access sites shall be controlled to restrict access at night and between construction events. Construction fences shall be constructed as necessary to protect remnant beach dune vegetation and property. Fences shall remain in place until the construction authorized by this permit is complete. The temporary construction fence locations and construction shall be subject to approval from the staff representative. Existing dune vegetation shall be disturbed only to the minimum extent necessary for completion of the authorized work. All vegetated areas disturbed by construction activities shall be re-vegetated with native salt-tolerant plant species.
3. No activities shall be conducted seaward of or below the mean high water line onto sovereignty owned lands of the State of Florida.
4. Burial or storage of any collected abiotic debris is prohibited. Burial of biotic debris (consisting primarily of red drift algae) is prohibited within the dune system or sea turtle nesting habitat. Disposal of accumulated debris from the beach must occur immediately after cleaning has been performed but must not result in the net removal of sandy material from the beach.
5. Operators of experimental beach cleaning equipment shall avoid all native, salt tolerant dune vegetation by a minimum of ten (10) feet.
6. To the degree possible, experimental beach cleaning activities shall be conducted outside the marine turtle nesting season (May 1 through October 31). Work may occur on the nesting beach (seaward of existing coastal armoring structures or the dune crest) under the following additional conditions.
7. During the marine turtle-nesting season (May 1 to October 31), experimental beach cleaning activities shall be confined to daylight hours (sunrise to sunset).

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8. During marine turtle nesting season (May 1 to October 31), the permittee is responsible for ensuring that a daily marine turtle nest survey, protection, and monitoring program is conducted throughout the permitted beach cleaning area. Such surveys and associated conservation measures shall be completed after sunrise and prior to the commencement of any experimental beach cleaning. The marine turtle survey, protection, and monitoring program shall be conducted only by individuals possessing appropriate expertise in the protocol being followed and a valid F.A.C. Rule 68E-1 Permit issued by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).
9. In the event that experimental beach cleaning occurs prior to completion of the marine turtle nest survey, protection, and monitoring program, experimental beach cleaning shall not occur landward of the wrack or debris line on that beach until 65 days have passed or after November 30, whichever is earlier. The permittee shall contact the Marine Turtle Permit Holder prior to reinitiating experimental beach cleaning in that area.
10. Any nests deposited in an area not requiring relocation for conservation purposes (as determined by the marine turtle permit holder) shall be left in situ. The marine turtle permit holder shall install an on-beach marker at any nest site and a secondary marker located at a point as far landward as possible to ensure that future location of the nest will be possible should the on-beach marker be lost. A series of stakes and survey ribbon or string shall be installed to establish an area of 3 feet radius surrounding the nest. Nest sites shall be inspected daily to ensure nest markers have not been removed.
11. All nests left in place shall be marked with a circle of tape or string having a radius of at least three (3) feet, centered at the approximated location of the clutch. An additional marker shall be placed at the base of the dune or seawall to ensure that future location of the nests will be possible should the on-beach markings be lost. No experimental cleaning equipment is allowed inside of this circle; however, careful removal of material by hand is allowed. All equipment operators should be briefed on the types of marking utilized and should be able to easily contact the individual responsible for the nest survey to verify any questionable areas.
12. In the event that on-beach nest markers are lost for any reason, including vandalism or high water conditions, no experimental beach cleaning shall be conducted until the marine turtle permit holder identifies the nest and restores the markers. In the event that the nest cannot be found and may have been lost during high water conditions, the permittee shall contact FWC staff at (850) 922-4330 to determine if experimental beach cleaning can resume. All marine turtle protection conditions shall remain in effect unless specifically waived in writing by FWC.
13. Experimental beach cleaning shall be accomplished to cause minimal disturbance to the beach such that ruts are not formed or sand compaction levels are not significantly increased above background levels.
14. In the event a nest is disturbed or uncovered during beach cleaning activities, the permittee shall cease all work and immediately contact the person(s) responsible for marine turtle conservation measures within the project area. If a nest(s) can not be safely avoided during construction, all activity within the affected project area shall be delayed until complete hatching and emergence of the nest.
15. Permittee shall submit quarterly progress reports and a final project report. Reports shall describe the results of experimental activities, provide locations and quantities of seaweed removal and assess impacts on project access, staging and cleaning areas in comparison to non-cleaned beaches, including the changes in beach topography, vegetation, soil compaction and sea turtle nesting.

### Conservation Recommendations for Shorebird Protection

1. Shorebird surveys should be conducted by trained, dedicated individuals using accepted, appropriate ecological survey procedures (for example, see "Breeding Season Population Census Techniques for Seabirds and Colonial Waterbirds Throughout North America" at URL: <http://www.mp2-pwrc.usgs.gov/cwb/manual/>).
2. The shorebird nesting season generally is 1 April – 1 September, but some nesting may occur through September. In addition, the imperiled snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) may nest as early as February along the west coast and panhandle of Florida.
3. Nesting season surveys should begin on April 1 (or February 1 in snowy plover habitat) or 45 days prior to construction commencement, whichever is later, and be conducted daily throughout the construction period.
4. Within the project area, the permittee should establish a site-specific buffer around any location where shorebirds have been engaged in courtship or nesting behavior, or around areas where piping plovers occur or winter migrants congregate in significant numbers. Any and all construction activities, including movement of vehicles, should be prohibited in the buffer zone.
5. The width of the buffer zone should be increased if birds appear agitated or disturbed by construction or other activities in adjacent areas.
6. Designated buffer zones must be posted with clearly marked signs around the perimeter. These markings should be maintained until nesting is completed or terminated, the chicks fledge, or piping plovers or winter migrants depart.
7. No construction activities or stockpiling of equipment should be allowed within the buffer area.
8. In addition with the above mentioned conditions, the permittee shall adhere to the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the State Endangered and Threatened Species Act, Chapter 372.072, Florida Statute.

### Caveat

By approving this permit request, the Department does not endorse the authorized mechanical seaweed removal techniques, and does not in any way imply future approval of a beach cleaning permit for any of these techniques.