

Loxahatchee River - Lake Worth Creek

AQUATIC PRESERVE

"Explored on canoe or kayak, the wild and scenic waters can easily transport an open mind back in time to the good old days of Trapper Nelson."

Laura Herren, Aquatic Preserve Manager

Key Accomplishments

- Staff involvement in biological and water quality monitoring conducted by Loxahatchee River Control District and South Florida Water Management District maintains an ongoing and improved awareness of the health of the waters of the aquatic preserve.
- Conducted permit reviews for several large dredging projects within the Loxahatchee River in order to ensure minimal environmental impacts occur while providing for improved navigational capacity for recreational boaters.



Five water quality monitoring stations have been established in the Loxahatchee River by the Loxahatchee River District's WildPine Ecological Laboratory.

Project Spotlight

Kitching Creek Restoration

Kitching Creek is a major tributary to the Loxahatchee River that traverses Jonathan Dickinson State Park and empties into the federally



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designated Wild and Scenic Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River. Kitching Creek has been impacted and redirected by land development activities which ultimately resulted in lower groundwater levels and degradation of natural wetlands. Tidal effects at Jupiter Inlet combined with reduced freshwater flows to the Northwest Fork have resulted in saltwater progression upstream. This project

redirects flows to Kitching Creek, increases the flow to the Loxahatchee for habitat restoration, raises groundwater

levels, restores degraded wetlands, and reduces nutrient loads reaching the North and Northwest Forks of the Loxahatchee. Partners include Martin County, South Florida Water Management District, and Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

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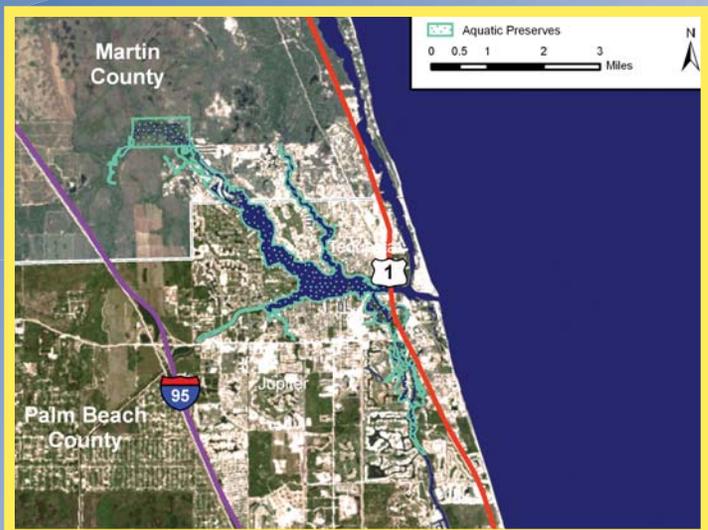
Loxahatchee River - Lake Worth Creek Aquatic Preserve

Location:

Southeast Florida in Martin and Palm Beach counties

Acreege:

9,000 acres of sovereign submerged lands



Local Contact:

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Trapper Nelson's, aka Tarzan of the Loxahatchee, homestead and zoological park was built along the narrow, scenic Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River in the 1950's.



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Oyster reefs help to improve water quality in the Loxahatchee River.



The federally threatened Johnson's seagrass is found in the central embayment of the Loxahatchee River.



The Jupiter Inlet lighthouse was completed in 1860.

Aquatic Preserve Facts:

- Loxahatchee River translates to "The Creek of the Turtle".
- Designated as the Loxahatchee River - Lake Worth Creek Aquatic Preserve in 1970, the aquatic preserve includes the remains of Trapper Nelson's Wildlife Zoo.
- The Loxahatchee River - Lake Worth Creek Aquatic Preserve includes the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River that was designated as the first of two Wild and Scenic Rivers in Florida.
- The upper reaches is composed of freshwater and tidal marsh riverine communities.
- Near and within the estuary, mangrove communities line the shoreline and submerged resources include tidal flats, seagrass beds, and oyster bars.
- Over 70% of commercially important fish and shellfish species rely on estuaries at some stage of their lives.
- Boating (especially kayaking and canoeing), waterskiing, recreational and commercial fishing, wildlife observation and photography are a few of the most popular activities in the aquatic preserve.



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