

WEST COAST INLAND NAVIGATION DISTRICT



TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE COMMERCIAL, RECREATIONAL, AND ECOLOGICAL VALUES OF DISTRICT WATERWAYS. Originally developed to facilitate commercial shipping to and along the Southwest Florida coast, today the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway's function is a blend of recreational and commercial use. Predominantly used today for cruising, sailing, fishing, and eco-exploring activities.

REFERENCE NOAA CHARTS 11425, 11427 & 1146 FOR NAVIGATIONAL AND POSITIONAL INFORMATION

PASSES TO THE GULF OF MEXICO



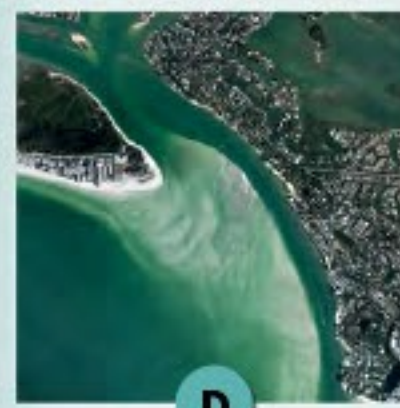
Anna Maria Pass



Longboat Pass



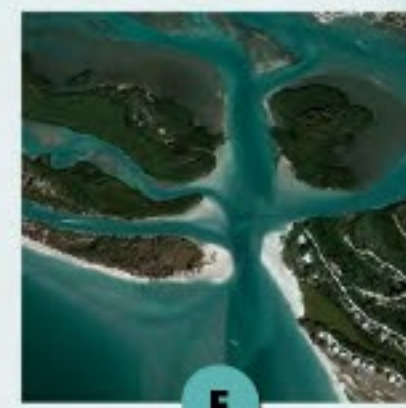
New Pass Sarasota



Big Sarasota Pass



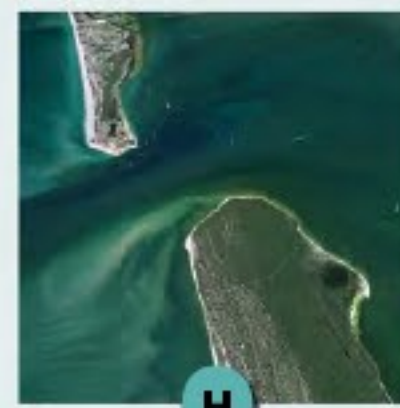
Venice Inlet



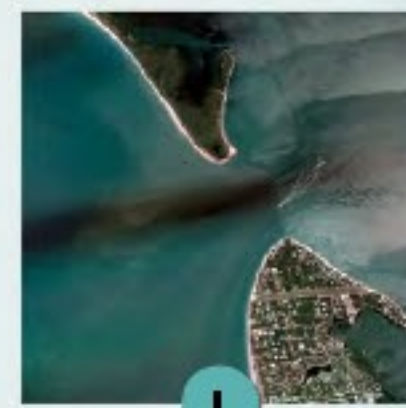
Stump Pass



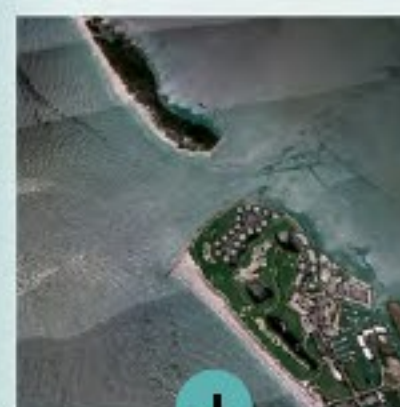
Gasparilla Pass



Boca Grande Pass



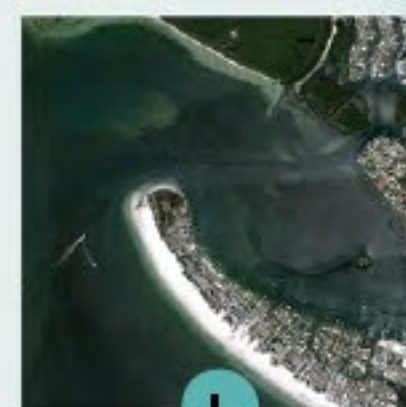
Captiva Pass



Redfish Pass



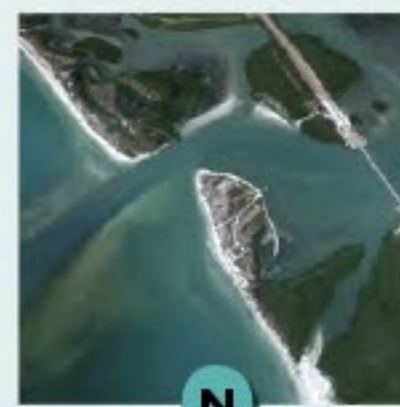
Blind Pass



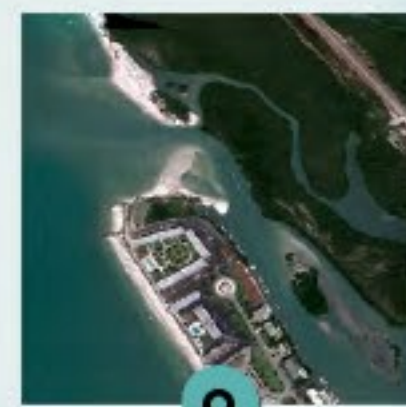
Mantanzas Pass



Big Carlos Pass



New Pass Lee



Big Hickory Pass

INLETS

The West Coast Inland Navigation District continually studies the 17 passes/inlets within its jurisdiction to develop management mechanisms for inlets that are not maintained as federal projects. The federally authorized projects within the District are Longboat Pass, New Pass (Sarasota), Venice Inlet, Boca Grande Pass, and Matanzas Pass. Passes that do not fall under WCIND or federal management generally are not actively maintained, but some study and strategic planning/maintenance have been associated with Big Sarasota Pass, Redfish Pass, Stump Pass, Blind Pass, Big Carlos Pass, New Pass (Lee) and Big Hickory Pass. The challenge in maintaining the integrity of a pass system involves resource viability and character, navigability, and the relationship to the coastal system. Inlets that are not maintained to any established criteria tend to be associated with adjacent eroded beaches.

WCIND strongly recommends obtaining as much information as is available through charts, guide maps or local boater knowledge to aid you in safely navigating in Southwest Florida waters. Inlet channels are often unstable in terms of migration and depth. During storm events of high wave energy and wind activity, they may be subjected to larger shifts in orientation. These dynamic shifts could mean that the best water for navigation is completely different after a storm.

REMEMBER: Tides, weather and other seasonal conditions affect navigability at inlets/passages. The shoaling of the outer channel creates inadequate depths for navigation that can result in running aground. Always check the U.S. Coast Guard's Local Notice to Mariners for up-to-date navigational information.

200 East Miami Avenue, Venice, FL 34285 Phone: 941.485.9402 Fax: 941.485.8394 Email: admin@wcind.net

FLORIDA WATERWAYS

- 1 Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway
- 2 Gulf Intracoastal Waterway
- 3 West Coast Intracoastal Waterway
- 4 Port Canaveral Lock and Canal
- 5 Okaloosa Waterway
- 6 Carrabelle to Anclote
- 7 Apalachicola
- 8 St. Johns River
- 9 Suwannee River
- 10 Kissimmee River
- 11 Cross Florida Barge Canal (incomplete)



SARASOTA



CHARLOTTE

LEE



WCIND
WEST COAST INLAND NAVIGATION DISTRICT

The West Coast Inland Navigation District (WCIND) is a multicounty special taxing body, covering Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte, and Lee counties, encompassing an estimated 1.5 million people. The district plays a pivotal role in the waterway projects that promote safe navigation from the open water of the Gulf of Mexico or the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIW) to the systems of secondary waterways, and supports boating, fishing, and beach-oriented projects.

WCIND supports county and local governments in maintaining and enhancing:

- public navigation channels and inlets
- boating access facilities
- waterfront parks
- piers and special structures

Due to reduced federal funding, local sponsors of the U.S. inland navigation system must now carry more of the cost of maintaining those systems. Given this, WCIND currently assesses less than 20 percent of its statutorily allowable millage rate to accomplish its mission. The member counties of the district collaborate closely to benefit from the resources afforded through a regional approach.



- ## RESOURCES
- MANATEE COUNTY** (www.manatee.org)
Natural Resources
Parks & Recreation
Sheriff's Office
941.742.5923
941.742.5923
941.742.5911
- SARASOTA COUNTY** (www.sarasota.org)
Natural Resources
Parks & Recreation
Sheriff's Office
941.861.5000
941.861.5000
941.861.5000
- CHARLOTTE COUNTY** (www.charlottecountyfl.com)
Natural Resources
Parks & Recreation
Sheriff's Office
941.631.3220
941.743.1200
941.631.2101
- LEE COUNTY** (www.lee-county.com)
Natural Resources
Parks & Recreation
Sheriff's Office
238.533.8109
238.533.7275
238.427.1000
- U.S. COAST GUARD SEARCH AND RESCUE** (www.uscg.mil)
VH Channel - 16 Search and rescue assistance 911
FL Marine Band (Lee & Charlotte Counties) 238.533.5754
Coast Guard (Sarasota County) 941.742.1261
U.S. COAST GUARD BOATING SAFETY (www.uscgboating.org)
Boating Foundation
Florida Wildlife Conservation (www.flwildlife.com)
Saltwater fishing and/or shellfish harvesting regulations: 888.242.9922
FL Marine Band (Lee & Charlotte Counties) 238.533.5754
Enforcement of water fishing boating laws/regulations, and encourages reporting of dead, injured or tagged manatees, sea turtles or other wildlife 888.404.FWCC-Call: FWCC/FWCC
FLORIDA REPT TIDE STATUS REPORTS 866.300.9399
FLORIDA SEA GRANT EXTENSION PROGRAM (www.flseagrant.org)
Provides educational information on marine and estuarine resources in the area:
Charlotte County 941.764.4340
Lee County 238.533.5718
Manatee County 941.723.4524
941.388.4441
MOORE MARINE LABORATORY (www.moorelab.org)
A marine research and education facility
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE (www.nws.gov)
24 HOUR WEATHER AND MARINE FORECAST 813.645.2526
TIDE AND CURRENT DATA (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov>)



INLAND WATERWAY SYMBOLS AND NAVIGATIONAL BUOYS



Gold icon indicates Intracoastal Waterway



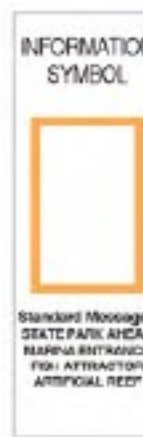
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Standard Message: ROCK DANGER SHALLOWS AREA DANGER DANGER DANGER



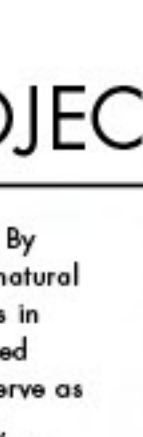
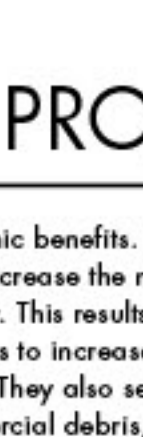
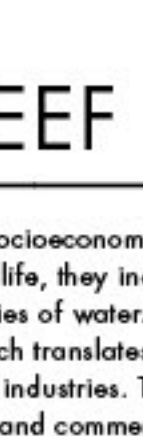
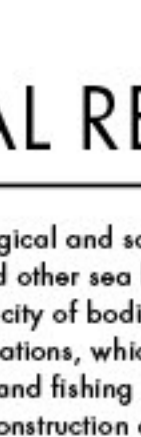
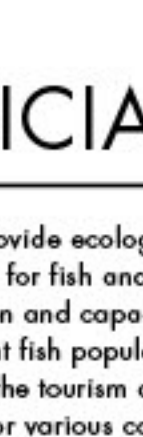
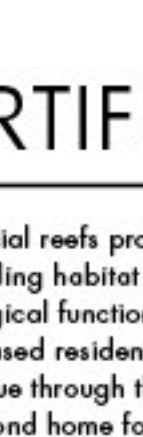
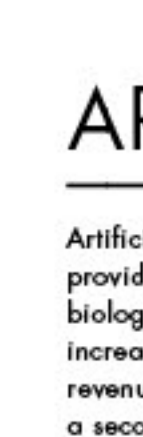
Standard Message: SLOW TO WAKE IN AREA HAZARDOUS SPEED NO TRACE ELS SPEED CONTROLLED AREA



Standard Message: STATE MAR. INCID. HAZARDOUS ENTRANCE FOR ARTIFICIAL REEF



Manatee Protection Slow Speed Zone Markers



WCIND HISTORY



1939

Feasibility study of inland waterway system completed by USACE



1947

WCIND created to act as the local interest in securing resources, assets, and property necessary to achieve construction



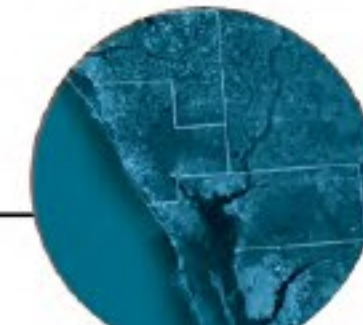
1960

Dredging begins - northward from the Caloosahatchee River toward Boca Grande



1967

Completion Ceremony held in Venice to celebrate the completion of the waterways linkage



1977

Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties voluntarily withdraw from WCIND



1998

The state legislature requires WCIND to coordinate with Florida Department of Natural Resources

Following a feasibility study by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in 1939, it was recommended to expand the intracoastal system to include a route from the Caloosahatchee River north to Anclote Key. With the outbreak of WWII, progress was halted until 1945, when Congress authorized construction of a channel 152 miles long, 100 feet wide, and 9 feet deep. The waterway was intended to link natural deep-water sections of bays through a series of man-made channels, providing safe passage for commercial goods, and access to commercial fishing grounds. Dredging began in June 1960—northward from the Caloosahatchee River toward Boca Grande—and was completed in 1967.

In 1989, WCIND was authorized to participate in even more waterway-related activities, including the promotion of inlet management, and the posting and maintenance of channel markers and manatee protection speed zone signs. We've also initiated programs to encourage boating safety and environmental stewardship through distribution of boater and waterway guides and resource maps.



BE SEAGRASS SAFE

Seagrass scarring is caused when boats enter shallow waters, causing the propeller to come into contact with seagrasses. This creates damage as the propeller slashes into the bottom, where crucial seagrass root systems are located. Recovery and growth of seagrasses in these scarred areas can take years, and if the damage is repeated, the seagrass bed may never completely recover. Scarring also leaves seagrass beds vulnerable to storms and other causes of erosion. According to the Florida Museum of Natural History, over 30,000 acres of seagrass have been scarred by boat propellers.

AVOID

Whenever possible, avoid seagrass beds and utilize navigation channels or deeper water while under power.



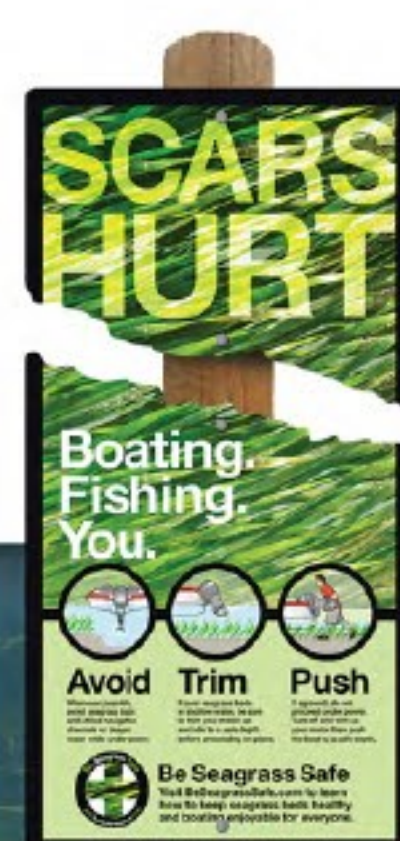
TRIM

If over seagrass beds in shallow water, be sure to trim your motor up and idle to a safe depth before proceeding on plane.



PUSH

If aground, do not proceed under power. Turn off and trim your motor up, then push the boat to a safe depth.



Aerial view of seagrass prop scar damage in Pine Island Sound

WATERWAY ECOLOGY

Some of the most beautiful and unspoiled coastlands in Florida are found along the waterway of the West Coast Inland Navigation District. Its southern reaches house an ecological paradise where marine and terrestrial species alike are cradled by countless coves and bays, inlets, and island nursery nooks. The WCIND makes a point of emphasizing the ecological aspects of the waterway and, wherever it can, cooperates with research efforts to further environmental understanding and protection. Some 90 percent of District-managed spoil islands, once condemned as "eyesores," are now covered with vegetation and provide additional habitat for a host of wildlife. The waters of the bays, inlets, and sounds are still a fisherman's paradise along this west coast "highway," offering endless opportunities for the seasoned angler and beginners alike. Few places in the United States can compare with the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway for scenic splendor, naturalness, and the timeless wonders of sun, sea, and sky. Birds are particularly prevalent along the waterway, even within its most populous areas. Wildlife sanctuaries dot the 150-mile route, and a number of WCIND spoil islands and mainland sites have been placed under sanctuary protection in cooperation with ecology-minded groups such as the Audubon Society. The cruising yachtsman will see herons, ibis, egrets, cormorants, brown and white pelicans, roseate spoonbills, seagulls, and occasionally an osprey or bald eagle—often occupying the same sandbar or roosting island. The ICW navigational markers are favored perch sites for cormorants, which have to dry their wings in the sun after diving. Overhead power cables and cell towers are other favorite spots for many species of birds to perch and observe their surroundings.



HOW CAN YOU PROTECT MANATEES?

- Wear polarized sunglasses while operating a boat. Polarized lenses make it easier to see things under the surface.
- Pole, paddle or use a trolling motor when over shallow seagrass beds.
- Slow down and observe all manatee speed zones and caution areas.
- While swimming or diving, do not approach or chase a manatee.
- Don't pollute. Pick up trash such as fishing lines and plastic bags.

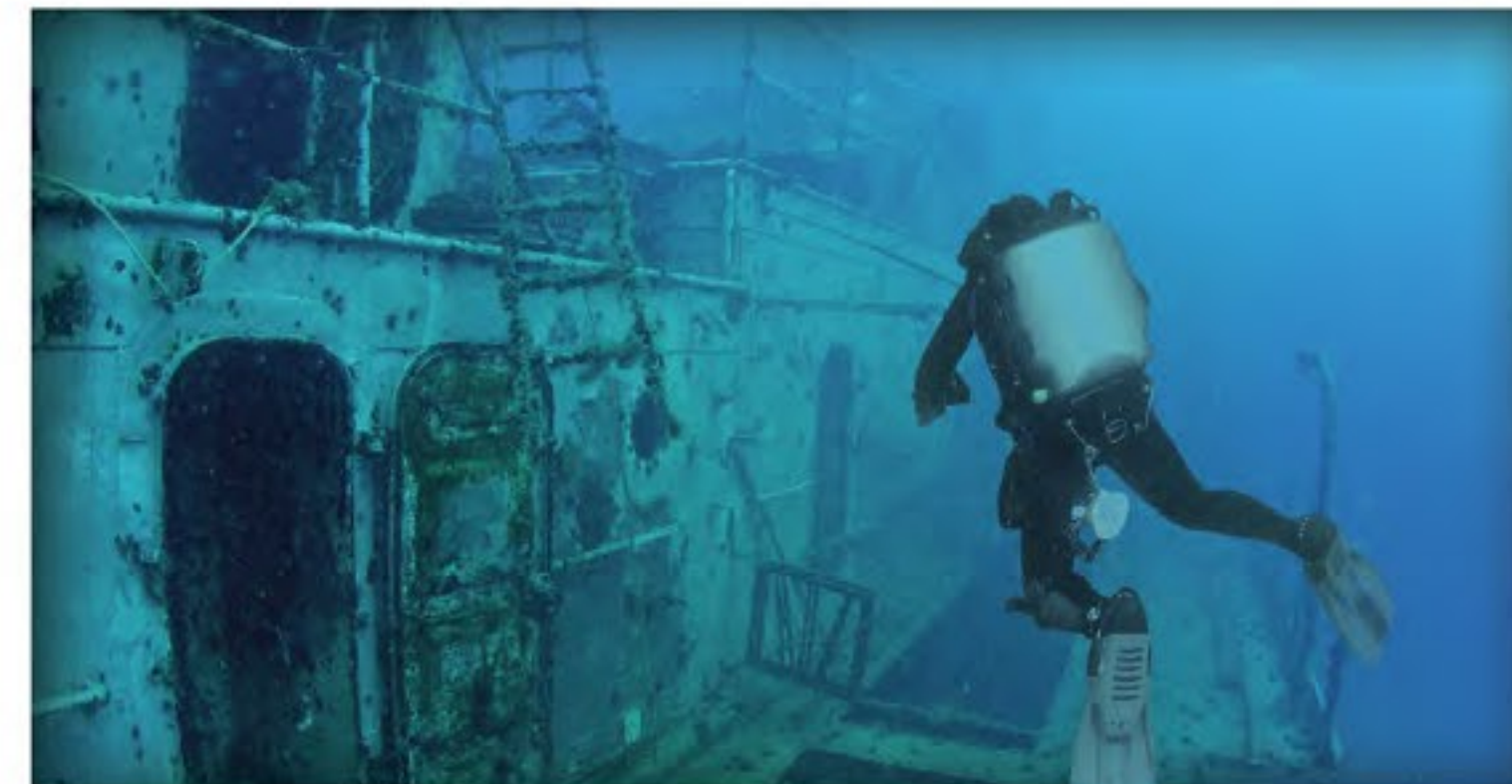


ARTIFICIAL REEF PROJECTS

Artificial reefs provide ecological and socioeconomic benefits. By providing habitat for fish and other sea life, they increase the natural biological function and capacity of bodies of water. This results in increased resident fish populations, which translates to increased revenue through the tourism and fishing industries. They also serve as a second home for various construction and commercial debris, including broken culverts, bridge demolitions, boxcars and retired vessels. Many items once considered trash are given a second chance.



Once destined for the landfills, they now offer habitat for sea life and a destination for divers and fishermen, all while aiding in the preservation and stabilization of the coastline and water quality throughout the bays and nearshore ecosystems.



DIVER SAFETY



The Florida "Divers-Down Flag" law requires that scuba divers and snorkelers display a flag whenever they are in the water.

- The divers-down flag is a square or rectangular red flag (at least 20 x 24 inches if displayed on a vessel; at least 12 x 12 inches if displayed on a tow buoy) with a white diagonal stripe and with wire or other stiffener to hold it unfurled and extended.
- In addition, a blue and white International Code Flag A (or alpha flag) may be displayed on dive vessels on federally controlled waters. This flag indicates that a vessel is involved in a diving activity. The alpha flag does not satisfy requirements of Florida state law.
- Boaters must make reasonable efforts to stay 300 feet away from dive flags in open water and 100 feet away in rivers, inlets or navigation channels.
- Boaters approaching divers-down flags closer than 300 feet in open water and 100 feet in rivers, inlets, or navigation channels must proceed no faster than is necessary to maintain headway and steerage (idle speed).



REEF RESOURCES

SARASOTA COUNTY: www.sarasota.wateratlas.usf.edu/

LEE COUNTY: www.leereefs.org or <https://www.leegov.com/naturalresources/marine/ArtificialReefs>

MANATEE COUNTY: <http://www.floridagofishing.com/reefs/cw-reefs-manatee-county.html>

CHARLOTTE COUNTY: <http://charlotte.ifas.ufl.edu/seagrass/sg-02a-ArtificialReefBrochure.pdf>

REEF ETIQUETTE



- Approach a reef area slowly when other boats are in the area.
- Try to make contact with other boaters before approaching a reef site that is being used.
- Remember, when a dive flag is displayed all vessels must make a reasonable effort to maintain a minimum distance of 300 feet.
- The reefs cover a large area. Coordinates given are to help to locate the reefs. Watching the depth sounder will help you locate a piece of the reef for your enjoyment. Share the reefs!
- Remember, reef location buoys often are placed in the center of the permitted area, not directly on top of reef material.