

## **UME Weekly Update: 02/16/2022**

### [Video Update](#)

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Unified Command is continuing the supplemental feeding trial for manatees at the Temporary Field Response Station in Brevard County. Staff continue to offer supplemental forage at the field site in ways that prevent manatees from associating people with food. As of February 16, approximately 20,000 pounds of romaine and butterleaf lettuce is being offered weekly, which is supplied by Florida growers. Since January 20, 2022 (when manatee feeding began), about 50,000 pounds of mixed produce, most of which has been paid for by public donations to the Fish & Wildlife Foundation of Florida has been provided.

Temperatures in the area are fluctuating and so are the number of manatees observed at the Temporary Field Response Station. Over the last week, there have been as few as 60 and as many as at least 600 manatees. Staff are monitoring water quality weekly to identify any changes that may be nutrients and chlorophyll-a associated with the trial effort so that feeding and clean-up protocols can be adjusted if needed.

The need for manatee rescues remains high and responding to manatees in distress continues to be a high priority. Manatee mortalities continue to increase, and staff are working diligently to collect and examine the carcasses. The FWC and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service greatly appreciate the dedicated efforts of our many partners within the Manatee Rescue & Rehabilitation Partnership. Public reports about distressed manatees to the FWC's Wildlife Alert hotline are also appreciated and allow trained, expert staff to determine the best course of action. If you see an injured, sick, orphaned or dead manatee, please contact Wildlife Alert at 888-404-FWCC (3922).

### **Statewide Rescues:**

2/9 - A Hubbs team reported an emaciated adult female manatee in Satellite Beach. The manatee was rescued by a team consisting of personnel from FWC, Brevard Zoo, Hubbs and the University of Florida and transported to SeaWorld for rehabilitation.

2/10 - While searching Port Everglades for distressed manatees, an adult female swimming abnormally was reported by staff conducting surveys. She was rescued by FWC, ZooTampa and Broward Sheriff staff, the manatee was transported to SeaWorld for rehabilitation.

2/11 - A grounded, thin, unresponsive manatee was found in shallow water on the discharge side of the Cape Canaveral Clean Energy Center. The manatee passed away shortly after the rescue.

### **Statewide Releases:**

2/14 - A male manatee rescued as an orphaned calf in November of 2019 in Anna Maria Sound was released at the Manatee Viewing Center in Apollo Beach

2/15 - A female manatee rescued in Boca Ciega Bay in July of 2021 for signs of red tide exposure was released at the Manatee Viewing Center in Apollo Beach.

2/15 - A female manatee rescued as an orphaned calf in Pinellas County in October of 2018 was released at the Manatee Viewing Center in Apollo Beach.