

UME Weekly Update: 02/23/2022

[Video Update](#)

This past week, a large-scale rescue operation was organized by our marine mammal response team in Port St. John with the goal of rescuing numerous distressed manatees reported and monitored earlier in the week in and around the Cape Canaveral Energy Center site. Many of the reported cases were thin listing adult manatees, which included several that were excessively buoyant. Weather conditions and other factors made these rescues difficult, but the team was able to capture four manatees. Many thanks to our staff and partners for making this rescue effort successful, including FWC biologists and Law Enforcement officers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), SeaWorld, Clearwater Marine Aquarium Research Institute, Brevard Zoo, Volusia County, and Jacksonville Zoo.

The need for manatee rescues remains high and responding to manatees in distress continues to be a high priority. Staff are also working hard to respond to manatee mortalities by collecting and examining carcasses. The FWC and USFWS 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 essential to 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).

The FWC and the USFWS Unified Command are also continuing the supplemental feeding trial for manatees at the Temporary Field Response Station. Staff continue to offer supplemental forage at the field site in ways that prevent manatees from associating people with food and in ways that prevent negative impacts to migration patterns and habitat.

Statewide Rescues:

2/16 - Two thin adult female manatees that were swimming while leaning to one side were rescued from Port St. John and transported to Sea World for rehabilitation.

2/17 - A thin adult male manatee that was swimming while leaning to one side was rescued from Port St. John and transported to Jacksonville Zoo for rehabilitation.

2/17 - An adult female manatee with watercraft wounds was reported by the public in the Weeki Wachee River. The manatee was rescued and transported to ZooTampa. Unfortunately, the manatee had to be euthanized due to its grave condition and untreatable injuries.

2/18 - A thin adult male manatee that was swimming while leaning to one side was rescued from Port St. John and transported to Sea World for rehabilitation.

2/21 - An adult manatee trapped behind a water control structure in Homestead was freed by South Florida Water Management District staff and allowed to safely swim into Biscayne Bay.

Statewide Releases:

2/16 - A manatee calf rescued in 2018 was rehabbed for two and a half years at Miami Seaquarium (MSQ) and released in Port Everglades. After not being able to feed on her own in the wild, she underwent further rehabilitation at MSQ, SeaWorld, and Disney. On 2/16, she was released in Blue Springs, a location that will be easier for her to learn to forage on her own.

2/22 - An adult female manatee rescued in October 2021 for watercraft-related injuries was rehabilitated at Sea World and released in Crystal River.