

UME Weekly Update: 3/23/2022

[Video Update](#)

The number of manatees at the Temporary Field Response Station continues to decline as ambient water temperatures rise. This week staff regularly documented between 30 and 50 manatees at the site. FWC and the USFWS Unified Command continue to provide lettuce to the remaining manatees but the feeding trial is likely in the final weeks for this winter season as manatees continue to disperse from warm-water sites.

As manatees naturally disperse from warm-water sites, people are more likely to see them while enjoying Florida's waterways. 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 the FWC's Wildlife Alert at 888-404-FWCC (3922). There are a variety of other ways people can help manatees, especially when out on the water. Read our recent [news release](#) for more information.

Next steps in the overall UME response are being discussed, but staff will continue efforts to help manatees throughout the year. Staff, volunteers, and our many partners within the Manatee Rescue & Rehabilitation Partnership continue working tirelessly to rescue and care for manatees in need of help. Recovery efforts continue as staff collect and examine carcasses to add to our understanding of this ongoing mortality event.

This week the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Martha Williams toured the Indian River Lagoon and visited the Temporary Field Response Station, complementing partners and staff on their efforts.

Statewide Rescues:

3/16 - Staff responded to multiple reports of an excessively buoyant and listing manatee in the Welaka Springs area. The adult female was rescued and transported to SeaWorld for rehabilitation.

3/17 - The FWC received a report of an unresponsive adult female manatee that was grounded in shallow water in Blue Springs State Park. The manatee was rescued and transported to SeaWorld but died. A necropsy determined the manatee died from intestinal trauma from an ingested fishing line.

3/17 - Staff received a report of a beached manatee in Jacksonville. The adult manatee was rescued, received emergency care for one night at Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, and was transported to SeaWorld for further rehabilitation the following day.

3/20 - An adult male manatee was reported to be showing signs of distress in a lagoon in the St. Johns River. The manatee was rescued and transported to SeaWorld for rehabilitation.

Statewide Releases:

There were no releases this week.