

## Section 18 HCP and Protected Species Training

### Purpose

County staff, contractors, monitoring personnel, horseback riders, commercial fishermen, north beach drivers and many other user groups access county beaches for work or play. Many procedures and policies contained in the HCP differ from those that were previously in effect. Comprehensive orientation and training classes are needed to ensure that everyone involved in compliance of the HCP are familiar with implementation and daily operating procedures.

### Relevant ITP Condition - G.2.o.

- o. HCP and Protected Species Training.** “Within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this Permit, the Permittee shall develop and provide for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service review and approval a training program. Such program shall provide information regarding applicable HCP conditions and Permit terms and local ordinances necessary to assist individual members of the public in understanding beach driving restrictions provided pursuant to the Permit. The Permittee shall implement use of the HCP and Protected Species Training Program within two (2) months of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approval. The Permittee may amend upon review and approval of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.”

### HCP Performance During 2012

**Implementation:** In September 2007 St. Johns County submitted to USFWS the required HCP and Protected Species Training procedure. The approved workshops include training for Horseback riders, North Beach 4x4 drivers and Commercial Fisherman. Training is done so through group workshops or online programming. Members of the horseback riding community and the North Beach 4x4 drivers primarily use the online program while commercial fishermen attend class training. The online program requires the user to follow a step-by-step plan that guides them through the permitting process. The training provides details of the HCP/ITP, how to identify protected species including other listed species not covered on the permit, policy and procedure, and requires the viewer to complete a quiz at the conclusion of the training. The quiz is used as a tool to reinforce what the viewer has just learned. Quizzes are automatically sent via email and a standard response is provided to the permittee asking them to supply their signed application in order to receive their permit. Horseback riding permits are sent in the mail while north beach 4x4 drivers and Commercial fishermen must bring their vehicle with an annual pass affixed to the windshield and state issued fishing license to the Habitat Conservation Section office in order to obtain their permit. Coastal construction contractors and their employees are still required to attend training at the Recreation and Parks office. Refer to Section 14 for more information regarding coastal construction permits.

**Assessment:** A total of 126 individuals completed HCP and Protected Species Training during 2012. See table 15 below.

Table 15. List of HCP Training Classes 2012

<b>HCP Training Dates &amp; Attendees</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>No. Of Attendees</b>
February 11	Toll Operators	45
April 14	Sea Turtle Patrol volunteers	47
April 16	Sea Turtle Patrol volunteer (make up session)	4
April 17	County staff/Contractors	22
August 14	Commercial Fishermen	8
<b>Totals</b>		<b>126</b>

**Program Improvements:** No program improvements are scheduled at this time.