



## DISCOVER FLORIDA'S OCEANS: 10 YEARS OF SEA LIFE SOLUTIONS



Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute's (HSWRI) Discover Florida's Oceans (DFO) funds supported collaborative research and community outreach to address critically important conservation initiatives, including:

- Sea turtle conservation and research at the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge and North Atlantic coast of Florida with the University of Central Florida
- Florida Manatee Reproductive Biology Project with SeaWorld Orlando, University of Florida and University of Central Florida
- Florida Marine Fisheries Enhancement Initiative with the Wildlife Foundation of Florida (WFF, citizen support organization of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Committee, FWC)
- Photo-identification studies and stranding investigations of endangered North Atlantic right whales with WFF and FWC
- Safe boating and angling guides with WFF and FWC
- Protection of shorebird nesting sites with WFF and FWC

HSWRI's activities with cetaceans of East Central Florida include stranding response, disentanglement, and population surveys. Over the past decade, regular aerial and boat surveys by HSWRI scientists have documented seasonal dolphin movements, population structure, habitat use, and determined dolphin group size and composition. Through its stranding response activities, HSWRI has conducted ongoing research into causes of dolphin Unusual Mortality Events — most recently, two concurrent events that impacted cetaceans in the region from 2013-2015. The apparent cause of one die-off was a cetacean morbillivirus, a contagious viral infection, but HSWRI scientists continue to search for the cause of the second event, which also affected manatees and pelicans.



Discover Florida's Oceans (DFO) funds also support the work of HSWRI's Marine Mammal Stranding rescue and research program. This work in Florida would not be possible without our incredible partners (reverse). For example, during an Unusual Mortality Event in 2013 HSWRI responded to a live bottlenose dolphin stranded in shallow waters. Working closely with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries, HSWRI and SeaWorld Orlando's Animal Rescue Team stabilized and transported the dolphin to the park's marine mammal rehabilitation facility. At the time of its rescue, the dolphin was in critical condition, weighing only about 350 pounds, and suffering from a respiratory disease. Over nearly five months of rehabilitation the dolphin gained 140 pounds and his respiratory disease resolved.

Prior to his return to the ocean, HSWRI scientists attached a high-frequency radio tag to the dolphin's dorsal fin. The tag allowed HSWRI to monitor his movements, feeding and migratory patterns, insight which informs resource management to the benefit of all wild dolphin populations.

HSWRI's team of 'first responders' also works with other members of the NOAA Marine Mammal Stranding Network to help marine mammals entangled in recreational fishing gear, including research and community outreach designed to prevent harmful interactions between marine mammals and boating and fishing enthusiasts.



We recognize the critical importance of ocean science literacy as a foundation for competing in a rapidly changing global economy. Funds from the DFO license plate have supported dozens of educational and community outreach programs and events throughout Florida each year. Over the past 10 years HSWRI has developed middle school curriculum on marine animals, participated in school science fairs and festivals, given presentations on best practices for recreational fishing and boating, provided hands-on training and research experiences for interns and college students and given presentations at community events in multiple locations throughout the state.

**FLORIDA OCEAN**  
Discover Florida's Oceans

**CHANGE THE WORLD.  
AT LEAST 2/3 OF IT.**

One small investment can create a wave of change. We would like to extend a special thanks to all of the Florida residents who have shown their support for Florida's special ocean and coastal lifestyle by purchasing the Discover Florida's Oceans specialty license plate.

**Catch the wave. Change the world.**

### A Message from the Chairman

Since its inception in 2004, the Discover Florida's Oceans (DFO) license plate has raised \$3,557,723 for scientific research, conservation and education projects to be completed in the state, with no tax dollars being expended. Plate revenues have advanced Florida scientific research and local conservation via the Hubbs Florida Oceans Fund (a subsidiary of the Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute, a 501(c)(3) public charity) and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission through the Wildlife Foundation of Florida, Inc. All DFO funds are restricted to marine and coastal projects that have statewide significance and lasting scientific, conservation or education value. Over the last ten years, funding from the Hubbs Florida Ocean Fund has contributed: extensive research on the life history; behavior and ecology of bottlenose dolphins and three species of sea turtles; physiological studies on manatees and other Florida wildlife species; environmental education of Florida youth and families; conservation of saltwater sportfish populations; protection of estuarine and marine habitats; investigations into the health of the Indian River Lagoon ecosystem; year-round response to whale and dolphin strandings, and much more.

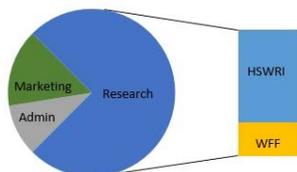
Thank you for your support of our collaborative efforts to improve the coastal wildlife and ecosystems of Florida.

The Hubbs Florida Ocean Fund and Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute thank the Florida Tax Collectors, their dedicated employees, and the following community partners for their support:



### DFO Plate Expenditure 2005-2015

Administration:  
\$355,782  
Marketing:  
\$533,662  
HSWRI Research:  
\$1,956,735  
WFF Research:  
\$711,544



A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Florida Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free 1-800-help-FLA (435-7352) within the state. The registration number issued to HSWRI in Florida is CH10200.