

# Annual Report

2013

## Estuary Conservation Association



*Encouraging environmental stewardship for the Cocohatchee estuary that fosters a balance of nature and community through science, education, safe navigation and local action.*

January 2014

## Working to conserve the estuary

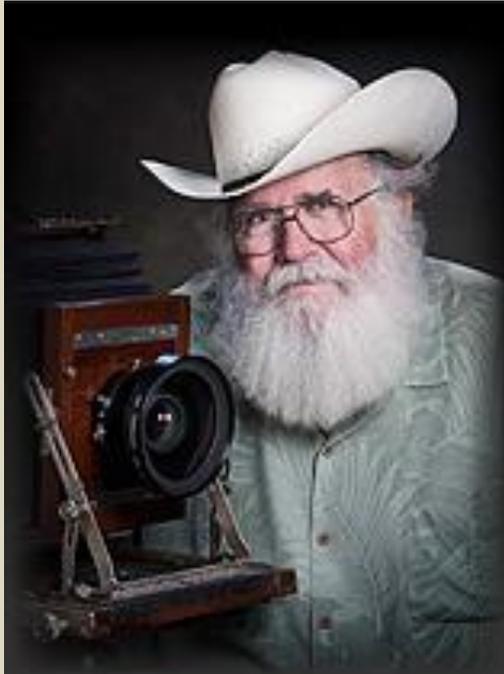


***The Estuary Conservation Association works with community partners to conduct research and education, raising local awareness about issues facing the Coghatchee estuary.***

The Estuary Conservation Association (ECA) is a local non-profit 501(c) 3 organization dedicated to the long-term conservation of wildlife and natural resources within the Coghatchee estuary, and working with the local community to sustain navigational safety for the Wiggins Pass inlet. This annual report highlights the work of ECA's members working in collaboration with local partners to achieve shared goals.

ECA encourages local residents, boaters and environmental enthusiasts to join the organization as a member, and to consider donating time and resources to help advance ECA's important work. For more details, please read through the enclosed report and visit ECA's website at [www.estuaryconservation.org](http://www.estuaryconservation.org).

## An Evening with Clyde Butcher



***Clyde Butcher, nationally recognized landscape photographer***

In partnership with Aqua Condominiums and LaPlaya Resort, ECA sponsored a reception and seminar featuring nationally recognized landscape photographer Clyde Butcher. The evening event was an exclusive invitation opportunity for ECA's members, Board of Directors, partners and sponsors.

Clyde shared stories and perspectives from his many photographic expeditions, including travels to locations around Florida and in more recent years, the American West. The evening included a presentation of landscape images from his work spanning decades, with behind-the-scenes pictures and anecdotes provided by his wife and partner Niki.

Aqua Condominiums provided the site for the evening, and LaPlaya Resort donated food and wine for the reception.

# ECA and Partners Celebrate Wiggins Pass Inlet Project



*Florida Weekly, October 2013*

In October, a Community Celebration event to recognize the successful dredging of the Wiggins Pass inlet was hosted through a collaborative partnership involving ECA, Pelican Isles Yacht Club, Aqua Condominiums, and LaPlaya Beach and Golf Resort.

Over 250 local residents, boaters, County and local government officials participated in the event. Walmart donated bottles of water, and event sponsors provided food for the festivities.

## ECA Welcomes New Board Members



*In 2013, ECA brought three new members to the Board of Directors:*

**Mac Hatcher**, retired senior biologist with Collier County's Natural Resources Department. Mac received his training in Fisheries Science from California State University in 1973, and worked for 27 years with Collier County on environmental issues.



**Ron Vuy**, Vice President and General Manager of the La Playa Beach and Golf Resort. Ron has been at the helm of LaPlaya since 2006. The property has consistently been recognized as one of the best beach resorts in the continental U.S. by Conde Nast and Travel and Leisure magazines.



**Alan Ritchie**, former Vice President of General Mills, Inc. in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and a Director Emeritus of the 170,000 member Experimental Aircraft Association. He is a past Chairman and currently a member of the Pelican Isle Yacht Club's Marina Committee.

## Coastal Forums Raise Local Awareness



*In partnership with the Barron Collier Jr. Foundation and Pelican Isle Yacht Club, ECA hosted the fourth annual series of Coastal Forums from January through April 2013. Featured topics and speakers included:*

**Florida Panthers: Live Captures and Tracking** in January, with Wildlife Biologist Dennis Giardina describing his experiences assisting in the capture and radio telemetry tagging of these magnificent native mammals, an endangered species native to South Florida.

**Sea Level Rise: Effects on Southwest Florida** in February, with Dr. Michael Savarese from Florida Gulf Coast University sharing results of his research on the effects of sea level rise on wetlands and coastal habitats in Southwest Florida.

**Dolphins and Boaters: Keeping Them Wild** in March, with marine mammal expert Dr. Randall Wells from Mote Marine Laboratory will share the results of research and field observations regarding our amazing dolphins and how boaters can watch and enjoy them without causing them harm.

**Sea Turtle Ecology: Effects of the Storm Season** in April, with a panel of biologists describing local efforts to monitor and protect sea turtle nests, and results of latest research on tracking movements of sea turtles in South Florida waters.

## Working to Sustain Safe Navigation



*Aerial image of the Wiggins Pass inlet*

ECA president Joe Moreland worked with local boating and community interests to support the Collier County Coastal Zone Management Department's successful dredging of the Wiggins Pass inlet in 2013.

ECA met with state and county officials, agency regulatory personnel and local boating interests to help facilitate the County's efforts to secure required regulatory approval, and to secure needed funds to implement the project.

For more details of the project, and for updated soundings of the Pass conducted by ECA volunteers and Pelican Isle Yacht Club, see [www.estuaryconservation.org](http://www.estuaryconservation.org).

## Increasing Community Outreach



***ECA acquires new portable display and increases outreach to local community through Facebook, website, and Constant Contact software.***

Members of ECA were able to track ongoing projects and read about new updates on ECA activities through email updates, website links, and Facebook postings during 2013. In October, ECA invested in the development of a professional portable display for use at public events. The first use of the new display took place at the Community Celebration event at the Pelican Isle Yacht Club in October, attended by over 250 people.