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DATE: November 12, 2009

TO: CAMA Staff

FROM:  Lee Edmiston, Director
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SUBJECT: CAMA Living Shorelines Guidance

NOAA's Restoration Center, in partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and other partners, initiated the Living Shorelines program in 2004. The goal of the Living Shorelines program is to provide alternatives to traditional hardened shorelines (e.g. bulkheads, stone revetments, seawalls) for erosion control that can result in significant loss of critical coastal habitats and natural processes, and in many cases, result in increased rates of erosion.

Living Shorelines uses bank stabilization techniques that are designed to reinforce eroding shorelines through the placement of soft/nonstructural materials (e.g. natural vegetation, submerged aquatic vegetation, sand fill, and organic material) or a hybrid approach that combines soft and hard materials.

CAMA supports the concept of Living Shorelines as an alternative shoreline management tool to replace existing hardened materials along Florida's coastline. However, as with all proposed projects within Aquatic Preserve boundaries, each Living Shorelines project needs to be thoroughly evaluated for compliance with the requirements of 18-20 with an eye toward any resources that may be impacted.

As CAMA is responsible for the management of 41 Aquatic Preserves representing Florida's most pristine coastal areas, it is the role of our managers to coordinate closely with regulatory agencies to provide site-based information that supports informed regulatory decisions regarding proposed projects within an Aquatic Preserve. As a part of this commitment CAMA managers should ensure that an appropriate site analysis is conducted for each Living Shorelines project to determine whether the targeted area

meets the intended threshold for implementation and to ensure the protection of resources.

Appropriate areas within Aquatic Preserves for consideration of Living Shorelines applications include shorelines with traditionally hardened materials that can be restored to more natural conditions. Natural shoreline conditions within Aquatic Preserves should remain undisturbed.