

# Manatee Pocket Dredging Project taking precautions for storm

Stuart, Fla. – August 24, 2011 – Precautions are underway to secure the dredging equipment in the Manatee Pocket and prepare the material handling area off of U.S. 1 in Stuart for any potential impact from Hurricane Irene. “Although the storm is currently tracking farther east, in an abundance of caution we are still taking steps to prepare for it,” said Martin County Coastal Engineer Kathy FitzPatrick.

Dredging in the pocket will be suspended on Wednesday, August 24 and will likely resume on Monday, August 29. This allows time for the water currently in the material handling area to drain off, creating room for the area to absorb the rainfall that is expected to occur.

The hydraulic dredge will be secured in the center of the main channel to keep the equipment away from shore. The mechanical dredge and barge will also be secured in Manatee Creek. “We are following the steps that are outlined in the project’s emergency response plan. The contractor will continue monitoring the storm track and will remain onsite throughout the weekend,” FitzPatrick said.

For more information about the Manatee Pocket Dredging Project visit [www.manateepocketproject.com](http://www.manateepocketproject.com).

## **About The Manatee Pocket Project**

The Manatee Pocket Project is a dredging project that entails the removal of approximately 280,000 cubic yards of sediment from the Manatee Pocket in Port Salerno. Once completed, the project will result in a 100-foot-wide channel that will provide navigational and environmental enhancements to the Manatee Pocket and its adjacent waterways and provide important economic benefits for the surrounding communities.

The goals of the project are to:

- Increase the draft and size of vessels that will be able to access the Pocket
- Define a channel to minimize impacts to adjacent shallow water areas and benefit manatee protection
- Remove detrimental sediments
- Improve the ability of marine life to re-establish in the Pocket
- Improve the water quality in the Pocket by greatly reducing the resuspension of sediment

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