



**DATE:** May 24, 2007

**CONTACT:** Kimberly Maroe, Public Information Manager

**PHONE:** 954-357-8053

## **MEDIA ALERT**

### **Coral Reef Restoration Project to Begin in Broward County**

**WHAT:** Full-scale tire salvage and recycling operations which aim to clean up approximately 700,000 tires from the seafloor and turn them into energy will begin in June 2007.

**WHEN:** A media day to cover this exciting multi-agency project will occur on June 7, 2007, beginning at 9 a.m.

**WHERE:** The dive salvage operations occur approximately 1 mile off of the beaches of Fort. Lauderdale, Florida. The Media Day will begin at 9 a.m. with briefings at the Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center (NSUOC), 8000 North Ocean Drive, located within John U. Lloyd Beach State Park in Dania Beach, FL. Interview opportunities will occur at NSUOC, on the water at the dive site, and at Port Everglades when the recovered tires are brought to land at the end of the day.

**BACKGROUND:** In the 1970s approximately 2 million tires were placed as an artificial reef in 60-70-feet of water on sandy bottom between two natural coral reefs. Intended as good fish habitat, the tires instead failed to support marine life and began to destroy nearby living coral reefs as storms forced the tires against living corals on their way toward shore. A well-intended artificial reef became a coral killing machine. An inventive approach, which aligns U.S. military divers with state tire recycling experts and marine biologists from Broward County and National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), is poised to tackle this massive cleanup, saving millions of dollars in cleanup costs in the process. Navy, Army, and Coast Guard divers are ready to use this project as an opportunity to practice their salvage skills. Broward County and NOAA are ensuring the few living corals in the area are protected. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection is working with the private sector to transport the tires from Port Everglades, where an Army Landing Craft Utility (LCU) will unload tractor trailer loads of tires each day. Tires recovered from the seafloor will be processed into tire-derived fuel (TDF). For the summer of 2007, the TDF will be used to fuel a Georgia plant that produces recycled paper.

**\*\*Press kits, which include B-roll video of the underwater military tire salvage operation as well as contrasting video of Broward County's bountiful natural and successful artificial reefs will be made available on DVD at the 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. briefings\*\***

**June 7, 2007, Media Day Timeline:**

**9:00-9:45 a.m.** Nova Southeastern University (NSU) Oceanographic Center, 8000 North Ocean Drive, John U. Lloyd Beach State Park, Dania Beach, FL

- Remarks by Broward County Mayor Josephus Eggelletion, Jr., overview by key project staff and opportunities to interview military divers.

**10:00 a.m.** Depart NSU Oceanographic Center aboard chartered dive boat en route to project dive site

**10:30 a.m.** Arrive dive site

- Individuals requesting space aboard the media boat must RSVP to Kimberly Maroe, Public Information Manager, Broward County Commission, 954-357-8053 or 954-232-4510 by June 5, 2007.
- Independent vessels requesting access for media purposes must also RSVP to number above by June 5, 2007, for access to the tire field. **There will be multiple military working dive teams operating at any given time.**
- **Independent media vessels are required to standoff at least 100 yards from military dive boats and the Army Landing Craft Utility (LCU). Failure to do so will result in a cessation of all dive operations.**

**12:00 p.m.** (approximate time) Media boat arrives back at NSU dock.

**5:00 p.m.** Media opportunity at Port Everglades as the 175-foot Army Landing Craft offloads its cargo at Port Everglades. There will be interview opportunities with Landing Craft crew, military divers and tire recycling experts from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

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