



LETTER TO THE COMMISSION

LTC No: 25-219

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission
FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager *RW*
DATE: November 5, 2025
SUBJECT: **Waterways Update – November 2025**

The purpose of this Letter to the Commission (LTC) is to provide the City Commission with an update on the City’s waterway initiatives.

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow Speed Zone: On November 6, 2025, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will vote on a proposal to implement a year-round slow speed zone on the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) between Sunrise Boulevard and Oakland Park Boulevard. Current regulations allow vessels to travel up to twenty-five (25) miles per hour depending on the time of day, day of the week, and season. The meeting will be held in Clewiston, Florida and City staff will be in attendance. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mangrove Plantings: The City completed two (2) mangrove plantings at Coontie Hatchee Park and George English Park. Additionally, through a partnership with the University of Florida, fifty (50) additional mangroves are being donated to the New River Middle School’s Eco Sharks Club, to nurture until the mangroves are ready for future City plantings. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant Opportunity: The City is collaborating with Nova Southeastern University to pursue a Community Foundation of Broward funding opportunity. The goal is to study the newly planted mangroves and conduct annual testing to determine the substances they are absorbing from the City’s waterways. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchoring Restriction: The thirty (30)-day overnight anchoring restriction has yielded positive results. Lake Sylvia, previously home to approximately twenty-five (25) anchored vessels, now has only four (4) remaining. Similar success has been observed along the ICW north of Las Olas Boulevard and in Sunrise Bay. A boater information brochure (Attachment 1) was created to welcome visitors and explain the anchoring |

<p>policy. The brochure is distributed proactively by Fort Lauderdale Police Department's Marine Patrol Unit to arriving boaters.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sewage Pumpout Vessel: The procurement of a sewage pumpout vessel is in progress. The initiative received significant media attention including interviews by Channel 10 News.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Response Procedures: On October 11, 2025, a vessel caught fire and sank in the ICW south of Commercial Boulevard. With the improved emergency abatement process recently implemented by City staff—a collaboration between Community Enhancement, Procurement, and Public Works—the vessel was removed within twenty-four (24) hours, marking a significant improvement from past response times.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water Quality Monitoring Stations: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) posted a Notice of Funding Opportunity specific to South Florida. City staff are evaluating this grant to potentially fund real-time water quality monitoring stations. These stations would continuously collect data on parameters including temperature, depth, salinity, dissolved oxygen, pH, turbidity, chlorophyll, and blue-green algae indicators (nitrate, nitrite, orthophosphate). Due to the federal government shutdown, this initiative is temporarily on hold but will be revisited once funding resumes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt a Waterway: Public interest has emerged for an "Adopt a Waterway" initiative, modeled after the City's "Adopt a Street" program. Outreach with internal stakeholders to assess the feasibility of long-term implementation is ongoing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living Seawall Program: Discussions are underway to develop a Living Seawall Permit Fee Rebate Program, which would help offset building permit costs for property owners who install living seawalls instead of traditional seawalls. City staff aim to present at a City Commission Conference meeting in early 2026.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water Quality: The City is collaborating with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to enhance water quality in the North Fork of the New River. FDOT is working on removing encampments of unsheltered persons along the riverbanks under Interstate 95 (I-95). A vegetation assessment of the area identified only minor occurrences of invasive species, which are insufficient to justify a full-scale project at this time. Phytoremediation is being explored as a possible long-term improvement strategy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Life Rings: The City is coordinating with FWC to obtain a large quantity of

life rings and personal flotation devices (life jackets) that will be strategically placed throughout the City to enhance swimmer and boater safety.

For further information, please contact Marco Aguilera, Chief Waterways Officer, at 954-828-4564 or maguilera@fortlauderdale.gov.

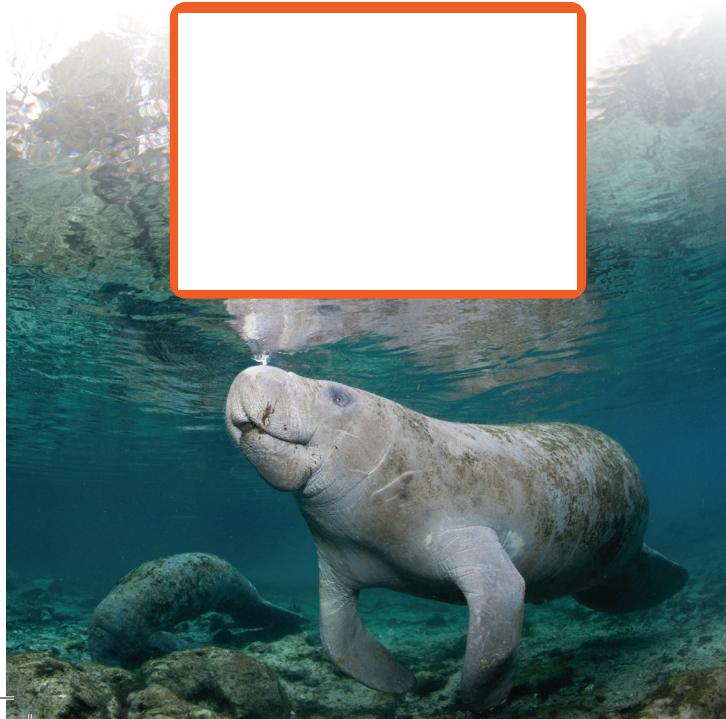
Attachment:

1. Brochure – Welcome to the City of Fort Lauderdale Waterways Guide

c: D'Wayne M. Spence, Interim City Attorney
David R. Soloman, City Clerk
Patrick Reilly, City Auditor
City Manager's Office
Department Directors

MANATEE ZONES

- ✓ **Follow all posted regulations.**
- ✓ **Weekends and holidays:**
Slow speed, minimum wake.
- ✓ **Monday-Friday:** In certain posted areas, 25 MPH with a maximum 15-inch wake.
- ✓ **ALWAYS:** Maintain a slow speed within 50 feet of the shore.
- ✓ **WATCH** for inexperienced paddleboarders, kayakers, and personal watercraft.



NAVIGATING THE NEW RIVER

Captains, monitor VHF Channel 9.

Bridge Schedules

BRIDGES WILL NOT OPEN

from 7:30 - 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.,
Monday through Friday, during rush hour traffic.

**Use VHF Channel 9 to communicate
with bridge tenders.**

Recommended Security Calls

Inbound in Order

- Entering the New River at channel marker "5"
- Tarpon Bend
- The Church
- The Girl's School
- The Tunnel
- SE 3rd Avenue Bridge
- Andrews Avenue Bridge
- New River Railroad Bridge (if closed or if your vessel needs room to maneuver)
- 7th Avenue Bridge (William H. Marshall)
- South River Fork
- Little Florida
- Ducksville
- The Wiggles
- Davie Boulevard Bridge
- CSX Railroad Bridge
- I-95 Underpass

If you would like this publication in an alternate format, please call (954) 828-4755 or email strategiccommunications@fortlauderdale.gov.



WELCOME TO THE



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

WATERWAYS GUIDE

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Emergency
911 or VHF 16

Police Marine Patrol
954-828-5440 (non-emergency)

USCG Station Fort Lauderdale
954-927-1611 or VHF 16

City Dockmaster
954-828-4626 or VHF 9

**City of Fort Lauderdale
Customer Service**
954-828-8000

US Customs Reporting
1-800-432-1216

TowBoatUS
954-783-7821 or VHF 16

Sea Tow
954-525-0037 or VHF 16



ANCHORING RESTRICTIONS

In accordance with Florida House Bill 481, the City of Fort Lauderdale restricts anchoring as follows:

No overnight anchoring for more than thirty (30) days in any six (6) month period within the municipal limits of the City of Fort Lauderdale.

What This Means

Captains must arrange to move their vessel to a dock or mooring field within 30 days. This ordinance does not apply to vessels that are docked or using the City's public mooring field.

For questions, contact the Fort Lauderdale Police Department Marine Patrol at 954-828-5440 (non-emergency).



FREE PUBLIC PUMPOUT STATIONS

The City of Fort Lauderdale offers four free public pumpout stations.

Self-Service 24/7

Cox's Landing Boat Ramp
1784 SE 15th Street

Smoker Park
501 S. New River Drive

Assisted Service Only

8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
(7 days per week)

Marshall Point
410 SW 4th Avenue

Cooley's Landing Marina
450 SW 7th Avenue

For questions about these stations or for directions, contact the Dockmaster's Office at 954-828-4626 or VHF 9.



REMEMBER, USING PUMPOUTS IS THE LAW!