

Doing Tangible, Applied, Community Based Marine Restoration in the U.S.: The TNC/CRP Experience

Dr. Robert J. Wilder

Coordinator, Community-Based Restoration The Nature Conservancy
rwilder@tnc.org 831-459-1460

Abstract: The Nature Conservancy's work in coastal and ocean restoration utilizes tangible, science-oriented practical conservation accomplished to a significant extent through local field sites. Recently, a Community-Based Restoration Program (CRP, a partnership with NOAA) is producing innovative environmental action and results. CRP is also part of the new Marine Initiative at TNC which is elevating coasts & oceans to one of five cross-cutting global priority areas. Case studies of CRP work include 15 sites such as at a North Carolina Oyster Reef, a Delaware Horseshoe Crab beach site where coarse aggregate is added to a formerly replenished beach, a New York Hard Clam Spawner Sanctuary, and for example Florida Keys Diadema Restoration. Year 2 sites are just beginning, some of which are partnerships with local environmental umbrella groups representing a number of conservation NGOs. TNC will solicit new proposals in Spring 2003 for Year 3 CRP projects, with an ongoing emphasis to fund sites that are community-based, that engage in tangible restoration, protect marine habitats and ecosystems, and serve as models for future action. Looking ahead, practical lessons learned in marine conservation at diverse CRP sites may be applied to leverage greater results around the U.S. and globally.