

## FDEP Issues Conditional Permit to City of Sanibel for Pilot Algae Management Testing

On Friday, September 8th, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) issued a Conditional Permit to the City of Sanibel to conduct pilot testing of various equipment to remove algae from Sanibel beaches. This permit is effective through February 15, 2008 and includes 23 conditions and a caveat due to the unique nature of Sanibel's beaches.

According to the Sanibel-Captiva Audubon Society, more than 32 species of shore birds utilize Sanibel's beach habitat. Of these species, nine are classified by the State of Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission as endangered, threatened, or a species of special concern. Sanibel's beaches are also the most active for sea turtle nesting in Lee County.

The FDEP Conditional Permit includes fifteen conditions regarding sea turtle protection, 8 conditions regarding shorebird protection and the caveat specifies that the Permit to conduct pilot testing does not imply further approval after the testing is completed.

To date, the City has received proposals from six vendors who are interested in testing equipment on Sanibel beaches.

"Fortunately, we have enjoyed pristine beaches this summer," said City Manager Judie Zimomra. "This permit positions us to be able to test equipment to manage algae if and when it appears."