



**WELCOME TO THE
TREASURE COAST SCENIC
HIGHWAY QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER.**

We're thrilled to have you along for the ride as we explore the natural beauty, vibrant communities, and hidden gems that make the Treasure Coast a place like no other. Each Season, we'll bring you the latest updates, upcoming events, local spotlights, and ways you can get involved in preserving and celebrating this stunning stretch of Florida's coastline. Long-time residents, new neighbors, or visitors just passing through, there's always something new to discover along the Indian River Lagoon - Treasure Coast Scenic Highway.



HIGHWAY HIGHLIGHTS

Volume 5

October 2026

A Vibrant Season **along the Treasure Coast Scenic Highway**



View of North Causeway "Summerlin Family" Bridge as seen from Museum Pointe Park on Seaway Drive. Photo provided by: Stephanie Torres, St. Lucie TPO

This quarter has brought a renewed appreciation for the beauty along A1A and the beaches of the Treasure Coast Scenic Highway. As we look across the Treasure Coast Scenic Highway, it's exciting to see continued investment in the places, people, and connections that make this corridor so special. In this issue, we're highlighting some of the projects and partnerships shaping the future of the Scenic Highway, along with the people and places that make it more than just a roadway. The goal is simple: preserve what makes the Treasure Coast Scenic Highway unique, while thoughtfully improving the experience for everyone who travels through it. Thank you for continuing to be part of the story!

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HIGHWAY HIGHLIGHTS



Pg. 2

Walton Scrub Preserve

Thirty-three acres of scrub habitat with half-mile interpretive trail and a 60-foot Observation Tower

Nestled along South Indian River Drive overlooking the Indian River Lagoon, Walton Scrub Preserve protects approximately 33 acres of Florida scrub and maritime hammock and provides a unique glimpse into one of the region's most important natural landscapes. The preserve is home to native and threatened species, including gopher tortoises and sand skinks, and features a self-guided interpretive trail that introduces visitors to the plants and habitats found within the preserve. Its location also provides views towards the Indian River Lagoon and the Savannas Preserve State Park, making it a special destination for hiking, birding, photography and experiencing Florida's natural environment. The newest addition to Walton Scrub is a 60-foot observation tower, giving visitors an elevated

Photos provided by: Marissa Da Bree-Latchman, LEED AP BD&C, AICP Environmental Planner II, City of PSL, Planning & Zoning, TCSHC Member

perspective of the surrounding scrub, Savannas and Indian River Lagoon. The tower was envisioned as an opportunity for environmental education, passive recreation, and ecotourism, helping residents and visitors better understand and appreciate the natural resources found here. The tower has an anticipated opening date of Fall 2026. The project was made possible through a partnership between St. Lucie County and Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND). Walton Scrub Preserve is located at 10809 South Indian River Drive, Fort Pierce, FL 39881.



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HIGHWAY HIGHLIGHTS



Pg. 3

St. Lucie County Completes New Stormwater Area to Help Indian River Lagoon



Sheraton Plaza Stormwater Treatment Area (STA)

Photos provided by: Caleta Scott, Community Engagement Coordinator, IRL Council, TCSHC Member

Article Provided by Eric Gill, Communications Director, St. Lucie County:

St. Lucie County's Water Quality Division recently transformed 16 acres beside Taylor Creek to help improve the health of the Indian River Lagoon. The Sheraton Plaza Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) received final acceptance from the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners at the regular meeting on Sept. 15.

This storm water facility includes multiple cells to catch and treat stormwater runoff from both the Sheraton Plaza and Harmony Heights communities. The project sits 1.5 miles to the west of the Taylor Creek spillway, which discharges directly into the Indian River Lagoon near the St. Lucie inlet. This is one of the county's largest stormwater efforts," said Water Quality Division Director Jim Lappert. "Multiple dry detention areas and wetland areas within the system will play a vital role in holding back and cleaning nutrient rich stormwater." As rainwater makes its way to our natural waterways, it collects debris, pollutants and nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen. Left unchecked, large amounts of these nutrients can lead to algae and blue-green algae blooms. Areas such as the new Sheraton Plaza STA help by slowing the flow of that runoff. Natural vegetation feeds off the nutrients, meaning less phosphorus and nitrogen end up in the estuary.

The Indian River Lagoon is recognized by the federal government as an estuary of natural significance. Running 156 miles along the east coast of Florida, it is one of our country's most biodiverse systems with an estimated 4,400 species of plant and animal living within. This list includes many protected species such as the Florida Manatee and both the Loggerhead and Green Sea Turtle.

HIGHWAY HIGHLIGHTS



Pg. 4

St. Lucie County Completes New Stormwater Area to Help Indian River Lagoon_{contd}

In addition to supporting safe, healthy waterways for the community, the STA increases stormwater capacity and creates passive recreational opportunities. The project also replaced outdated outfall pipes with a new 72-inch pipe at the request of the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).

"This project is a great accomplishment," said St. Lucie County Public Works Director Patrick Dayan. "I'm proud of the work the Water Quality team has done to improve the health of local water bodies and our communities."

A partnership with the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program (IRLNEP) and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021 funded the project's design and construction, respectively. ARP provided \$2,228,626 for the construction project, which was completed under budget with a remainder of \$172,448.90. This STA was one of multiple projects that came to life in 2025 and 2026 thanks to \$19 million in federal funding. White City and River Park communities, as well as areas like Indrio Savannahs, Ten Mile Creek and Hog Pen Slough have also benefited from ARP-funded stormwater and water quality improvements.

S. Lucie County's Water Quality Division manages projects like these to enhance the quality of life for county residents. Neighborhood retrofits, baffle box installations and green spaces to treat stormwater runoff help prevent flooding and property damage, protect water quality and enhance wildlife habitat. Learn more at www.stlucieco.gov/publicworks.



Sheraton Plaza Stormwater Treatment Area (STA)

**Photos provided by: Caleta Scott, Community Engagement Coordinator, IRL Council,
TCSHC Member**

Experience the Scenic Highway: What's Happening with Our Partners

The Treasure Coast Scenic Highway Committee is proud to support and spotlight events hosted by our dedicated partner organizations. These upcoming activities offer unique opportunities to engage with the treasures found along the scenic highway corridor. Be sure to mark your calendar and take part in the events that help make the Treasure Coast a vibrant and scenic destination!

11th Annual IRL Science Festival to be held October 24, 2026



Due to the Road Construction on Indian River Drive the IRL Science Festival will be held at Museum Pointe Park by South Causeway Beach, 414 Seaway Drive, Fort Pierce, Florida.

The 11th Annual IRL Science Festival is taking place October 24, 2026 from 10am - 3pm. Come out and join in on an unforgettable celebration of science, nature, and community spirit! This FREE event offers something for everyone, with a focus on family-friendly STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) activities that inspire and engage.

Dive into a world of exploration with hands-on activities that spark curiosity and creativity. From interactive exhibits to thrilling science shows, there's no shortage of excitement here!

Save the date and join us for a day of discovery, laughter, and family fun at the Indian River Lagoon Science Festival. Be sure to stop by the Treasure Coast Scenic Highway Committee booth and paint a "Scenic Shell". We will see you there!



Experience the Scenic Highway: What's Happening with Our Partners

480 N. Indian River Drive, Fort Pierce, FL 34950

www.manateecenter.org



Manatee
Center

LEARN AT THE LAGOON



The Manatee Center is OPEN during the roadway construction on Indian River Drive.

Free Community Day - Last Wednesday Each Month 10:00am - 4:00pm

As a way of making coastal discovery accessible for everyone the Manatee Center is opening it's doors and waiving admission for the day! Free Community Day takes place the last Wednesday of each month.

ManaTales Storytime Program - Ongoing Weekly - 9:30 and 11:00am

Join us in the outdoor classroom for a morning full of fun, learning, and connection! Each session includes a themed story, a hands-on activity, music and movement time. Guests also receive free passes to the Manatee Center and a Gift Store Discount! Call [772-429-6266](tel:772-429-6266) x3337 to RSVP.

Space fills quickly so reserve your spot today!

St. Lucie County Regional History Museum

The St. Lucie County Regional History Center is located at 414 Seaway Drive on South Hutchinson Island in Fort Pierce. The Center's hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Admission is \$4 for adults, \$3 for seniors (55+), and \$3 for children (4-17). Children (under 4 years old) are admitted free. Joint tickets to the Regional History Center and St. Lucie County Aquarium are also available. The St. Lucie County Regional History Center operates in partnership with St. Lucie County and volunteers from the St. Lucie Historical Society. The Center can be reached at 772-462-1795.



Partnerships and Connections along the Scenic Highway

Our Lagoon - Our Legacy Celebrates Shared Connection to the Indian River Lagoon



Photo credit: Anne Sinnott/Hometown News; Provided by Caleta Scott, Community Engagement Coordinator, IRL Council, TCSHC Member

The Indian River Lagoon took center stage Sept. 19 as residents gathered at St. Lucie Village School for "Our Lagoon - Our Legacy," a community program celebrating the Lagoon and exploring ways to protect it for future generations.

The afternoon featured local voices from across the community. Caleta Scott of the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program opened the program with a look at the importance of the Lagoon, and the role communities play in its future. Vincent Encomio of Florida Sea Grant shared information about lagoon health and stewardship, followed by Elyse Geraghty of the Manatee Center, who highlighted local restoration efforts. Barbara Brown of Docks for a Clean Lagoon closed the speaker portion with practical ways residents can become better stewards of their waterfront - by adopting vertical oyster gardens to place beneath docks in the IRL.

The program continued with workshops, exhibits and hands-on activities focused on living shorelines, shoreline restoration and protection, and ways individuals can make a difference. A Vertical Oyster Garden workshop led by Docks for a Clean Lagoon and the Manatee Center (Fort Pierce Utilities Authority) gave participants a firsthand look at how oysters can improve water quality and create habitat.

Events like "Our Lagoon - Our Legacy" remind us that the Indian River Lagoon is more than a scenic backdrop along the Florida Scenic Highway. It is part of the community's history, economy and everyday life - and protecting it is a responsibility we all share.

"Our Lagoon - Our Legacy" is funded in part by the Florida Remembered Society through an America250 / Florida250 public programs grant from Florida Humanities, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Jacarlene Foundation.

To learn more about Docks for a Clean Lagoon, visit www.docksforacleanlagoon.org



The Indian River Drive Corridor Improvements project is a major infrastructure initiative focused on the full roadway reconstruction of Indian River Drive between Seaway Drive and Marina Way. This transformative project will improve safety, functionality, and the overall appearance of one of Fort Pierce's most scenic and historic corridors.



Project Limits provided by City of Fort Pierce

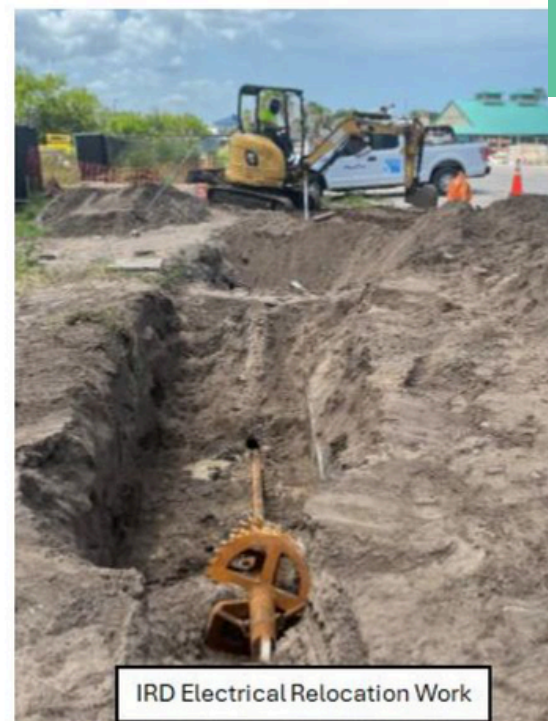
The project represents a coordinated effort between multiple partners and funding sources, including the City of Fort Pierce, the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency, the Florida Job Growth Infrastructure Grant, and the Half-Cent Infrastructure Surtax. Key project elements include: Replacement of the Moore's Creek Bridge, pedestrian safety improvements to enhance walkability and connectivity, landscaping enhancements to beautify the waterfront corridor, and utility upgrades and infrastructure improvements that will support long-term reliability of the corridor. Current construction activities include stormwater drainage improvements, irrigation conduit installation, tree relocations, electrical utility relocations, and roadway subgrade and base construction. Curb and gutter and sidewalk installation are also progressing throughout the project area. Final project completion is anticipated in Spring 2027.

Project progress can be found at:

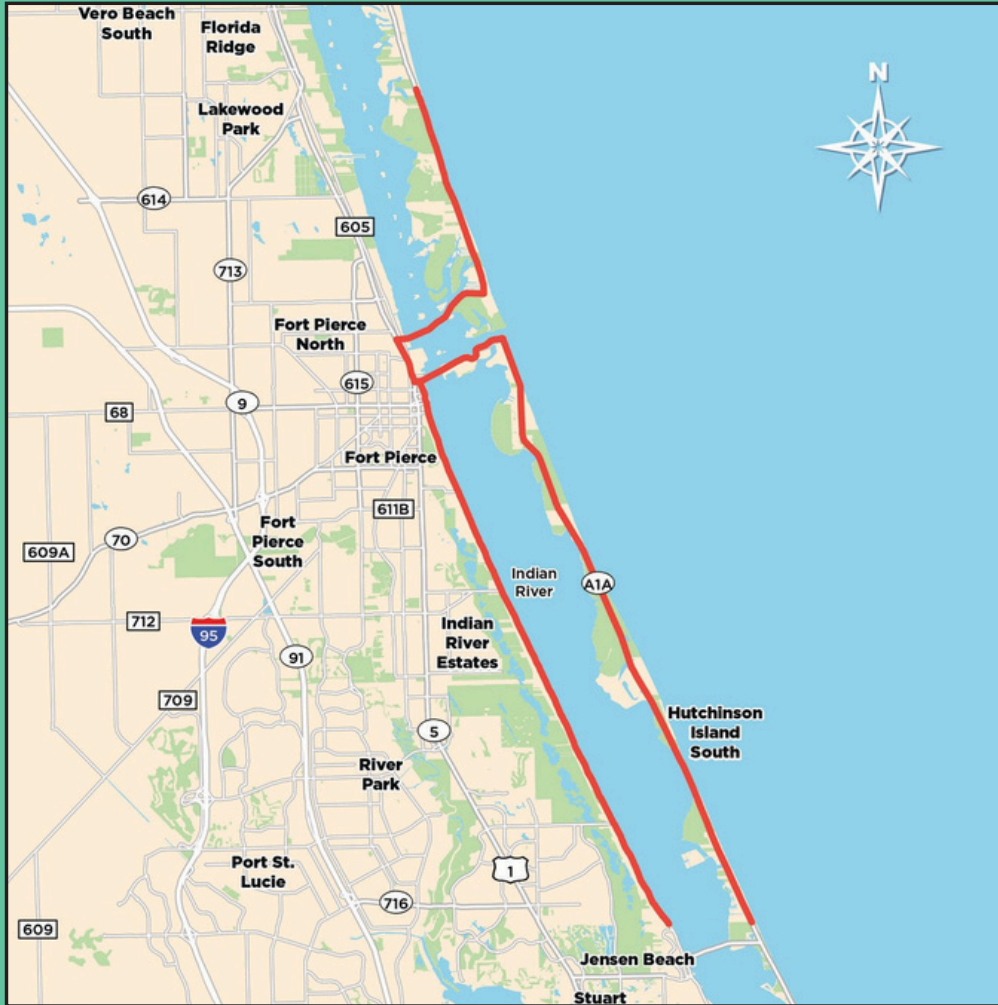
<https://www.cityoffortpierce.com/1209/Indian-River-Drive-Corridor-Improvements>



Royal Palm Tree Relocations



IRD Electrical Relocation Work



Great views of the Indian River Lagoon, the Atlantic Ocean can be enjoyed along this byway, which is filled with historical, cultural and environmental resources. World War II soldiers trained on Florida's beaches here in preparation for the Normandy invasion, and numerous artists and writers have been inspired by the beauty of the region.



Real Places. Real Stories.™

We Want to Feature YOU! Share Your Scenic Story

Do you have a favorite memory, hidden gem, or community project along the Treasure Coast Scenic Highway? We're looking for inspiring stories, personal experiences, local spotlights, and photos to include in upcoming newsletters! Whether you're a resident, volunteer, business owner, or simply someone who loves the byway, we'd love to hear from you. Help us showcase the people and places that make the Treasure Coast so special. Submit your story or suggestion today to: stephanie.torres@stlucieco.gov

Join Us in Preserving the Beauty of the Treasure Coast Scenic Highway!

Committee Members Needed



Are you passionate about protecting Florida's natural beauty and cultural heritage? Do you want to make a meaningful impact in your community? The Treasure Coast Scenic Highway Committee is looking for enthusiastic new members to join our team! As a committee member, you'll have the opportunity to collaborate with local leaders, residents, and organizations to promote tourism, sustainability and community pride. If you're a long-time resident, a business owner, or simply someone who loves the charm of the Treasure Coast, we welcome your voice and vision. Contact Stephanie Torres, St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization at stephanie.torres@stlucieco.gov.



HIGHWAY HIGHLIGHTS

Pg. 9



The Indian River Lagoon Treasure Coast Scenic Highway is a proud member of the Florida Scenic Highways Program (FSHP). FSHP was established to showcase the outstanding intrinsic resources (cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, natural and scenic) that can be found along Florida's highway system.

The Florida Scenic Highway Program byway collection includes 27 state designated scenic highways. Of these, six are further designated at a federal level as National Scenic Byways, and the Florida Keys Scenic Highway and A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway are designated as All-American Roads.

The program is a grass-roots effort to heighten awareness of these resources which enhance the overall traveling experience in Florida. Program participation provides benefits to each byway's region, including resource preservation, enhancement and economic development. More information on the state program can be found at: <https://floridascenichighways.com/>



@IRLTCSH



Jimmy Buffet Memorial Highway, Fort Pierce

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