

The logo features the word "LIONFISH" in large, bold, red letters. Each letter is filled with a pattern of red and white stripes, resembling the tail of a lionfish. Above the letters, several long, thin, red and white striped lines radiate upwards, mimicking the spines of a lionfish. Below "LIONFISH", the words "REMOVAL & AWARENESS DAY" are written in a smaller, bold, red, sans-serif font. Underneath that, the words "Festival and Tournament" are written in a red, cursive script font.

LIONFISH
REMOVAL & AWARENESS DAY
Festival and Tournament



Event Update

September 3, 2015

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Division of Marine Fisheries Management

VERSION 1

This presentation summarizes the Commission's first annual Lionfish Removal and Awareness Day event and activities in Pensacola and throughout the State, as well as the Commission's lionfish management efforts and next steps for consideration.

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Report date: August 3, 2015

Lionfish Removal and Awareness Day

Approved by the Commission in Feb. 2015 to occur annually on the Saturday after Mother's day

- Bring further interest and awareness to the lionfish issue
- Encourage divers and anglers to be proactive in their lionfish removal efforts
- Inform the general public on ways they can become involved
- Use as a tool to raise awareness, not a solution to the problem
- Inaugural event hosted by FWC in Pensacola on May 16-17, 2015
- Simultaneous satellite events statewide



Conflict Wildlife – Lionfish

- Part of important agency strategic initiative
- Minimize human health and safety, environmental, social, economic and other adverse impacts from non-native lionfish
 - Encourage removal efforts
 - Remove regulatory barriers to harvest
 - Sponsor and participate in derbies
 - Reef Rangers program
 - Increase public awareness
 - Attend tournaments and festivals
 - Lionfish Removal and Awareness Day
 - Promote consumption
 - How-to videos and chef collaborations



Lionfish Removal and Awareness Day 2015

- Exceeded outreach goals
 - Over 3,000 people attended the Pensacola event
 - Coverage by more than 50 media outlets
 - More than 2,000 total lionfish removed from Florida waters
 - 13 lionfish removal events held simultaneously statewide
- Over 50 vendors
- Over 40 event partners and sponsors



Event Activities

- Celebrity chef cook-off
 - 8 local celebrity chefs prepared lionfish tastings
- Guy Harvey appearance and autograph signing
- Educational and family activities
 - Kid zone with games and activities
 - Parade
 - Conservation booths
 - Filet and safe handling demonstrations on stage
- Raffles of artwork, dive gear, and lifetime saltwater fishing licenses
- Lionfish derbies in Pensacola and statewide
- Marine related artists and other vendors



Follow Up Survey

- Will be completed in September
- Evaluate the effectiveness of this year's Lionfish Removal and Awareness Day event in raising public awareness about lionfish
- Use survey results to guide future efforts related to lionfish removal and event planning



Next Year – Bigger and Better



Planning for next year's event has already begun

- Consider expanding the scope of the event
 - Use the Day as a kick-off event for a summer-long statewide lionfish derby
 - Culminate with awards ceremony and festival in Pensacola in October
- Enhance what worked and look for new opportunities to:
 - Engage and educate the public through hands-on activities, demos, and giveaways
 - Enlist help of partners to promote, support, and participate in the event
 - Use social media and other advertising to get message out before, during, and after the event
- Evaluate effectiveness of event



The following slides are considered backup material
and are not anticipated to be part of the actual
presentation



Major Partners and Sponsors



Lionfish in Florida

Found in most Florida waters

- Population explosion in recent years

Highly successful invader

- Broad range of habitat use
- No known natural predators in Florida
- Rapid reproduction
- Eradication is unlikely

Impacts

- Disrupts ecosystem balance
 - Preys upon ecologically important native species
 - Competes for food with ecologically and economically important species



FWC Innovative Lionfish Management

- Eliminating regulatory barriers to harvest
- Regulations to curtail new introductions
- Outreach and non-regulatory actions
 - Attending tournaments and festivals
 - Sponsoring derbies
 - Reef Rangers
 - Kiosks for on-site sign up
 - Report Florida Lionfish smartphone app
 - Lionfish Removal and Awareness Day

