

ENDANGERED SPECIES OBSERVER PROGRAM
Gulf Coast Trailing Co.- Dredge Mermentau
Palm Beach Harbor, FL 1994/1995

DAILY REPORT

Date: 01 / 03 / 95

Loads: 31-35

Area Worked: Stations 43+00 - 61+00

Conditions: overcast with showers to clear, winds 0-10 knots, seas calm.

Are there incidents involving endangered or protected species? Yes No

Comments: The starboard drag head is checked first because it is raised briefly for inspection and then dropped overboard again during pump out. On load #31 I went on deck to the starboard side to check the draghead as it was raised. The drag arm was raised to just below the surface, but was stationary. I saw that the port drag arm was being reeled in and went to check it first. The drag arm was brought on board. I approached and inspected it, stopping to remove some debris. I then walked back to the starboard to see if that drag arm had yet been raised. It was already on board and the AB told me that it had a turtle caught in it. The AB had secured a cable to the end of the drag head (one of it's visors) so that debris could be removed. As I approached, the drag arm was dropped, the visor raised, and the turtle fell on deck and then overboard.

I saw the turtle only briefly, it soon sank out of view. I could see that it's head and carapace were badly fractured and that part of the front right flipper was missing. The head was small in relation to the body, and

(continued on next page)

Bridge Watch Summary

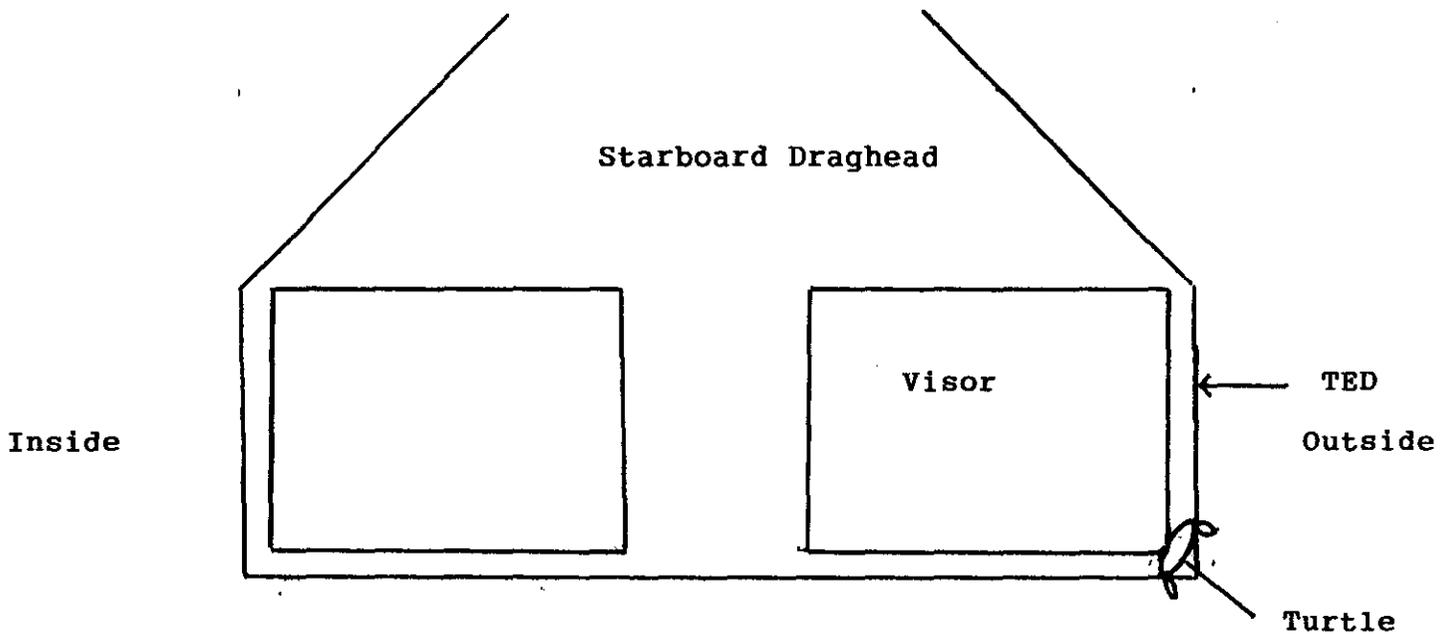
Species	No. of animals	Comments
<u>Tursiops truncatus</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Sighted at the just south of the inlet.</u>
<u>Chelonia mydas</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Taken in the starboard drag head on load # 31.</u>

Observer(s) On Duty: Phil Tonne, Eric Westerman, Lindy Payne

the ventral surface (plastron) was light white. I estimated the carapace length to be between 14 and 18 inches. I identified the turtle as a subadult green sea turtle.

The turtle had been caught between the drag head and the TED. The turtle was dorsal side up and its head was facing into the drag arm.

After the incident we met with Captain Bailey to clarify coordination between the crew and the observers. We stated the need for both drag arms to be raised, as soon as possible, after a load was obtained, and that when turtles were caught they would be left in place until an observer arrived to advise on turtle removal and photograph any takes.



ENDANGERED SPECIES OBSERVER PROGRAM
 Gulf Coast Trailing Co. - Dredge Mermentau
 Palm Beach Harbor, FL 1994/1995

WEEKLY SUMMARY

Dates: 01 / 01 / 95 - 01 / 08 / 95 Loads: 16-50

Are there incidents involving endangered or protected species? Yes x No

Comments: Juvenile green turtle was crushed between the
visor and TED on 01-03-95. After the incident the gaps
between the visor and TEDs were welded closed with pieces
metal bar. This should eliminate the possibility of a
turtle being caught between the draghead and TED. The drag
tenders have greatly reduced the suction in the dragheads
when they pick them up from the bottom. Drag tenders are
aware to only use as much suction is needed to keep the
pipes clear. Incident occurred on the 0530-1130 shift J.R.
dragtender.

Extra lateral screening was added to the lander
screens this week. This should help keep debris in the
lander screens when clogging occurs. The clogging of screens
this week has diminished as the week went on. The rocks
and sea grass and trash have been reduced since the beginning
of the week. Samples this week included blue crabs, speckled
crabs, horseshoe crabs, sponge, skates, stargazers, starfish,
angel fish, hermit crabs, hog choker, shell, wood, rocks,
trash and sea grass. Water temperatures have ranged from
70-72 degrees.

Bridge Watch Summary

Species	No. of animals	Comments
<u>Tm</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>Manatees traveling near the south jetties</u>
<u>Tt</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Bottlenose dolphins</u>
<u>Tm</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>Manatees sighted at dock</u>

Observers On Duty:

Eric Westerman
Phil Tonne
Linda Payne
Cathryn Stephenson

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WEEKLY SUMMARY

Page Two

Dates: 01/01/95 - 01/08/95 Loads: 16-50

Are there incidents involving endangered or protected species? Yes No

Comments: Load 49 a front right flipper from a juvenile green
turtle was sampled. This was not a fresh kill, front flipper
was in a badly decomposed state. Strong odor to sample.
Flipper was discolored, mostly gray color with some green,
white and yellow. Flipper measured 24 cm length and 6 cm
width. Muscle mass and bones were also attached to the
flipper. Sample was photographed and then frozen waiting
disposition. Load 50 two pieces of badly decomposed plastron
was sampled in the starboard lander. One piece measured
50cm by 10 cm and the other measured 40cm by 28 cm. Plastron
white in color with grayish color under mass. Sample
Photographed then frozen. The turtle that fell out of the
draghead on 01-03-95 matches the size and the decomposed
state this specimen. The area we are digging in is the
same area that the turtle went overboard. This is probably
the remains of the incident on 01-03-95.

Bridge Watch Summary

Species	No. of animals	Comments

Observers On Duty:
Eric Westerman
Phil Tonne
Linda Payne
Kathryn Stephenson