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Fiberglass clams coming to Levy County



Leslie Sturmer, an agent with UF/IFAS Shellfish Extension, speaks to the commissioners on Tuesday (Dec. 5).

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BRONSON -- The Levy County Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday morning

(Dec. 5) heard about works of art -- fiberglass clams -- planned for placement at places in Levy County.

Leslie Sturmer, an agent with UF/IFAS Shellfish Extension, spoke to the commissioners on Tuesday about the plan to place three of the fiberglass works of art at county locations initially.

Tisha Whitehurst, the Levy County RESTORE Act coordinator said it is better to not name specific locations yet.

Rose Cantwell and Sue Colson of the Cedar Key Aquaculture Association endorse the program, which is known as the Follow the Claim Trail. This program will help people learn about the heritage, ecology and shellfish resource-based economy of Cedar Key and the surrounding area.

This is a fun, educational and public art treasure hunt that will go through Cedar Key and other parts of Levy County. The 10 clams are all made of fiberglass and will be about five-foot tall. They are to be painted and decorated by local artists.

Each clam will have a fact plaque, according to the information provided to the County Commission that includes information about the clam's ecological and economic benefit to the coastal waters of Levy County.

The RESTORE Act funding for this project is listed at \$53,500 for the 10 fiberglass clams; for honorariums for local artists to paint the clams; to create and print inserts to the paper version of the Shellfish Trail Map; to promote through webpage development, media and advertising; and to support local businesses - such as fiberglass manufacturers, graphic designers and printing companies.

The County Commission agreed to endorse the plan to create 10 fiberglass clams. There is no cost to the county for the project.

As far as where to place the three clams in the county beyond Cedar Key locations, the commission asked Sturmer and others to confer with Levy County Coordinator Wilbur Dean, Levy County Attorney Anne Bast Brown and Levy County Parks and Recreation Director Matt Weldon to assure the places to put them are suitable.