

REAL DEBATE WISCONSIN

WELCOME TO REAL DEBATE WISCONSIN(RDW). TOO OFTEN IN TODAY'S POLITICAL LANDSCAPE DISCOURSE IS KEPT AMONG THOSE WHO AGREE. THIS IS NOT A BLOG TO PROMOTE THAT. WE DISCUSS IDEAS HERE, WE ASK THAT YOU KEEP YOUR TONE IN CHECK AND RESPECT THOSE WHO ARE WILLING TO SHARE.

FEBRUARY 20, 2007

The Best Of Intentions... See what they do for you?

Artificial reef made of tires becomes ecological disaster

What began 30 years ago as an idealistic plan to shape an artificial coral reef has become an underwater wasteland

BY TRENTON DANIEL
tdaniel@MiamiHerald.com

A plan in the early 1970s to create a massive artificial reef off Fort Lauderdale has turned into an environmental mess with the U.S. Navy, Broward County and others trying to figure out how to remove about two million tires covering 36 acres of ocean floor.

What was intended to lure game fish now is damaging sensitive coral reefs and littering Broward's tourist-populated shoreline.

"They **thought** it would be a good fish habitat. It turned out to be a **bad idea**," said William Nuckols, project coordinator and military liaison for Coastal America, a federal group involved in the cleanup. `` **It's a coastal coral destruction machine.**"



The tires dot the ocean bottom a mile and a half from the end of Sunrise Boulevard.

Environmentalists say strong tides -- **especially during hurricanes and tropical storms** -- cause the loose tires to knock against coral reefs, disrupting the ecosystem. In

some cases, tires have washed ashore.

Now, the U.S. Navy, Broward County and a few other groups are looking at a three-year plan to remove the tires. The organizers surveyed the waters last month.

"We're trying to work out all the specific details," Nuckols said.

Touted as the largest of its kind nationwide, the tire reef was **created with the best of intentions.**

In the spring of 1972, a nonprofit group called Broward Artificial Reef, or BARINC, hatched an idea to build a three-mile reef while at the same time disposing of old tires. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers endorsed the project; similar ones had been created in the Northeast and Gulf of Mexico.

Broward County pitched in with the funds. **BARINC even raised \$8,000 from bingo games.**

And so, the tires came from Goodyear and junkyards, bundled on barges to be dumped at sea. The idea was that an artificial reef -- called Osborne Reef -- would form from the stacked tires.



But **it didn't work.**

Metal clips holding the tires together corroded, and the tires spilled across the ocean floor. Unlike sunken barges also used to build artificial reefs, the tires moved with the tide, and marine life never formed. Fishermen grumbled that game fish never came

because the water there was too shallow.

"I do know we made a mistake in doing it," said Ray McAllister,

CONTRIBUTORS

- [Randy](#)
- [Sandra](#)
- [Phelony Jones](#)
- [Cathy Stepp](#)
- [realdebate](#)
- [Real Debate](#)

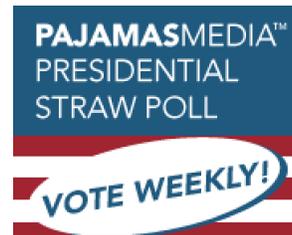
MRQ OF THE WEEK.

MRQ of the week.

- Will John Edwards' Handlers Please Handle Him?
Medieval Silicone Breast Implant Action Theater
There are plenty of slacked jawed teenagers out here to work at the stores and stand around and look bored and ignore customers. So I tell SuperChump "Chump, next time I see you...." Dang, he's right behind me aint he?

[Free polls from Pollhost.com](#)

PRESIDENTIAL STRAW POLL



[▶ CLICK TO OPEN VOTING BOOTH](#)

BLOG ADS

GOOGLE

SITE METER

