

**Table 5**  
**Annual On-the-Water Events Held in the St. Johns County Area**

| <b>Event</b>                             | <b>General time frame</b> | <b>Approx. Size</b> |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------|
| El Pescado Grande Tournament             | Mid April                 | 30 boats            |
| Blue Water Tournament                    | Early May                 | 150 boats           |
| Jack Genung Memorial Fishing Tournament  | Late May                  | 25 boats            |
| Ponce's Billfish Invitational            | Early June                | 25 boats            |
| Kingbuster Classic Tournament            | Mid June                  | 300 boats           |
| A.C.G.F.A. Kingfish Challenge            | July                      | 250 boats           |
| Greater Jacksonville Kingfish Tournament | July                      | 400 boats           |
| Blessing of the Fleet                    | Easter                    | 100 boats           |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks        | July                      | 30 boats            |
| Regatta of Lights                        | Late December             | 30-50 boats         |

These events have the potential to draw large numbers of watercraft into relatively confined spaces for short periods. Watercraft-related manatee mortalities have occurred in the general time frames of some of these events, although the FWC data does not indicate that any watercraft-related mortality has occurred as a result of any of these events. Although powerboat races are not currently held in St. Johns County, they can pose a particularly serious threat to manatees. Consequently, whenever the U.S. Coast Guard permits one of these events, it must enter into a Section 7 Consultation with the FWS, as required under the Endangered Species Act, to ensure that adequate safeguards are implemented.

Because maintaining low levels of watercraft-related manatee mortality is a goal of this Plan, additional analysis is provided regarding the watercraft-related manatee deaths that have taken place in the St. Johns County Area. Since data have been systematically collected in 1974, 11 manatees have died from boat collisions in St. Johns County waterways and there have been seven additional deaths in waters immediately adjacent to St. Johns County in waters shared by St. Johns and a neighboring county.

Figure 8 showed the location of these watercraft-related manatee deaths in the St. Johns County area, and details regarding each of these instances were provided in Table 4.

It must be recognized, however, that data points provided by FWC indicate the locations where manatee carcasses were recovered, not necessarily where the impacts actually occurred. Carcasses may be carried by water currents or pushed by wind, or an injured manatee may live for days and travel a considerable distance after it is injured and before it dies.

Five of the 11 watercraft-related manatee deaths in St. Johns County have occurred during the period from 2000-2004. During this period, however there has also been an increase in the number of vessels that are registered to residents of St. Johns County.

Figure 15 identifies the annual watercraft-related manatee deaths in relation to the increase in vessels registered in St. Johns County. (Because the number of watercraft registrations prior to 1995-96 could not be located, the data presented is only for the period from 1995-2005). In reviewing these data, however, one needs to be mindful that a variety of external factors also contribute to the number of boaters in St. Johns County. Although there is no easy way to