

So little time, so much water to dive!
Red 7 Scuba, LLC



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Office of Governor Rick Scott
State of Florida, The Capitol
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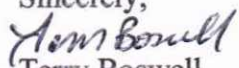
Dear Governor Rick Scott and FFWCC Commissioners,

I, Terry Boswell, am writing you to ask for your support of the Emerald Coast Reef Association (ECRA) plan to help rid our reefs of the invasive Lionfish. As the Owner of a local dive shop, many of my customers have expressed concerns over the Lionfish arriving in our area and the impact these voracious predators are having on our native fish populations. As a retired Chief Warrant Officer I was trained to analyze and solve problems, and the no cost proposal sponsored by the ECRA is a win-win proposal from both a cost and Lionfish reduction stand point.

I have discussed the ECRA proposal with my dive buddies and customers. They all love the idea. Currently, most spear fishermen only dive during open seasons for the fish they are interested in harvesting. This proposal would extend their seasons giving them more incentive to kill lionfish during peak summer fishing seasons. I personally believe the ECRA proposal will go a long way towards reducing the lionfish populations in our waters and it will do so without increasing the tax burden on Floridians.

I don't believe that simply running periodic Lionfish tournaments will do the job of keeping these voracious predators under control and as Lionfish tournaments are expensive to conduct and most of us smaller dive shops don't have the funds or the time to put them together. The tags for Lionfish heads program would incentivize local spear fishermen to actively hunt Lionfish which they are not doing at this time.

All my military training has taught me one thing, that simply sitting around hoping things will get better does not work. We need to conduct an aggressive campaign of eradication to get the current Lionfish populations down and the ERCA plan to offer fish tags for Lionfish heads will incentivize divers to actively hunt for Lionfish, which in my humble opinion the only way we are going to get this current crisis under control.

Sincerely,

Terry Boswell
Owner, Red 7 Scuba, LLC