

New Artificial Reef Technology Coming To Dixie



David Osteen, left, with Todd Barber, right.

Dixie's County Commissioners voted in favor of the purchase of one of the newest innovations in artificial reefs, "Reef Balls", at the March 3rd meeting. This was a vote that will not only be good for Dixie's economy, but for the environment as well.

Dixie Artificial Reef Coordinator, David Osteen, stated that he was very excited about the reef balls. Osteen and Reef Ball Development Group, Ltd. President Todd Barber, gave an in depth presentation to the Board which included a demonstration of how they are constructed. A model of one of the reef balls can be seen in front of the courthouse steps.

The reef balls are made by pouring a non-polluting concrete into a fiberglass mold containing a central Polyform buoy surrounded by various sized inflatable balls. The balls will vary in thickness size and height, just like natural reefs, as well as varying surface patterns that enhance sea life settlement.

The county has agreed to purchase three molds; two medium and one small sized pending on the approval of a \$25,000.00 state grant. Cost of the mold is \$10,000.00. Approximately 175 reef balls will be made and placed on the reef site already in place off of Horseshoe Beach. Each ball will cost approximately \$100.00 which includes materials and placement.

Osteeen stated that the Commission has also agreed to hire local commercial fishermen to deploy the ball, keeping the grant monies in the county.

Osteeen has put out a plea for help, saying, "I am only one person and I need your help to make this program stronger". Together we can get alot more done, so please call me at 498-0250 and be a supporter of the Dixie County Reef Program.

1999 "Dixie
County Advocate"
12/95 Inana