



May 7, 2007

To: Ron Taylor, Florida Wildlife Commission, Chief Snook Biologist

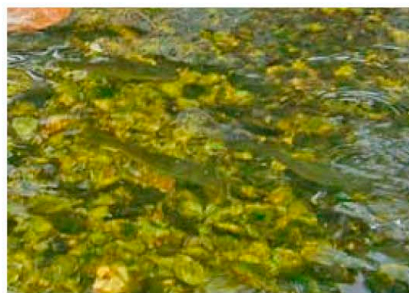
From: Rick Roberts, Executive Director Snook Foundation

Dear Ron,

The Snook Foundation was requested by well known outdoor writer, Steve Kantner to visit and inspect a portion of what once was Cherry Creek in the Oakland Park area of Broward County. We did so on Wed, May 2 and inspected the waterway by canoe (our photos are attached). This small section of remaining natural habitat exists in what is otherwise a canalized system draining tightly packed homes. These drainage canals have been dredged and armored with seawalls for many years. To the best of our knowledge, this section of creek bed is the last remnant of the natural creek. Besides a viable living oyster bed, it contains a surprising population of sea life and fish, and the surrounding trees are safe harbor for several species of birds no longer ordinarily seen in the area according to reliable reports.

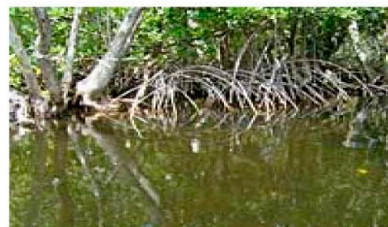


#### **Our observation:**



In less than a quarter mile of this section of remaining creek we discovered a nearly 100% intact, pristine, natural snook nursery habitat supporting a large population of juvenile common snook in their first year of life. These fish are the recruits that will take an important place in the population of Atlantic common snook; one of Florida's most valuable and sought after game fish. To find a functioning nursery for snook in Broward County is an increasingly rare occurrence due to human population density and the almost complete destruction of the native habitat by continued dredging of natural waterways.

To find a population of young snook thriving beneath a mature canopy of mature red and white mangroves in Oakland Park is extraordinary. This remnant creek bed is a hard mixture of ancient coral limestone, oyster shell, an extended living oyster bar and bright sand. It is the last tiny piece of the remnant of natural Florida that once made Broward County an inshore fishing mecca. In summary, this seeming small area is an abundant resource nurturing large numbers of juvenile common snook and many other species of sea life-it is exceptional.



#### **Recommendation:**

We respectfully request the intervention of FWC and DEP in order to stop any plan or project to dredge or change this habitat in anyway. With respect to the city of Oakland Park, we feel the need to recommend DEP not permit dredging in this locale. To do so would potentially destroy a much needed snook nursery habitat. We further recommend that this area would best be set aside as a sanctuary. It is perhaps the last remaining natural remnant of a once pristine tidal creek in Broward County. This natural treasure, a pearl of great price, has value to Broward as well as to Florida. It is irreplaceable. Furthermore, in our observation of this tidal area, which supports a myriad of species, it appears that little could be gained by deepening it. We believe at best, extensive studies would prove that a dredging project would destroy the potential for this priceless microhabitat to continue to be productive. Best Regards,

Rick Roberts  
Executive Director  
The Snook Foundation  
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