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“Planting for Protection”



Dune Doctors, LLC, a coastal erosion control firm, works with local schools and regional learning centers to conduct a unique, hands-on, educational event called **“Planting for Protection,”** designed to educate children and the general public in the importance of coastal resiliency.

In a setting designed to both protect dune ecosystems and to educate students and the public on the important role native species and sand dunes play along coastlines in the protection of people and property, native Sea oats are planted by participants under the guidance of mentors from Dune Doctors.

“We’re coordinating this event with the start of the hurricane season and to highlight the nesting activities of both sea turtles and birds along the coast,” says Frederique Beroset, owner of Dune Doctors. “We’re inviting the public to attend and to share in the activities for the day. We hope that in this way, by actually having them plant these vital native plants, they will then support our mission to preserve and protect one of our most important resources, native coastal dune ecosystems.”

“Dune Doctors seeks to promote stewardship of coastal ecosystems,” say Brad Newman, VP of Sales & Marketing for the company. “We want to encourage people to view our coastal environments as a valuable asset that must be invested in, respected, and cared for and **“Planting for Protection,”** is a community-level initiative to fulfill our promise to clients and the public to fortify, restore, and protect our coastline.”

The team at Dune Doctors are coastal restoration experts specializing in consulting, constructing, and maintaining native ecosystems and protective landscapes. Since 2000, as a 100% woman-owned small business, Dune Doctors has delivered hundreds of government, commercial and residential coastal restoration projects and participated in several beach renourishments along the Gulf of Mexico.



Frederique Beronet
OWNER, MBA & M.S. BIOLOGY

“Planting for Protection” - educational training with Frederique Beronet



Dune Doctors, LLC is a coastal erosion control firm based out of Pensacola, Florida, specializing in planning, constructing and maintaining native ecosystems and protective landscapes. Since 2000, as a government-certified, 100% woman-owned small business, Dune Doctors has delivered hundreds of government, commercial and residential beach restoration projects along the coastlines of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean.

Dune Doctors was established in 2000 after owner Frederique Beronet, M.B.A. spent years researching native coastal plants and developing protocols to grow underused species. With a background in plant biology, Beronet stresses the importance of using plants native to the area when restoring a habitat. Routinely, seeds or cuttings are harvested on or within a few miles of the project area and are taken to a nursery specialized in growing coastal plants to have them prepared specifically for a project.

As a respected expert in coastal restoration, Beronet designs projects with a strong emphasis on scientific protocols. Details such as the mixed variety of vegetation, size and quality of plantings, and the integration of genetically similar species are key factors which result in a higher than average success rate for Dune Doctors. Achieving a natural look that is both aesthetically pleasing and environmentally compliant is the value proposition for the company. Dune Doctors rates project success through a process called TEAM QAQC, the goal of which is to improve coastal resiliency through the fortification, restoration, and protection of dune ecosystems for years to come.

For nearly two decades, Dune Doctors has successfully implemented hundreds of coastal restoration projects for home-owners, commercial properties, as well as local, state, and federal governments.

1000+ Projects

19 YEARS

4 States

1 MISSION
“Proactive Stewardship”



Frederique Beroset, left, and Rick Martin from the company Dune Doctors, plants sea oats Monday on Pensacola Beach to redirect rainwater and storm surge after the Margaritaville Beach Hotel's parking garage was flooded during April's deluge.



From left, Frederique Beroset and Rick Martin work Monday to create a new dune to redirect rainwater and storm surge. TONY GIBERSON/TGIBERSON@PNJ.COM

DUNE DOCTORS TO THE RESCUE

Project's goal is to redirect heavy rain

By Kimberly Blair
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Pensacola Beach was mostly spared catastrophic flooding from the April 29-30 deluge but it didn't escape erosion from stormwater runoff.

A river of water, for instance, cascaded off Fort Pickens Road, scouring out the sand shoulder and shooting a path into the Margaritaville Beach Hotel parking garage.

Joe McCay, operations manager, could not say how much water filled the low-lying garage underneath the Gulf-front hotel, but the standing water had to be



Rick Martin plants sea oats Monday on Pensacola Beach. PHOTOS BY TONY GIBERSON/TGIBERSON@PNJ.COM

pumped out.

To prevent future flooding, McCay called in experts — Dune Doctors and Grissett Excavating — to fix the problem.

The two companies dug out a swell and built a sand

berm bolstered with sand fencing and sea oats to channel future stormwater runoff from Fort Pickens Road away from the parking garage, McCay said.

"It will steer the water into a holding area on our

Five Flags Hotel area where it will drain into the sand," McCay said of the vacant Margaritaville's parent company acquired after 2004's Hurricane Ivan destroyed Five Flags.

The \$6,000 project will only redirect rain. It won't, however, help protect the hotel against a tropical storm or hurricane storm surge, McCay said.

Frederique Beroset, the Dune Doctor, who was planting rows of sea oats on the newly built berm on Monday, said she's hoping the sea oats will take root and fortify the berm before the area is hit with another bout of heavy rain.

"It will take them about three months to get established," she said.

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Dune

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"I've not seen anything to this magnitude from rain before. This is something you usually see after a hurricane."

JIMMY GRISSETT, owner of Grissett Excavating

Paolo Ghio, the Santa Rosa Island Authority's director of developmental services, said the berm construction is an excellent example of a project that increases erosion control and fortifies a natural sand dune.

"They've done a fantastic job," he said. "The dune needs the water more than the garage does."

The two companies have been working on a number of April flood projects on Pensacola Beach and Navarre Beach that involve restoring washouts and replacing dune vegetation, said Jimmy Grissett, owner of Milton-based Grissett Excavating.

April's rain also eroded an area around San de

Luna condominiums west of the hotel, creating a 5-foot-deep hole. And the rain washed sand around Soundside Centre on Pensacola Beach and undermined foundations of homes on Navarre Beach.

"I've not seen anything to this magnitude from rain before," Grissett said. "This is something you usually see after a hurricane."

Ghio also pointed out that Escambia's County's coastal engineer is calculating the loss of sand along Quietwater Beach, which was replenished with 1,300 dump truck loads of sand, to the tune of \$700,000, last year.

Rain washed away the top layer of the sand, he said.

"Even if you lose 1 inch over a large area, that's a fair amount of sand," he said.

Overall, the beach, which normally takes the brunt of storms, had very little damage compared to the rest of the two-county area.

"It was a complete reversal of fortune," Ghio said. "When you have a bad storm, it's usually, 'Oh my god, let's leave the island and go to the mainland.' On April 29, it was, 'Let's leave the mainland and go to the island.'"



DUNE DOCTORS
 Coastal Restoration Experts

Deadman's revival

Project breathes life into island in Pensacola Bay

Kimberly Blair
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Five decades of strong currents, waves and storm surges have slowly eaten away at the shores of Deadman's Island jutting out from Gulf Breeze into Pensacola Bay.

But what Mother Nature chipped away is quickly being replaced by M&N of Alabama, a marine contractor, as part of the second phase of the Deadman's Island Restoration Project.

ONLINE
 See video from the Deadman's Island restoration project.

In one week's time, the company has pumped enough sand from a nearby Gilmore Bayou dredge site to restore 250 feet of shoreline.

And by next week, 16,000 cubic yards of sand will have been pumped onto the northern and eastern shore — an isthmus that is teeming with birds and wildlife and protects a 10,000-year-old salt marsh and the spring-fed Gilmore Bayou. By then, the new piece of land will be roughly 300 feet long and 250 feet wide.

Heather Reed, a marine biologist for her own company, Ecological Consulting Services, is the city's project manager. This week, she was on the

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From left, Frederique Beroset, Margo Zdravkovic and Heather Reed discuss the plans for the restoration of Deadman's Island. TONY GIBERSON/TGIBERSON@PNJ.COM

DEADMAN'S ISLAND

Throughout the 18th century, the Spanish and British used Deadman's Island as a careening site for ship repairs and painting.

In the 19th century, it was a yellow fever quarantine area for ships, and in the 20th century, it was the site of a glue and fish fertilizer plant.

Artifacts from all of these eras can be found on the land and in the water around the island.

The City of Gulf Breeze purchased part of the island from private owners in 1977. The rest of it was donated to the city in 1978.

The city decided to preserve the ecologically and historically significant land as a low-impact recreation area.

In 1992, the land became a state-protected Aquatic Preserve.

In 2007, the city hired Heather Reed, a marine biologist. The restoration project includes the installation of two breakwaters.



From left, Margo Zdravkovic, Heather Reed and Frederique Beroset discuss restoration efforts on Deadman's Island. PHOTOS BY TONY GIBERSON/TGIBERSON@PNJ.COM

Island

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island with experts on shore bird habitat and dune restoration, mapping out a plan to create a wetlands and habitat for nesting shorebirds.

"We're here today (determining) the right elevation we need for the shorebirds and the plants we need for, hopefully, protecting the birds from any kinds of stresses and predators," she said.

"After we're sure of the elevations we need, we'll be fine-tuning things and we'll bring volunteers out over the next week for plantings."

Reed has relied heavily on armies of volunteers since she began the project in 2007.

They have planted vegetation, filled oyster baskets for one of the breakwaters installed to protect the island from eroding currents and waves, and helped collect data for monitoring projects on the success of the project.

Margo Zdravkovic, director of Key West-based Coastal Bird Conservation, said she's excited about the prospect of cre-



From left, Frederique Beroset, Margo Zdravkovic and Heather Reed talk about the island's restoration, while Dwayne Miller, far left, keeps an eye on the flow of sand onto the beach this week.

ating more nesting grounds for shorebirds whose populations are in sharp decline.

She pointed out where vegetation should be planted and where areas should be left open to attract birds.

"I'm helping her shape the new habitat and make it welcoming to shore birds," she said. "We're hoping to get least terns and skimmers here."

The tip on the island being created by the sand restoration project should be "very enticing for colonial nesting birds," Zdravkovic said.

"It's possible we'll have a few come check this out

in the next few weeks," she said.

Frederique Beroset, with Pensacola-based Dune Doctors, began working with Reed on the Deadman's Island project in 2008. She's offering advice on what types of native plants will help stabilize the white crystal sand.

"I'm super excited about the quality of sand," she said as she watched sand, clay clumps and water spew from a large pipe. "The clay and peat provide nutrients in the quartz crystal sand for the plants and food for crabs and other creatures."

DUNE DOCTORS
 Coastal Restoration Experts

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