



June 2026

Customary Use Submission Process Finalized

On May 5, 2026, Escambia County published instructions for submitting information to be used by County Commissioners to determine if Customary Use (public use of private beachfront property) should be imposed on Perdido Key. The County's instructions for information submission are available at website [Escambia County Seeking Perdido Key Beach Usage Information](#) with an August 28, 2026 deadline; the submission form is available at website [Perdido Key Beach Information Form](#). After collecting, County staff and legal personnel will take three months to evaluate the information and then provide recommendations to Escambia County Commissioners to determine whether or not Customary Use should be imposed on all or part of Perdido Key. If you have questions about what information to submit, contact PKA Secretary Charles Krupnick at charles.krupnick@gmail.com; if you have difficulty uploading material through the County portal, contact PKA Director Lisa Henseler at lhenseler@yahoo.com.

An online Zoom meeting to discuss Perdido Key Customary Use Response will begin at 3 PM on Thursday, June 4, 2026. Login information will be sent to PKA members by a PKA Blast e-mail prior to the meeting.

World Oceans Day 2026

World Ocean Day 2026 will be celebrated from Noon to 3 PM on Monday, June 8, 2026 at the Perdido Key Community Center on 15500 Perdido Key Drive. Sponsored by the Perdido Key Association and Perdido Key Chamber Foundation, the event will have displays and activities addressing the value of and threats to the wonderful oceans we share. Presenters include Dauphin Island Sea Lab, UWF Conservation of Marine Mammals/Florida Panhandle Marine Institute, Escambia County's Natural and Marine Resources divisions, Healthy Gulf, NIUHI Dive Charters (focused on lionfish), Gulf Islands National Seashore, Florida State Parks, Friends of Pensacola State Parks, Escambia County Lifeguards, Perdido Key Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs. The event will have a number of giveaways including snowballs from Bam! Snoballs, beach safety toys from Youths Left Behind, Take & Make from Southwest Branch West Florida Public Libraries and a Bag Raffle prize from Perdido Bike Rental. *Marlin the Cowboy* movie will also be displayed.

For World Oceans Day, the United Nations encourages us to **Reimagine** and “close the distance between us. To move from **passive inheritors** of the ocean’s generosity to **active guardians** of its future.” “The World Ocean Day 2026 Action Theme – **Strong Marine Protected Areas for Our Blue Planet** – will guide global action over the coming years” and “is essential to turning global commitments into real conservation outcomes.” To learn more about recent actions to preserve our oceans as well as World Oceans Day 2026, go to [Celebrate World Ocean Day](#) and [Homepage - United Nations World Oceans Day](#).

Lifeguards On Duty

A reminder that lifeguards will be on duty at Perdido Key Beach Access #2 from 10 AM until 6 PM daily through August 11, 2026.

Turtle and Shorebird Nesting Begins

The local sea turtle nesting season is from May 1, 2026 until October 31, 2026. Loggerhead, green, Kemp’s ridley and leatherback sea turtles nest along our shores along with shorebirds such as least terns, snowy plover’s, Wilson’s plover and black skimmers, so please observe all beach access restrictions. Although sea turtle nests may be well marked, shorebird nests are just “scrapes in the sand” and easily destroyed. For more information and precautions go to the May 1, 2026 *Pensacola News Journal* article “Watch where you walk. Sea turtle nesting seasons begins” at [Pensacola Beach Perdido Key sea turtle nesting season](#).

First Sea Turtle Nest on Perdido Key!

On May 19, 2026, volunteers found the first Perdido Key sea turtle nest of the season – a loggerhead turtle nest. The find was a reminder of the need to protect turtles and their hatchlings by following the *Lights Out, Leave only Footprints* and *Share the Beach* instructions provided by Escambia County. For more information, go to the May 19, 2026 Escambia County *News Article* [Escambia County Records First Loggerhead Nest on Perdido Key](#).

Bycatch Reduction Devices Required

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission requires Bycatch Reduction Devices (BRDs) for all recreational crab traps in Florida to keep sea turtles out of the traps. They can be obtained at no charge from the Escambia County Extension Office. For questions or to obtain BRDs, contact Rick O’Connor at the Escambia County Extension Office (850-475-5230).

More Flights from Gulf Shores

Allegiant Airlines continues to expand its service from Gulf Shores International Airport with new flights to Omaha, Huntsville, Oklahoma City, Louisville and Springfield, Missouri. Each destination will have two flights per week through the “peak summer season.” The Gulf Shores airport is also planning a \$15 million expansion to include “additional boarding gate areas, expanded curbside drop-off, and enlarged baggage claim area, and a new outdoor patio.” For more on this issue, go to the May 12, 2026 article [Mullet Wrapper: Allegiant adds flights to Omaha, Huntsville, Oklahoma City, Louisville, Springfield in Gulf Shores & Orange Beach](#).

Scallop Search 2026

This year's "Pensacola Scallop Search" will be conducted between July 12 and August 1, 2026 on Big Lagoon and Santa Rosa Sound. Those interested in participating will need a team of at least three people with snorkel gear. Some locations require a power boat so let the search organizers know whether or not you have a boat. For more information and to register your team, contact Rick O'Connor at roc1@ufl.edu.

Unwanted Critters on Perdido Key

Those walking or biking on Perdido Key often see animals scurrying about – from geckos and snakes to opossums to deer. Recently a few rodents, probably Florida's native **cotton rats**, were sighted along River Road – perhaps dislocated by the extensive Perdido Key Villas development under construction between Semmes Street and Gardenglen Drive. But please be alert for **nutria** – an introduced but invasive rodent from South America that can devastate wetlands. They look like beavers but have slender tails instead of paddles. A population of nutria has survived on the Lost Key Golf Course on Perdido Key for many years but could have spread further into the community. If seen, please contact Rick O'Connor at roc1@ufl.edu.

Perdido Kids Park July Reopening

The Perdido Kids Park on Gulf Beach Hwy is scheduled to reopen in July 2026 after closing in April 2026 because of deteriorating equipment. Improvements to the park include "new durable playground equipment, new ADA assessable amenities, new fencing and more." Some of the park's original equipment has been retained such as the climbing trees and airplane rocker toys. For more on this issue, go to the May 13, 2026 article [Mullet Wrapper: New Perdido Kids Park on Gulf Beach Hwy. opens in July in Gulf Shores & Orange Beach.](#)

Gulf State Park Pier Observation Deck Reopened

Damaged by Hurricane Sally in 2020, a number of delays prevented reopening the Observation Deck at Gulf State Park Pier until very recently. The elevated platform offers spectacular views of both sea and land. For more on this issue, see the May 27, 2026 article [Mullet Wrapper: Observation Deck At Gulf State Park Pier Re-Opens in Gulf Shores & Orange Beach.](#)

Pensacola to Pensacola Beach Shuttle

Escambia County has begun its Seasonal Beach Jumper for travel between Pensacola and Pensacola Beach. The free service has pickups at the ECAT Transfer Center (1515 W. Fairfield Drive), Downtown Transfer Center (139 W. Government Street), Baylen Street Parking Garage and the corner of Jefferson and Garden Street. The drop-off on Pensacola Beach is at Casino Beach Pavilion. For more on this issue, go to the May 20, 2026 Escambia County *News Article* [ECAT to Resume Free Seasonal Beach Jumper Service this Weekend.](#)

Florida Forever Funds Lacking

"Florida Forever" is the state's premier land conservation program but according to *1000 Friends of Florida* has been underfunded with lawmakers "walking away from a law they passed just three years ago." "Without the authority to purchase land, valuable and vulnerable

land will be lost forever to development." Drawn from May 14, 2026 *1000 Friends of Florida* e-mail. For more on this issue, see the March 30, 2026 *WUSF* article [Florida Forever is on the verge of getting little funding this year | WUSF](#) by Steve Newborn.

More Property Insurers for Florida

Three new property and casualty insurers have come to Florida since tort reforms were implemented by the State. Twenty companies now offer home and condominium coverage in Florida. For more on this issue, see the May 20, 2026 *USA Today* article [Florida welcomes 3 new property insurers. Here's why that's a big deal](#) by Clayton Park.

Bernardo de Galvez

Spanish General Bernardo de Gálvez played an important role in the American Revolution. In 1781 he led the "Siege of Pensacola" securing a vital Spanish victory over the British. His effort and those of other Spanish forces occupied "British armies and fleets in skirmishes and battles across the Gulf Coast, keeping those same armies and fleets from assisting the British fight elsewhere." While his name was somewhat forgotten over time, "in 2018, a bronze statue of Galvez upon his horse was installed at the intersection of Palafox and Wright streets." For more on this issue, see the April 26, 2026 *Pensacola News Journal* article "Galvez Day is coming! Who's Galvez? Pensacola knows. Finally." by Troy Moon at [Pensacola Galvez Day honors Spanish Gen. Bernardo de Galvez.](#)

Invasive Tilapia Removal

Tilapia is an African fish that can be farm-raised in the United States, but should not be running free in US waters where they can "outcompete native species for habitat and resources." "Some water bodies in central and south Florida are now dominated by these fish." In Escambia County, tilapia can be found in Bayou Chico where a two day Sea Grant volunteer assisted project removed 66 tilapias. Florida Sea Grant will conduct a survey in August 2026 to determine the extent of tilapia presence in Escambia County. If you see any tilapia, please contact Escambia County Sea Grant Representative Rick O'Connor at roc1@ufl.edu. Drawn from May 20, 2026 Rick O'Connor e-mail.

Sargassum Hits South Florida

Some Palm Beach County beaches were swamped with sargassum during Memorial Day weekend. The seaweed has grown to "record proportions" along much the eastern Atlantic and into the Gulf with "moderate beach events" on the Florida southeast coast. For more on this issue, see the May 28, 2026 *USA Today* article [Sargassum seaweed knocks Miami beach off best beaches U.S. list](#) by Kimberly Miller.

Everglades Creature Crisis

The extended drought in parts of south Florida has compromised livable habitat for alligators and wading birds in the Everglades. Marshes have dried up with no fish for predators and failed nesting for birds such as wood storks and egrets. Man and nature share responsibility for the crisis with some hopes for the upcoming rainy season and human intervention. For more on this issue, see the May 21, 2026 *USA Today* article [Wading birds alligators suffer as everglades endures epic drought](#) by Kimberley Miller.

Endangered Species Day

Endangered Species Day is celebrated globally on May 15, 2026 to mark the importance of protecting threatened and endangered wildlife and their habitats. Many ocean animals are “facing a triple planetary crisis – climate change, plastic pollution and biodiversity loss – and their challenges only continue to mount.” Drawn from May 15, 2026 *Ocean Conservancy* e-mail by Chris Robbins and the *Endangered Species Day* website at [Endangered Species Day - Endangered Species Coalition](#).

Cownose Ray Decline

The cownose ray can prowl in large groups along the Gulf coast and inland waters, but the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) “have documented declines in the local abundance of cownose rays in some Florida estuaries, which has prompted staff to evaluate whether specific regulations are needed.” Those with “knowledge and on-the-water expertise” can help evaluate potential regulatory changes at an online workshop on Tuesday, June 2, 2026 from 5:00 - 7:00 pm (CT) at [MyFWC.com/SaltwaterWorkshops](#) (go to [FWC Saltwater Workshops page](#) for more information on the workshop). After the online meeting, a video of the workshop will be posted at the Saltwater Workshops link. You can also provide comments by emailing Marine@MyFWC.com or going to the [saltwater comments webpage](#).

Invasive Marsh Dayflower

The “marsh dayflower” has not been identified in our area but can be found in nearby counties. It has succulent stems forming dense mats that can stand 8 to 59 inches high. The plant also has narrow leaves and 3-petaled white, pink or light purple flowers that last only one day – hence its name. Please be alert for possible marsh dayflower’s spread into our area – its mats can crowd out native vegetation in the marshy wet habitat it prefers. For more information, go to the May 27, 2026 *UF/IFAS Blog* [A New Potential Invasive Species Threat – The Marsh Dayflower - UF/IFAS Extension Escambia County](#) by Rick O’Connor.

Hawksbill Sea Turtles and Emperor Penguins Endangered

Generally found in warmer southern Gulf waters off places like Yucatan and Cuba, their “colored shells and pointed, bird-like beaks” make hawksbill sea turtles “among the most unique and beautiful species in our ocean.” But they face the same threats as other ocean creatures from “changing ocean conditions, habitat loss and accidental entanglement in fishing gear” and are now “fight for survival.” Drawn from May 13, 2026 *Ocean Conservancy* e-mail by Dr. Britta Baechler. Much further south, Emperor penguins also fight for survival. “With increased threats from climate change, ocean waters are warming and the Antarctic ice is melting at an alarming rate” threatening both the penguin’s nesting areas and their food supply. Drawn from May 14, 2026 *Ocean Conservancy* e-mail by Daniel Berkson.

Blue Angels practice at NAS Pensacola on June 2,3,9,10,16,17,23,24,30

Bands on the Beach at Pensacola Beach every Tuesday 7-9 PM April to October

June Calendar

June 1-20 – Gulf Coast Chinese Lantern Festival at Bellingrath Gardens & Home

June 2-7,16-21 – Pensacola Blue Wahoos at Blue Wahoos Stadium in Pensacola

June 5-8 – Flora-Bama Family Fishing Rodeo at the Flora-Bama beach area
June 6,13,20,27 – 7:30 AM Parkrun at Rex Plex North Field, University of West Florida
June 8 – World Oceans Day event at Perdido Key Community Center 15500 Perdido Key Dr
June 11 – Perdido Palooza Craft and Vendor Market
June 12 – Gala and Patriotic Drone Show at Destin-Fort Walton Rigdon Center
June 12,13 –Collectibles Trades & Show at Rest and Relax Inn 7200 Plantation Rd, Pensacola
June 12,13 – Coca-Cola Twin 100s: Summer Weekend Getaway at Five Flags Speedway
June 13 – Pensapride 2026: Summerween at Pensacola Interstate Fairgrounds
June 13 – Juneteenth Festival at Museum Plaza in downtown Pensacola
June 14 – Bride’s Night Wedding Expo at Sanders Beach/Corinne Jones Center in Pensacola
June 16-17 – Beetlejuice the Musical at Saenger Theatre in downtown Pensacola
June 19-26 – Panhandle Gem and Mineral Show 1958 Lewis Turner Blvd, Fort Walton Beach
June 29 – The Princess Concert at the Saenger Theatre in downtown Pensacola

The following websites provide additional information about events on our great Gulf Coast:

<https://www.visitpensacola.com/>
<http://mygulfcoastchamber.com/>
<http://www.visitperdido.com/>
<http://mulletwrapper.net/>
<https://myescambia.com/>
<http://www.emeraldcoastfl.com//>
<http://alabama.travel/festivals-and-events>

Perdido Key Association Board of Directors