

C2R

CONCRETE TO REEFS:
A TCPI INITIATIVE



BACKGROUND

How C2R was formed.

MATERIALS

Concrete blocks, culverts,
slabs, and more.

DEPLOYMENTS

November 2015 and July
2017.

CONTENTS

pg.3

BACKGROUND

pg.4

MATERIALS

pg.5

DEPLOYMENTS

pg.9

MOVING FORWARD



BACKGROUND

As the Tri-County Community Partnership Initiative and Community Partnership Program got underway, Eglin AFB staff at the AFRL and Okaloosa County realized they had mutual needs. Eglin AFB needed an inexpensive method to dispose of concrete leftover after testing, while Okaloosa County needed an inexpensive source of artificial reef material. Led by Dr. John Wilcox, staff on both sides began working on agreements to dispose of the concrete as brand new rubble artificial reefs. The stacked concrete pieces create pockets of habitat perfect for fish species, many of which are popular with local anglers.

With grants from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as well as the Okaloosa County Tourism Development Council, the first deployment took place in November of 2015.

The project is a win-win-win for the environment, the community, and the TCPI partners.

Environment - New artificial reefs provide habitat for soft corals, fish species, and more. Additionally, the concrete does not have to be disposed of in a landfill.

The Community - The Emerald Coast is popular for both anglers and divers. The artificial reefs are relatively close to shore, offering recreational opportunities both for charter boats as well as locals. Already we have heard positive reports from anglers using the reefs deployed in 2015.

TCPI Partners - Eglin AFB saves concrete disposal fees, while Okaloosa County gained new reefs as well as positive publicity for the project.



MATERIALS

The materials for the Concrete to Reefs deployment included culverts, manholes, junction covers, slabs, window shades, bridge pieces, jersey barriers, blocks, and large concrete slabs.

The materials were taken both from Eglin AFB ranges, as well as from Wright Landfill, an Okaloosa County facility. Material was donated from construction projects on Eglin, as well as from FDOT testing locations.

Materials are stored at Vulcan immediately before deployment, and must be at least 500 lbs to pass inspection.

In the future, additional phases of Concrete to Reefs could include decommissioned military equipment like tanks, airplanes, and more. Such donated items would be used to create a military-themed reef, further emphasizing the partnership between Eglin AFB and the surrounding community.







DEPLOYMENTS

July-August 2017

In this second phase, 800+ tons of concrete will be dropped on two reef locations, in the same vicinity as the reefs pictured in the map on page 5. Material will be deployed by H.G. Harders & Sons, Inc, overseen by Taylor Engineering. Like the first deployment, this Concrete to Reefs phase is supported by grants from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Okaloosa County Tourism Development Council, as well as through budget allocations made by the Okaloosa County Tourism Development Department.

This deployment will clean out the material at Wright Landfill, and remove most of the large material from two Eglin AFB ranges. In addition, concrete window shades from a building-removal project will be included in the deployment, strengthening ties between Eglin AFB and the reef project.



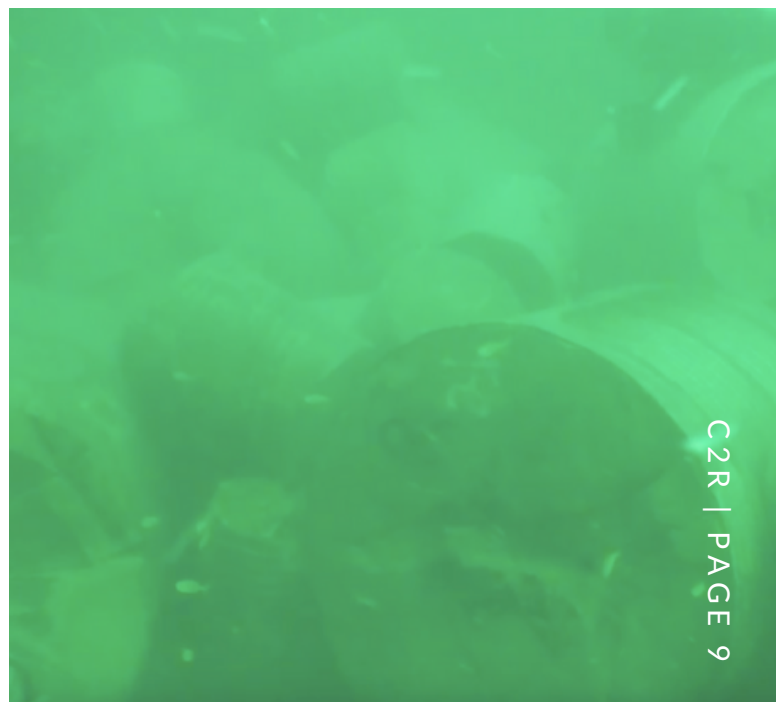
MOVING FORWARD

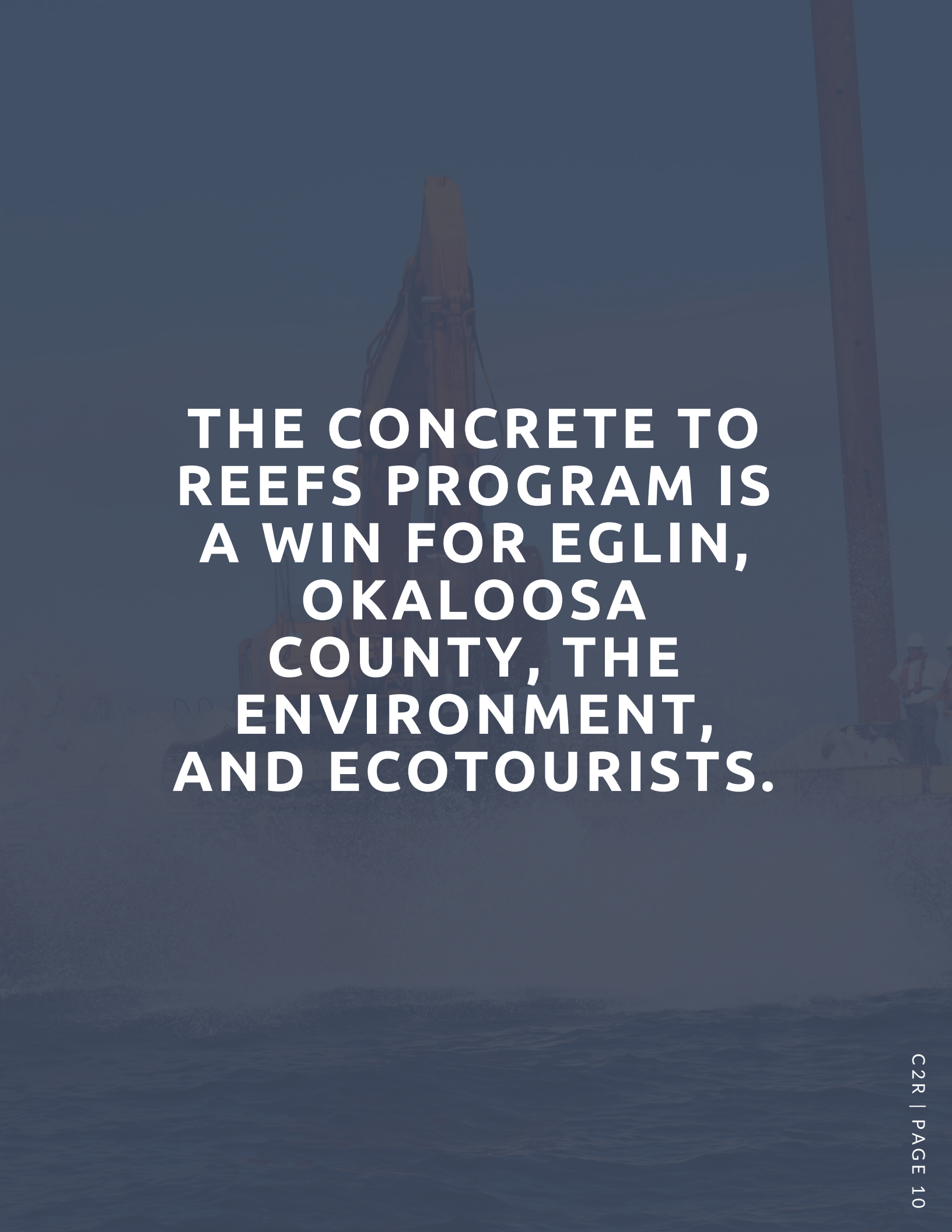
Through an additional partnership between the base and the county, TCPI has just facilitated a land-use agreement for Arbennie Pritchett in Fort Walton Beach. This field will serve as a storage site for concrete, both material from Eglin AFB but also from community sources. Though Eglin owns the land, Okaloosa County staff will have access at all times. In the future, the area will increase capacity to store materials until a deployment has been scheduled.

As aforementioned, Eglin and Okaloosa staff are looking for new materials to repurpose. In addition to more concrete slabs and blocks, we are researching the possibility of using vehicles and other large items to create a military reef. The reef will not only create habitat, but serve as an extremely marketable amenity for locals and tourism professionals while underscoring the importance of the military in the Florida Panhandle.

Though we have now used the grants we had allocated for concrete to reefs, we plan to seek future grants from the BP oil spill settlement as well as other sources.

Middle and lower photo courtesy of: explorepensacola.com; Taylor Engineering



The background of the page is a dark, blue-tinted photograph of a construction site. A large crane is visible in the center, and several workers in safety gear are positioned on the right side. The overall scene is dimly lit, suggesting an overcast day or a specific lighting setup for the photograph.

**THE CONCRETE TO
REEFS PROGRAM IS
A WIN FOR EGLIN,
OKALOOSA
COUNTY, THE
ENVIRONMENT,
AND ECOTOURISTS.**