

Designing, constructing and maintaining crocodile sanctuaries in the USA and Jamaica

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Abstract: From the 1960's to the 1980's, the American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*) population in south Florida was estimated at 250 ± 78 non-hatchlings. In 1978, Florida Power & Light (FPL) joined the recovery efforts by initiating an American Crocodile Management Program on their Turkey Point Property in Florida City, Florida. In 2006 FPL made plans to design and construct additional crocodile nesting habitat in an area south of the power plant. The restoration project involved removal of the invasive vegetation, followed by the removal of rock fill and replacing it with substrate suitable for crocodile nesting. The construction was complete in January 2008 and the first successful crocodile nest hatched in June of 2008. The crocodile population in Jamaica is in decline. Jamaica is a tourist destination and resorts take up much of the islands' beaches. Habitat destruction on different levels is happening island-wide. Much of the coastal habitat is under pressure by charcoal producers. The Holland Bay Crocodile Sanctuary is located in agricultural land in St Thomas. Several dedicated people, both Jamaican and international, have put their resources, time, energy, expertise and funding into developing designing, constructung, maintaining, and operating this sanctuary. The facility is off the grid and self-sufficient, solar powered, features wells with treated water and a septic system. It has a room for short- and long-term scientists, students or volunteers.

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