



Photo courtesy of Betty Olliges

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Artificial reef sinking; 3,000 ton ship goes down to bring back the bite

Story by Jana Eschbach / CBS 12 NEWS

STUART, Fla. - An entire community rallies to raise the money to buy and then sink a massive steel cargo ship, hoping it will bring the bite back to the Sailfish Capital of the World.

Tonight, ten miles offshore, the new Hailey Glasrud Reef lies 197 feet under the sea, most likely already teaming already with fish.

The Hailey Glasrud, formerly the Wave Tamer in the 1990's, and in her glory in Bolivia, 1960, as the Petra Gunda. Now she's a sunken reef, or a really big fish magnet.

"Something like this as it goes down not only does it start the ecosystem in motion but also starts the local economic system," said Captain Rocky Carbia, Safari I Charter Fisherman. "The fishing industry in Florida is one of the top money making industries."

On board with Fishing Charter Captain Rocky Carbia, we traveled out to watch her go down.

Captain Rocky says fish love structure, and at 200 plus feet, she's got a lot of that. To be exact, it's a 209 Foot ship (Bulk Carrier), with nearly 80 ft. of vertically that has been cleaned, sanitized and prepared to be towed up to Martin County from Miami.

The approximate destination coordinates are 8.9 miles slightly E-NE out of the St. Lucie Inlet, bearing 71 degrees, and in 197 feet of water.

"When the water hits that upper level it'll go down very very quickly," said Martin County Artificial Reef Fund's John Burke's, who has overseen Haley's transformation from cargo ship to a stripped steel shell.

"Any piece of wire, and PVC, and wood, you just have to essentially a blank steel vessel by the time its all done," Burke said. "Everything that could possibly pollute is taken off the vessel. The EPA put through strict rules in the last several years. They've put through very stringent standards."

There are 3 unsealed small hull holes uncovered, then a crew jumps ship, before they begin to fill. The 3000-ton steel ship takes her time taking on water, slowly falling into the sea over a 15 minute period.

The Haley Glasrud is now an artificial reef on the bottom of the Treasure Coast

The entire project funded by seven years of fundraising, private donations, raffles, fishing tournaments like the great Reef Builders \$10,000 prize tournament in July and Lionfish Round Ups.

If you've supported any of these events, The Haley Glasrud reef is now here for everyone to see thanks to your efforts. It is however, 197 feet down, so you need an oxygen tank to view the reef.

The total price tag for the entire artificial reef: \$150,000.

Stuart's Mayor Troy MacDonald, said it was one of the perks of his job to be able to watch the wreckage sink. He agreed, it is not a bad price to pay to support a billion dollar fishing and boating industry on the Treasure Coast.

To see the locations of all of Martin County's Artificial Reefs go to Charts of reef locations:

<http://www.mcacreefs.org/uploads/docs/blocks/166/chart-list-12-16-2011.pdf>

Video of past shipwrecks:

<http://youtu.be/32VM48FyCwk>

MCAC Artificial Reef Fund, Inc. July 12, 2014 Tournament Information for reef fund:

<http://www.mcacreefs.org/p/74/2014-tournament>

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MCAC Reef Fund, Inc. Contact Information:

Call Betty: 772-223-1685

MCAC, Betty Olliges, PO Box 1852, Palm City, FL 34991

Email: Info@MCACREEFS.org

Website: <http://www.MCACREEFS.org>

8th Annual Reef Builders Tournament & Lionfish Round-Up

Artificial reef construction and development creates habitat for marine organisms and fish. In the past few years, the MCAC Reef Fund has placed eighteen artificial reefs on the ocean floor as new fish habitats, what we call 'Hotels for Fish'. You will find pictures and videos, including underwater from Sea Rover Services Dive Team on our website www.MCACREEFS.org. It is important to sustain a viable marine environment. Our ability to maintain a working reef program is a way to maintain the Treasure Coast's reputation as a top notch sport fishing destination.

Martin County Artificial Reef Fund is a 501(c)(3) Corporation set up several years ago to enhance the artificial reef program of Martin County. Our first success was the deployment of the Wickstrom reef in 2003. We are building on that success and would like to continue a network of additional artificial reefs. Working in conjunction with Martin County's active focus on improving our reef system, we can continue to create an artificial reef program that will compete with any other county in the state of Florida.

Fund raising is necessary to accomplish our goals. With that in mind, the Artificial Reef Fund launched the 1st Annual Reef Builders Tournament in 2006. Our primary fundraiser is our Annual Tournament. For the past three years we've included the dive community offering the area anglers and divers a unique tournament experience described as 'Good Fish – Bad Fish'. Lionfish are beautiful but they are an invasive species. You can find more about them, catching and cooking, restaurants that serve them and much more on Martin County's MCLionfish website www.MCLionfish.com

From noon to 5PM, it's fun for all at the Weigh-in with the Tiki Bar, live music, vendors with arts and crafts, Coastal Paddleboarding, kayak and paddleboard trials, lionfish cleaned and cooked by our tournament volunteers for tasting and more fun every year, well. . . it's a big dock party! This year someone may walk the plank! The Fishing Tournament and Lionfish Round-Up are followed by an Awards Dinner with prizes and auction items provided by our sponsors.

All of our sponsors have their logo on our website with a hyperlink to their website. Your sponsorship is needed to make our event a success. All proceeds from the event will go to the Martin County Artificial Reefs Program. The county artificial reef website www.MartinReefs.com has a report on the socio-economic benefits of artificial reefs. If you are not familiar with the program, this excellent website and report makes very clear the value of artificial reefs to our community. Tournament Information for reef fund: <http://www.mcacreefs.org/p/74/2014-tournament>

Economic Benefits of Artificial Reefs:

University of Florida Study: The Economic Benefits Associated with Florida's Artificial Reefs.

Florida reportedly has the largest complement of permitted artificial reefs in the nation. These reefs have been shown to be beneficial to the local economies. The studies reviewed in this report show that artificial reefs do increase economic activity in surrounding communities. Because artificial reefs are valued by users and non-users alike and provide benefits that exceed costs, they may be an effective tool for redirecting use away from natural reefs if such a management objective is required. Overall, artificial reefs are a source of economic value that may justify additional deployments, even after taking into account the opportunity costs associated with scarce public funds.