

**Eco kids help protect our coasts against future erosion***Written by Cristina Virsida*

August 2, 2007 (Hallandale Beach, FL) – This Saturday August 4<sup>th</sup> at sunrise, volunteers - children and adults - armed with hand trowels and sunscreen will be returning for a third time to the southern side of Hallandale Beach to continue planting thousands of sea oats into the dunes. In only two weekends, this hard working and dedicated group of volunteers has already planted 30,000 sea oats, effectively constructing a stronger and better prepared coast against future storms and erosion. Because of its extensive system of underground stems and roots, sea oats help reduce beach erosion by gathering and holding the blowing sand together into sand dunes, protecting against rising waves.

Fourteen year old Alvaro Cuba returned this past Saturday for a second time to lend a hand in the planting. About volunteering, Alvaro said “When you’re out here, you really feel like what you’re doing is meaningful and it’s really helping the environment. It’s great to be able to do things like this.” Alvaro went on to express his enthusiasm about KEC, “Everyone should come out and volunteer with groups like The Kids Ecology Corps! Everyone is so nice and friendly and I’m doing something good.”

This dune restoration and environmental education project is a joint partnership between The Kids Ecology Corps (KEC), Broward Soil and Water Conservation District (BSWD) for Watershed Management Program Services and the City of Hallandale. BSWD is funding KEC to manage the sea oats planting with a \$5,000 grant awarded last month to the group.

City Commissioner Keith London offered to pitch in as a volunteer with KEC for this Saturday’s planting. Mr. London explains the importance of this project. “The City of Hallandale is very dedicated to protecting our city’s precious coastline. This project has been a wonderful way for our community to help preserve our beaches and ensure that our coasts will be here for generations to come. We look forward to working with The Kids Ecology Corps in this great community effort and hope this will encourage more citizens to become stewards of our natural environment.”

This environmental restoration and education project is just one of many community projects undertaken by The Kids Ecology Corps, a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization whose mission is to inspire young people to make environmental action part of their everyday lives and in the lives of those around them. KEC has reached over 55,000 young people from pre-k through high school, offering unique hands-on presentations and eco-action programs that educate children and youth about: keeping our oceans clean; the importance of trees; the role re-planting our coastal wetlands play in beach conservation; water conservation; pollution prevention; global climate change and energy conservation; and, protecting local natural habitats for native wildlife. Visit them at [www.kidsecologycorps.org](http://www.kidsecologycorps.org) or contact The Kids Ecology Corps at [kec@kidsecologycorps.org](mailto:kec@kidsecologycorps.org). The team can be reached at Tel.: 954-524-0366 for further information on becoming a volunteer or to schedule an environmental education presentation or eco-action project at your school.

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