

BOCA CHICA NAVAL AIR STATION ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSTRUCTION MONITORING

In 2005, the US Navy at Boca Chica Naval Air Station acquired emergency approvals from State and federal regulatory agencies to clear a large area of mangroves at the west end of one of the major runways to provide a safety zone for flight activities. The Air Station contains the largest area of remaining critical habitat for the federally-listed endangered Lower Keys Marsh Rabbit, *Sylvilagus palustris hefneri*. Some of the area to be cleared contained this critical habitat.

The construction firm selected for this work retained SWC to provide onsite inspections, staff training and monitoring to assure that the clearing work did not have a harmful effect on the Marsh Rabbit. SWC staff mapped—using GPS (Geographic Positioning Systems) and GIS (Geographic Information Systems)—the preferred habitat areas within the area to be cleared, conducted pre-work training sessions with staff of the construction firm to assure all personnel were fully familiar with the rabbit and signs indicating presence of individuals, and made regular visits to the site during clearing activities to assure that no damage to rabbits occurred.

Point of Contact: Ensign Chan/David Ellis
Year Completed: Professional Services 2005
Construction: 2005

Lower Keys Marsh Rabbit

