

## **Istokpoga Airboat Ramp Restoration**

On February 9, 2024, the **Florida Sportsmen's Conservation Association** and the **Lake Okeechobee Association of Airboaters** teamed up to work on the airboat ramp at the Istokpoga Canal, an essential access point to the Kissimmee River.

The existing slide was never an ideal fit, and the wooden structure had deteriorated significantly over time. The South Florida Water Management District is upgrading the ramp with marine-grade wood to improve durability. Our team focused on removing the old wooden components while preserving the concrete pilings, ensuring a solid foundation for the new structure.

A huge thank you goes out to the chairman, Billy Boatwright, and the **14 dedicated volunteers** who brought an array of power tools to dismantle the old ramp. Special appreciation to **Ricky Burnsed**, who provided a skid steer and mini excavator, saving us from severe backaches! Thanks to his efforts, the heavy lifting was handled efficiently, making the process smoother for everyone.

Projects like this help the district save thousands of taxpayer dollars while maintaining safe and accessible public waterways. We take pride in contributing to these conservation efforts, ensuring outdoor enthusiasts can continue enjoying Florida's beautiful natural resources. It's gratifying to be part of a project that benefits both the environment and the community.