

## What Lies Beneath the Surface of the EVMA Retention Ponds?

Well, the first of what I hope is only the beginning of harvesting tilapia from our retention ponds for 2017, was conducted on Friday March 19<sup>th</sup>. I'll give you the numbers of what is no longer living, breeding and producing nutrients within four of our retention ponds. Mr. James Malone, a fish harvester from Winter Haven Florida, removed one thousand one hundred and fifty (1,150+/-) pounds of tilapia which will no longer be producing nutrients which promote the growth of algae in our ponds. Additionally, these fish were in the process of breeding, so literally thousands upon thousands of eggs and small newly hatched juvenile tilapia were also removed. The harvest, broken down pond by pond is as follows:

**Pond #3** closest to the beginning of the bike path at Venice East Blvd. 400#s removed.

**Pond #4** next pond east (after the bridge) on the bike path 600#s removed.

**Pond #6** next pond east on the bike path 100#s removed.

**Pond #7** last of the four ponds which parallel the bike path 50#s removed.

If you recall, back on July 8, 2016, approximately 500#+/- of tilapia were removed from only ponds #3 and #4, as ponds #6 and #7 were not accessed at that time. So to date, we have removed one thousand six hundred and fifty (1,650+/-) pounds of tilapia at no cost to our community as well as the eggs which will never hatch and the nutrients which will not be deposited into our ponds which promote and further the growth of algae. This action in and of itself is a huge step in improving the water quality of our retention ponds and at absolutely no cost to our communities.

Please remember, the harvesting of live tilapia has no cost associated with it to the communities, however if the fish die due to depleted oxygen and overcrowding the cost of removal is significant.