



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Beth Ranson, Public Education & Information Officer

O: 305.292.7190

C: 305.747.4245

E: branson@keysmosquito.org

FKMCD RELEASES WOLBACHIA MOSQUITOES ON STOCK ISLAND

April 18, 2017, Monroe County – The Florida Keys Mosquito Control District (FKMCD), in conjunction with MosquitoMate (www.mosquitomate.com), released 20,000 male *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes on Stock Island today as part of a field trial of a new control method.

The field trial involves the release of male *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes infected with a naturally-occurring bacterium called *Wolbachia*. When a *Wolbachia*-infected male mates with a wild female *Aedes aegypti*, the resulting eggs do not hatch. During the 12 week evaluation, a thousand male mosquitoes, which do not bite, will be released from 20 different points in the trial area twice-a-week.

“This is an important time at Mosquito Control,” said Executive Director Andrea Leal. “A successful trial with the *Wolbachia*-infected mosquitoes could mean the availability of a new tool in the fight against the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito for not only our District, but for Mosquito Control Districts around the country.”

Aedes aegypti mosquitoes, which are very difficult to control, can carry many diseases such as Zika, dengue and chikungunya. FKMCD is constantly looking for new ways to eliminate this mosquito and prevent these diseases from entering our island communities.

MosquitoMate has conducted a similar trial to this one in Clovis, California. More information about the trial can be found at www.keysmosquito.org.

Photo Caption:

IMG_1478: Each tube contains 1,000 *Wolbachia*-infected male *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes.

IMG_1499: Billy Ryan, Lower Keys Inspector, releases *Wolbachia*-infected male *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes.

IMG_1485: Catherine Pruszynski, Research Entomologist, releases *Wolbachia*-infected male *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes.

About the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District

The mission of the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District is to control the mosquito population using the most effective methods, techniques, equipment and insecticides; thus enhancing the quality of life for all residents and reducing the possibility of mosquito transmitted diseases.

Follow FKMCD on Twitter at [@FlKeysMosquito](https://twitter.com/FlKeysMosquito) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/FlKeysMosquito). For more information about the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District, please visit www.keysmosquito.org.

###