

Turneffe Flats: 40 Years of Sustainable Tourism in Belize

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SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, March 23, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- <u>Turneffe Flats</u> has long been recognized as Belize's premier saltwater fly fishing, scuba diving and marine eco-tourism destination. Located on beautiful Turneffe Atoll in Belize, the resort specializes in superior flats fishing, diving, guided snorkeling, and other eco-tours for a limited number of guests.



Turneffe Flats, Belize

Turneffe Flats was first certified by <u>Green Globe</u> in 2013 and its hands-on operations and commitment to the surrounding environment have delivered a recent score of 94%, putting the

resort in the elite class of sustainably managed eco-lodges worldwide.



Turneffe Flats mission is to provide top-quality guest services while improving our surrounding environment and living conditions for our employees and neighbors"

Turneffe Flats owner Craig

Turneffe Flats has been owned and operated by its original owners, Craig and Karen Hayes, since 1981. Beginning as a small fly fishing camp, "Flats" has evolved to one of the better-known fishing and diving properties in Belize.

"Turneffe Flats mission is to provide top-quality guest services while improving our surrounding environment and living conditions for our employees and neighbors,"

says Turneffe Flats owner Craig Hayes.

Hayes

Turneffe Atoll is approximately 48 kilometres long and 16 kilometres wide, making it the largest coral atoll in Belize and the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System. The land and seascape consist of

a network of highly productive flats, creeks, and lagoons dotted by more than 150 mangrove islands and higher cayes with savanna and littoral forest.

Large expanses of intact mangrove and seagrass habitat and shallows provide important nursery functionality for a wide array of fish species, crocodiles, lobster, conch and other invertebrates. It is home to more than 500 species of fish, 65 species of stony corals, sea turtles, manatees, dolphins, seabirds, and other wildlife.

As a remote, off-grid resort, Turneffe Flats strives to provide quality guest services with minimal impact to Turneffe Atoll's environment. "All aspects of the operations have evolved over the past 40 years toward this goal" says Hayes.

The off-grid solar installation provides approximately 75% of energy needs reducing the use of diesel fuel by more than 64,000 litres per year. The solar panels have also been adapted for rainwater collection.

The resort water system operates primarily with rainwater collected from multiple linked locations. Current storage holds more than 1,000,000 litres of rainwater making the backup water-maker largely unneeded. □

Clearly seeing evidence of sea level rise, Turneffe Flats has developed a sea wall bolstered by a mangrove "hedge". This offers an attractive, functional and ecologically friendly way to address the sea level rise concern.

The resort's comprehensive waste management systems are designed to leave zero pollution on Turneffe Atoll. These include state-of-the-art wastewater management which recycles approximately half of the toilet water with no environmental discharge. All kitchen food waste is composted and used kitchen oil and mechanical oil is processed for biodiesel.

In 2002, Turneffe Flats formed a sister NGO, Turneffe Atoll Trust. Among other things, Turneffe Atoll Trust funded and drove efforts to establish Turneffe Atoll as Belize's largest marine reserve in 2012 and recently purchased approximately 6880 hectares at Turneffe to be protected in its natural state in perpetuity for the benefit of the people of Belize.

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