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Poly Provides Life Saving Solutions

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 7, 2008

Kastalon, Inc.

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For more than a decade, the survival of the endangered manatees has improved thanks to the researchers at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University and Kastalon Polyurethane Products.

Engineers of the Institute not only invented, but have continually improved on an acoustic detection system that has successfully kept manatees from being injured or killed by floodgates and boat locks, which rank among the main causes leading to the demise of these slow moving creatures. The system uses sound waves and is so responsive it can stop the gates less than a 10th of a second after they detect the manatee.

Teaming up with Kastalon Polyurethane Products satisfied the concerns of the design team in sourcing a material that could withstand years of continuous submersion in brackish water and dramatic impact caused by boats and moving debris. Kastalon, a leading custom polyurethane components manufacturer located outside Chicago, developed a specially formulated urethane that would withstand harsh environmental stress with strong mechanical properties, resistance to UV rays, and could exceed the design life expectancies.

According to Larry Taylor, Harbor Branch's project manager, "it's all about solutions and we knew that Kastalon had the right chemistries."



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Currently, Harbor Branch and Kastalon are again working together on the latest version of the acoustic detection system which involves several intricate parts including underwater sensor cartridges designed from the specially formulated acoustically invisible polyurethane. The improved system is smaller, faster and more reliable.

The success of this project has resulted in Harbor Branch receiving a \$5.8 million federal contract from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to install the system on the six additional navigation locks around Lake Okeechobee, Florida.

For more information on Kastalon's custom polyurethane capabilities, contact Lyn Thorne, Kastalon Polyurethane Products, Inc. 708-389-2210. For project information, contact Larry Taylor, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at 772-465-2400, ext. 625.

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