

A Look Ahead

In 2012, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council is embarking on a multi-year, comprehensive review of sanctuary marine zones and regulations, and will be soliciting public input throughout the process. The revisions made during this process will shape the future of marine conservation management in the Florida Keys for decades. The sanctuary's long-term monitoring programs and the comprehensive *Condition Report 2011 for Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary* highlight the need for additional management strategies and community engagement to reduce the extensive pressures that continue to threaten resource health and impede recovery. During the review, the sanctuary and its advisory council will examine the sanctuary boundary, current sanctuary-wide regulations, the sanctuary's marine zones and zone-specific regulations, involving the public in every step of the process.

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Members

Officers

Chair: Bruce Popham
Vice Chair: Ken Nedimyer

Non-Governmental Members

Boating Industry: Bruce Popham
Alternate: Bill Gilbert, Jr.
Citizen-at-Large – Lower Keys: David Hawtof
Alternate: Kristie Killam
Citizen-at-Large – Middle Keys: Dolly Garlo
Alternate: George Garrett
Citizen-at-Large – Upper Keys: David Makepeace
Alternate: Suzy Roebing
Conservation and Environment: Ken Nedimyer
Alternate: Jessica Pulfer
Conservation and Environment: Chris Bergh
Alternate: Peter Frezza
Diving – Lower Keys: Don Kincaid
Alternate: Bob Smith
Diving – Upper Keys: Rob Mitchell
Alternate: Scott Fowler
Education and Outreach: Martin Moe
Alternate: Alex Brylske
Fishing- Charter Fishing Flats Guide: Richard Grathwohl
Alternate: Ted Lund
Fishing – Charter Sports Fishing: Steven Leopold
Alternate: Brad Simonds

Fishing – Commercial – Marine/Tropical: Ben Daughtry
Alternate: Leah Wilde-Gould
Fishing – Commercial – Shell/Scale: Jeff Cramer
Alternate: Bill Kelly
Fishing – Recreational: Jack Curlett
Alternate: Bruce Frerer
Research and Monitoring: David Vaughan
Alternate: Art Itkin
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration: Jerry Lorenz
Alternate: Joseph Boyer
Submerged Cultural Resources: Corey Malcom
Alternate: Bill Chalfant
Tourism – Lower Keys: vacant
Alternate: Clinton Barras
Tourism – Upper Keys: Debra Illes
Alternate: Susan Ford Hammaker

Governmental Members

Local Government

Elected County Official: George R. Neugent
Alternate: Heather Carruthers

State Government (non-voting)

Florida Department of Environmental Protection: Joanna Walczak
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation, Division of Law Enforcement: Major Alfredo Escanio



Alternates: Capt. Pat Langley, Capt. Christian Rodriguez
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute: John Hunt

Federal Government (non-voting)

National Park Service: Tracy Ziegler
NOAA Office of Law Enforcement: Kenneth Blackburn
Alternate: John O'Malley
NOAA Office of General Counsel, Southeast Region: Karen Raine
U.S. Coast Guard: LCDR Michael Capelli
Alternate: Phil Goodman
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Patricia Bradley
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Anne Morkill
Alternates: Karen Hillier
NOAA Fisheries Service: Lauren Lugo

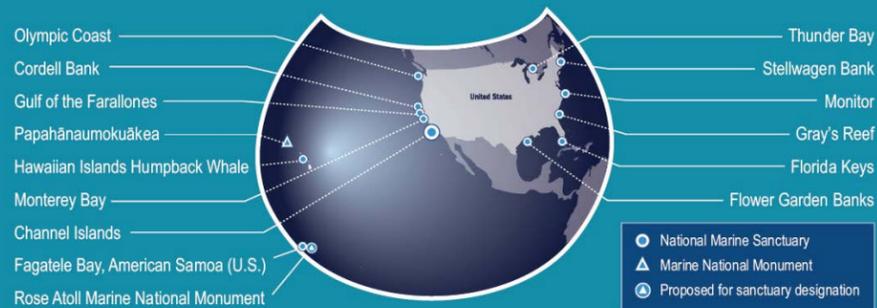
Ex-Officio ONMS Staff Members (non-voting)

NOAA Florida Keys NMS: Sean Morton
NOAA, ONMS, Southeast Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Region: Billy Causey

Sanctuary Advisory Council Coordinator
Lilli Ferguson

<http://floridakeys.noaa.gov>

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM



NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is committed to supporting lives and livelihoods across the nation and in sanctuary communities through socioeconomic research and monitoring to understand the economic and social drivers of sanctuary resources and improve management practices.

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY



2011 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary surrounds the Florida Keys archipelago and supports one of the most diverse marine ecosystems in North America. The sanctuary is home to the continent's only living coral barrier reef and beckons divers from around the world. The shallow waters of the 2,900-square nautical mile sanctuary also contain mangrove fringed islands and lush seagrass meadows. Together, these complex ecosystems provide the basis for the valuable tourism and fishing industries that are vital to Florida's economy. Established November 16, 1990.





Sanctuary supports youth maritime heritage documentation project

Sanctuary staff assisted a Florida Keys high school student in a year-long project to document 160 anchors, cannons and maritime artifacts along a 200-mile stretch of the U.S. Route 1 highway, creating possibly the most comprehensive report of topside maritime artifacts in the Florida Keys. The resulting catalog of roadside artifacts, provides an opportunity for visitors to appreciate the Keys' rich maritime history while highlighting the importance of maritime heritage conservation.



Restoration team reattaches 100 corals at vessel grounding site

Sanctuary staff completed work on a coral restoration project off Key Largo in the summer of 2011. The team reattached 100 corals, primarily boulder star coral, which had been injured during the 2006 grounding of the 54-foot motor yacht *Das Boot*. The vessel had struck an area of shallow patch reefs, injuring approximately 8.7 square meters of reef framework. Monies recovered in the grounding case settlement were used for restoration.



Sanctuary releases comprehensive assessment of resource conditions

The *Condition Report 2011 for Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary*, finalized in September 2011, examined the status and trends of sanctuary water quality, habitats, marine life and cultural resources. The comprehensive report documented how human actions continue to negatively affect the habitat and living resources of the sanctuary, but demonstrated improvements with long term management actions, community involvement and regulatory compliance. This report and others will guide the sanctuary's marine zoning and regulatory review slated to begin in 2012.



Website redesign enhances outreach capability of sanctuary

In 2011, sanctuary staff oversaw a major redesign of the sanctuary's website (floridakeys.noaa.gov). The complete overhaul included 370 html pages, 450 images, 230 pdfs, 1,375 links and a fresh new look. The sanctuary's website is an important public outreach tool, and the new site's updated content, functioning links and ease of navigation will enable the public to more readily access information, thereby increasing understanding of sanctuary science and management.



New artificial reef increased revenues and pressure on natural reef

The socioeconomic study "The Economic Impact of the USS *Vandenberg* on the Monroe County Economy" documented a 188.9% increase in dive business and a \$6.5 million increase in recreational expenditures following the 2009 sinking of the USS *Vandenberg* as an artificial reef within Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. However, the study also noted a 40.1% increase in user pressure by divers, snorkelers and other to the surrounding natural reefs after the deployment of the *Vandenberg*.



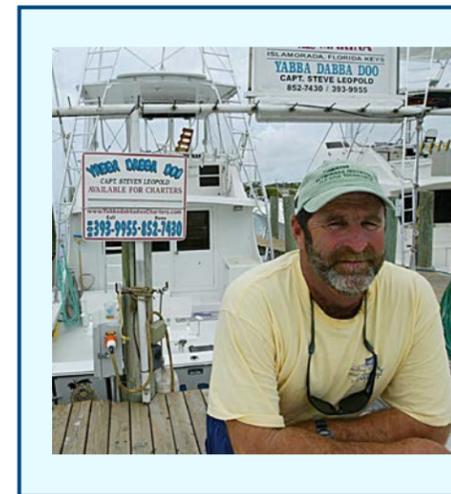
Research divers monitor coral community, remove marine debris

As part of the sanctuary's zone monitoring program, sanctuary and University of North Carolina at Wilmington researchers monitored 280 sites in the upper Florida Keys. During their 269 dives, sanctuary staff surveyed corals, urchins and sponges and removed 500 pounds of marine debris. This research has annually been documenting changes in the sanctuary's coral reef community since 1998. Long term monitoring results show populations of protected elkhorn and staghorn corals appear to be holding steady, while long-spined sea urchins are on a slow recovery.



Sanctuary enforcement focuses on protected reserves

The sanctuary-supported officers of Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission spent more than 4,800 hours protecting the resources of the sanctuary. More than 2,100 hours of their time was spent patrolling the 161 square-nautical-mile Tortugas Ecological Reserve via long range enforcement vessel, R/V *Peter Gladding*. Officers issued 63 citations and 59 warnings for violations to sanctuary regulations. During the year, officers responded to 31 new vessel groundings and 27 grounding cases were referred for prosecution.



Advisory council members supportive of sanctuary management process

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is a fine example of a government program that works in its intended form...for the people, by the people, specific to its unique region. It is a group that listens, speaks, and acts on input from all the various stakeholders of that region. I trust Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary with the very important task of managing the waters surrounding our beautiful island community.

- Steve Leopold, Sanctuary Advisory Council Member, Charter/Sports Fishing Seat