

2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



PARTNERS WORK TO PROTECT KEYS' RESOURCES

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) enhanced its partnership with Florida International University (FIU) through a \$1.3 million memorandum of understanding. FIU has been the primary partner in FKNMS' seagrass monitoring for 25 years and manages Aquarius Reef Base. The agreement establishes FIU as a formal partner with scientists, mechanics and education and outreach specialists. The partnership will enable FIU to increase its presence in the Keys. FKNMS will leverage FIU's resources to strengthen its research program and expand education and outreach programs.



RESEARCH EXPEDITION IN TORTUGAS, MARQUESAS

NOAA scientists were part of a team on the NOAA Ship *Nancy Foster* to explore Riley's Hump, Tortugas Bank and the Marquesas/Western Dry Rocks area. Scientists performed fish and queen conch surveys, mapped approximately 800 linear miles of habitat and collected more than 14 hours of video with the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation's ROV *Mohawk*. The team surgically tagged fishes with acoustic transmitters and deployed or serviced 11 acoustic receivers. A NOAA Teacher at Sea and Miami Herald reporter participated, leading to a front cover feature in the Miami Herald.



PARTNERSHIP BRINGS SCUBA DIVING TO HOUSEHOLD SCREENS

FKNMS was the first site in a new collaboration between NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Catlin Seaview Survey and Google. The Catlin Seaview camera is being used to document reef conditions in the sanctuary. The special high resolution camera allows scenes to be stitched into 360 degree panoramas for eventual release on Google Street View. Panoramas of iconic sites including Christ of the Abyss statue, the Aquarius undersea laboratory and staghorn coral nurseries were released to the public in August. The project received media coverage in more than 200 outlets.

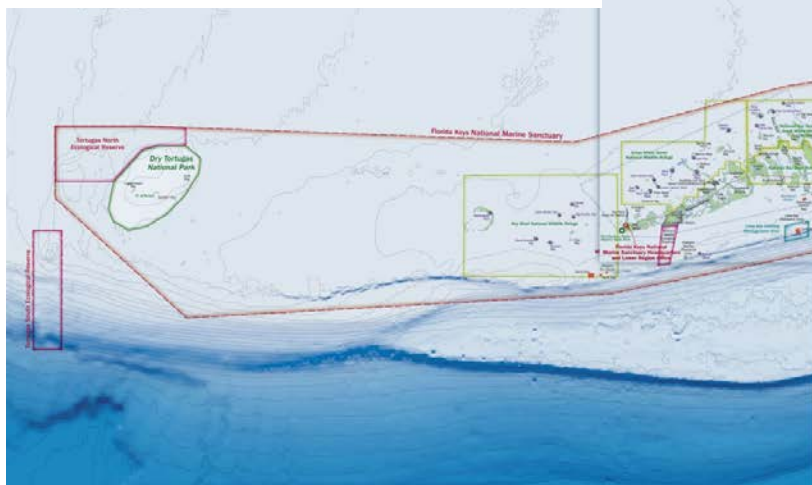


SCOPING FOR FKNMS REGULATORY REVIEW PROCESS COMPLETED

Three sanctuary advisory council (SAC) working groups provided recommendations for potential changes to the sanctuary's marine zoning. The SAC recommended FKNMS analyze these recommendations as part of its Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The sanctuary held a public scoping process to gather input on the direction the sanctuary should take. FKNMS then worked with the SAC and subject experts to review the public's recommendations. After two years of meetings, the SAC accepted the working groups' recommendations and provided additional recommendations to the sanctuary.

LOOKING AHEAD

- In 2015, the sanctuary is analyzing alternatives for updating its 1997 management plan as part of a comprehensive review, including roughly 220 suggestions from the sanctuary advisory council. Staff expect to release the alternatives in a draft Environmental Impact Statement around October.
- For its 25th anniversary year, FKNMS will release special outreach products about the sanctuary's history along with a list of 25 accomplishments. Planning for two public events in November is currently underway. The events will take place in the Upper Keys and at the Eco-Discovery Center.
- In partnership with the South Florida Tesla Owners and Mote Marine Laboratory, FKNMS will unveil a new electric car charging station at the Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center. This will reduce carbon emissions and also provide outreach opportunities.



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. The sanctuary was established on November 16, 1990.

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.

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM

Olympic Coast
Cordell Bank
Gulf of the Farallones
Papahānaumokuākea
Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale
Monterey Bay
Channel Islands
American Samoa (U.S.)



Thunder Bay
Stellwagen Bank
Monitor
Gray's Reef
Florida Keys
Flower Garden Banks

○ National Marine Sanctuary
△ Marine National Monument

Scale varies in this perspective. Adapted from National Geographic Maps.

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a system of 14 marine protected areas encompassing more than 150,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The system includes 13 national marine sanctuaries and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. For more information on the National Marine Sanctuary System, visit: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>