

Biscayne National Park

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE • U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



Final General Management Plan

August 2015 presentation to
Sanctuary Advisory Committee
Marathon, Florida

Purpose of Briefing

- Describe final plan and zone changes
- History of plan development
- Interagency consultation
- Public involvement

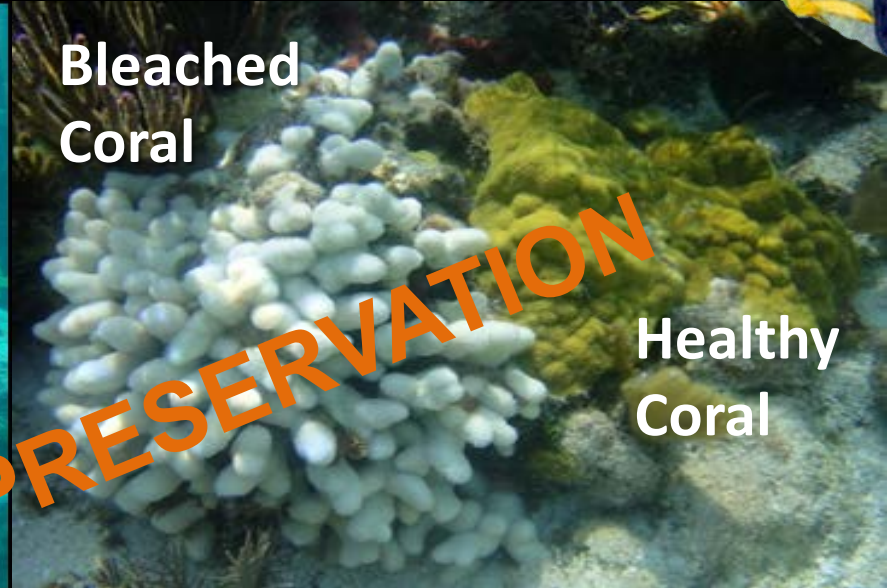


Need for Action

Undersized Fish



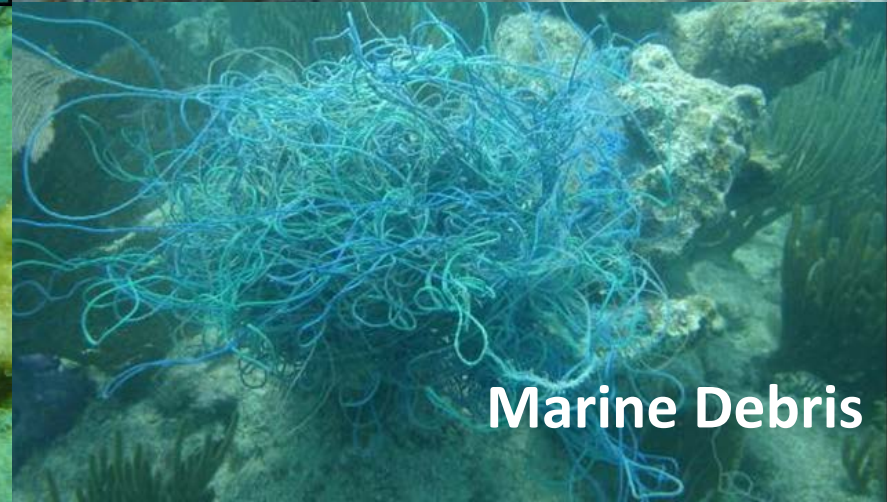
Bleached Coral



Healthy Coral



Dead Coral



Marine Debris

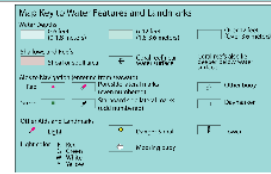
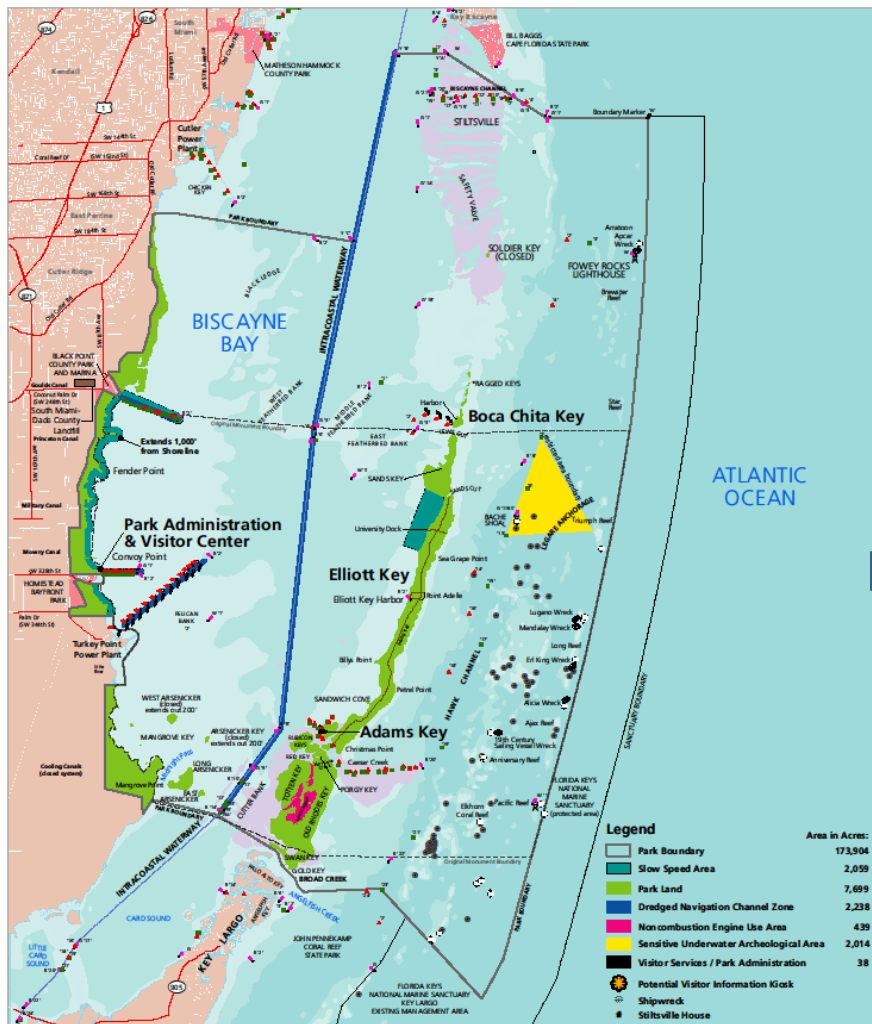
GMP Development



COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

22 public meetings; over 1,000 attendees; 43,000 pieces of correspondence





*RACED KEYS 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 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2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 20

New slow speed zones: 1000' off mainland shoreline

Currently:

NW



SW



- Increases manatee protection
- Consistent with Miami-Dade Manatee Protection Plan
- Increases paddler safety
- Reduces risk of vessel groundings – protects boaters and seagrass
- Consistent with State of Florida boating zone names

Plan:



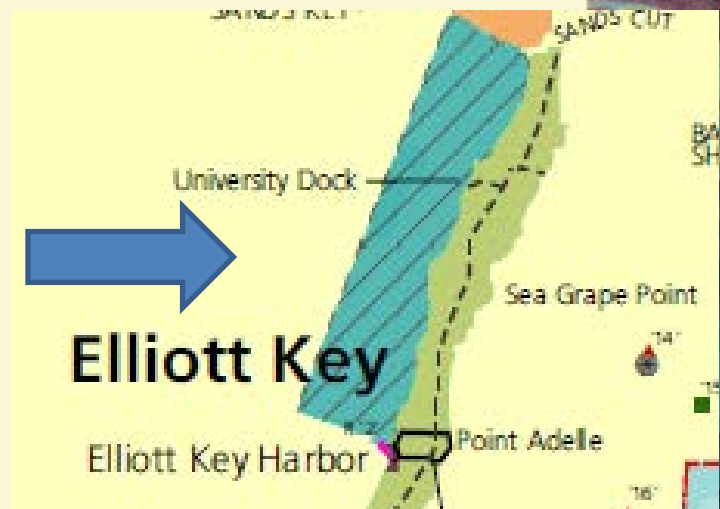
Increases “slow speed zone” & renames it to “idle speed no wake”

Currently:



- Increases swimmer protection
- Increases boater safety
- Larger area for recreational anchoring
- Consistent with State of Florida boating zone names

Plan:



Reduced size of Legare “Anchorage”

Currently:



2014 acres

- Intended to protect a sensitive submerged archeological site
- Old boundaries based on visible markers; Triumph Reef tower removed by USCG. Marker GPS allows lat/long boundaries

Plan:



756 acres

- Increased access while maintaining protection
- Always no entering water or stopping – now also no traps

Non-combustion engine use zones at Featherbeds

Currently:



- West, Middle, and East Featherbeds are between Black Point Marina and Boca Chita – had many groundings

- Were previously marked as shoals

- Reduces chance of vessel groundings
- Increases seagrass protection
- Increases boater safety

Plan:



Increased non-combustion engine use zones around Jones Lagoon

Currently:



- Jones Lagoon is very shallow
- First proposal had a bigger increase, drew boater and FWC concerns about creek access
- Final zone is only a small increase to the north
- Increases boater safety
- Reduces risk of vessel grounding

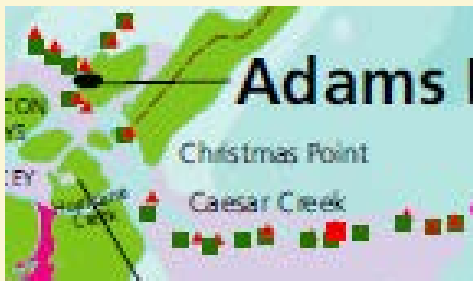
Plan:



Added slow speed zone to protect docked boats at Adams Key



Currently:



- Boaters on plane through Caesars Creek resulted in docked boats at Adams Key smashing against dock

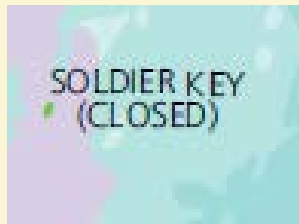
Plan:



- New slow speed zone between CC Markers 20 and 24 will protect visitor, government and university vessels docked there

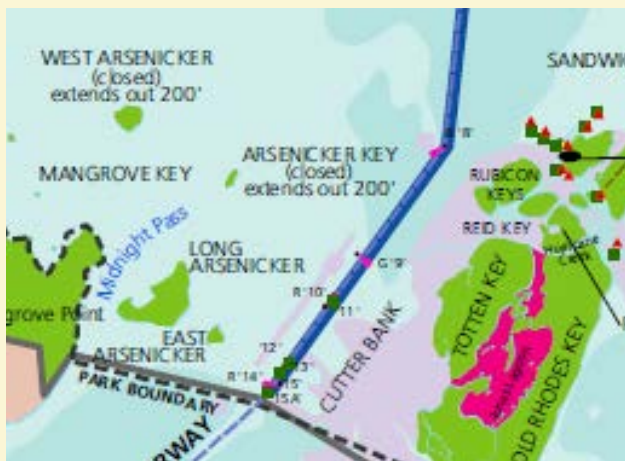
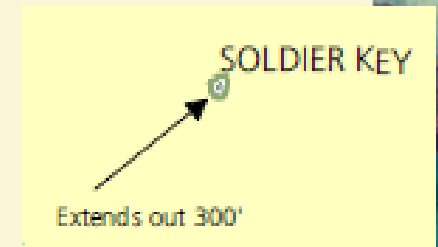
Sensitive resource zones around waterbird colonies

Currently:



- All waterbird colonies in the park have State-listed wading bird nests
- Currently most colonies were closed. Public comments in favor of more protection
- Plan closes all colony islands and add State- and science-recommended buffer zones around them

Plan:



Final Alternative

- Marine Reserve Zone
 - Same size and location as Alternative 4
 - Scientific basis, success worldwide
 - Mooring buoy transition instead of anchoring ban
- Alternative 6 zones
 - Single slow speed zone along shoreline
 - Marker, zone names same as State and County
- Developed via public engagement and agency consultation; public involved in zone design



Community Engagement

2014 outreach highlights:

- 4 anglers/recreational boaters groups
- 6 commercial fishing groups
- 4 environmental groups, including NPCA
- 3 public meetings with FWC support
- 3 elected/agency officials park tours including Senator Rubio staff
- South Atlantic Fisheries Mgmt Council
- New York Times article



2015 outreach highlights:

- 5 elected/agency officials tours/briefings: Rep. Curbelo, State & County Rep., USACE Ass't Sec., new FWC Regional Director
- Stakeholder briefings, including Ocean Reef Club, Sport Fishing & Boating Partnership Council
- News story with Telemundo



Final Alternative

A Glimpse into the Future

More and Larger Fish



Improved Visitor Experience



HEALTHY CORAL REEF

Spillover Effect

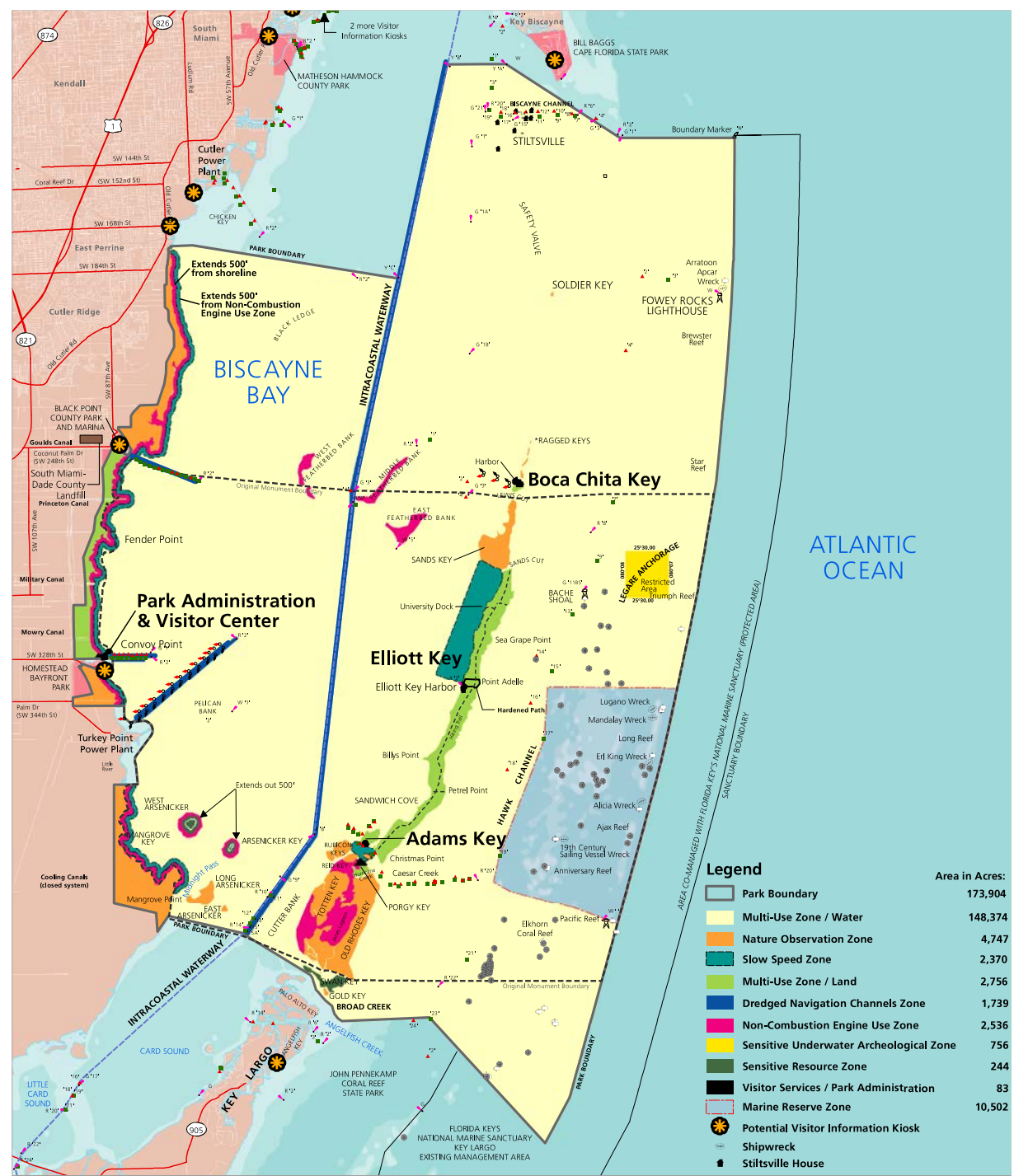




Questions and Discussion

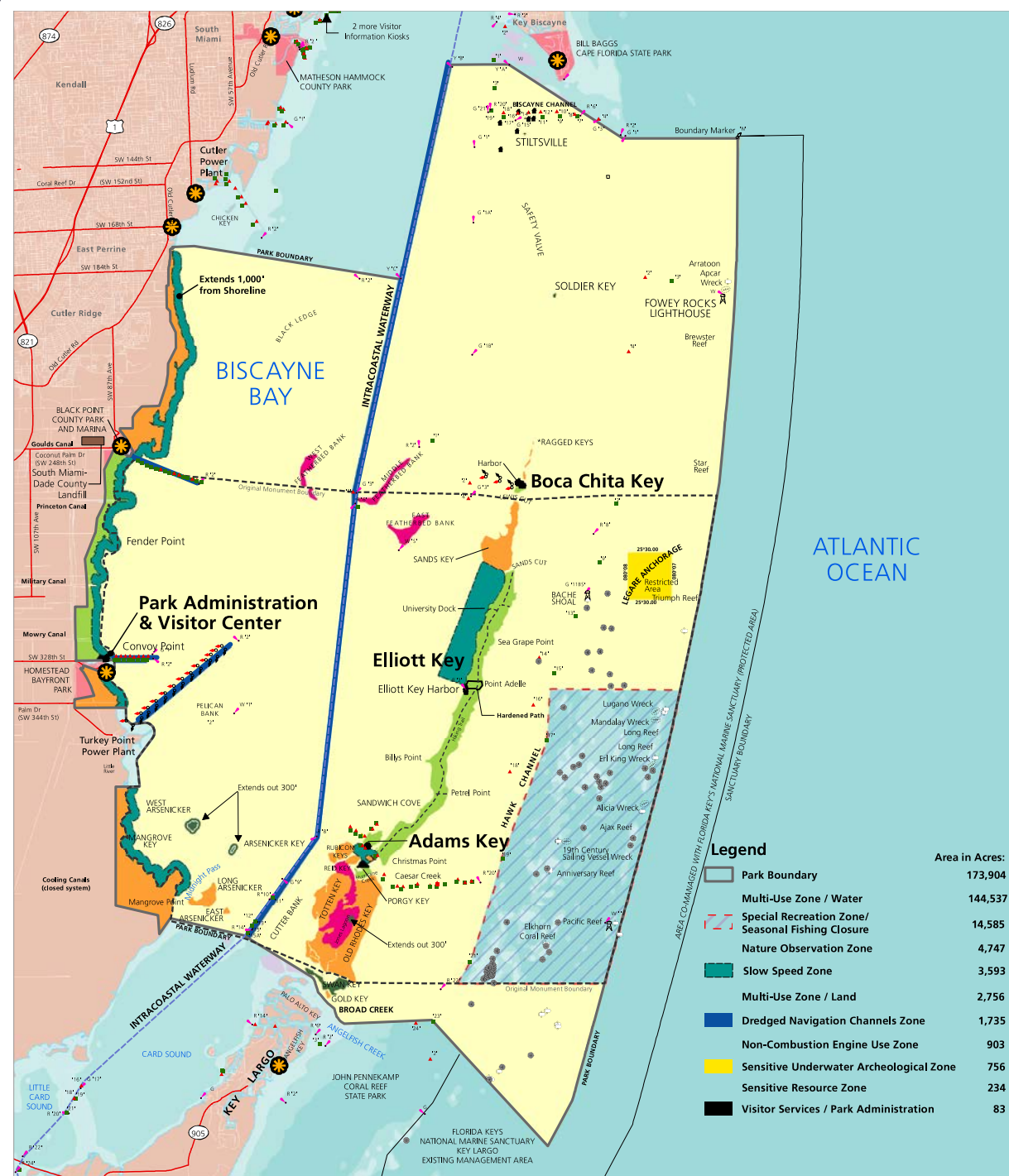
Alternative 4 Marine Reserve Zone

- 2011 Draft EIS preferred alternative
- Provides memorable visitor experience while maintaining a healthier reef
- 10,502 acre Marine Reserve Zone (MRZ)
- 6.3% of total park waters
- Protects 30% of park's reefs
- Improves fishing opportunities outside due to spillover
- Dual zone along mangrove shoreline



Alternatives 6 and 7 – Special Recreation Zone

- Alternative 6 – permits; 2013 Supplemental Draft EIS preferred alternative
- Alternative 7 – seasonal closure; limited commercial fishing
- 14,585 acre Special Recreation Zone (SRZ), 39% larger than MRZ
- 8.8% of total park waters
- Protects 70% of park's reefs
- Developed in consultation with FWC; adaptive management
- Single slow speed zone along mangrove shoreline
- Reduced non-combustion engine use zone around Jones Lagoon area



Agency Collaboration

2009 - Marine Reserve Zone science review

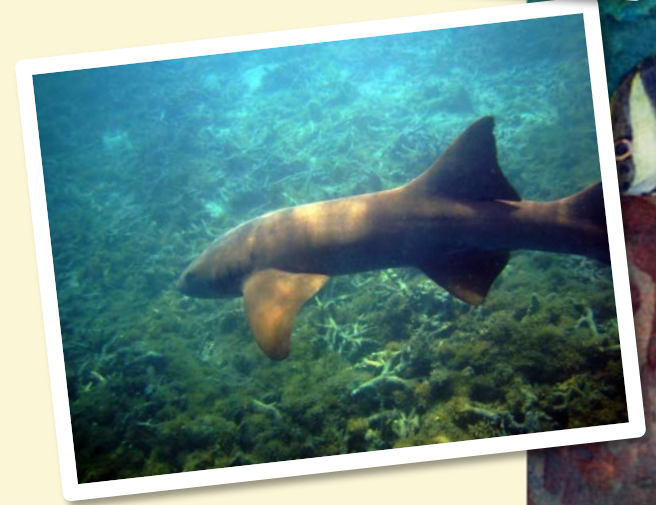
- NOAA Fisheries and University of Miami ranked public-proposed MRZ configurations by effectiveness
- Informed NPS decision on Marine Reserve Zone (MRZ) configurations in the DEIS

2011 – 2013 - Supplemental DEIS

- Significant collaboration with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and NOAA Fisheries to develop Alternatives 6 and 7
- FWC supported Alternative 6

2014 - Public workshops

- Collaboration with FWC
- Focused on Alternatives 4, 6, and 7



Public Comments – Marine Reserve and Special Recreation Zones

- Visitor access
- Equity among user groups
- Effectiveness of different proposals
- Economic impacts (tourism and guided and commercial fishing)
- Fishing pressure outside of MRZ/SRZ
- Size and location of zones and restrictions within them
- Anchoring (safety and access)
- Monitoring strategy
- Special activity licenses – equity, distribution, and cost

