Multi-Partner Derelict Vessel Removal Effort in the Marquesas Keys

FKNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council
April 18, 2017

Presented by:
Celia Hitchins
Monroe County
Office of Marine Resources
The Problem
The Planning

- Remoteness/Scale
- Location/Sensitivity/Access
- Legal/Permitting requirements
- Funding
- Authority

= Very Complex!
# Salvage Assessment

**#1: 25-foot wooden ex-commercial Cuban fishing vessel, "Mariel".**

Position: N 24.57593 W 082.09924

Status: Intact but sunk. Submerged 75%. Traditional wooden-hulled construction.

Pollution potential: Recent arrival to Marquesas, engine oil, fuel tank in bow of vessel, engine battery, loose debris, possible fuel jugs in forward cabin. Significant impacts to sea bed and mangroves.

Salvage plan: Derelict is accessible to 2-foot draft salvage vessel at high tide. Pump vessel afloat and remove to staging area for decontamination.

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**#2: 25-foot white fiberglass sailboat, derelict vessel, FL 3411HT**

Position: N 24.57512 W 082.09840

Status: Floating, just arrived and drifting toward mangroves next to #1 above.

Pollution potential: Inboard engine, fuel tank, engine oil. Vessel is floating but will have impacts to sea bed and mangroves when it grounds and eventually fills with water.

Salvage plan: Dewater and tow away at high tide.
Vessel Tagging

NOTICE
FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
DIVISION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

TO THE OWNER AND ALL INTERESTED IN THE ATTACHED PROPERTY

SUNKEN MIGRANT VESSEL #34
ST OF FL WATER

IS UNLAWFULLY UPON PUBLIC PROPERTY KNOWN AS

INCIDENT/SUMMARY #: FWSB-16-11679
DATE OF POSTING: 9/23/16

DIOR
DIVISION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER
MARATHON
NEAREST FWC OFFICE
ADDRESS
2796 95 Hwy
Marathon, FL 33050
CITY
STATE
ZIP CODE
305-619-6267

FWC-OLE 073 (08/15)
ENVIROMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF ABANDONED MIGRANT VESSELS AND DEBRIS REMOVAL AT MARQUEASAS KEYS

Prepared for:
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Florida Keys National Wildlife Refuge Complex
28950 Watson Blvd., Big Pine Key, FL 33043

Prepared by:
Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
33 East Quay Rd., Key West, FL 33040

Memorandum
To: Daniel Clark, Refuge Manager, Florida Keys National Wildlife Refuge Complex
Big Pine Key, Florida

From: Rosanna Hitzeman, Field Supervisor, South Florida Ecological Services Office
Vero Beach, Florida

Subject: Abandoned Migrant Vessels and Debris Removal at Marquesas Keys

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) South Florida Ecological Services Office has received the Service's Florida Keys National Wildlife Refuge Complex's (FKNWR) request for consultation dated January 25, 2017, for the proposed removal of abandoned migrant chugs and associated debris in the vicinity of the Marquesas Keys. FKNWR determined that the proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect any threatened or endangered species and/or designated critical habitat present. This includes the green sea turtle (Chelonia mydas), hawksbill sea turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata), Kemp's ridley sea turtle (Lepidochelys kempi), leatherback sea turtle (Dermochelys coriacea), loggerhead sea turtle (Caretta caretta), plover (Charadrius melodus), red knot (Calidris canutus rufa), and roseate tern (Sterna dougallii), as well as critical habitat for the loggerhead turtle and plover. For the purposes of this document, the five identified sea turtles will be referred to collectively as sea turtles. The SFELO has reviewed the information provided by the FKNWR, this memorandum is provided in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). The request has been assigned consultation code 0412010-2016-14543.

The FKNWR as Lead Agency, along with Cooprating Agencies, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), NOAA Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and Monroe County Marine Resource Office, propose to remove shoreline and nearshore habitats in the vicinity of the Marquesas Keys by permanently removing pollution threats including a number of abandoned migrant chugs and associated debris. This would occur in two stages in order to remove pollution and environmental threats from 25 chugs and 1 abandoned vessel. The first stage of the proposed response strategy would be to recover pollution from 12 chugs by safely towing them and/or lifting them directly out of the water onto a shallow draft barge, one at a time, moving them away from sensitive beach habitats, and relocating them to a safe place that would be anchored (using spuds) closely offshore. For chugs where only the engine or another source of pollution would be recovered, equipment would be brought alongside the chugs and the pollution threat would be removed. In some instances it may be required to remove the chugs.
Let the work begin...almost

- Salvage/Operational Plans
- Pollution Response Plan
- Weather reports (via NWS)
- Daily oversight

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Marine Weather Spot Forecast for
NOAA/FKNMS, Monroe County, FLDEP, FWC, USFWS, USCG to support
“Removal of Derelict Vessels in the Marquesas Keys”

DATE AND TIME ISSUED: Monday, 13 March at 1500 EDT

CURRENT WATCHES, WARNINGS, OR ADVISORIES:
None.

FORECAST for Key West to Marquesas Keys:

Tonight, 13-14 March 2017, 1800-0600 EDT:
WIND: S near 10 knots, becoming W to NW and increasing to 15 knots after midnight.
SEAS: Building to 1 to 3 feet, nearshore waters a light chop, becoming a moderate chop.
SKY COVER. Partly cloudy this evening, becoming mostly cloudy.
RAIN CHANCE: 50% (scattered rain showers), mainly after midnight.
LIGHTNING RISK (probability within 25 nautical miles): 2%
The Removal Process
The Removal Process
Media involvement

**Agencies to remove derelict vessels**

Boats, chugs litter Marquesas Keys.

For more than a year, Monroe County Marine Resources Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Keys Conservation Office, Monroe County Environmental Services, and the Florida Keys Audubon Society have been working to remove derelict vessels from the Marquesas Keys. The vessels pose a threat to the environment and can be a hazard to boaters.

**FDOT to host meeting for projects**

The Florida Department of Transportation will host a meeting to discuss projects in the Keys.

**Work has begun on the removal of 32 derelict and abandoned vessels.**

These deteriorating boats, mainly left by Cuban migrants, are polluting the environment and could be hazardous to marine life and the environment. The Monroe County BOCC has partnered with various agencies to remove these vessels.

**Monroe County BOCC**

March 17

Work has begun on the removal of 32 derelict and abandoned vessels. These deteriorating boats, mainly left by Cuban migrants, are polluting the once pristine Marquesas Keys and causing problems for the land and marine ecosystems at this remote area about 17 miles west of Key West.

This multi-agency project is led by Monroe County's Marine Resources Department.