



Upper Keys Region













Upper Keys Region: Marine Zones

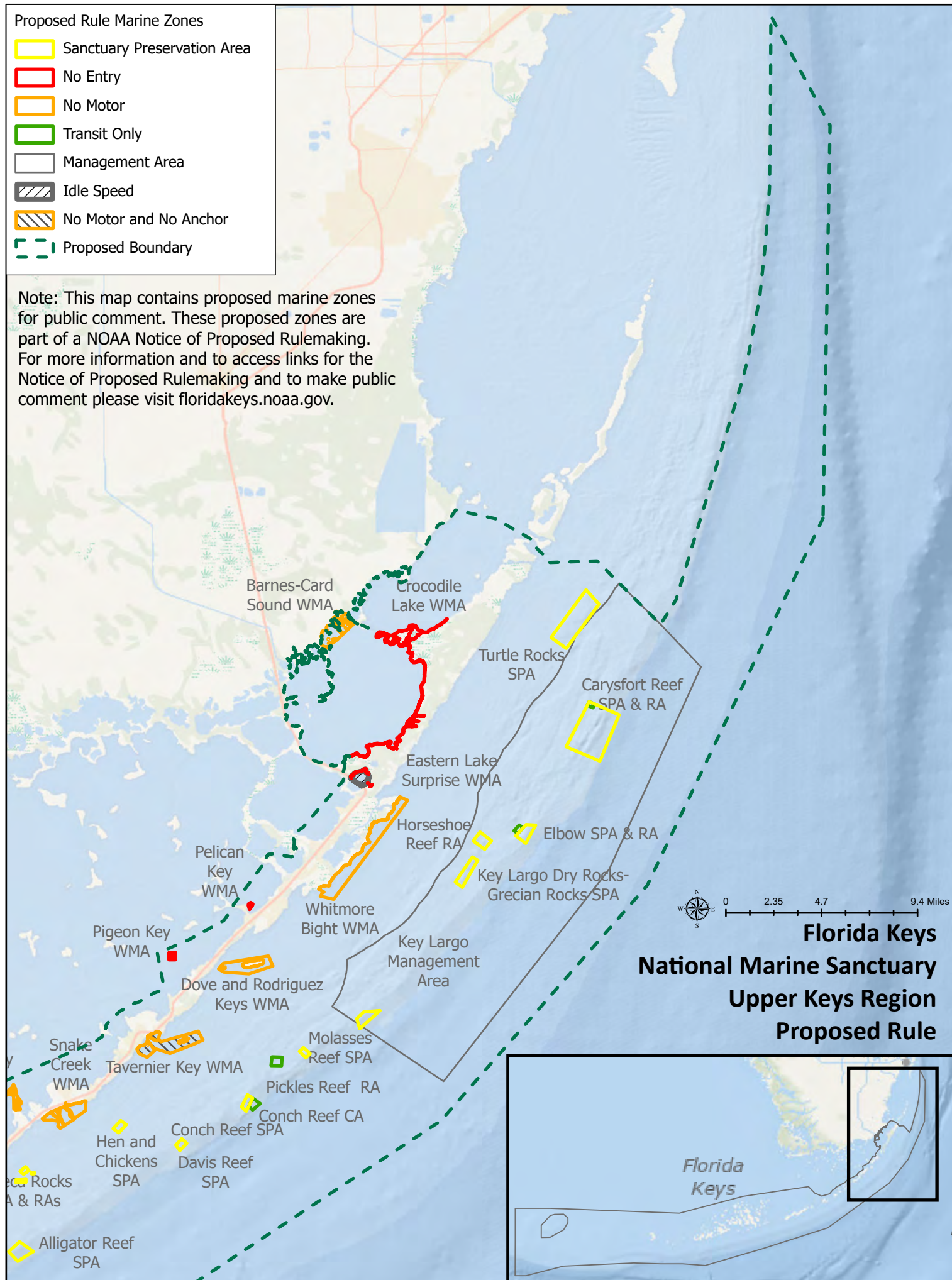
- Upper Keys Regional Map
- Key Largo Management Area
- Turtle Rocks Sanctuary Preservation Area
- Carysfort Reef Sanctuary Preservation Area and Carysfort Reef Nursery Restoration Area
- The Elbow Sanctuary Preservation Area and The Elbow Nursery Restoration Area
- Horseshoe Reef Habitat Restoration Area
- Key Largo Dry Rocks, Grecian Rocks, and Key Largo Dry Rocks-Grecian Rocks Sanctuary Preservation Areas
- Molasses Reef and French Reef Sanctuary Preservation Areas
- Pickles Reef Habitat Restoration Area and Tavernier Nursery Restoration Area
- Conch Reef Sanctuary Preservation Area and Conch Reef Conservation Area
- Davis Reef Sanctuary Preservation Area
- Hen and Chickens Sanctuary Preservation Area
- Crocodile Lake Wildlife Management Area
- Barnes-Card Sound Wildlife Management Area
- Eastern Lake Surprise Wildlife Management Area
- Whitmore Bight Wildlife Management Area
- Pelican Key Wildlife Management Area
- Dove and Rodriguez Keys Wildlife Management Area
- Pigeon Key Wildlife Management Area
- Tavernier Key Wildlife Management Area

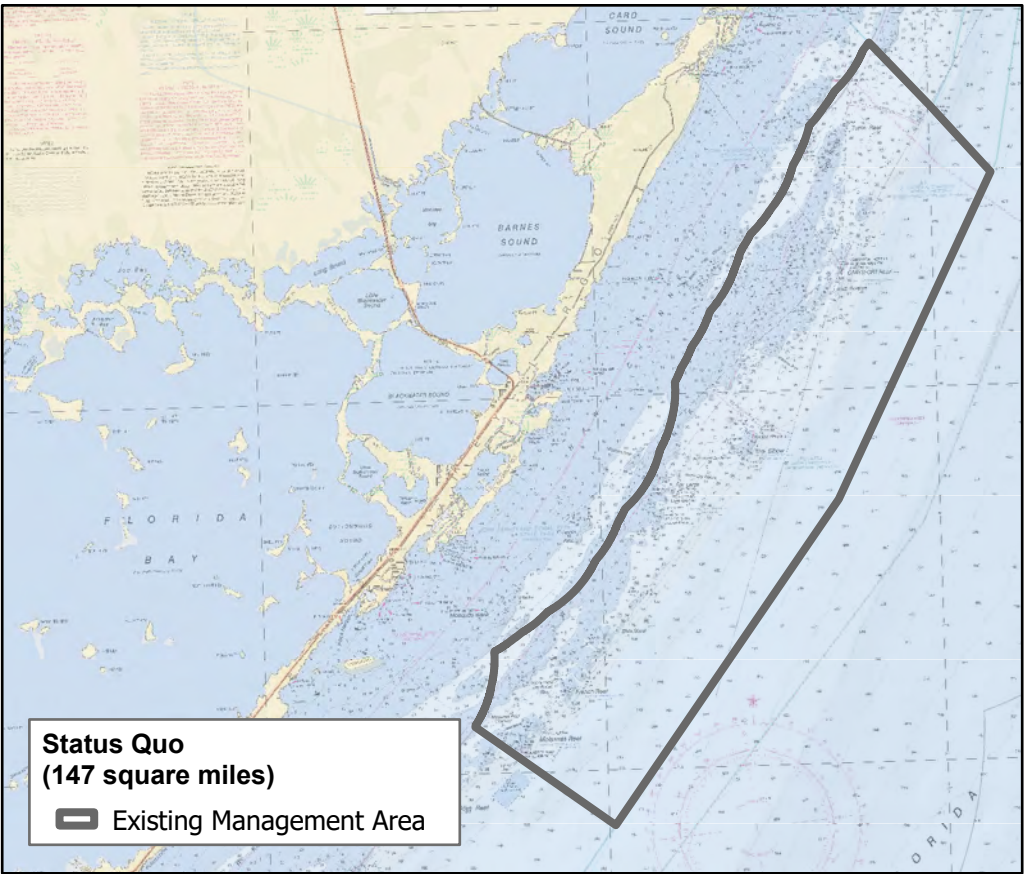
Cover photo: The historic Carysfort Reef Lighthouse sits at the north end of the Key Largo Existing Management Area. Photo: Amy Massey/NOAA

Proposed Rule Marine Zones

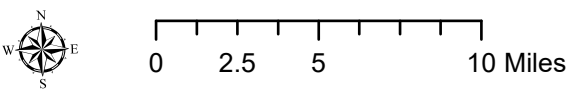
-  Sanctuary Preservation Area
-  No Entry
-  No Motor
-  Transit Only
-  Management Area
-  Idle Speed
-  No Motor and No Anchor
-  Proposed Boundary

Note: This map contains proposed marine zones for public comment. These proposed zones are part of a NOAA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. For more information and to access links for the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and to make public comment please visit floridakeys.noaa.gov.





**Draft Rule is the same
as status quo**



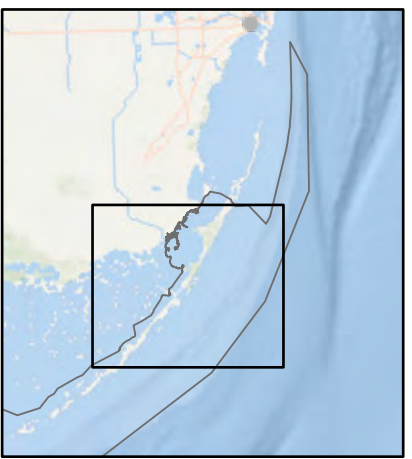
Key Largo Management Area

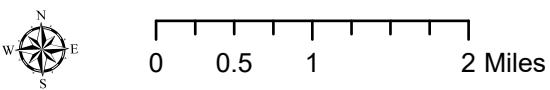
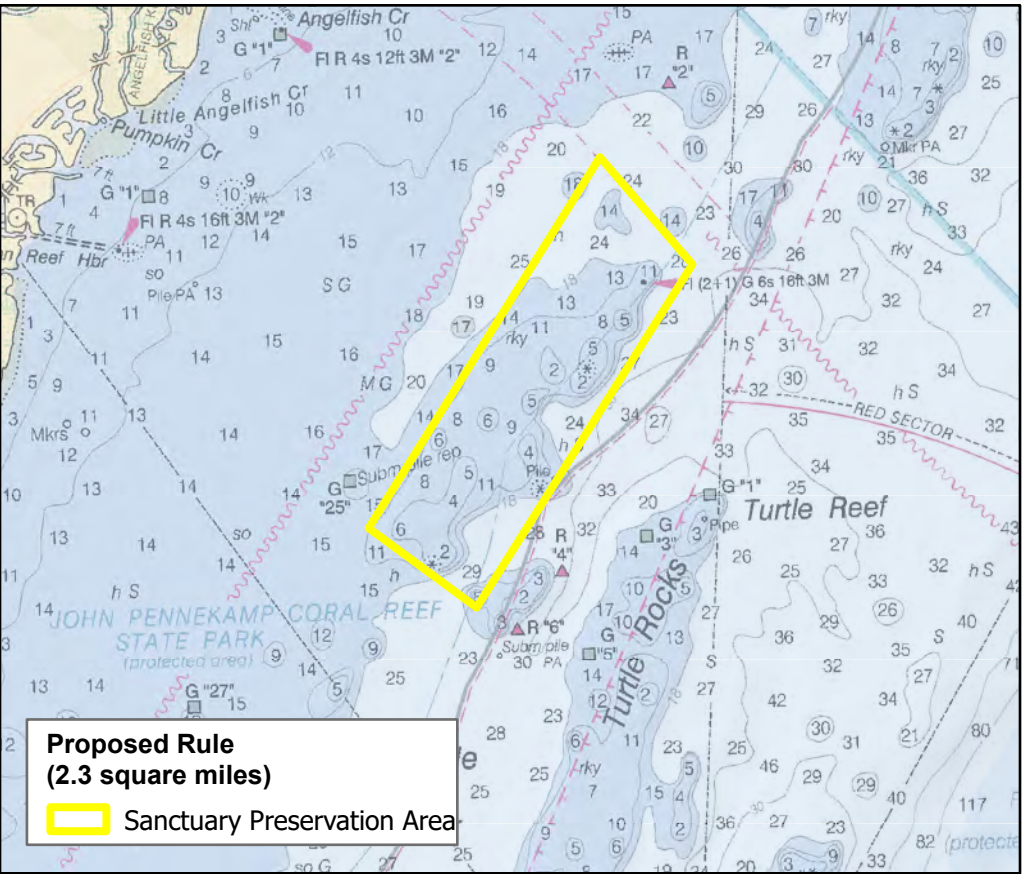
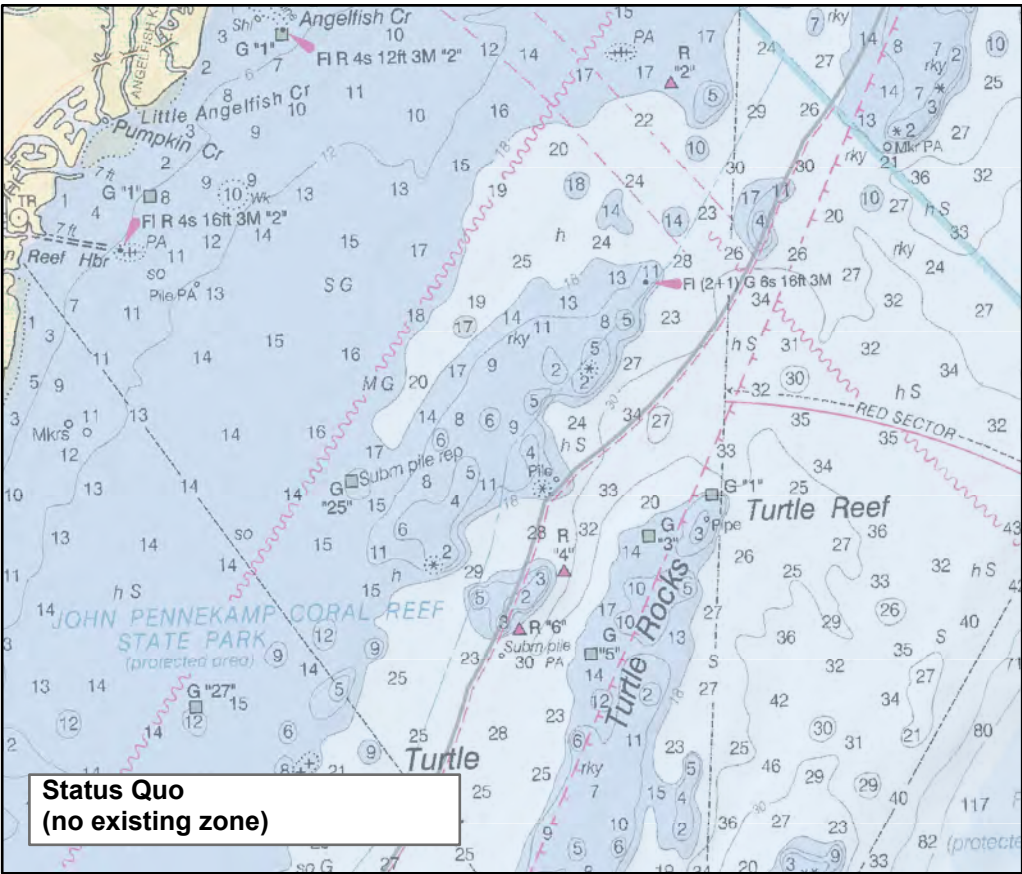
Designated in 1975 as a National Marine Sanctuary, this zone encompasses an interconnected network of habitat types such as seagrass beds, shallow hardbottom and coral reefs. It includes Conservation, Sanctuary Preservation and Restoration Areas and is located adjacent to other protected areas such as John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park, Biscayne National Park, and Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge. This zone includes areas that prohibit spearfishing, marine life collecting, harvest of lobster, and recreational and commercial fishing. This zone also includes multiple restoration sites, including four nursery areas that are propagating corals and two outplanting sites. Three Mission: Iconic Reef sites are located within this zone.

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Upper Keys Region





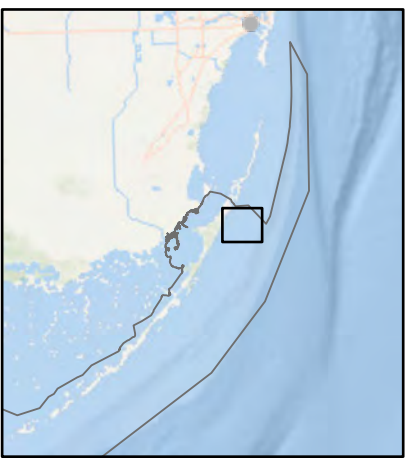
Turtle Rocks Sanctuary Preservation Area

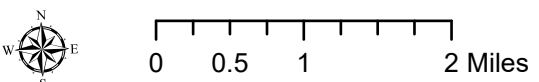
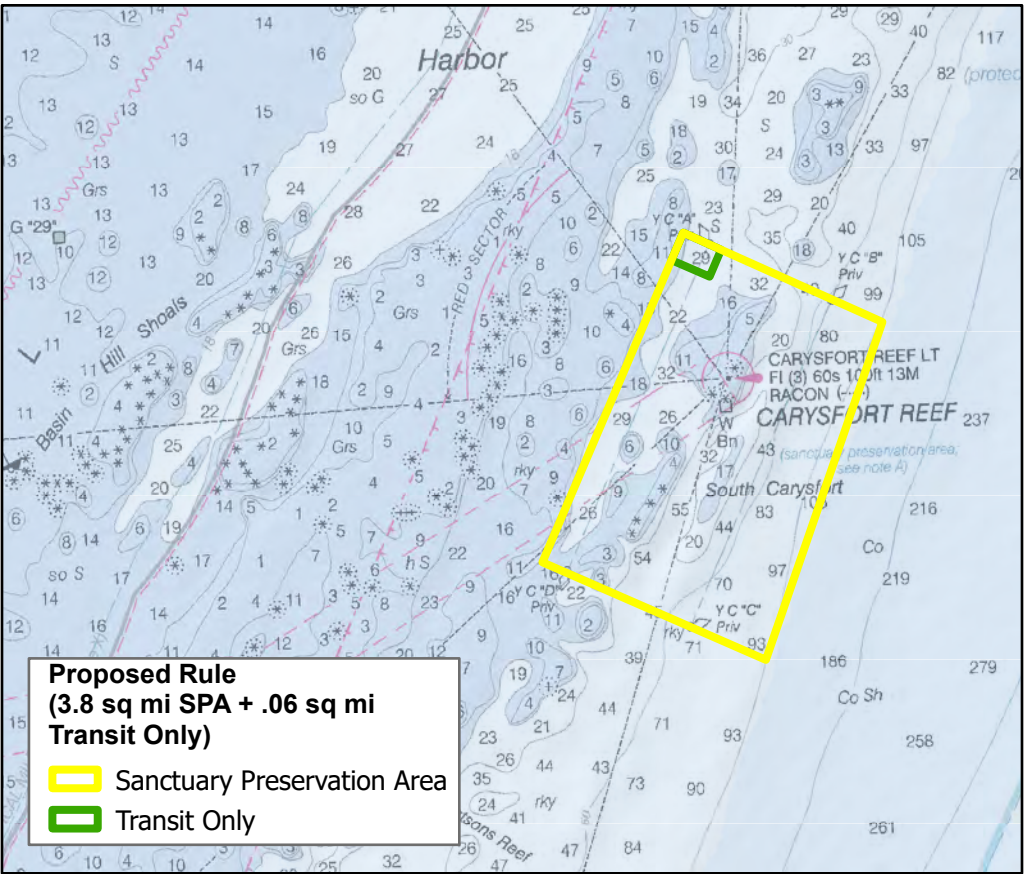
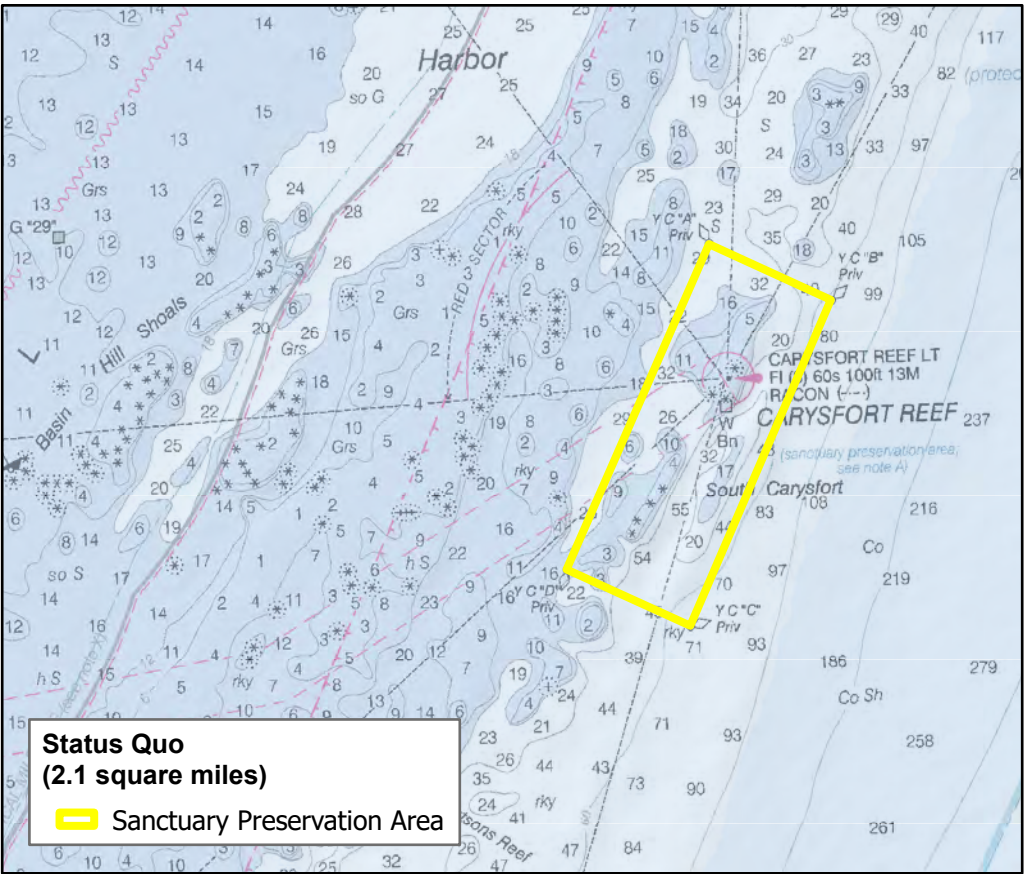
Protects important nearshore, interconnected habitats within the Upper Keys including individual and aggregated patch reefs, seagrass beds and shallow hardbottom communities. High relief coral reef habitats in this area historically contained large populations of ESA-listed staghorn, elkhorn, and star corals. Currently contains remnant ESA-listed staghorn coral populations and one of the only known fused staghorn colonies. In addition to the natural resources, historical resources in the area that are also susceptible to anchoring damage will be protected. This area is an existing Pennekamp Coral Formation Zone, which prohibits harvest of spiny lobster and deployment of traps.

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Carysfort Reef Sanctuary Preservation Area and Carysfort Reef Nursery Restoration Area

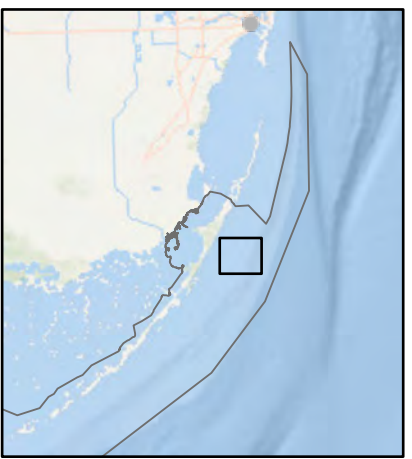
SPA: Protects the best developed spur-and-groove reef system in the Upper Florida Keys that formerly supported extensive thickets of ESA-listed elkhorn and staghorn corals and also includes extensive and diverse deepwater reef habitats and an important spawning aggregation site for fishery species. Currently is the largest demonstration site for the restoration of ESA-listed elkhorn and staghorn coral in the Florida Keys, which is one of seven Mission: Iconic Reef sites. An important candidate site for resilience because of its close proximity to the Florida Current and its interconnectedness to the wider Caribbean. The historic Carysfort lighthouse is included in this SPA. This zone was originally designed to limit consumptive activities and separate users engaged in different activities.

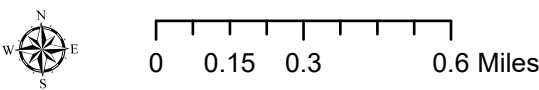
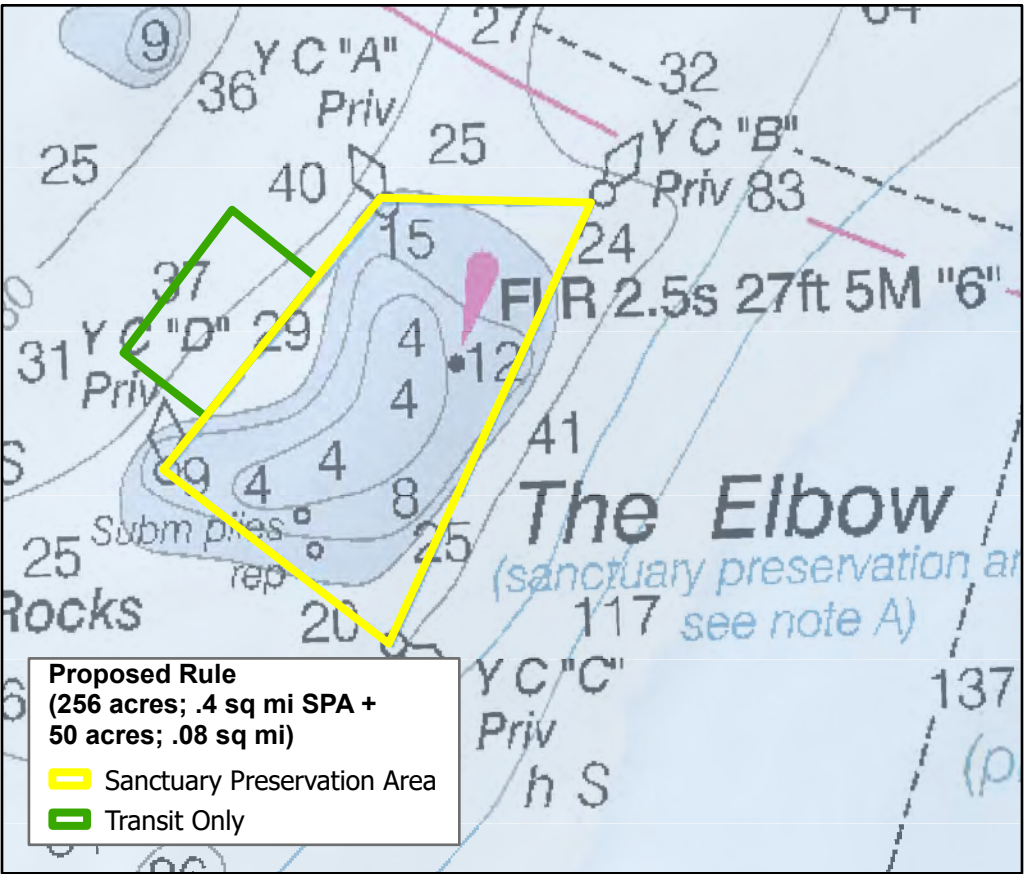
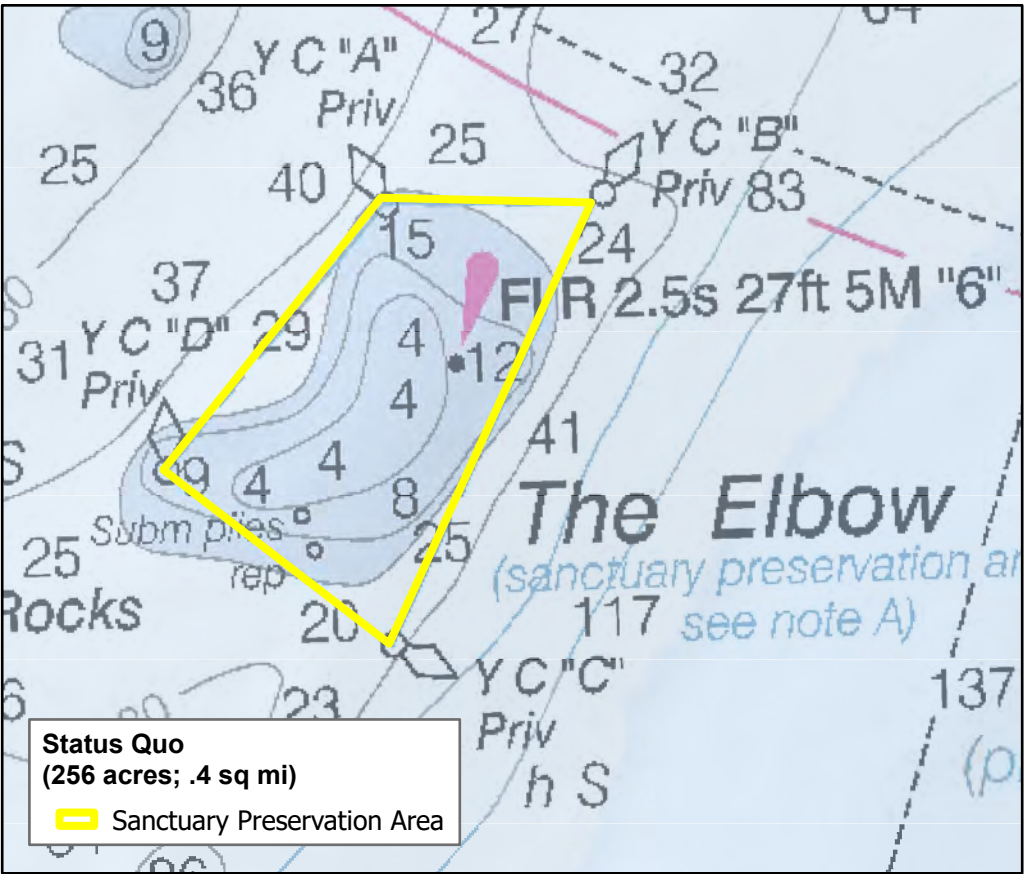
Carysfort RA: Provide additional protections to an existing, permitted coral nursery site.

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The Elbow Sanctuary Preservation Area and The Elbow Nursery Restoration Area

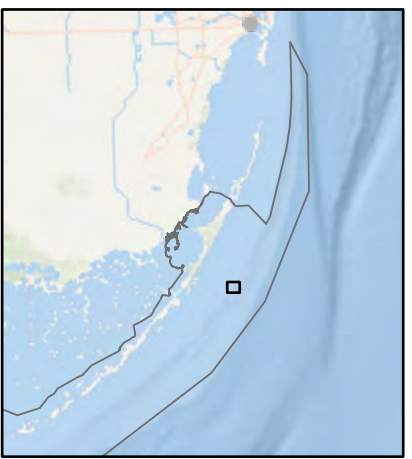
The Elbow SPA: Protects an important reef community with a well-defined reef crest, spur-and-groove and deeper multi-tiered linear reef system. Historically supported large stands of ESA-listed staghorn and elkhorn coral and contains remnant populations of elkhorn coral that are undergoing recovery. This zone also contains important shipwrecks included in the FKNMS Shipwreck Trail. This zone was originally designed to limit consumptive activities and separate users engaged in different activities.

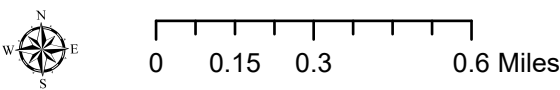
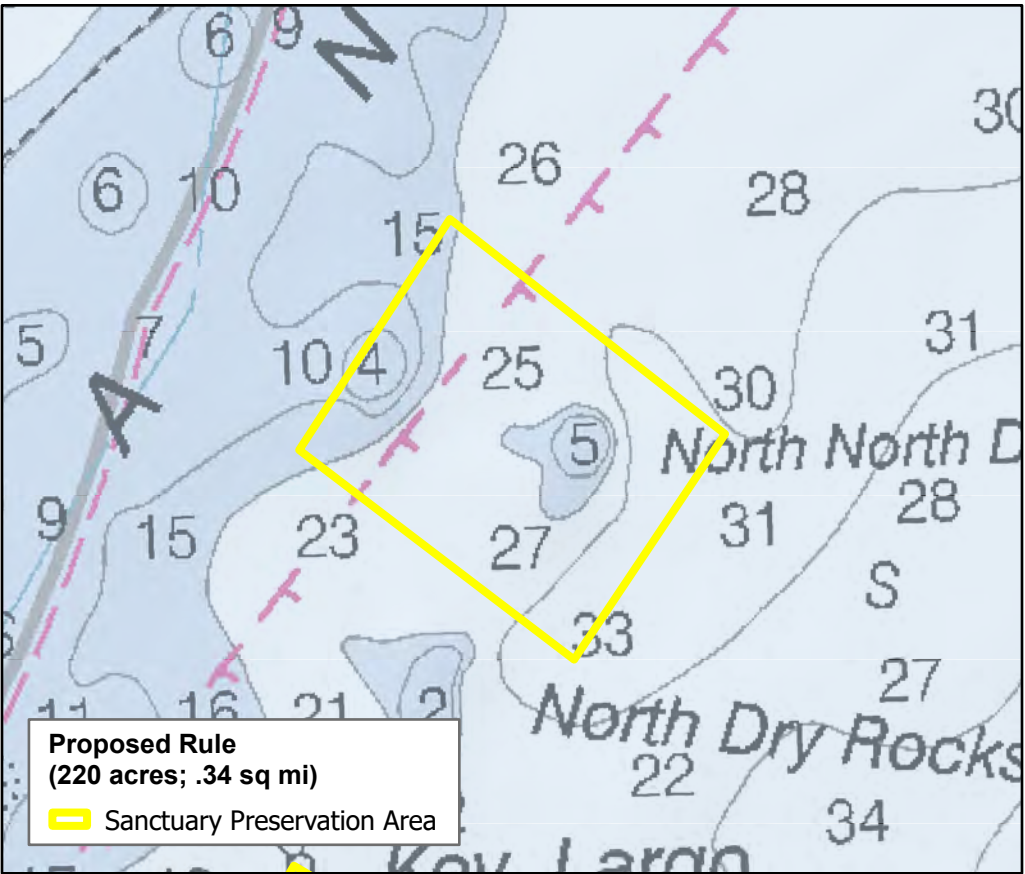
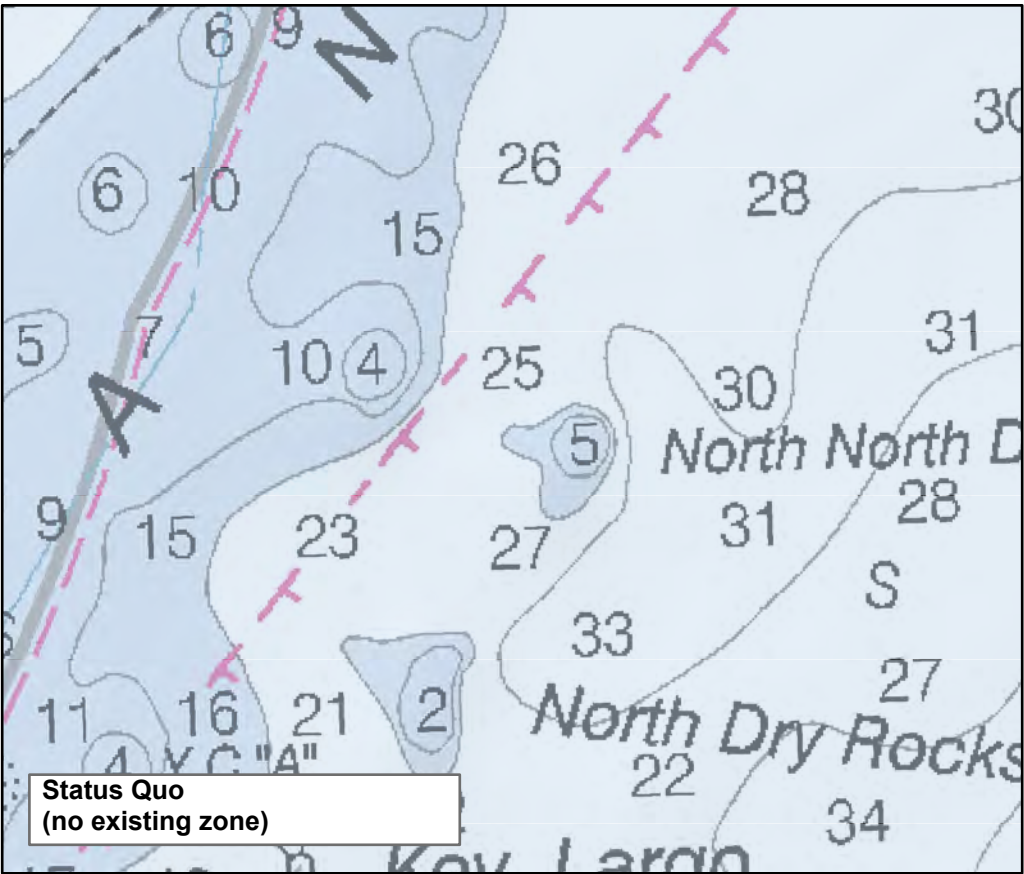
The Elbow Reef Restoration Area: This area, an active coral nursery site, is provided for restoration of degraded coral reef ecosystem sanctuary resources.

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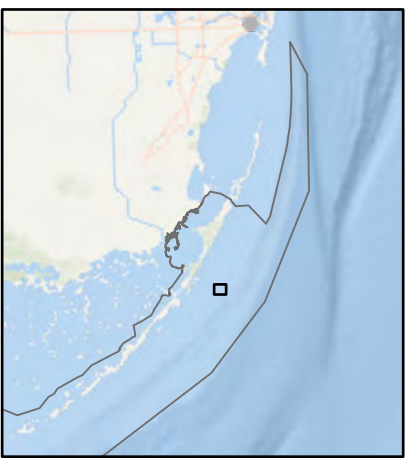




Horseshoe Reef Habitat Restoration Area

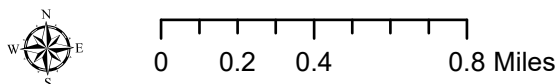
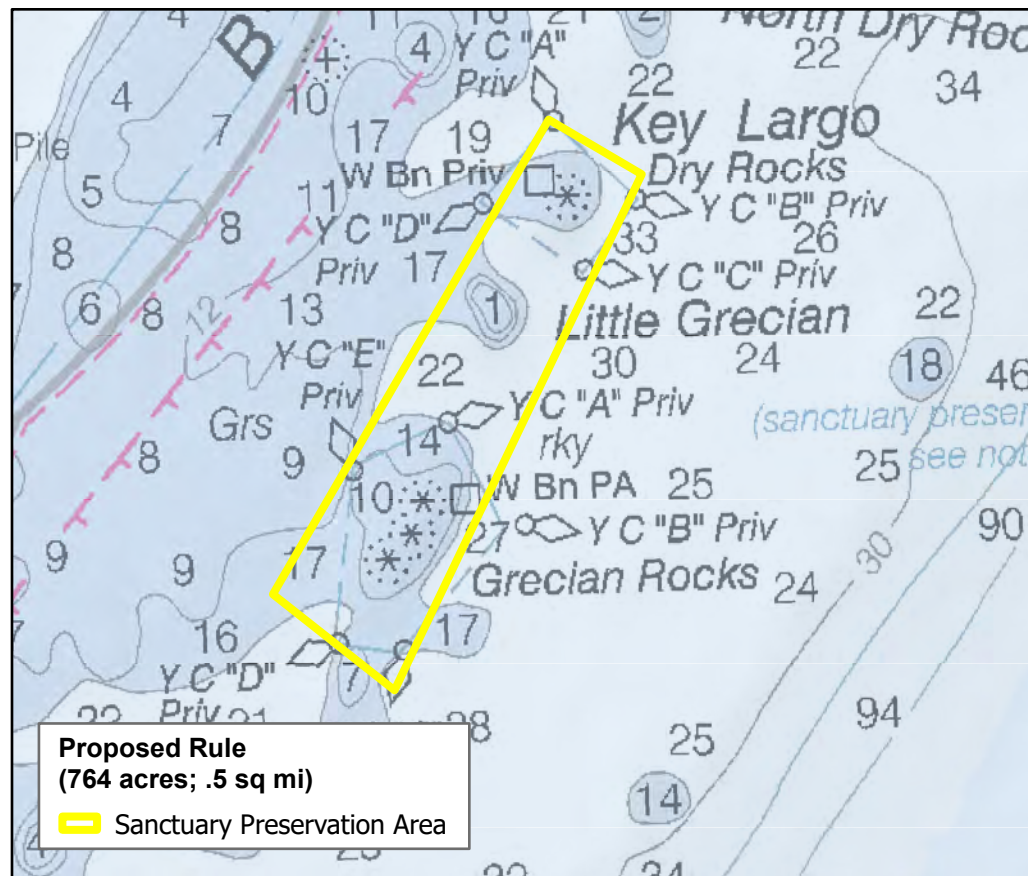
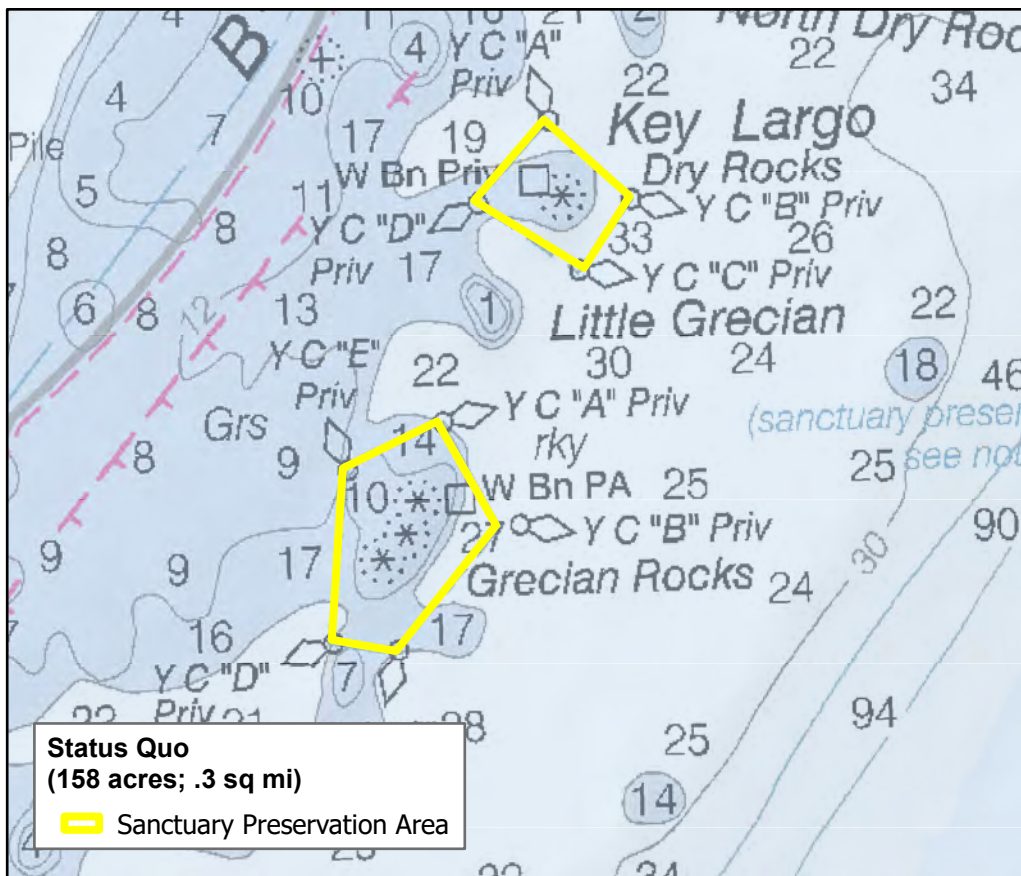
Provide additional protections to the only Mission: Iconic Reefs site that is not already included within an existing SPA. This zone encompasses the portion of Horseshoe Reef targeted for active restoration and would not affect the remainder of the reef.

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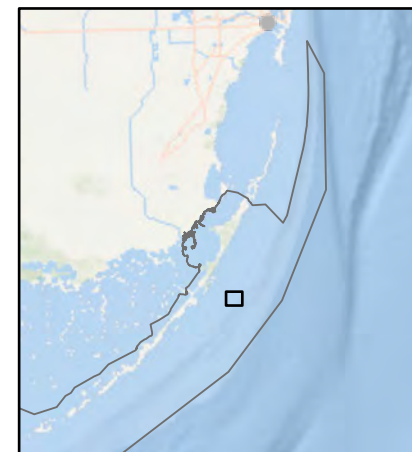


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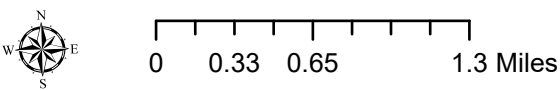
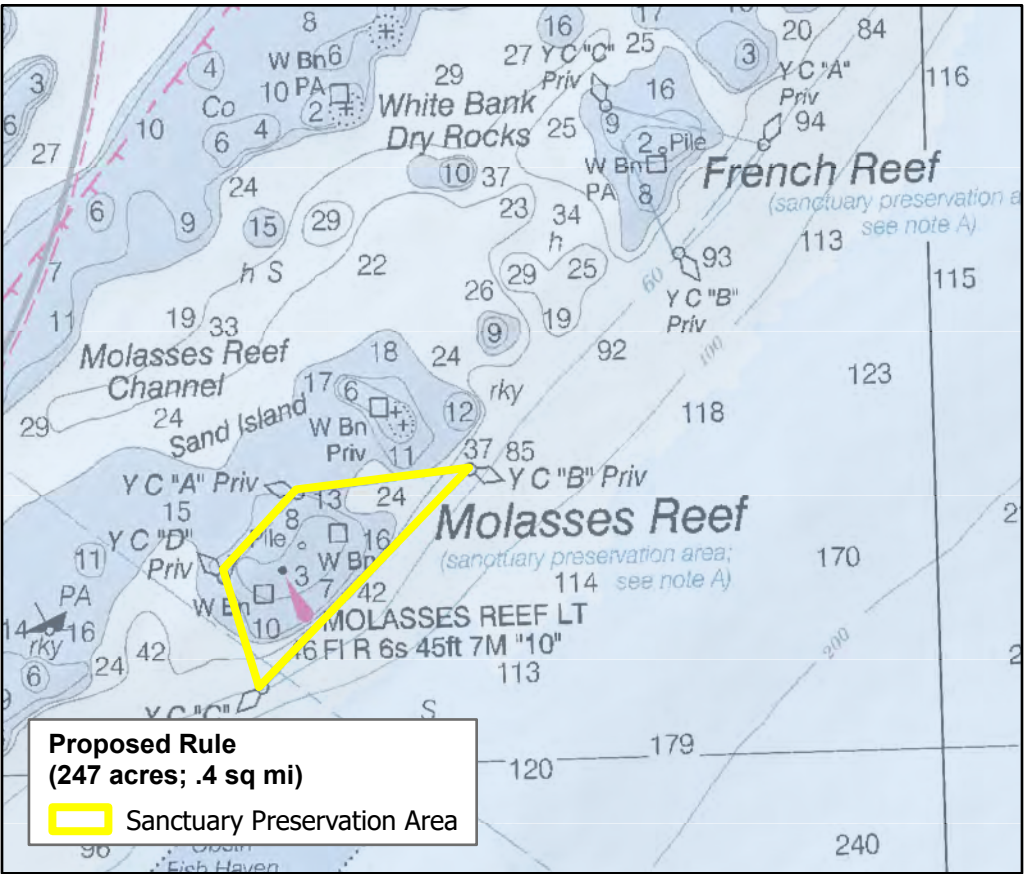
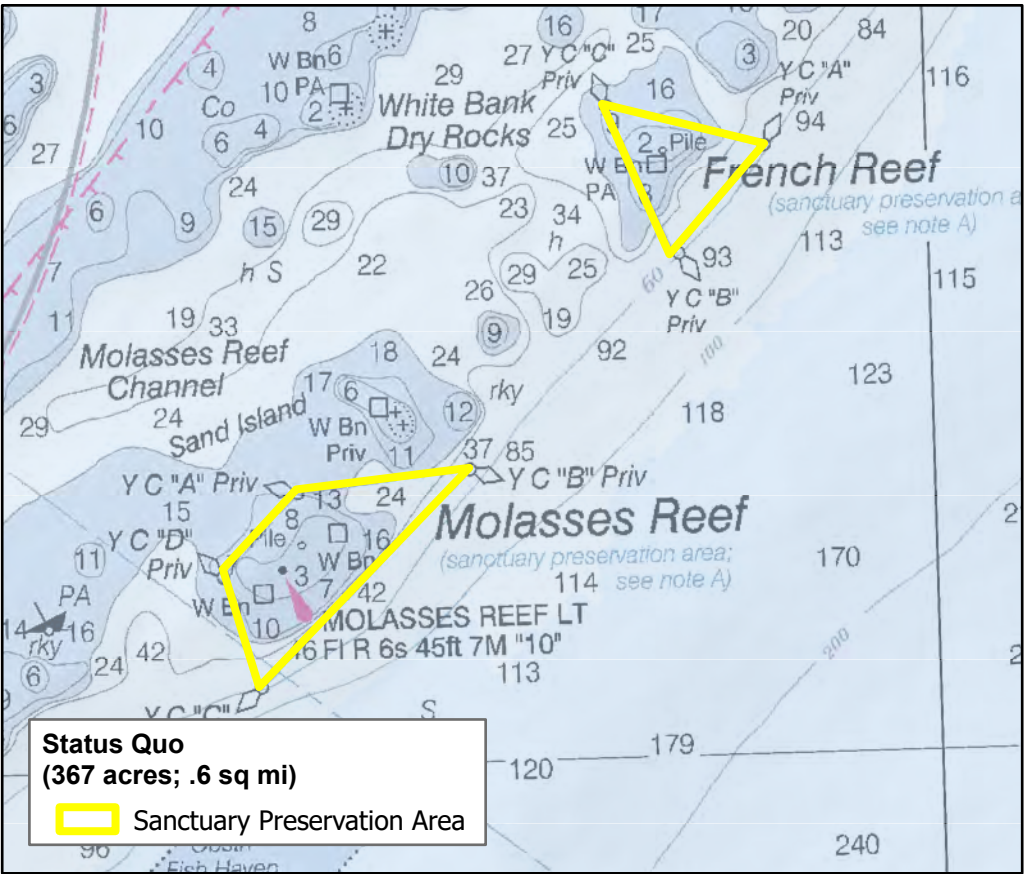


Key Largo Dry Rocks, Grecian Rocks, and Key Largo Dry Rocks-Grecian Rocks Sanctuary Preservation Areas

Encompasses spur-and-groove fore reef habitats, back reef and shallow reef crests, small patch reefs that supported historic assemblages of ESA-listed staghorn and elkhorn corals. Contains one of the largest remaining healthy populations of ESA-listed star corals on outer reefs in the Upper Keys. Protects seagrass meadows that support large populations of herbivorous reef fish, queen conch, and lobster. Contains the Christ of the Deep statue and includes one of the oldest Acropora restoration sites in the Florida Keys. Key Largo Dry Rocks and Grecian Rocks SPAs, which this zone encompasses and connects, were originally designated to limit consumptive activities and separate users engaged in different activities.

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Molasses Reef and French Reef Sanctuary Preservation Areas

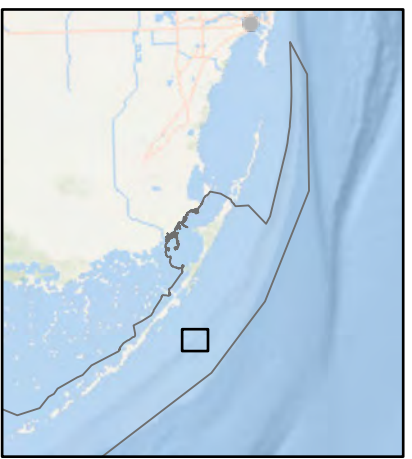
Molasses Reef SPA: Protects a well-developed, spur-and-groove system and a deep reef wall with a historic presence of ESA-listed staghorn and elkhorn corals, as well as a population of large ESA-listed star corals. Contains several famous shipwreck sites and is an important research site with long-term temperature data and coral monitoring stations, and ongoing ESA-listed staghorn and elkhorn coral restoration activities. This is the most heavily-used site for recreational scuba diving in the Upper Keys. The historic Molasses Reef light is included in this SPA. This zone was originally designed to limit consumptive activities and separate users engaged in different activities.

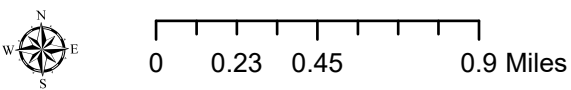
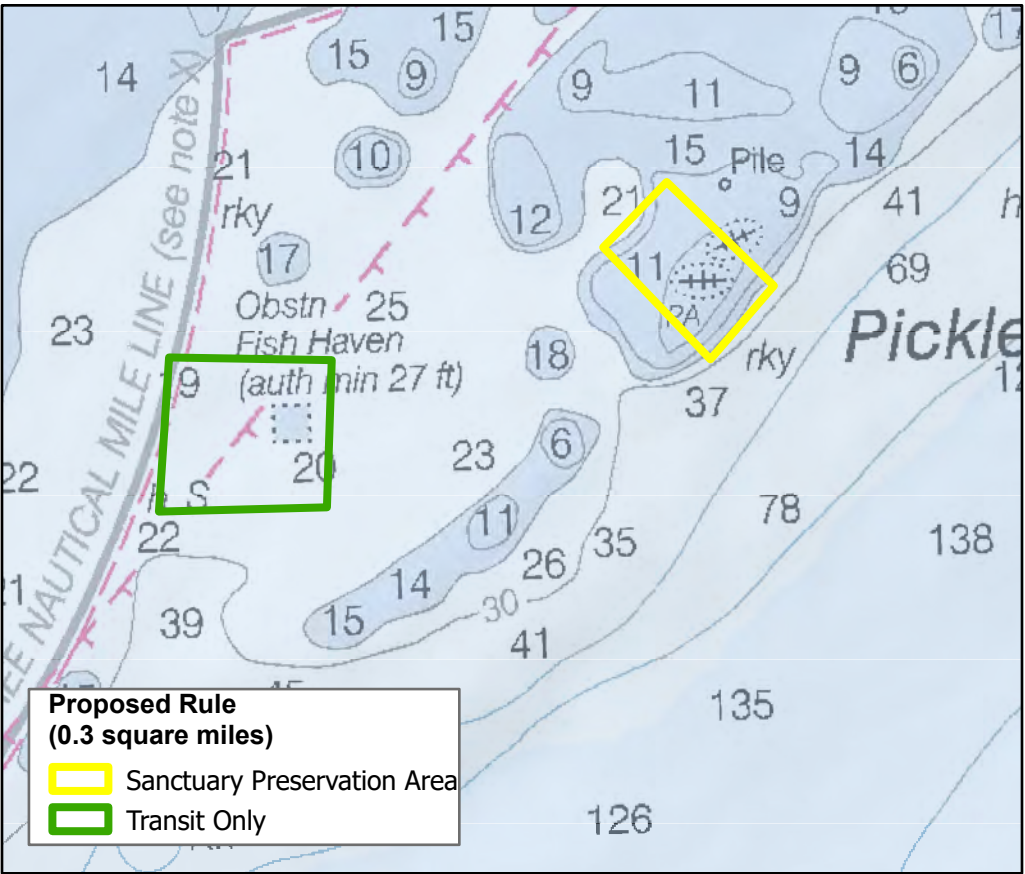
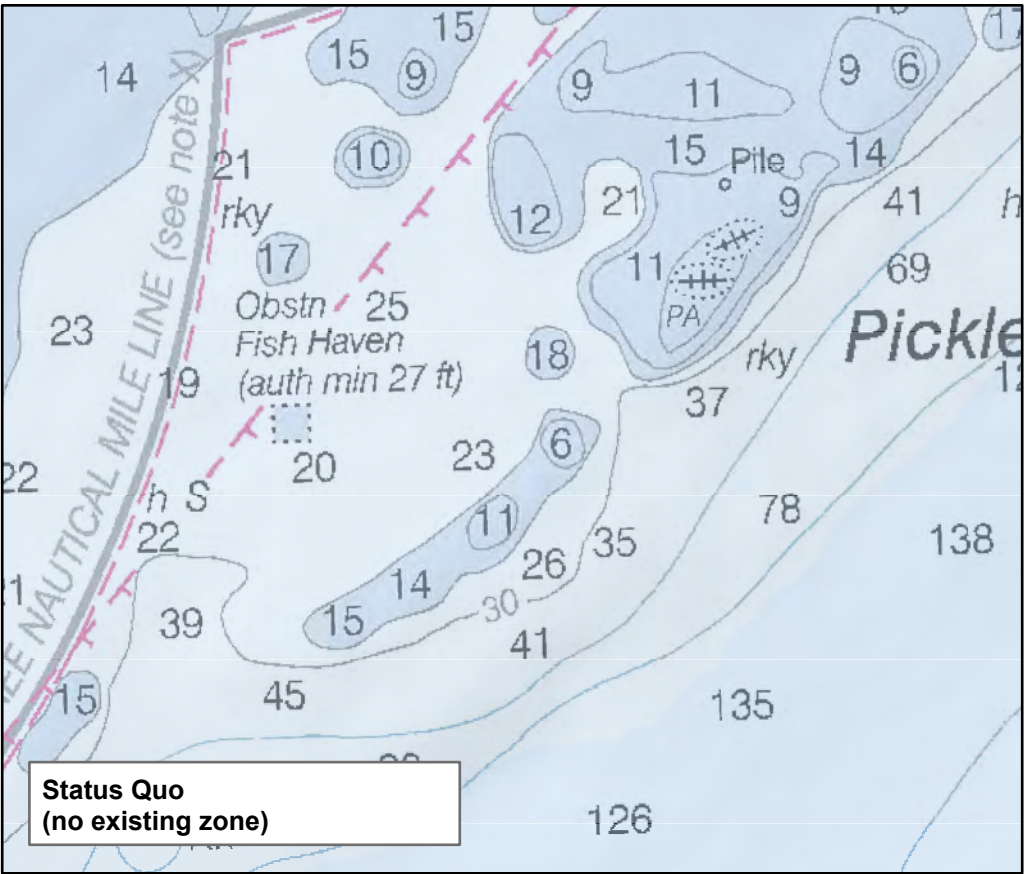
French Reef SPA: This zone is eliminated.

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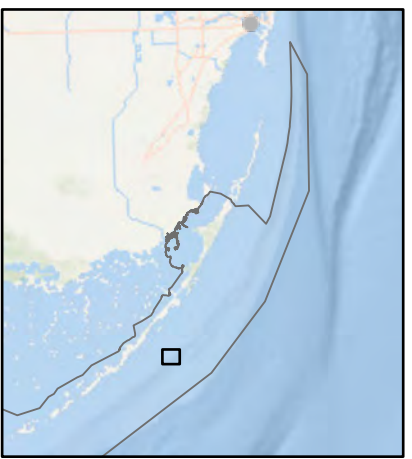
Pickles Reef Habitat Restoration Area and Tavernier Nursery Restoration Area

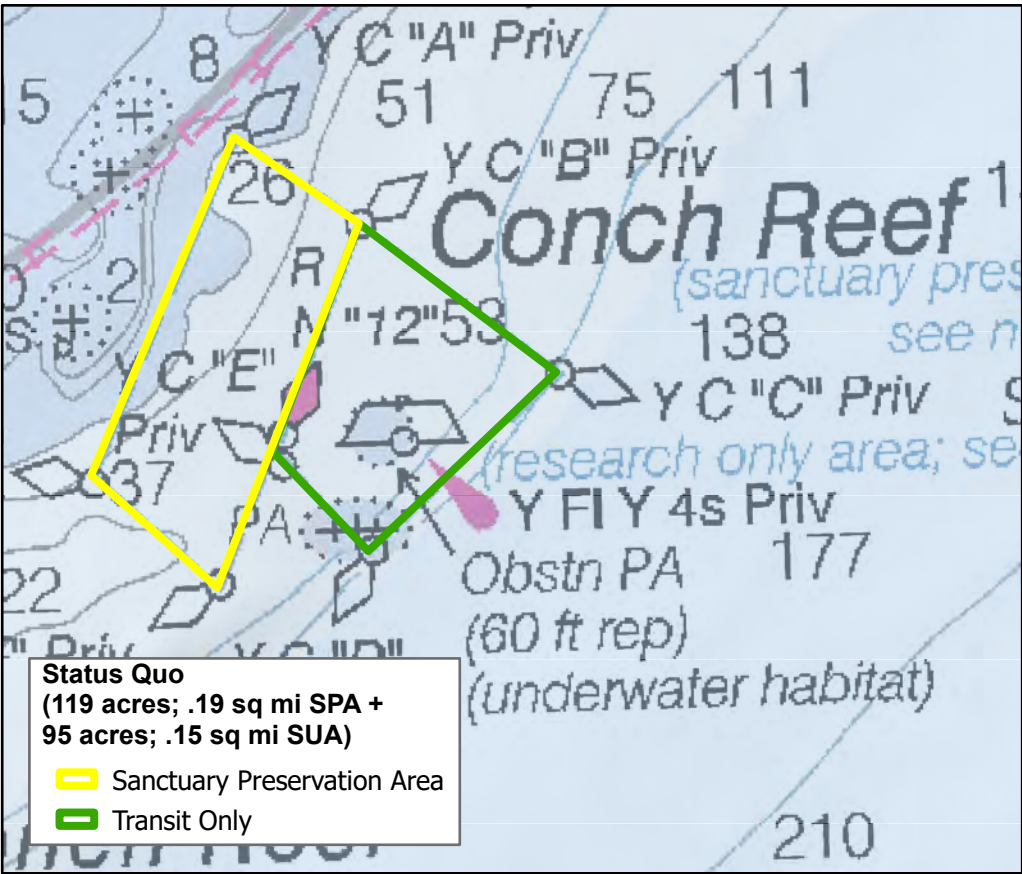
Pickles Reef RA - Habitat: Provide additional protections to an active and long-term restoration site that includes a large population of ESA listed elkhorn coral and staghorn coral that has been particularly vulnerable to anchor damage. Tavernier RA - Nursery: Provide additional protections to include multiple existing, permitted coral nursery sites, which have been shown to be resilient to high water temperatures, storms, and coral disease.

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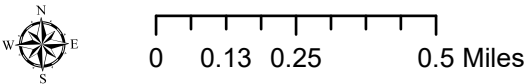
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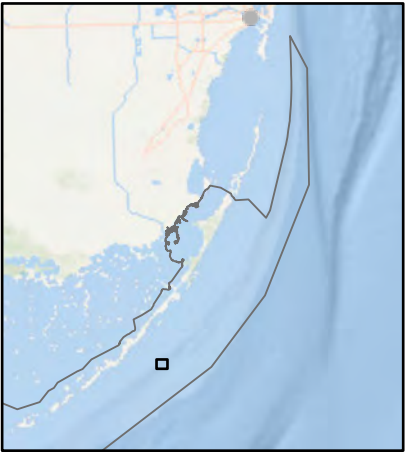


Conch Reef Sanctuary Preservation Area and Conch Reef Conservation Area

Conch Reef SPA: Protects an area with diverse coral species and one of the best developed reef wall systems in the Florida Keys. It contains good conch habitat and has historically contained well developed stands of pillar coral. This zone was originally designed to limit consumptive activities and separate users engaged in different activities.

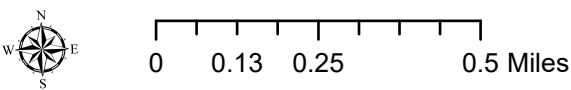
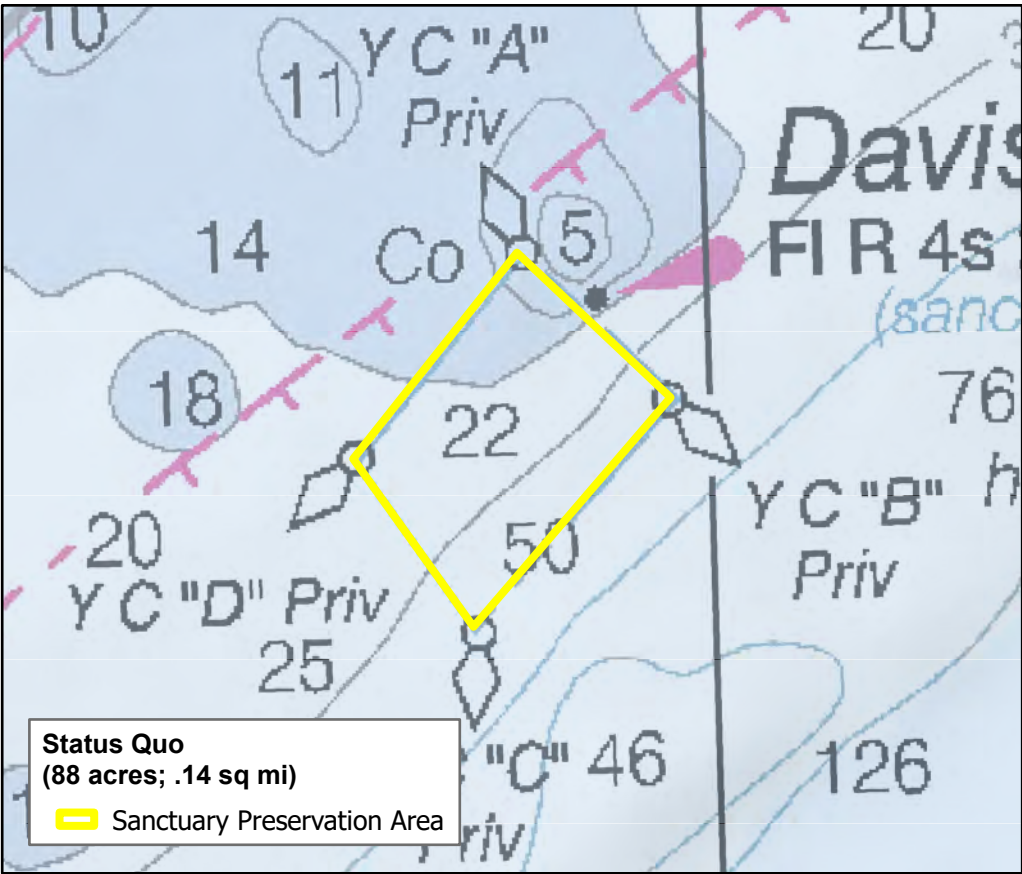
Conch Reef CA: Protects an aggregated patch reef system with limited spur-and-groove development and a well developed reef wall system along with associated hardbottom and seagrass habitats. The Conservation Area contains remnant populations of ESA-listed elkhorn, staghorn, and star corals and large queen conch and lobster populations. This zone encompasses the Aquarius underwater laboratory. This zone was originally established to limit use and allow scientists to differentiate impacts caused by use and those caused by changing environmental conditions.

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Davis Reef Sanctuary Preservation Area

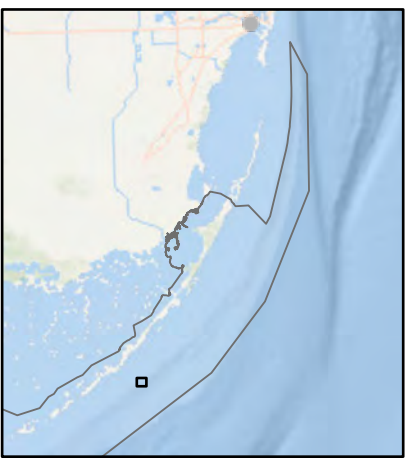
Protects a spur-and-groove fore reef, with a prominent rubble berm back reef, that drops off to a well-developed intermediate, drowned spur-and-groove reef. This zone includes a coral restoration project site. This zone was originally designed to limit consumptive activities and separate users engaged in different activities.

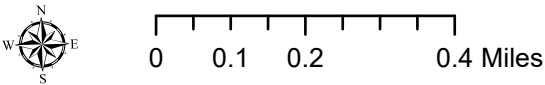
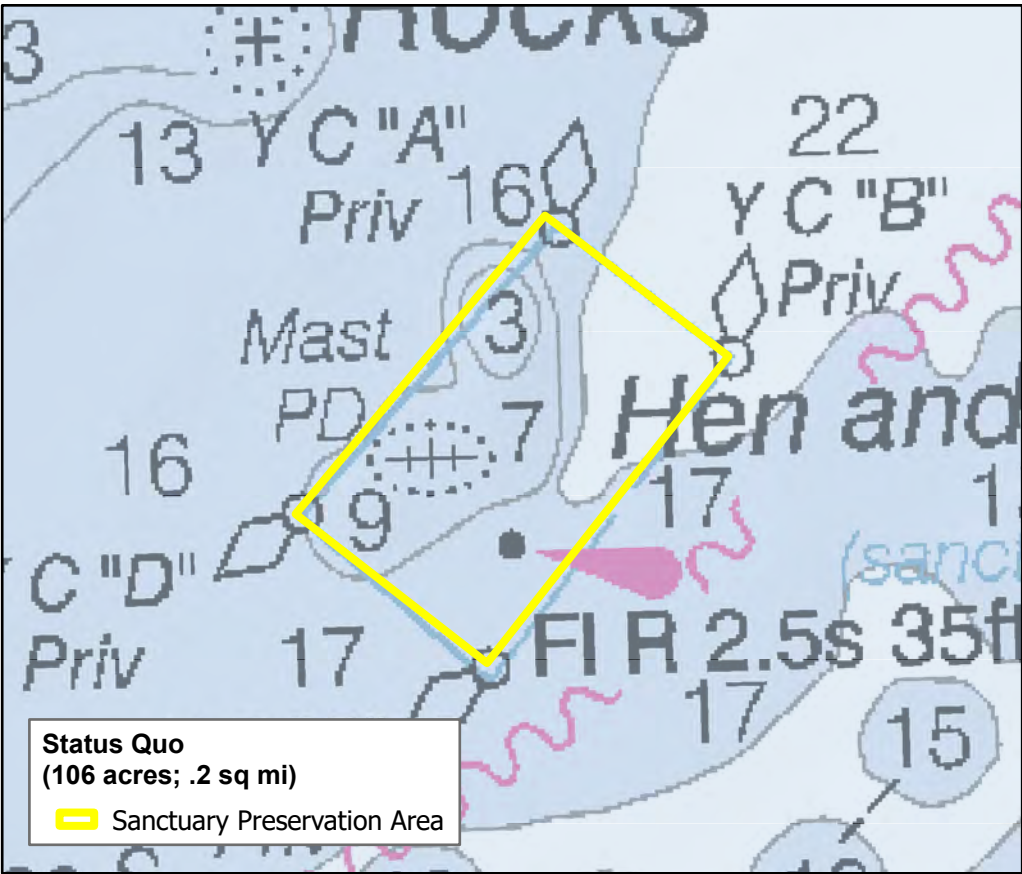
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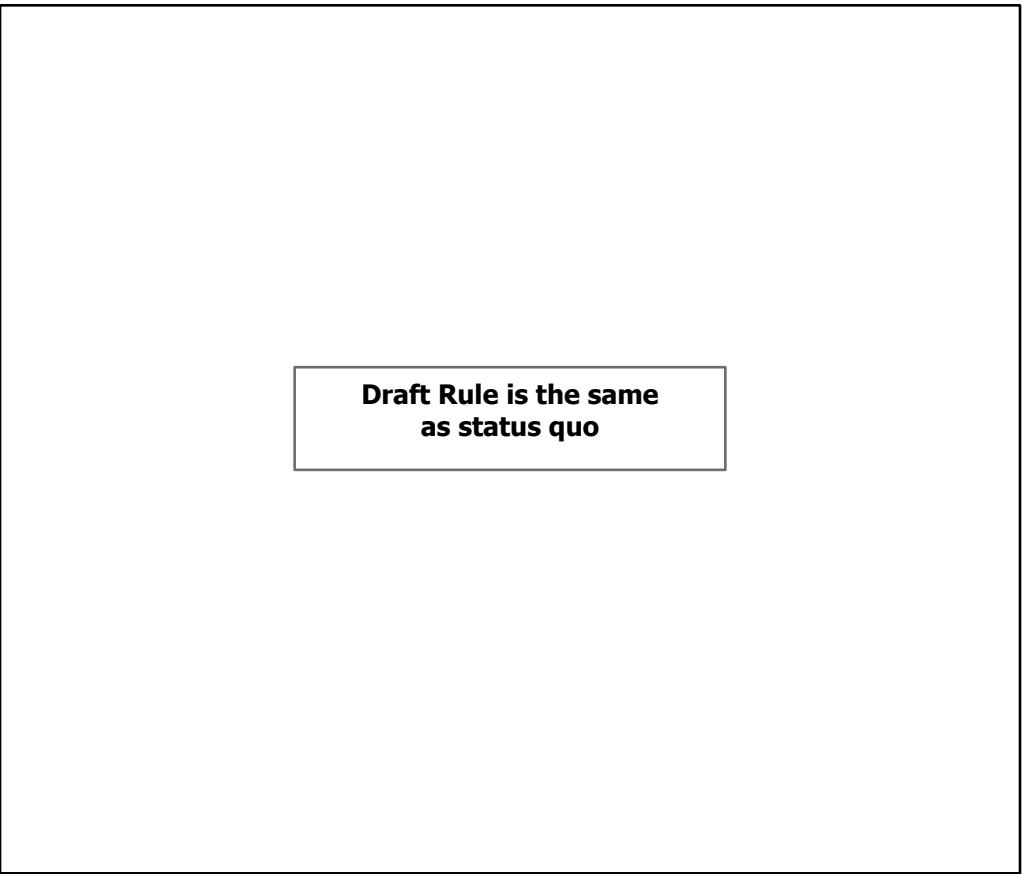


Hen and Chickens Sanctuary Preservation Area

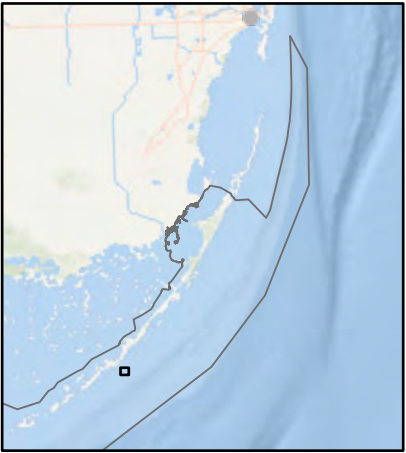
Protects a unique mid-channel patch reef off Plantation Key within Hawk Channel with large populations of ESA-listed star corals as well as brain corals, and remnant patches of ESA-listed staghorn corals. This zone was originally designed to limit consumptive activities and separate users engaged in different activities.

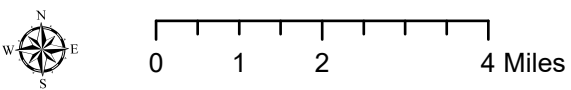
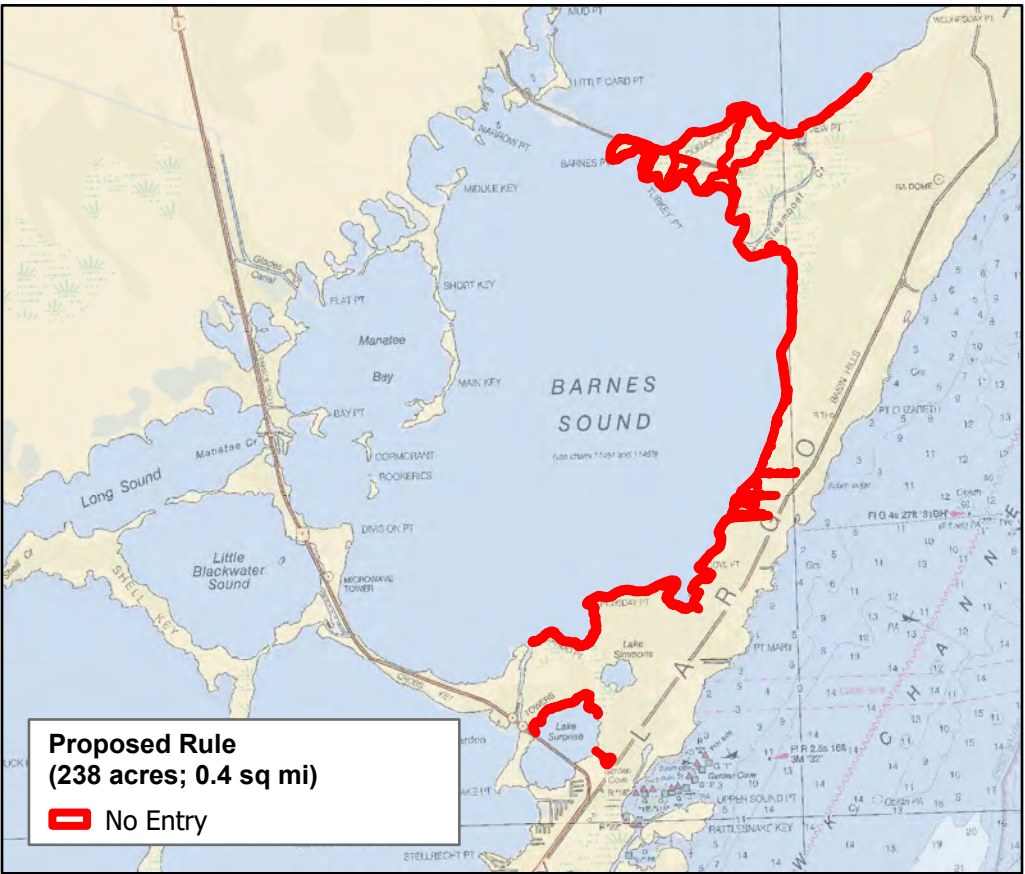
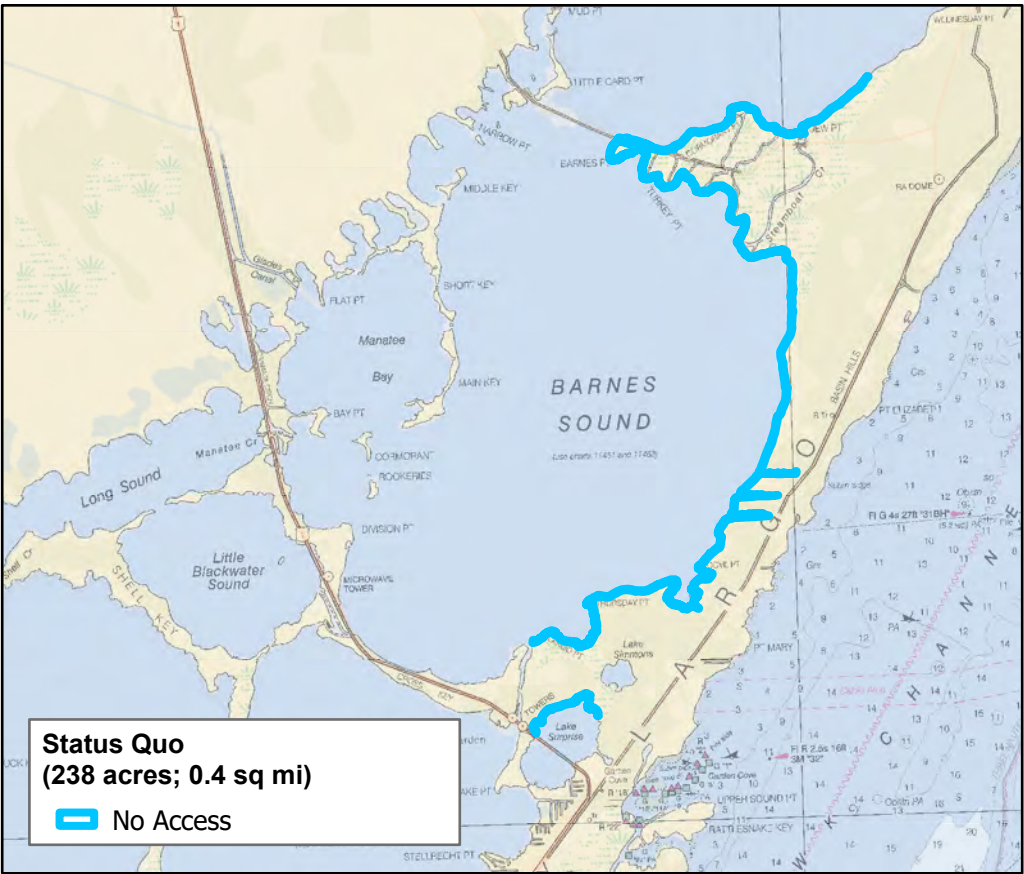
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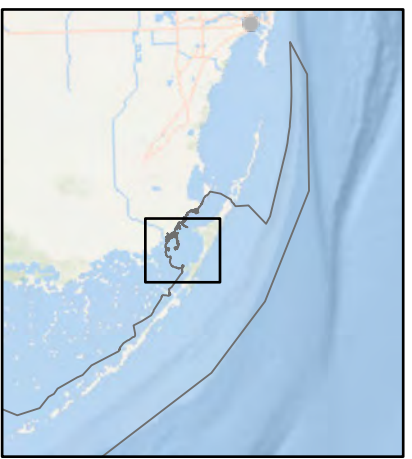
Crocodile Lake Wildlife Management Area

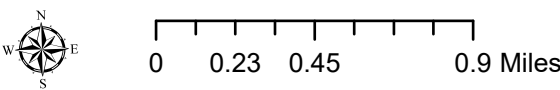
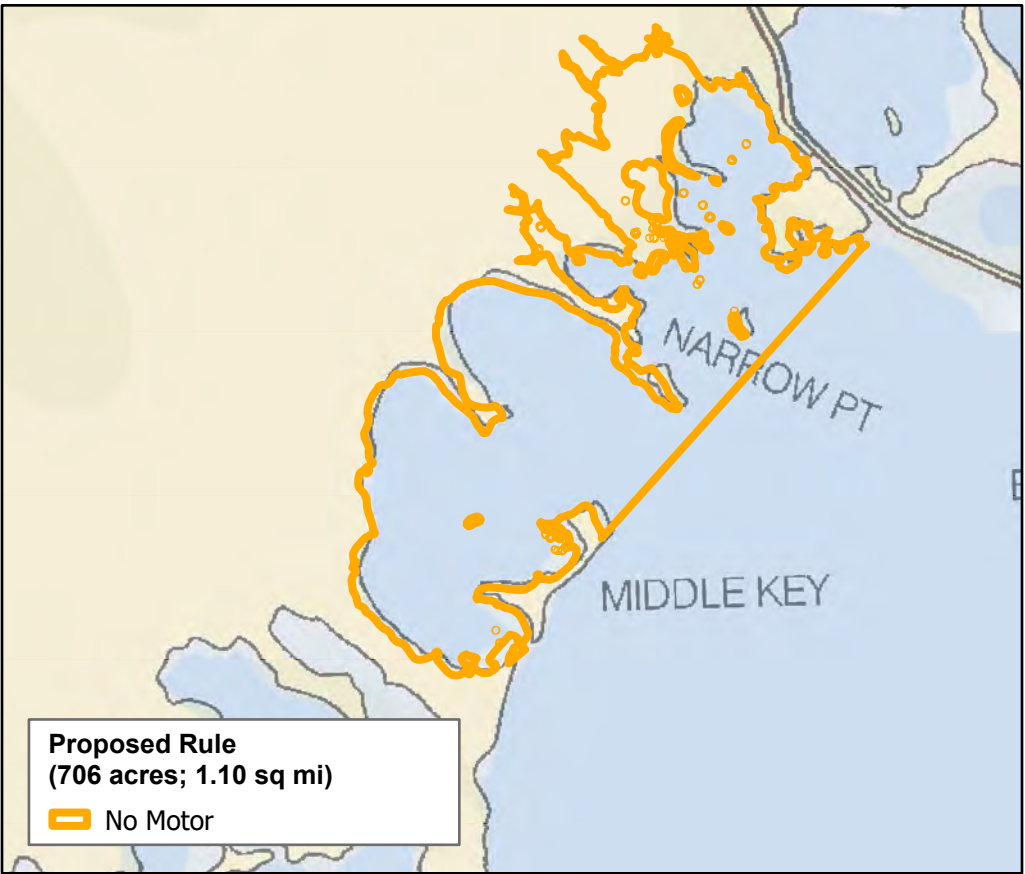
Decrease disturbance to ESA-listed species, including American crocodile and West Indian manatee. Decrease disturbance to wading birds using the shallow seagrass flat areas for foraging, nesting and roosting. Protect the shallow seagrass flats near Card Sound Bridge that have been impacted by vessel groundings and exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring. Steamboat Creek remains open to normal operation.

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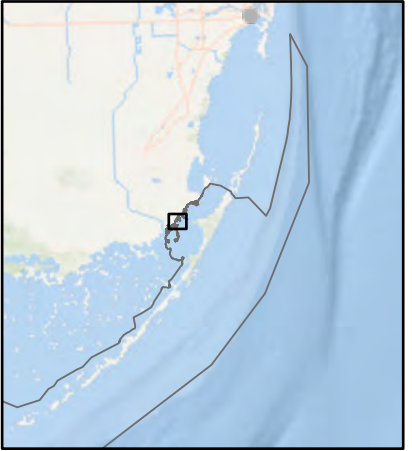
Barnes-Card Sound Wildlife Management Area

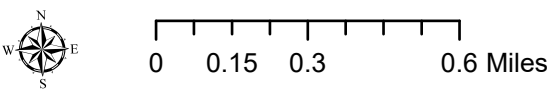
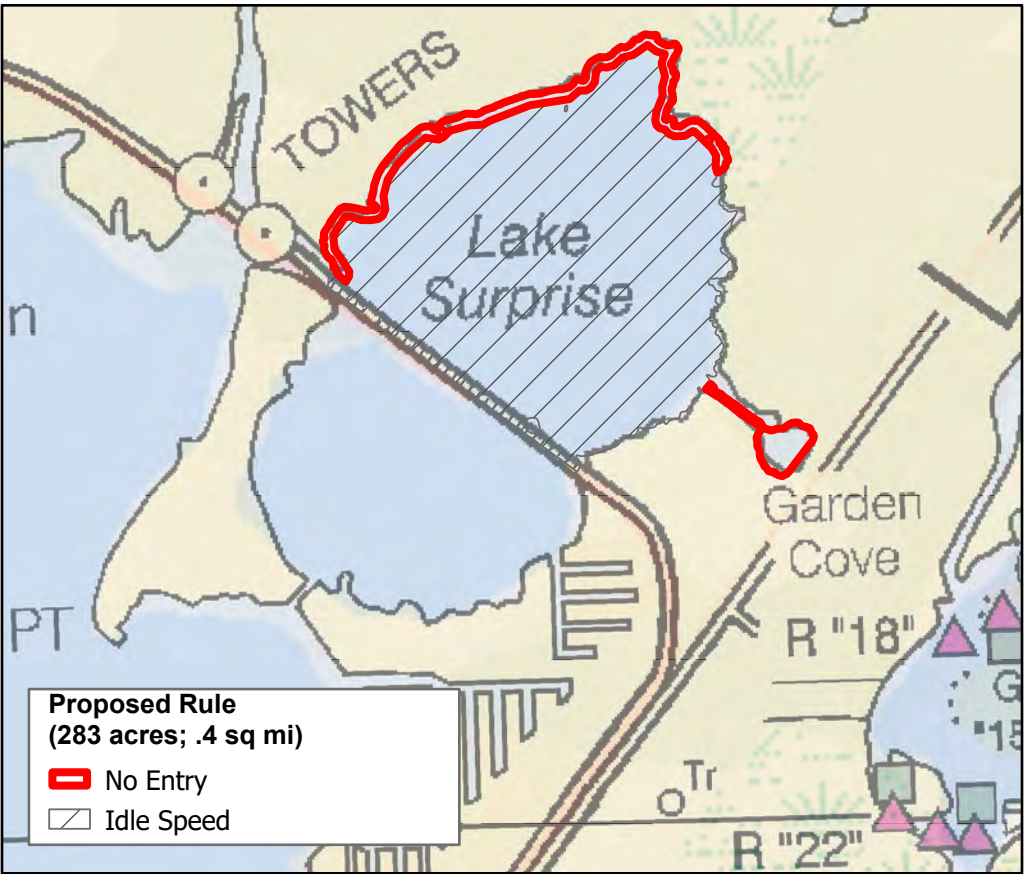
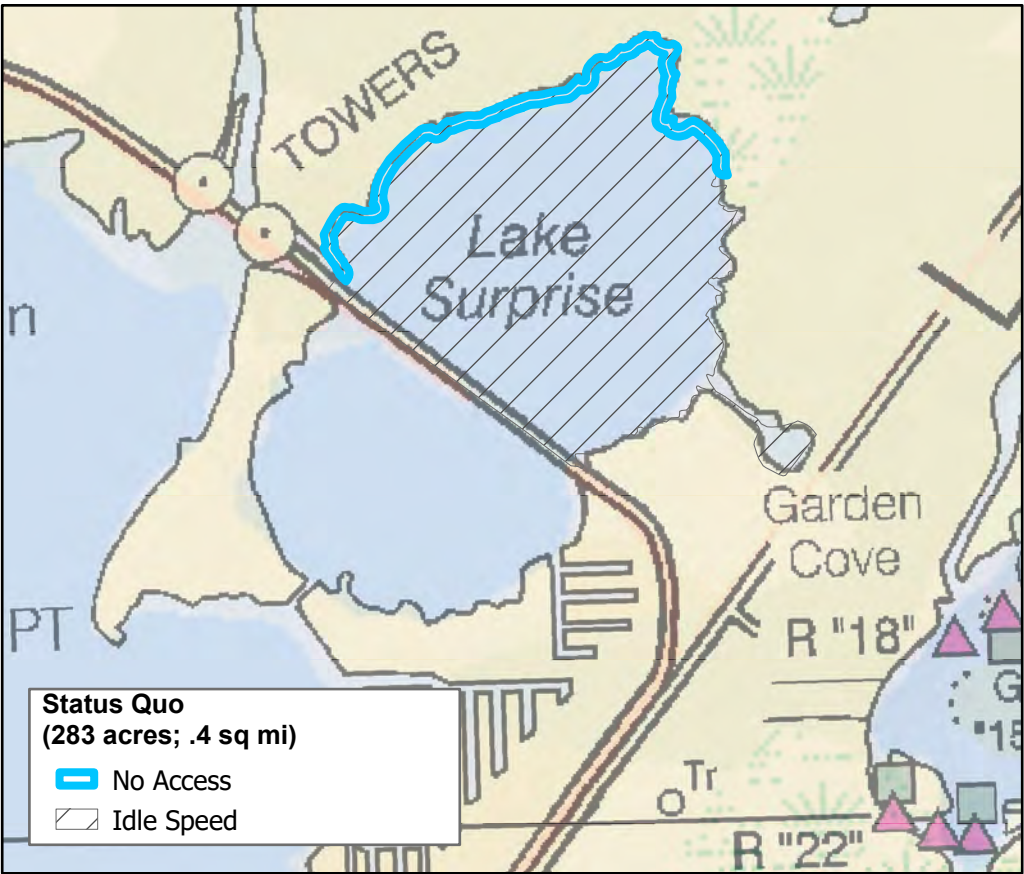
Decrease disturbance to nesting and wading birds and shallow water gamefish. Decrease impacts to the benthic community, including seagrass and macroalgae. A seagrass and macroalgae monitoring program has existed in this area for more than 17 years. Shallow seagrass flats exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring.

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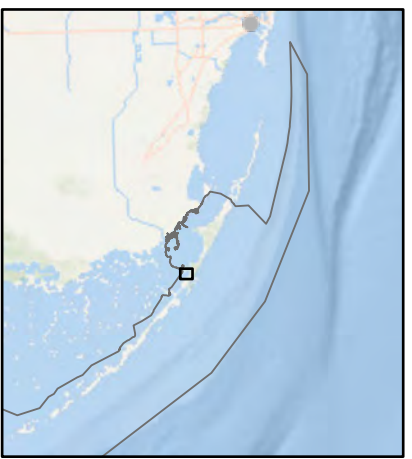




Eastern Lake Surprise Wildlife Management Area

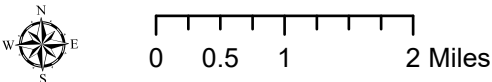
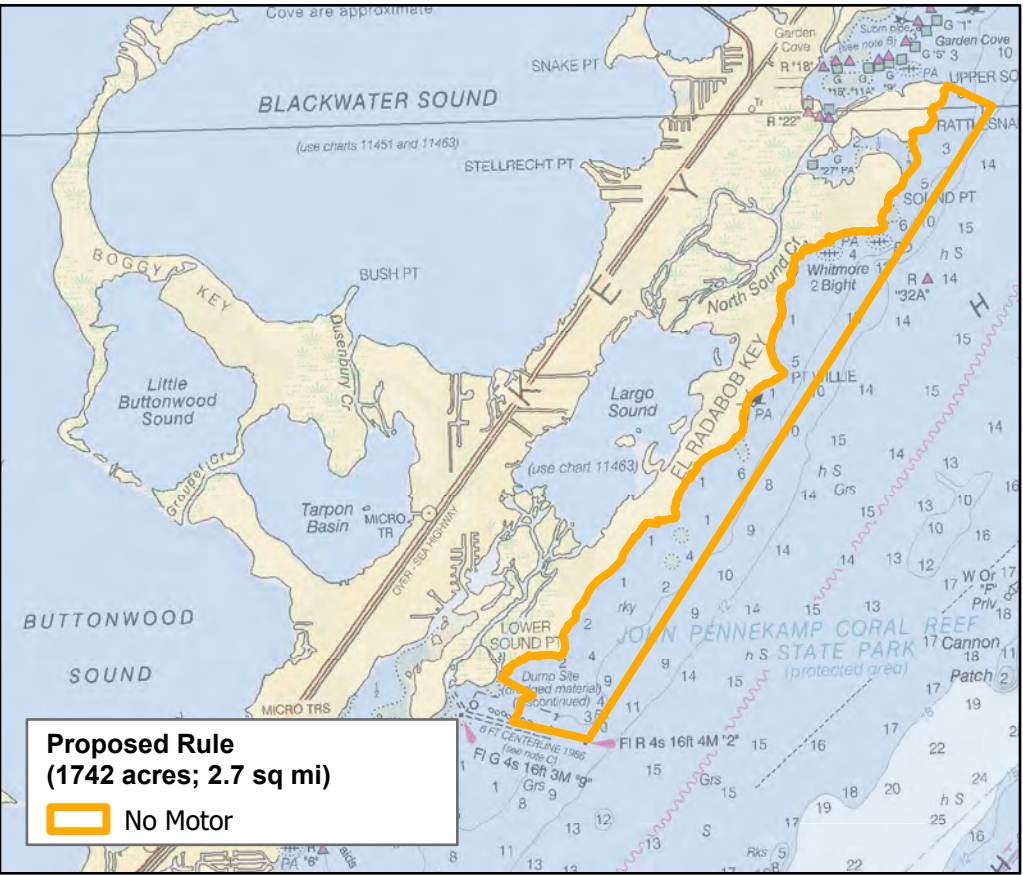
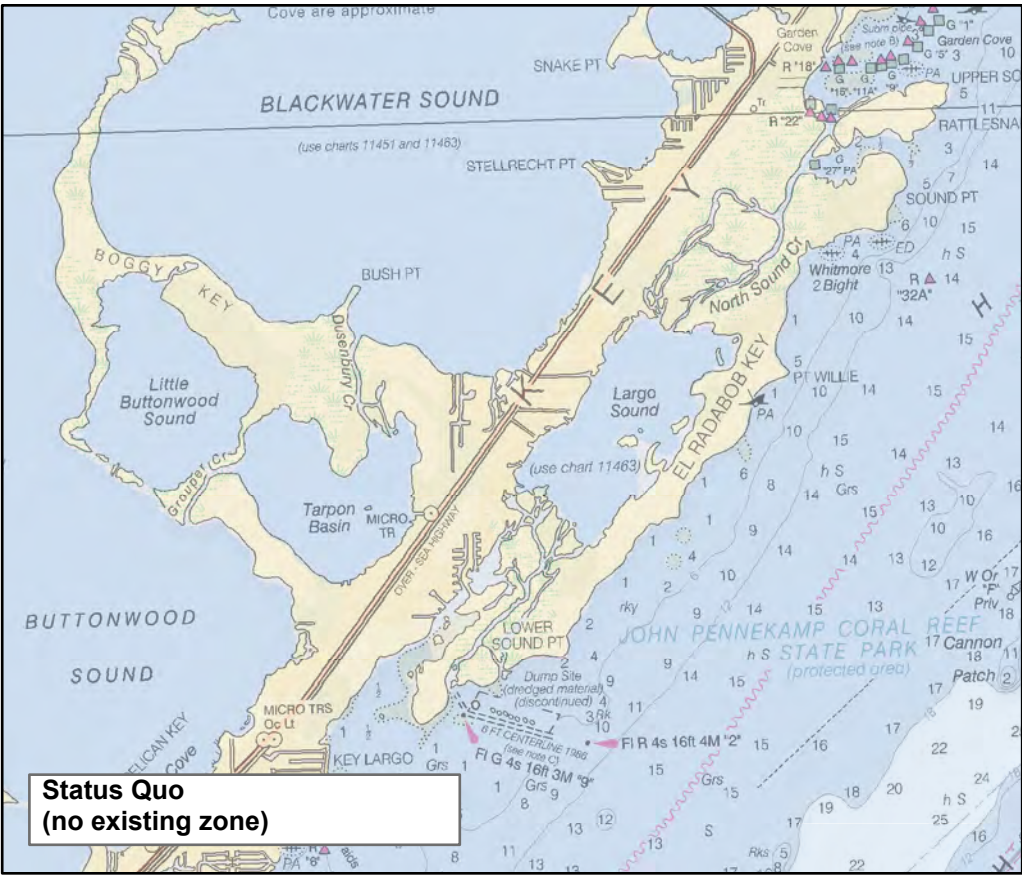
Decrease disturbance of ESA-listed species including American crocodile and West Indian manatee.

Upper Keys Region



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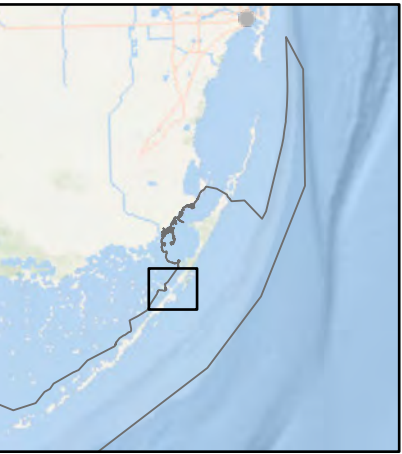
Whitmore Bight Wildlife Management Area

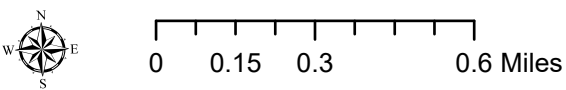
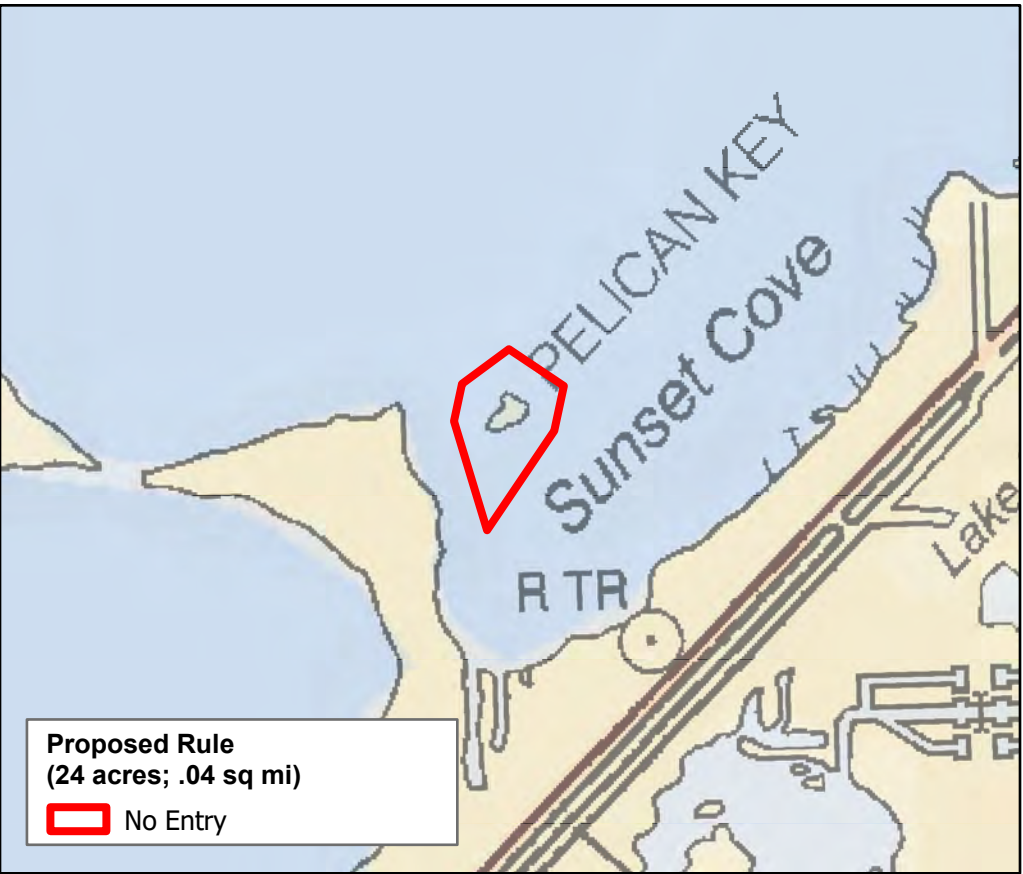
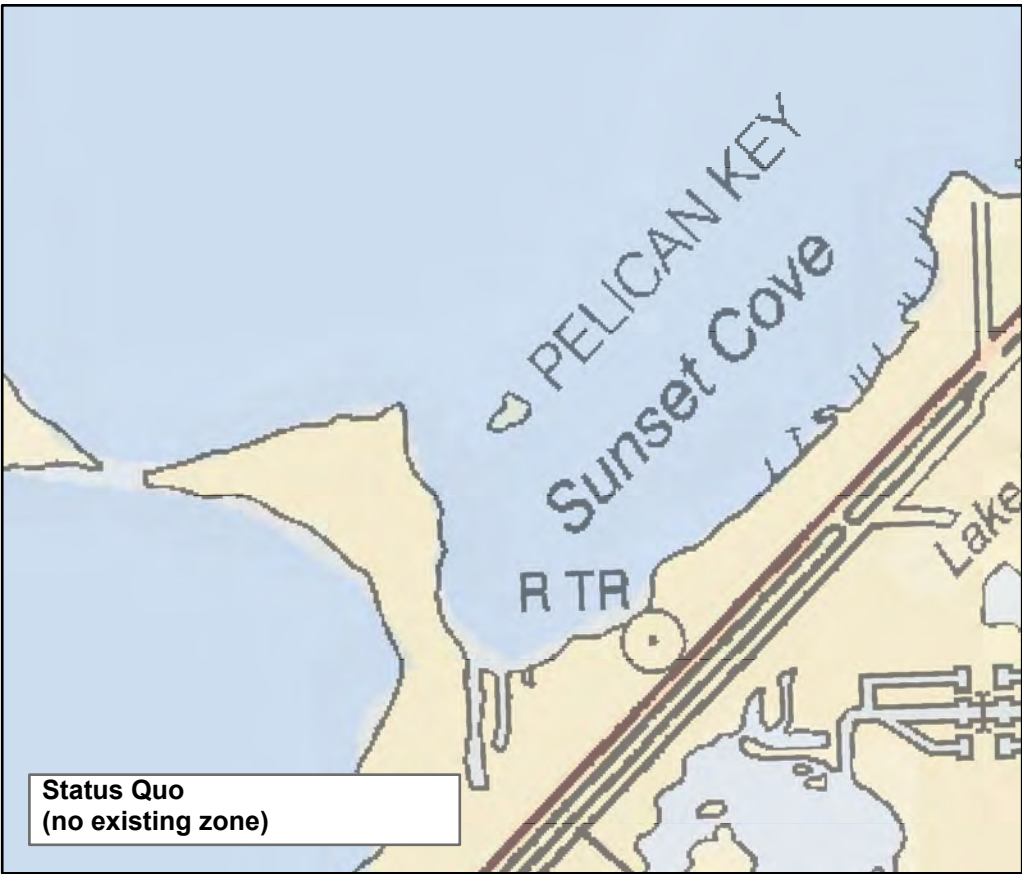
Decrease disturbance to the benthic community including hardbottom habitat that supports juvenile lobster and various reef and game fish. Shallow seagrass flats exhibit light-to-moderate prop scarring.

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Upper Keys Region





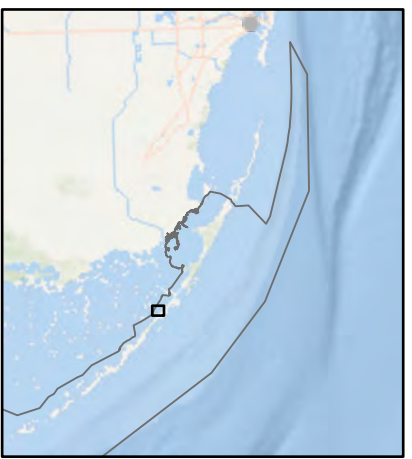
Pelican Key Wildlife Management Area

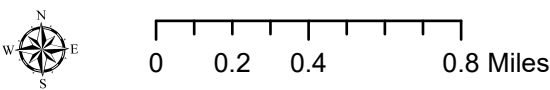
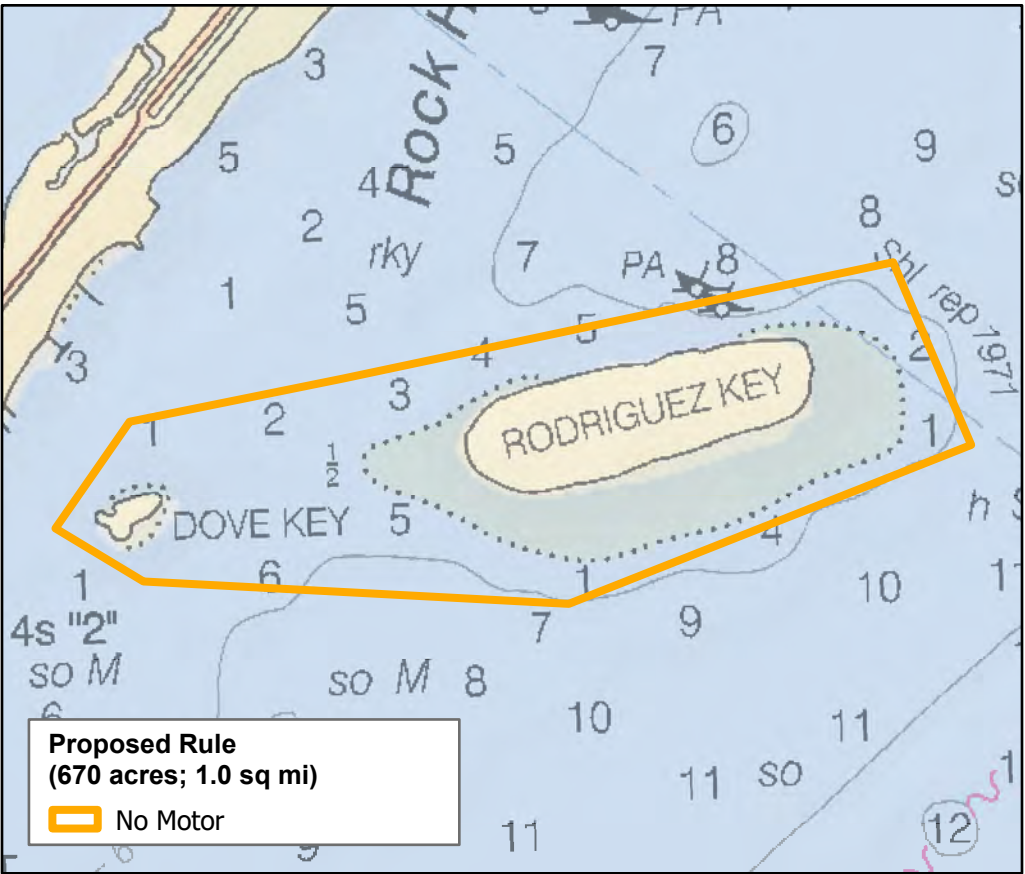
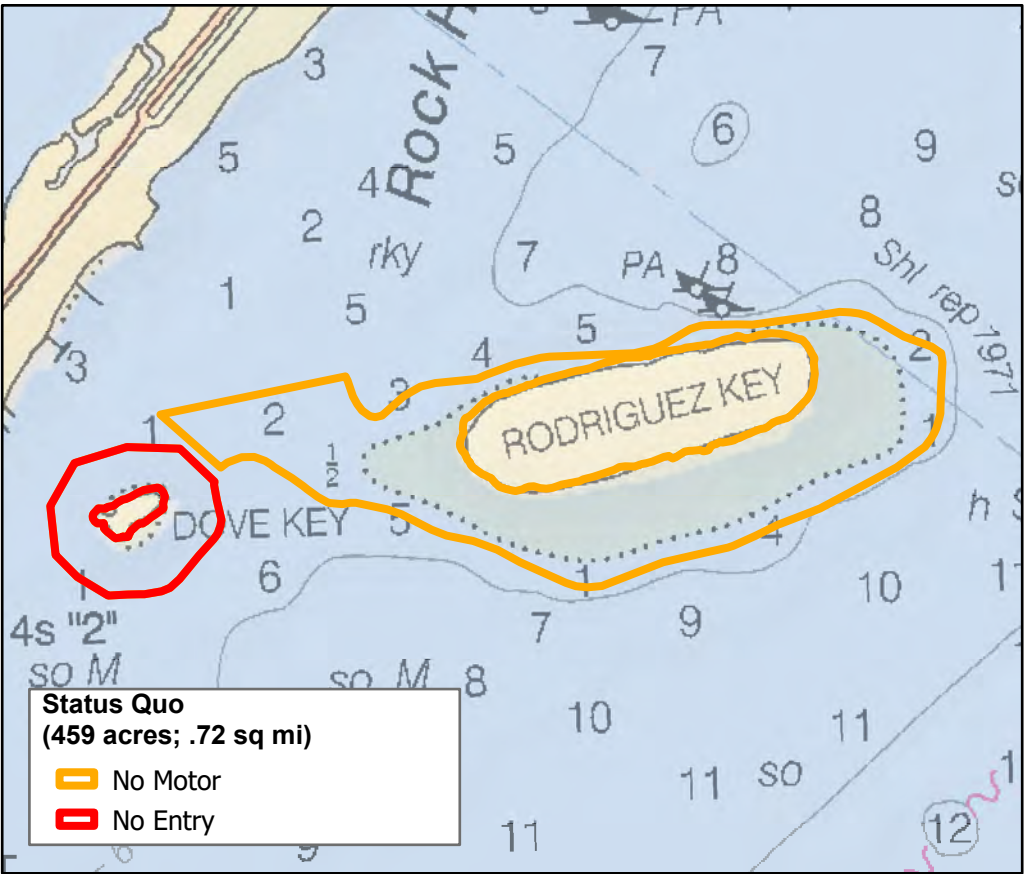
Protect shallow seagrasses. Decrease disturbance of manatees and roosting and wading birds including magnificent frigatebirds and pelicans. Shallow seagrass flats exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring.

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Upper Keys Region





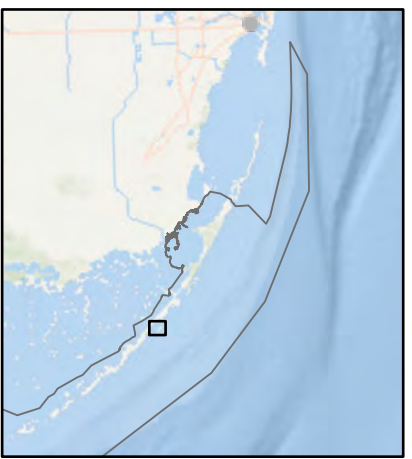
Dove and Rodriguez Keys Wildlife Management Area

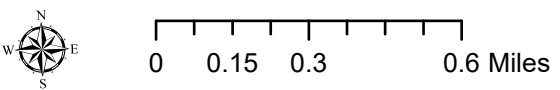
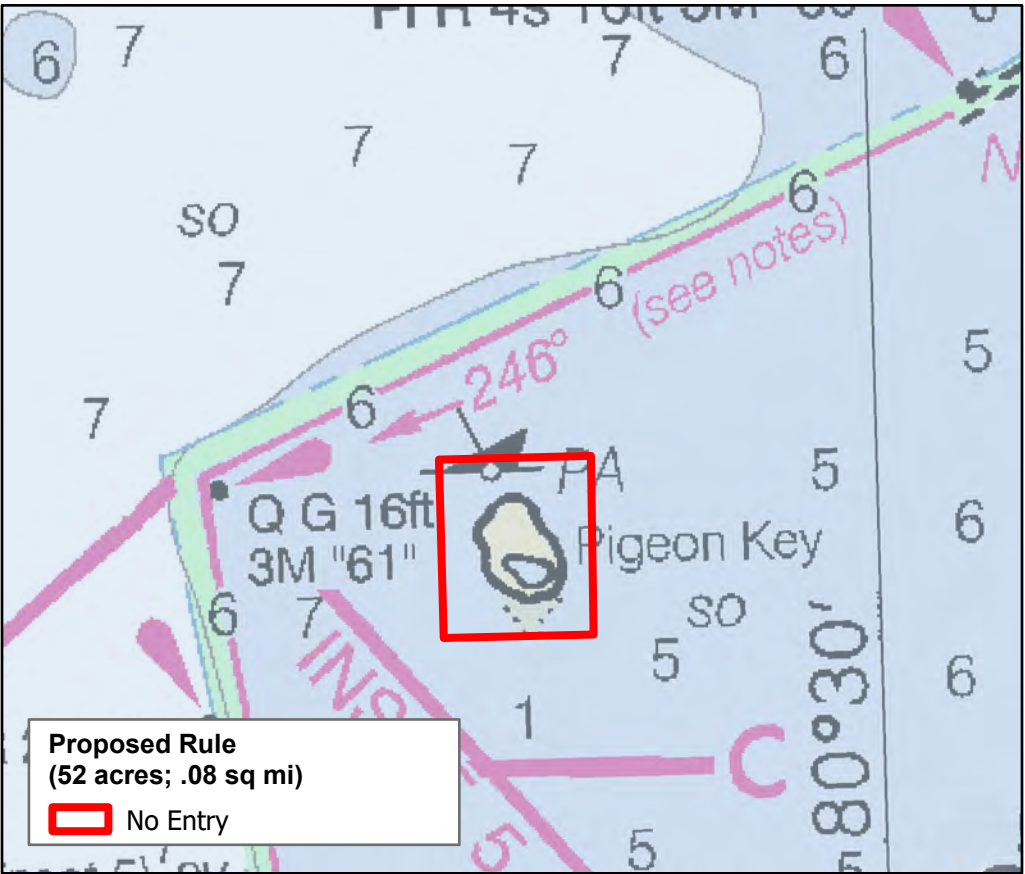
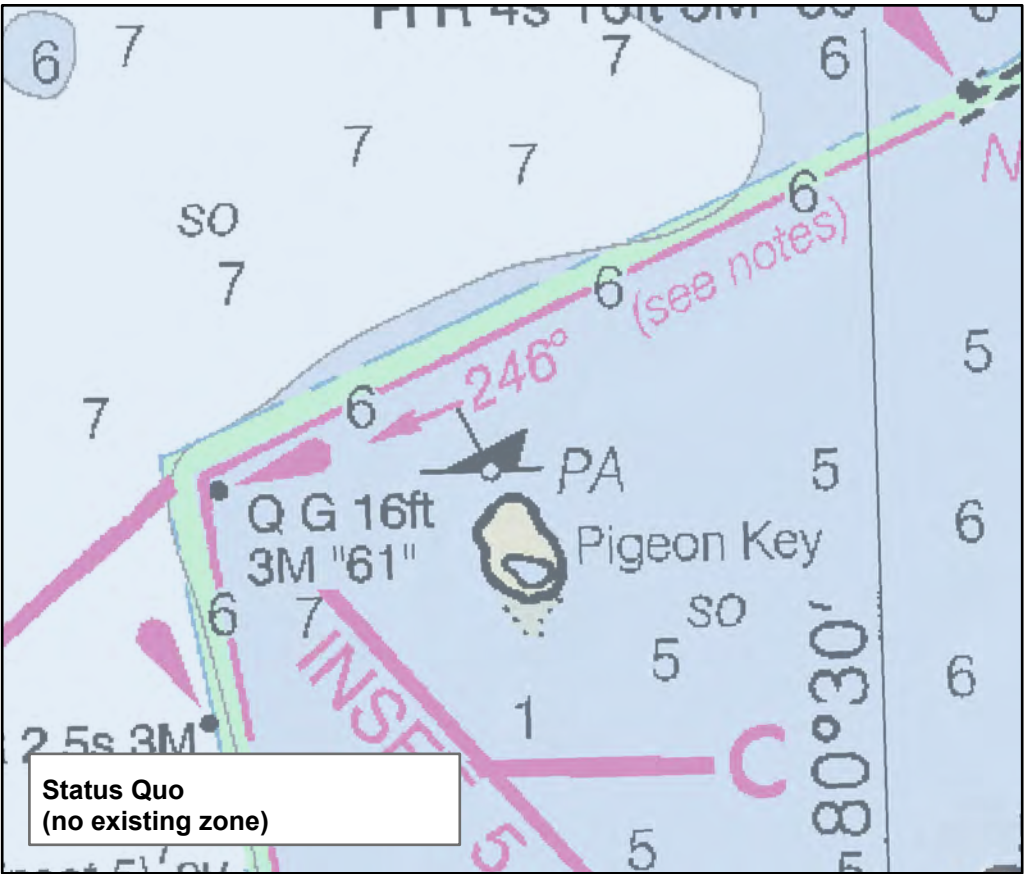
Decrease disturbance of a variety of birds and fish including bonefish, and the benthic community including seagrass and hardbottom habitat. The shallow seagrass flats in this area have been impacted by vessel groundings and exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring. Improve compliance through ease of marking.

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Upper Keys Region





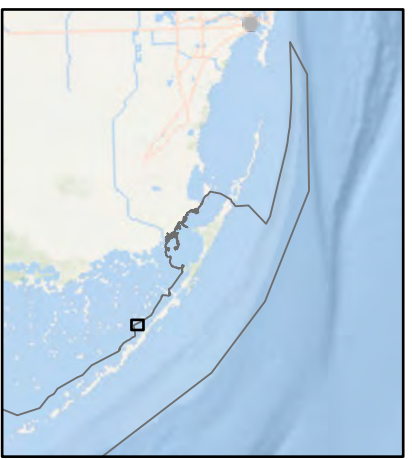
Pigeon Key Wildlife Management Area

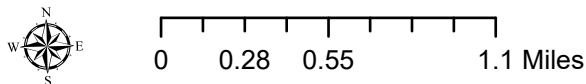
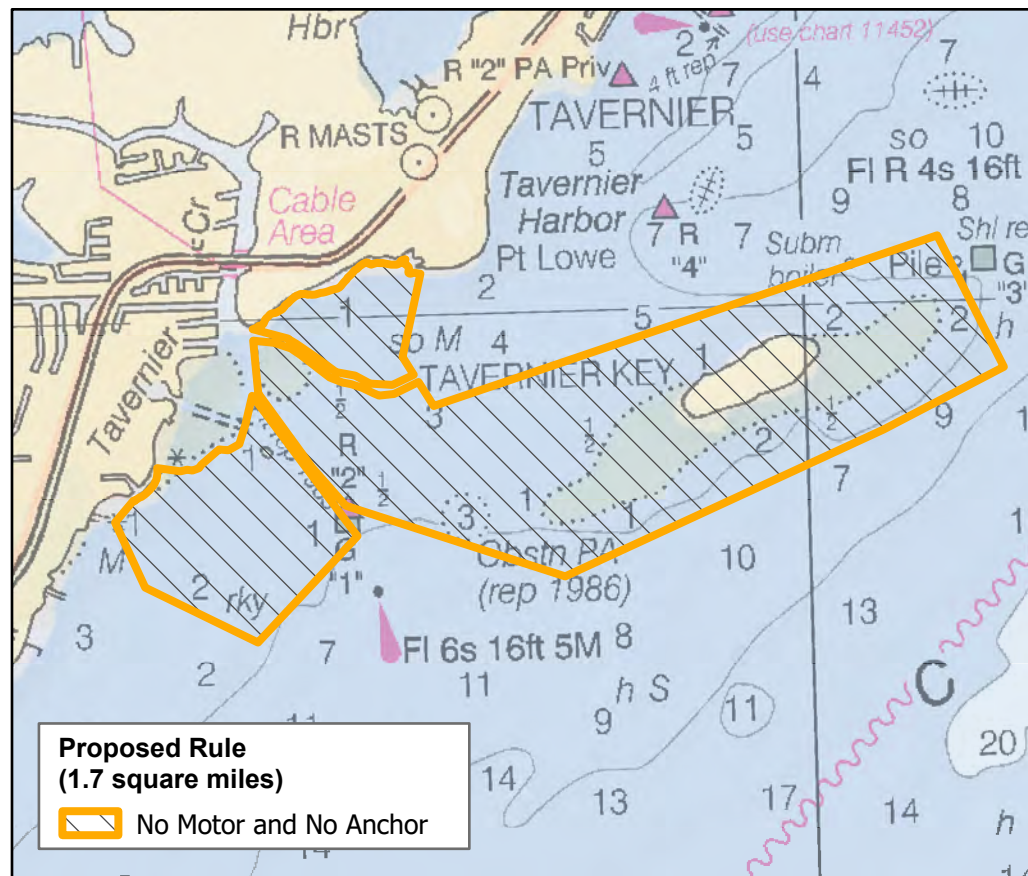
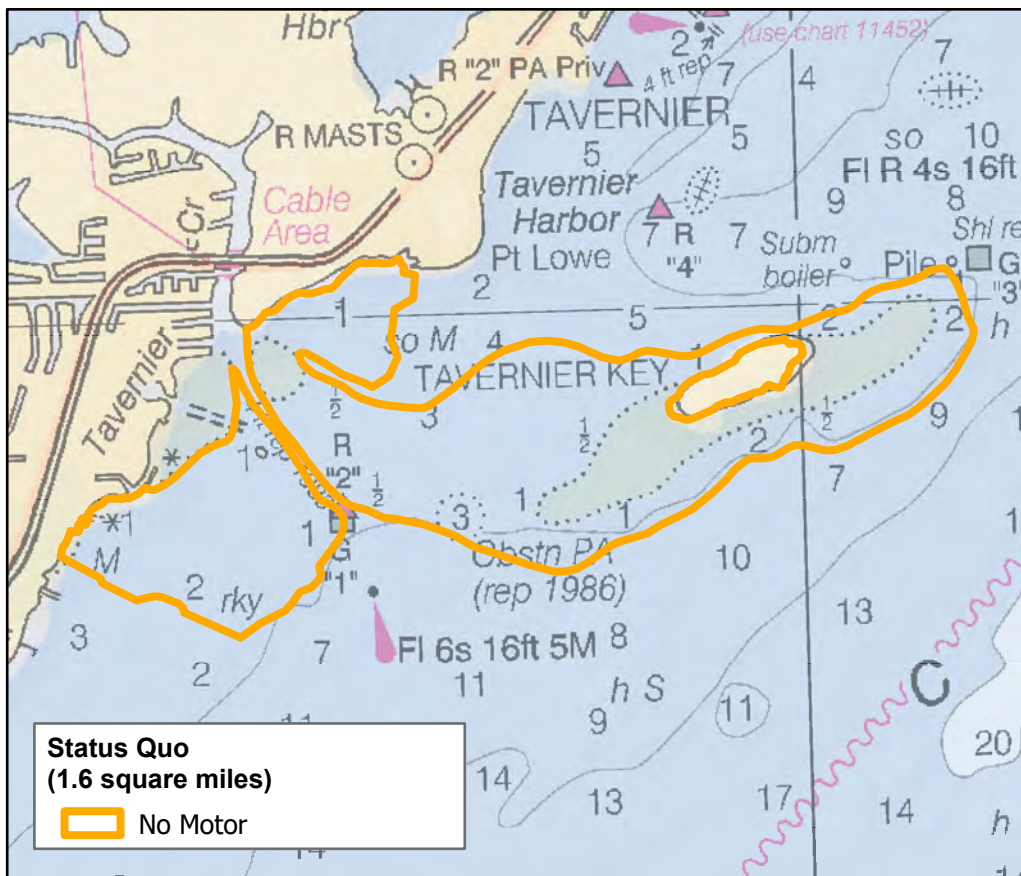
Decrease disturbance to an important wading bird nesting area including for roseate spoonbills and for roosting magnificent frigatebirds. Decrease disturbance of mangrove terrapins and mangrove salt marsh snakes. This area is in close proximity to the Intracoastal Waterway.

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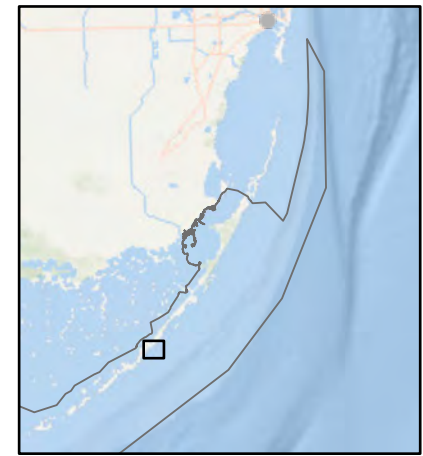
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Upper Keys Region





Upper Keys Region



Tavernier Key Wildlife Management Area

Decrease disturbance to wading, roosting and nesting birds and fish including bonefish. Decrease disturbance to the benthic community including seagrass and hardbottom habitat. The shallow seagrass flats in this area have been impacted by vessel groundings and exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring.

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