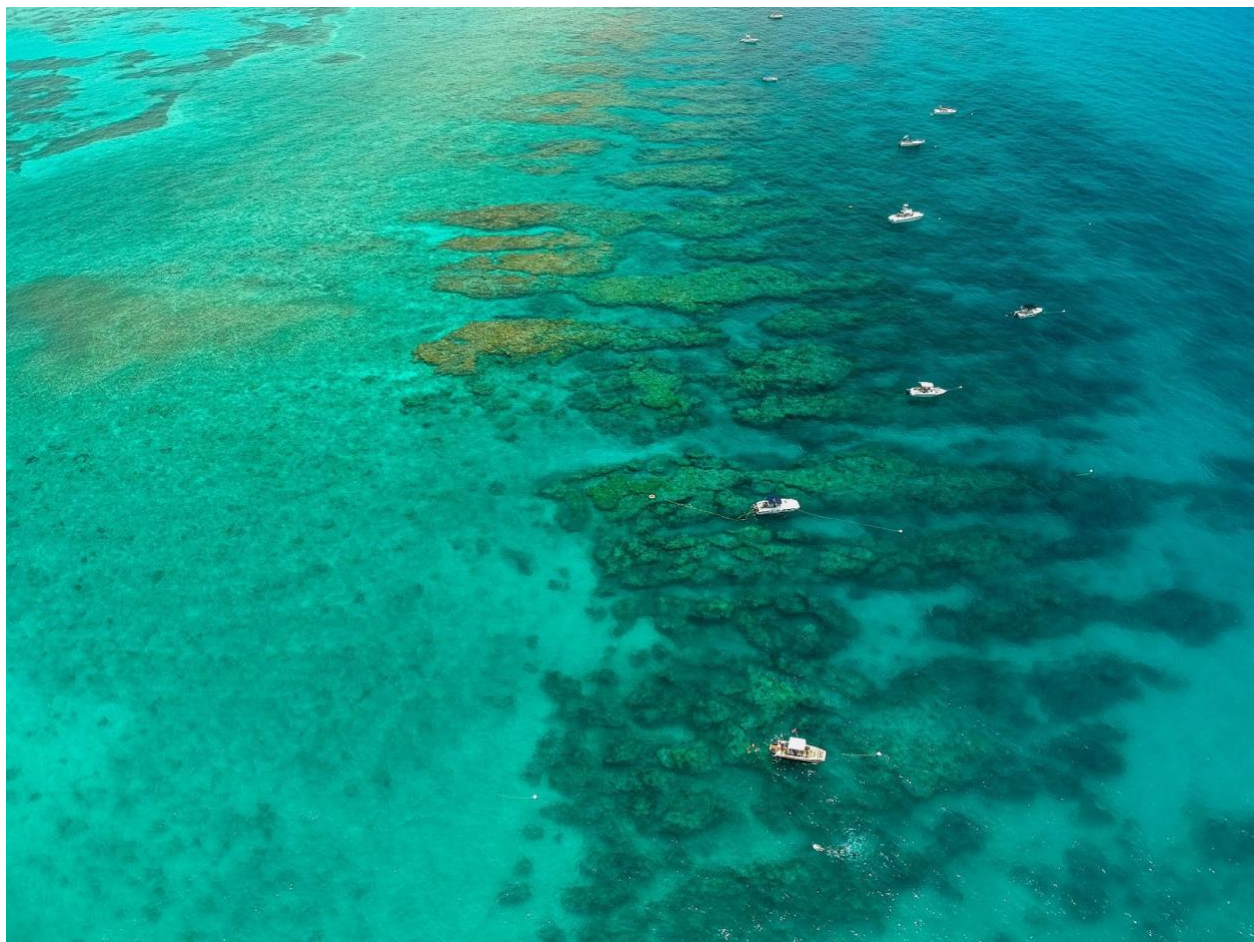


Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: Proposed Marine Zone Changes



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**NATIONAL
MARINE
SANCTUARIES**

Cover photo: Recreational boaters moor on Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary mooring buoys at Looe Key Sanctuary Preservation Area. Photo: Shawn Verne



Table of Contents

Proposed Marine Zone Changes.....	1
Management Areas.....	2
National Wildlife Refuges	3
Conservation Areas	4
Sanctuary Preservation Areas	6
Habitat Restoration Areas.....	11
Nursery Restoration Areas.....	13
Wildlife Management Areas	15



Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

Proposed Marine Zone Changes

This document is meant for an easy reference summary and does not replace the proposed rule. For more information, visit the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Restoration Blueprint [website](#).

NOAA has published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for public comment for Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. This proposed rule follows NOAA’s publication of a draft environmental impact statement in August 2019, also referred to as the Restoration Blueprint. The Restoration Blueprint provided a range of alternatives for modified and new marine zones. The proposed modified and/or new marine zones summarized in this document are informed by public comments on the draft environmental impact statement, additional agency input, and scientific and user data. NOAA’s proposed rule includes five marine zone types: management areas, conservation areas, sanctuary preservation areas, restoration areas, and wildlife management areas. NOAA has used marine zoning as a management tool in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) since 1997. Since that time, much has changed in relation to specific habitats and marine species that could benefit from modified or enhanced marine zone designation. Marine zone designation could: provide additional conservation protections for significant and sensitive habitats, including seven federally listed coral species protected under the Endangered Species Act; facilitate important research opportunities to advance the science of coral reef ecosystem restoration and recovery; and protect large contiguous habitats that serve as natural spawning and nursery sites and permanent residence areas for many marine species. There is also a need to minimize and mitigate threats to habitats and species as a result of heavy, concentrated, and conflicting uses. Targeted marine zone designation could allow sustainable use while also separating conflicting uses and managing high intensity and concentrated use activities. Additionally, there is a need to simplify and, where possible, make the marine zone regulations and access restrictions consistent within each zone type and with state of Florida regulations and practice.

The summary tables below provide information on marine zones in NOAA’s proposed rule. The tables indicate whether each zone is existing, modified, or proposed new. For modified marine zones, a description of the modification (spatial or regulation change) and the rationale for the proposed change are included. In addition to marine zone-specific regulations, sanctuary-wide regulations apply within all marine zones of the sanctuary.

Please note: in the tables below, if an existing regulation does not change but is applied in a smaller or expanded area, the change is reflected in the “spatial change” column only.

Management Areas

NOAA’s proposed rule includes two existing management areas, which are the former Key Largo and Looe Key national marine sanctuaries, which were established by NOAA prior to the designation of FKNMS. The management areas have protections above and beyond sanctuary-wide prohibitions. Management area regulations are at 15 CFR § 922.164(b) and Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates are in Appendix III to 15 CFR 922 subpart P.

Summary of prohibited activities: Taking coral, marine invertebrates, plants, rocks, or other material (except lobstering and stone crab fishing are allowed); collecting tropical fish; fishing with wire fish traps or other bottom equipment; and fishing with or while carrying spearguns.

Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Key Largo (Upper Keys)	No	No	No	N/A
Looe Key (Lower Keys)	No	No	No	N/A

National Wildlife Refuges

FKNMS overlaps with the Florida Keys National Wildlife Refuge Complex, which includes four national wildlife refuges that are managed by the U.S. Department of Interior’s U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Two of these national wildlife refuges, Key West and Great White Heron, have protections above and beyond sanctuary-wide prohibitions. Regulations for Key West and Great White Heron national wildlife refuges are at 15 CFR § 922.164(c) and GPS coordinates are in Appendix IV to 15 CFR 922 subpart P.

Summary of prohibited activities: Key West and Great White Heron national wildlife refuges: Operating a personal watercraft; operating an airboat; water skiing; and landing recreational aircraft. However, there are some exceptions for personal watercraft operation in Key West National Wildlife Refuge.

National Wildlife Refuges	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Great White Heron (Middle Keys and Lower Keys)	No	No	No	N/A
Key West (Marquesas)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate conflicting uses between personal watercraft and fishing activities, through allowing personal watercraft operation in a small portion of the refuge, west of the Key West main ship channel around marker G13

Conservation Areas

NOAA’s proposed rule includes six conservation areas. These areas of the sanctuary provide natural spawning, nursery, and residence areas for sanctuary marine life, and seek to protect and preserve groups of habitats and species from certain activities through limited restrictions and prohibitions. These areas consist of contiguous, diverse habitats, protect a variety of sanctuary resources, and/or facilitate research that supports sanctuary management or recovery of sanctuary resources. The conservation areas proposed here are all existing marine zones, currently categorized as either a special use area or an ecological reserve. NOAA also proposes to eliminate one existing special use area. Conservation area regulations are at 15 CFR § 922.164(f) and GPS coordinates are in Appendix VII to 15 CFR 922 subpart P.

Summary of prohibited activities: Discharging any material except vessel cooling water; collecting, injuring, or possessing any living or dead organism; anchoring (except in Western Sambo where anchoring is allowed shoreward of the reef tract); and entering except for continuous transit without interruption (except in Western Sambo where entering is allowed).

Conservation Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Conch Reef (Upper Keys)	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zone type name change from special use area to conservation area
Tennessee Reef (Middle Keys)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend zone to the 90-foot contour line to capture important deep-reef habitats Zone type name change from special use area to conservation area
Eastern Sambo (Lower Keys)	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zone type name change from special use area to conservation area
Looe Key (Lower Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate this zone as it has not been used for research purposes as intended While area supports healthy corals, sufficient protection for similar species is provided by nearby Looe Key Sanctuary Preservation Area Looe Key Management Area and sanctuary-wide regulations would still apply

Conservation Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Western Sambo (Lower Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend zone to the 90-foot contour line to capture important deep-reef habitats • Protect the area of most prominent coral reef development with a no anchor regulation • Stopping is allowed (exception to the continuous transit without interruption regulation) • All other existing regulations apply • Zone type name change from ecological reserve to conservation area
Tortugas North (Tortugas)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative changes to simplify the application process for an access permit by allowing requests to be submitted more than 30 days in advance • Zone type name change from ecological reserve to conservation area
Tortugas South (Tortugas)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend zone to the west by 1-mile along its entire length to include additional habitat west of Riley's Hump, known to support fish spawning aggregations and important deep reef habitats • Retain protection for the southern portion, where data show unique habitat features, including rock escarpment formations, a well-defined ledge, and diversity of fish species • Zone type name change from ecological reserve to conservation area

Sanctuary Preservation Areas

NOAA’s proposed rule includes 17 sanctuary preservation areas (SPAs). These areas of the sanctuary encompass discrete, biologically important areas, within which activities are subject to conditions and prohibitions to avoid concentrations of uses that could impact species populations or habitats, reduce conflicts between uses, protect areas of important marine species or habitats, or provide opportunities for scientific research. NOAA proposes to add two new, combine two existing, and eliminate two existing sanctuary preservation areas. Sanctuary preservation area regulations are at 15 CFR § 922.164(e) and GPS coordinates are in Appendix VI to 15 CFR 922 subpart P.

Summary of prohibited activities: Discharging any material except vessel cooling water; collecting, injuring, or possessing any living or dead organism; and anchoring.

Sanctuary Preservation Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Turtle Rocks (Upper Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone overlaps with the John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park No Lobster Trap Zone, and expand slightly to include additional historical resources Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats All other existing SPA regulations apply
Carysfort Reef (Upper Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend zone slightly shoreward and seaward to the 90-foot depth contour to capture Endangered Species Act listed corals and important deep reef habitats Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats including areas of active coral restoration (this SPA is a Mission: Iconic Reef site) All other existing SPA regulations apply
The Elbow (Upper Keys)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats All other existing SPA regulations apply

Sanctuary Preservation Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Key Largo Dry Rocks-Grecian Rocks (Upper Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of total area by connecting two existing SPAs to create one new SPA to protect additional sensitive coral reef habitats that are not encompassed in the two current zones (note: SPA size is smaller than proposed in the 2019 DEIS) Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats All other existing SPA regulations apply
French Reef (Upper Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate this zone because SPA no longer contains reproductively viable populations of ESA-listed coral species that it was originally designed to protect Retain moorings to reduce anchor impacts to species that are present Sanctuary-wide regulations would apply
Molasses Reef (Upper Keys)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats All other existing SPA regulations apply
Conch Reef (Upper Keys)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats Remove regulatory exception allowing catch and release fishing by trolling to create consistent regulations among all SPAs to protect all species and increase compliance All other existing SPA regulations apply
Davis Reef (Upper Keys)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats All other existing SPA regulations apply
Hen and Chickens Reef (Upper Keys)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats All other existing SPA regulations apply

Sanctuary Preservation Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Cheeca Rocks (Middle Keys)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats including areas of active coral restoration (this SPA is a Mission: Iconic Reef site) • All other existing SPA regulations apply
Alligator Reef (Middle Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand to the 90-foot depth contour zone to capture important deep reef habitats • Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats • Remove regulatory exception allowing catch and release fishing by trolling to create consistent regulations among all SPAs to protect all species and increase compliance • All other existing SPA regulations apply
Turtle Shoal (Middle Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed new zone to protect complex of mid-channel aggregate patch reefs that have shown high resilience to bleaching and disease and still contain large populations of ESA-listed corals • Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats • All other existing SPA regulations apply
Coffins Patch (Middle Keys)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats • All other existing SPA regulations apply

Sanctuary Preservation Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Sombrero Key (Middle Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the zone to include remnant elkhorn coral thickets Square off the existing triangular shape to facilitate marking, compliance, and enforcement Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats including areas of active coral restoration (this SPA is a Mission: Iconic Reef site) Remove regulatory exception allowing catch and release fishing by trolling to create consistent regulations among all SPAs to protect all species and increase compliance All other existing SPA regulations apply
Newfound Harbor Key (Lower Keys)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats including areas of active coral restoration (this SPA is a Mission Iconic Reef site) All other existing SPA regulations apply
Looe Key (Lower Keys)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats including areas of active coral restoration (this SPA is a Mission: Iconic Reef site) All other existing SPA regulations apply
Eastern Dry Rocks (Marquesas)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats including areas of active coral restoration (this SPA is a Mission: Iconic Reef site) All other existing SPA regulations apply

Sanctuary Preservation Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Rock Key (Marquesas)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate this zone because SPA no longer contains reproductively viable populations of ESA-listed coral species that it was originally designed to protect • Retain moorings to reduce anchor impacts to species that are present • Sanctuary-wide regulations would apply
Sand Key (Marquesas)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of no anchor regulation to reduce potential anchor damage to sensitive habitats • Remove regulatory exception allowing catch and release fishing by trolling to create consistent regulations among all SPAs to protect all species and increase compliance • All other existing SPA regulations apply

Habitat Restoration Areas

NOAA’s proposed rule includes 13 restoration areas, a proposed new zone type. Restoration areas are areas of the sanctuary that support species or habitat recovery, including protection for restoration sites (referred to as habitat restoration areas) and short and long-term propagation nurseries (referred to as nursery restoration areas), within which activities are subject to conditions, restrictions, and prohibitions to achieve these objectives. Restoration area regulations are at 15 CFR § 922.164(g) and (h) and GPS coordinates are in Appendix VIII and IX to 15 CFR 922 subpart P.

Summary of prohibited activities: Discharging any material except vessel cooling water; collecting, injuring, or possessing any living or dead organisms; and anchoring (habitat restoration areas have the same regulations as sanctuary preservation areas).

Habitat Restoration Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Horseshoe Reef - Habitat (Upper Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone within Key Largo Management Area Provide additional protections to the only Mission: Iconic Reefs site that is not already included within an existing SPA Encompass only the portion of Horseshoe Reef targeted for active restoration without affecting the remainder of the reef
Pickles Reef - Habitat (Upper Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone within Key Largo Management Area Provide additional protections to an active and long-term restoration site that includes large populations of ESA-listed elkhorn and staghorn coral that has been particularly vulnerable to anchor damage
Cheeca Rocks East - Habitat (Middle Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone within Key Largo Management Area Provide additional protections to an active and long-term restoration site with one of the largest remaining populations of ESA-listed star coral (<i>Orbicella</i> spp.) Protect healthy populations of species susceptible to Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease that appear more resilient to bleaching and disease

Habitat Restoration Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Cheeca Rocks South - Habitat (Middle Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone within Key Largo Management Area Provide additional protections to an active and long-term restoration site with one of the largest remaining populations of ESA-listed star coral (<i>Orbicella</i> spp.) Protect healthy populations of species susceptible to Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease that appear to be a site that is more resilient to bleaching and disease

Nursery Restoration Areas

NOAA’s proposed rule includes 13 restoration areas, a proposed new zone type. Restoration areas are areas of the sanctuary that support species or habitat recovery, including protection for restoration sites (referred to as habitat restoration areas) and short and long-term propagation nurseries (referred to as nursery restoration areas), within which activities are subject to conditions, restrictions, and prohibitions to achieve these objectives. Restoration area regulations are at 15 CFR § 922.164(g) and (h) and GPS coordinates are in Appendix VIII and IX to 15 CFR 922 subpart P.

Summary of prohibited activities: Discharging any material except vessel cooling water; collecting, injuring, or possessing any living or dead organism; anchoring; and entering except for continuous transit without interruption (nursery restoration areas have the same regulations as conservation areas).

Nursery Restoration Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Carysfort Reef - Nursery (Upper Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone within Carysfort Reef SPA Provide additional protections to an existing, permitted coral nursery site
Tavernier - Nursery (Upper Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone within Key Largo Management Area Provide additional protections to multiple existing, permitted coral nursery sites
The Elbow Reef - Nursery (Upper Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone within Key Largo Management Area Provide additional protections to an existing, permitted coral nursery site
Marathon - Nursery (Middle Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone to provide additional protections to an existing, permitted coral nursery site
Middle Keys - Nursery (Middle Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone to provide additional protections to an existing, permitted coral nursery site
Looe Key East - Nursery (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone within Looe Key Management Area Provide additional protections to an existing, permitted coral nursery site

Nursery Restoration Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Looe Key West - Nursery (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone within Looe Key Management Area Provide additional protections to an existing, permitted coral nursery site
Marker 32 - Nursery (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone to provide additional protections to an existing, permitted coral nursery site
Sand Key - Nursery (Marquesas)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new zone to provide additional protections to an existing, permitted coral nursery site

Wildlife Management Areas

NOAA’s proposed rule includes 47 wildlife management areas (WMAs), of which 23 are proposed new zones. NOAA is also proposing to eliminate two existing wildlife management areas. Wildlife management areas are areas of the sanctuary in which various access and use restrictions are applied to manage, protect, preserve, and minimize disturbance to sanctuary wildlife resources, including, but not limited to, endangered or threatened species, or the habitats, special places, or conditions on which they rely. Wildlife management area regulations are at 15 CFR § 922.164(d) and GPS coordinates are in Appendix V to 15 CFR 922 subpart P.

Summary of prohibited activities: Each wildlife management area is established to meet location specific resource management or protection goals, and as such the access and use restrictions are zone specific. Prohibitions could include: idle speed no wake, no motor, no anchor, or no entry.

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Barnes-Card Sound (Upper Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed no motor zone Decrease disturbance to nesting and wading birds and shallow water gamefish Decrease impacts to the benthic community, including seagrass and macroalgae
Crocodile Lake (Upper Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove the shoreline in Eastern Lake Surprise from this zone (that area is now included in the existing Eastern Lake Surprise WMA) Exclude Steamboat Creek Change terminology from no access buffer to no entry Extend regulation to year round (current regulation applies March 1 to October 1) 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

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Eastern Lake Surprise (Upper Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of a portion of the shoreline previously included in Crocodile Lake WMA to be included in this WMA • Addition of no entry within 300 feet (100 yards) of the northern half of the shoreline; and addition of no entry in the canal and basin on the southeast side • No change to the existing idle speed no wake regulation • Decrease disturbance to ESA-listed species including American crocodile and West Indian manatee
Whitmore Bight (Upper Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed no motor zone to decrease disturbance to the benthic community, including hard-bottom habitat that supports juvenile lobster and various reef and game fish
Pelican Key (Upper Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed no entry zone to protect shallow seagrasses • Decrease disturbance to manatees and roosting and wading birds, including magnificent frigatebirds and pelicans
Dove Key and Rodriguez Key (Upper Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine the two currently separate WMAs into one no motor zone • Change regulation for area surrounding Dove Key from no entry to no motor • Decrease disturbance to a variety of birds and fish, including bonefish • Decrease disturbance to the benthic community, including seagrass and hard-bottom habitat • Improve compliance through ease of understanding
Pigeon Key (Upper Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed no entry zone to decrease disturbance to mangrove terrapins, mangrove salt marsh snakes, nesting wading birds (including roseate spoonbills), and roosting magnificent frigatebirds in a very important wading bird nesting area

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Tavernier Key (Upper Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove a portion of the existing zone on the far western side Exclude Tavernier Creek and the unnamed channel to the northeast leading to Tavernier Creek Addition of no anchor regulation to the existing no motor zone Decrease disturbance to a variety of birds using the area for nesting, roosting, and foraging Protect shallow water habitat used by various fish species
Snake Creek (Middle Keys)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the existing no motor zone to the west along the shoreline up to the existing Monroe County no motor zone Exclude Snake Creek and the three channels providing access to Windley Key Decrease disturbance to a variety of birds using the area for nesting, roosting, and foraging Protect shallow water habitat used by bonefish, permit, tarpon, and other fish species
Cotton Key (Middle Keys)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand existing no motor zone to include shallow seagrass flats west of Cotton Key Decrease disturbance to nesting and roosting pelicans, cormorants, several heron species, magnificent frigatebirds, and various fish species Decrease disturbance to seagrass habitats that exhibit high prop scarring
Ashbey-Horseshoe Key (Middle Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed no entry zone Decrease disturbance to brown pelicans and magnificent frigatebird roosting areas in Lignumvitae Key Aquatic Preserve and Lignumvitae Key Botanical State Park Provide additional protection to an area with high concentrations of boating and fishing pressure with impacts to birds

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Channel Key Banks (Middle Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new idle speed no wake zone except in Channel Key Pass Protect seagrass and hard-bottom habitat that support a diverse assemblage of corals, sponges, macroalgae, seagrass, and many juvenile fish species prior to their migration to the reef tract Protect a habitat type that is not currently well represented in the existing FKNMS marine zones Decrease disturbance to benthic habitats from vessel impacts Protect banks and associated channels that are susceptible to boat groundings, where the majority of the banks have light-to-severe prop scarring
Marathon Oceanside Shoreline (Middle Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new idle speed no wake zone except in the 10 channels providing access to Marathon Decrease disturbance to nearshore seagrass and hard-bottom habitats from vessel impacts Reduce impacts from numerous vessel groundings in the area along Vaca Cut, which exhibits severe prop scarring Protect the remaining area along the Marathon shoreline that exhibits light-to-severe prop scarring

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Red Bay Bank (Middle Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new idle speed no wake zone Protect seagrass and hard-bottom habitat that support a diverse assemblage of corals, sponges, macroalgae, seagrass, and many juvenile fish species prior to their migration to the reef tract Protect a habitat type that is not currently well represented in the existing FKNMS marine zones Decrease disturbance to benthic habitats from vessel impacts Protect banks and associated channels that are susceptible to boat groundings, where the majority of the banks have light-to-severe prop scarring
East Bahia Honda Key (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new no motor zone Decrease disturbance to nesting and/or foraging birds, including white-crowned pigeons and reddish egrets Protect shallow seagrass flats that exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring
West Bahia Honda Key (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed new no motor zone Decrease disturbance to nesting and foraging birds, including white-crowned pigeons and reddish egrets
Horseshoe Keys (Lower Keys)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand slightly to include the southern tip of the island and the small islands to the north and west Change terminology from no access buffer to no entry Decrease disturbance to nesting and/or foraging birds
Little Pine Key Mangrove (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed no entry zone Decrease disturbance to nesting and roosting birds, including reddish egrets, tri-colored herons, and great white herons Reduce flushing of these birds from their nests and roosting sites

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Water Key Mangroves (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed no entry zone Decrease disturbance to nesting, wading, and foraging birds, including reddish egret
Howe Key Mangrove (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed no entry zone Decrease disturbance to nesting birds, including great white heron, great blue heron, and reddish egret
East Content Keys and Upper Harbor Key Flats (Lower Keys)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the existing idle speed no wake zone to include shallow flats up to and around the existing Upper Harbor Key WMA Change terminology from no access buffer to no entry around Upper Harbor Key Decrease disturbance to various bird species, as this area is an important great white heron nesting and roosting site Decrease impacts to shallow water seagrass and hard-bottom habitat from vessels where many of the surrounding flats exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring
West Content Keys (Lower Keys)	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change terminology from no access buffer to no entry in the western cove No change to the idle speed no wake regulation in the eastern tidal creek Decrease disturbance to shorebirds that use the sandbar for foraging and resting habitat Decrease impacts to shallow water seagrass and hard-bottom habitat from vessels
Torch Key Mangroves (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed no entry zone Decrease disturbance to nesting and roosting habitat for various birds, including white-crowned pigeon and reddish egret Protect shallow water foraging habitat for various wading birds and shorebirds

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Little Crane Key (Lower Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate zone because the area has shifted following storm events and no longer supports bird nesting and roosting sites • Sanctuary-wide regulations would apply
Northeast Tarpon Belly Keys (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed no motor zone • Decrease disturbance to nesting and roosting sites for reddish egrets and other wading birds
Crane Key (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed no entry zone • Decrease disturbance to nesting and roosting birds, including magnificent frigatebird and great white heron • Protect nesting great white herons, which have the highest post-Hurricane Irma annual count of nesting sites in the backcountry • Protect an important island for other nesting, roosting, and foraging birds to reduce flushing from their nests and roosting sites • Protect shallow seagrass flats that exhibit light-to-moderate prop scarring
Sawyer Key (Lower Keys)	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change terminology from closed to no entry • Decrease disturbance to shallow water foraging habitat for wading and shorebirds
Happy Jack Key (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed no entry zone • Decrease disturbance to nesting and roosting reddish egrets • Protect the surrounding shallows that provide pristine foraging habitat
Barracuda Keys (Lower Keys)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed idle speed no wake zone • Decrease disturbance to important, sensitive shallow water habitats, including seagrass flats, and the large numbers of resting shorebirds that use them • Protect shallow flats that exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Tidal flat south of Marvin Key (Lower Keys)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate zone because area is a popular recreational location and the nearby proposed new Barracuda Key WMA could better serve to meet the purpose of decreasing disturbance to shorebirds in the area Sanctuary-wide regulations would apply
Pelican Shoal (Lower Keys)	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change terminology from no access buffer to no entry Protect an area known to support nesting roseate terns, an ESA-listed species Maintain protections for an existing state critical wildlife area
Snipe Keys (Lower Keys)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition of no entry around the two small southern islands No change to the existing no motor and idle speed no wake areas Decrease disturbance to an important magnificent frigatebird roosting area
Mud Keys (Lower Keys)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change existing closed area in two small creeks to idle speed no wake No change to the idle speed no wake in two main creeks Decrease disturbance to nesting and roosting birds Protect sensitive benthic habitat, as many of the surrounding flats exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring
Lower Harbor Keys (Lower Keys)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand to include area on the eastern side of the island and to better align with channels Extend the existing idle speed no wake regulation to the entire zone Decrease disturbance to nesting and roosting birds, including great white heron, little blue heron, double-crested cormorant, osprey, and other wading birds

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
East Harbor Key (Lower Keys)	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change terminology from no access buffer to no entry • Decrease disturbance to various resting shorebirds and nesting birds
Cayo Agua Keys (Lower Keys)	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change to the existing idle speed no wake zone • Decrease disturbance to nesting and roosting birds and the large numbers of resting and foraging shorebirds that use the shallow seagrass flats
Bay Keys (Lower Keys)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the existing idle speed no wake zone to include the entire channel north of the western island • Expand to include the western island as no motor • No change to the no motor zone around the eastern island • Decrease disturbance to roosting magnificent frigatebirds, a species that is highly disturbed by boater use • Decrease disturbance to nesting great white herons and little blue herons
Archer Key (Marquesas)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed no anchor zone • Protect seagrass habitat, soft corals, and sponges • Decrease impacts to shallow seagrass flats around the island that exhibit light-to-moderate prop scarring
Big Mullet Key (Marquesas)	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change to the existing no motor zone • Decrease disturbance to nesting and wading birds
Cottrell Key (Marquesas)	No	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the regulation from no motor to no entry • Decrease disturbance to a significant population of nesting great white heron and other nesting, roosting, and foraging birds

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Little Mullet Key (Marquesas)	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change terminology from no access buffer to no entry • Decrease disturbance to nesting, wading, and foraging birds
Ballast and Man Keys Flats (Marquesas)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed idle speed no wake except in the two channels between the keys • Decrease disturbance to ESA-listed sea turtles and protect important hard-bottom habitat • Provide additional protection to sensitive benthic habitats, where shallow seagrass flats exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring
Western Dry Rocks (Marquesas)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed transit only and no anchor zone from April 1 to July 31; this zone aligns with an existing Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission fishing regulation • Protect an area with ecological significance for supporting multi-species fish spawning aggregations
Woman Key (Marquesas)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the no entry zone seaward to create a 100 yard buffer • Decrease disturbance to ESA-listed sea turtles • Protect important hard-bottom habitat, where shallow seagrass flats exhibit light-to-severe prop scarring
Boca Grande Key (Marquesas)	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the no entry zone seaward to create a 100 yard buffer • Decrease disturbance to nesting and roosting birds • Protect sea turtle nesting beaches that may be impacted by high concentrations of visitors • Reduce impacts to shallow seagrass flats around the island that exhibit light prop scarring

Wildlife Management Areas	Proposed spatial and/or regulatory changes			Purpose of proposed spatial and/or regulatory change
	New zone	Spatial change	Regulatory change	
Marquesas Keys (Marquesas)	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of no entry around the small island west of Gull Key • Change no motor zone around the two northwestern islands to no entry • Change terminology from no access buffer to no entry around the southwestern small island • No change to the idle speed no wake zone in the creek east of Gull Key • Decrease disturbance to nesting, feeding, and roosting birds and ESA-listed sea turtles • Reduce impacts to shallow seagrass flats around the islands that exhibit light-to-moderate prop scarring
Marquesas Keys Turtle (Marquesas)	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed idle speed no wake zone • Decrease disturbance to ESA-listed green sea turtles on a rare, internationally-important foraging ground
Tortugas Bank (Tortugas)	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change to the no anchor by vessels >50m length regulation • Protect Tortugas Bank from anchor damage
Pulley Ridge	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed no anchor zone • Protect nationally-significant mesophotic reef ecosystems with demonstrated connectivity to the Florida Keys • Align with an existing Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Habitat Area of Particular Concern



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