



2025 Final Restoration Blueprint: Middle Keys Region Maps



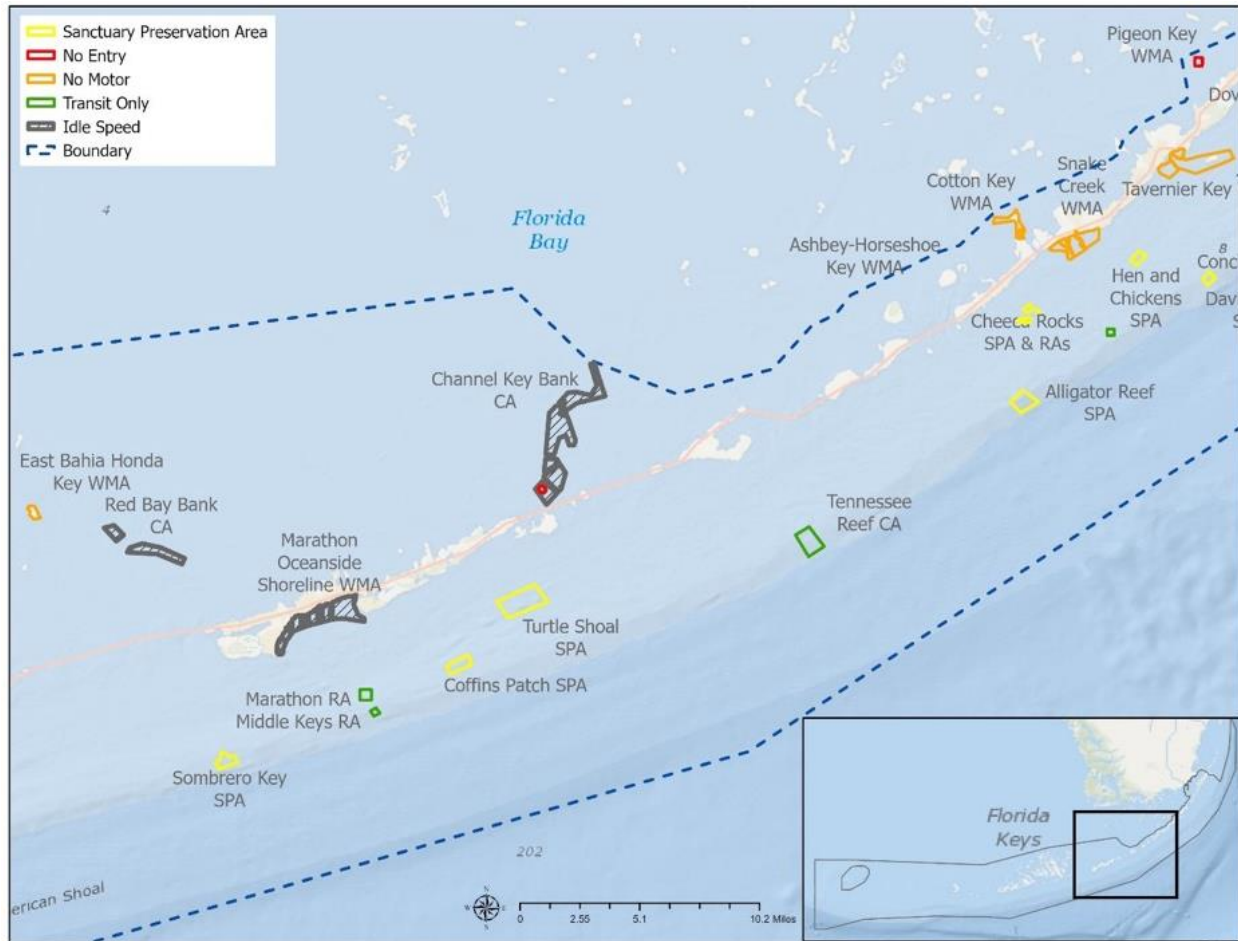


Middle Keys Region: Marine Zones

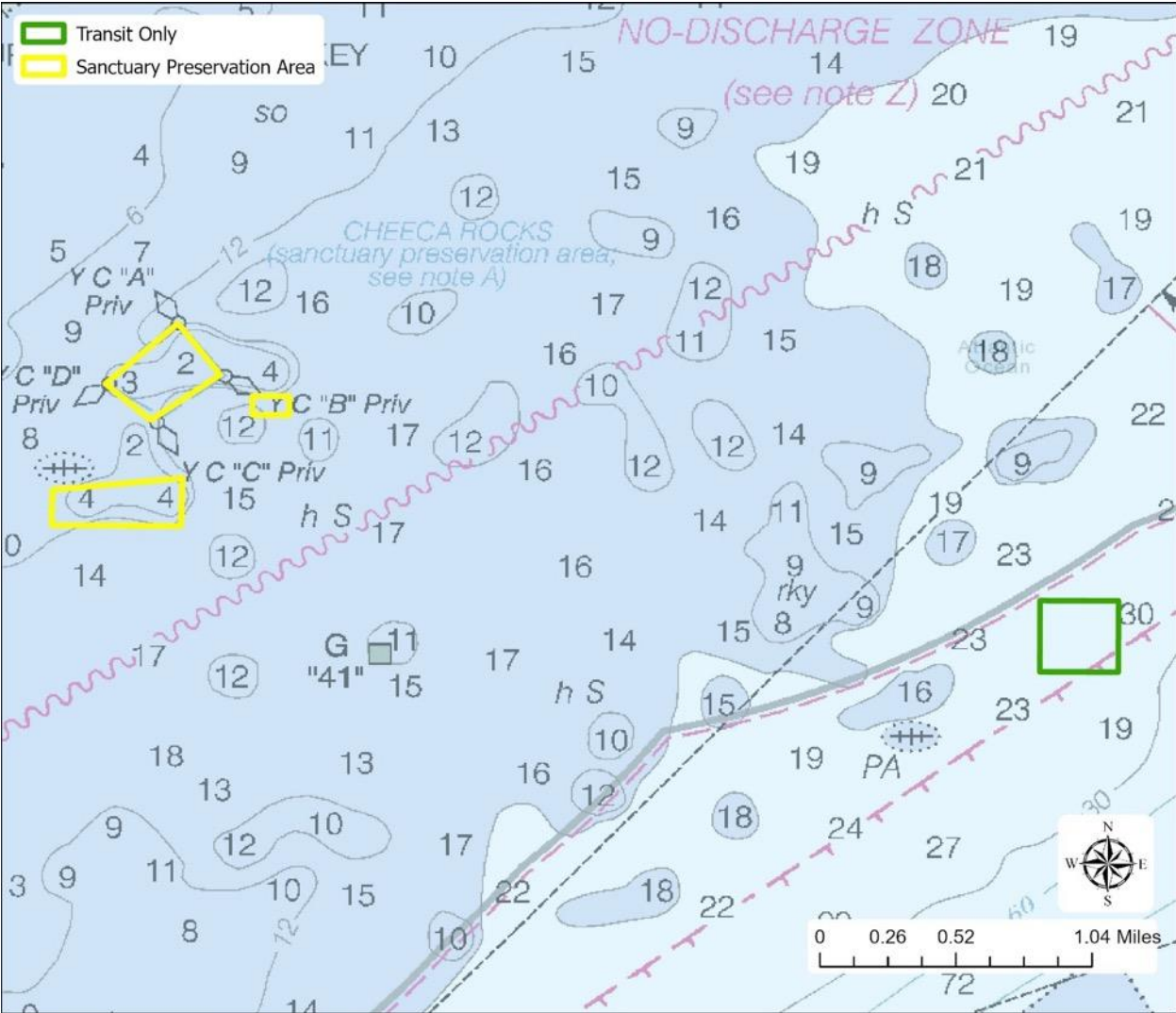
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Cover photo: The iconic Seven Mile Bridge crosses the channel, delineating the Lower and Middle Florida Keys. Photo: Andy Newman/Florida Keys News Bureau

Middle Keys Regional Map




Cheeca Rocks Sanctuary Preservation Area, Cheeca Rocks East and Cheeca Rocks South Habitat Restoration Areas, and Islamorada Nursery Restoration Area



Cheeca Rocks Sanctuary Preservation Area is home to endangered star corals and a high diversity of other boulder coral species. This isolated patch reef is an important site for climate change studies and other scientific research. This sanctuary preservation area (SPA), approximately 0.07 square miles (46 acres), has been a sanctuary marine zone since 1997. The 2025 updated regulations include the addition of a no anchor regulation throughout this zone; all other existing regulations are maintained. Implementation of the no anchor regulation is delayed until 2027.

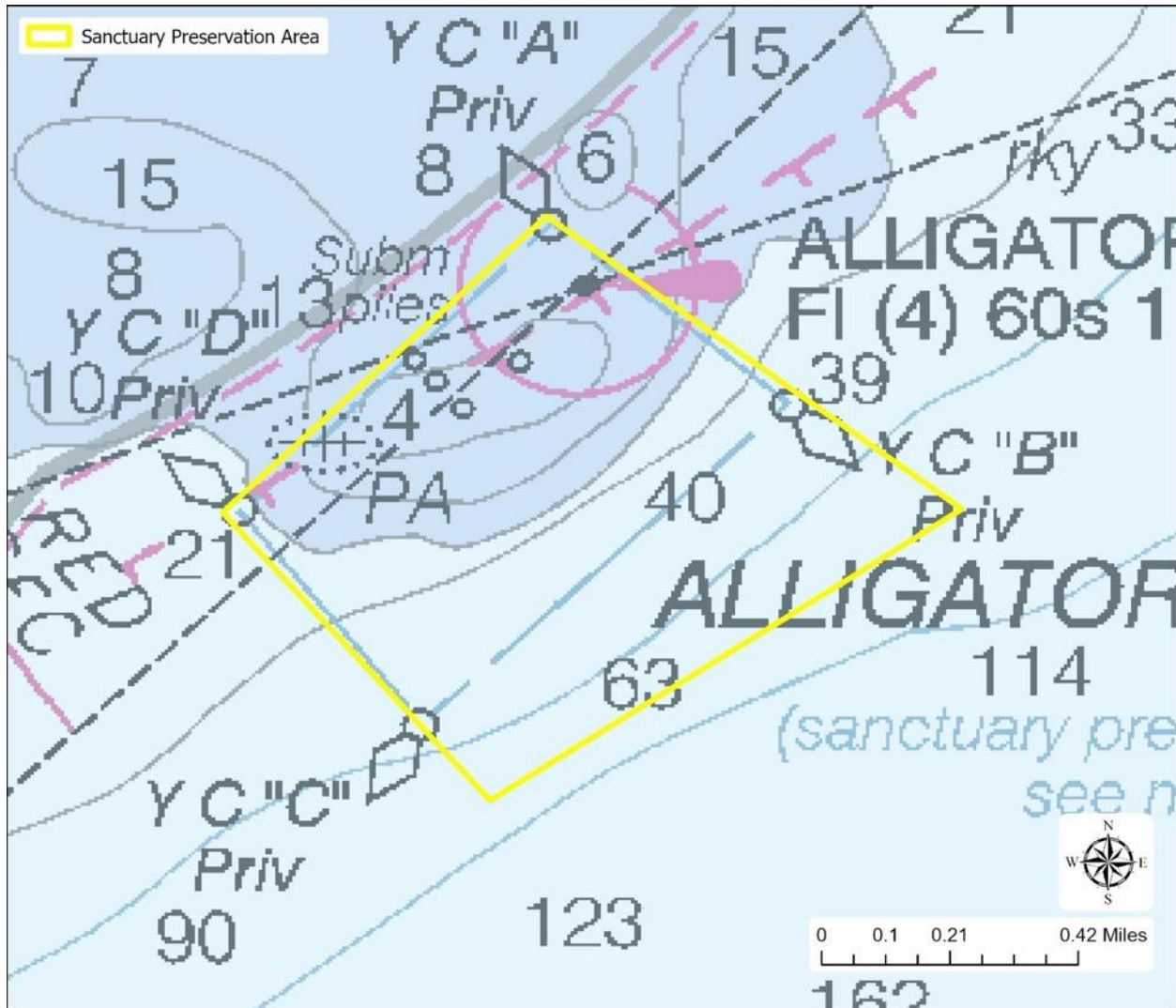
Cheeca Rocks Habitat Restoration East: The 2025 updated regulations include this area as a new habitat restoration area that is approximately 0.01 square miles (5.9 acres).



Cheeca Rocks Habitat Restoration Area South: The 2025 updated regulations include this area as a new habitat restoration area that is approximately 0.07 square miles (46 acres).

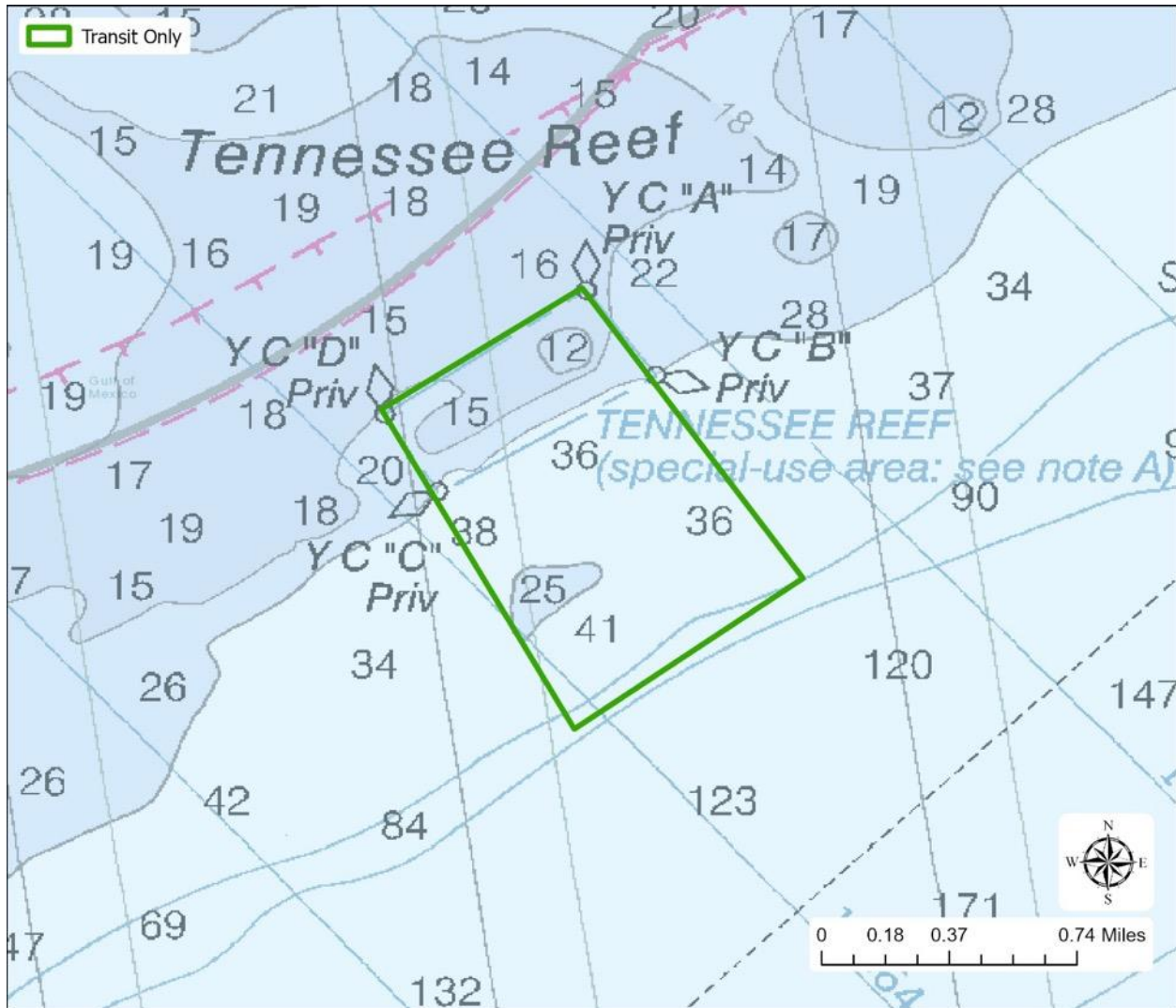
Islamorada Nursery Restoration Area: The 2025 updated regulations include this area as a new nursery restoration area that is approximately 0.07 square miles (47 acres).

Alligator Reef Sanctuary Preservation Area



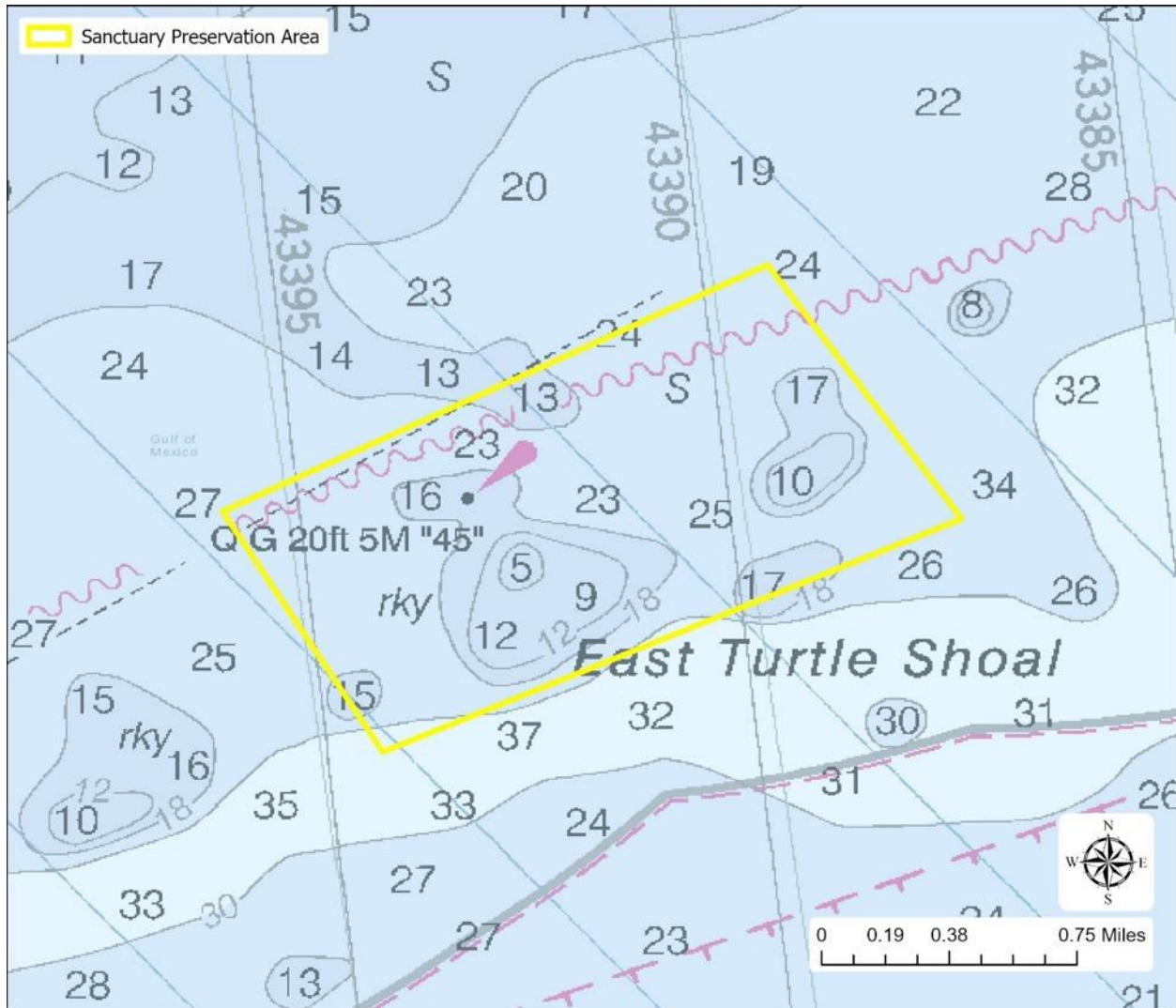
Alligator Reef SPA protects a coral reef ecosystem that marks a geological transition between shallow Upper and Middle Keys reefs. This area supports large aggregations of queen conch and historically contained extensive thickets of endangered staghorn corals. The historic Alligator Reef lighthouse is included in this SPA. Alligator Reef SPA has been a sanctuary marine zone since 1997. The 2025 updated regulations include the addition of a no anchor regulation throughout this zone, eliminates the current exception for catch and release fishing by trolling (all other existing regulations are maintained), and proposes to expand the zone by approximately 0.2 square miles (127 acres) for a total area of 0.52 square miles (334 acres). This SPA is expanded to include deep reef coral assemblages. Implementation of the no anchor regulation is delayed until 2027.

Tennessee Reef Conservation Area



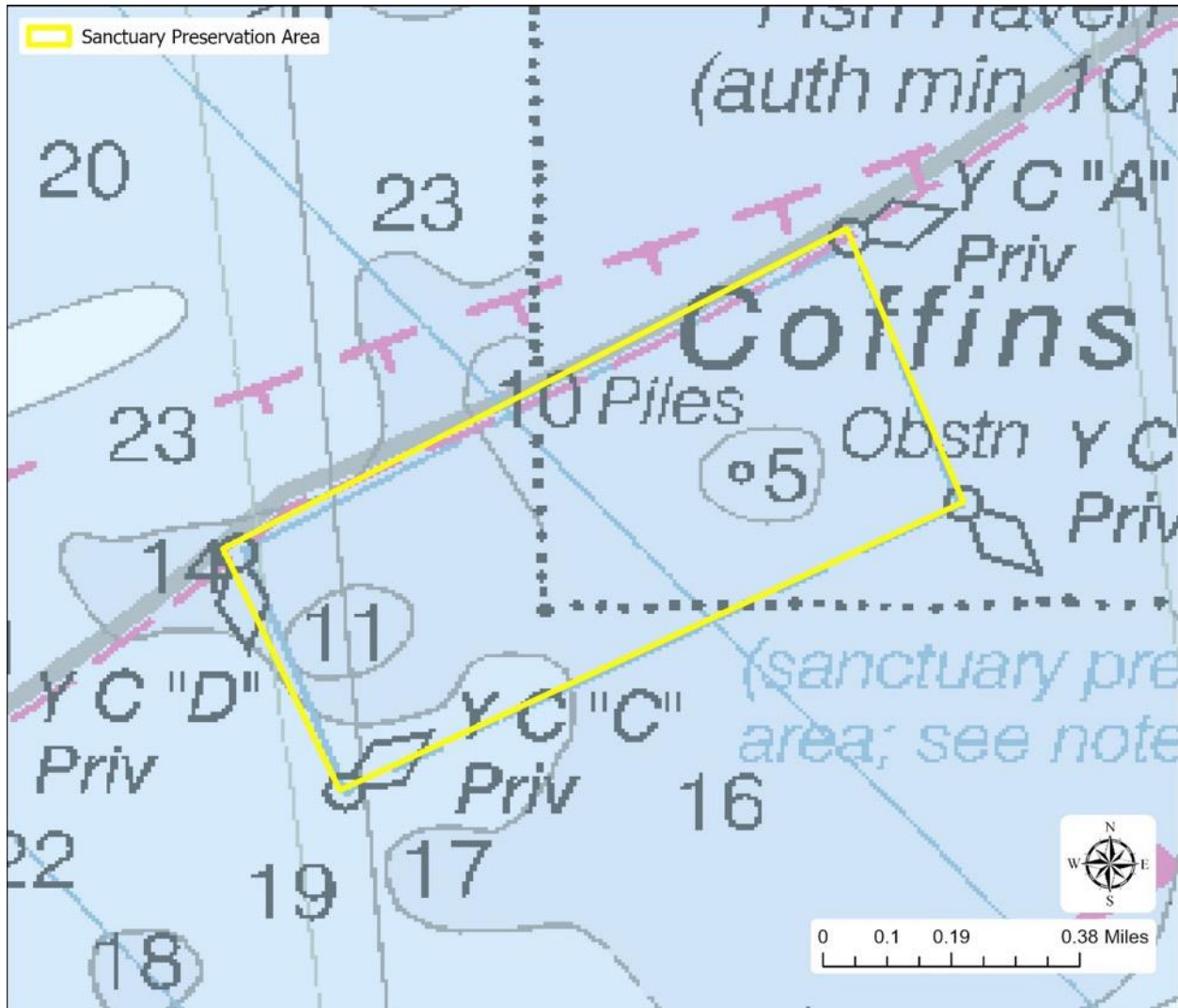
Tennessee Reef Conservation Area contains deep water assemblages of corals and sponges and was a historic site for endangered and threatened coral species. Tennessee Reef has been a sanctuary marine zone since 1997. The 2025 updated regulations expand this zone by approximately 0.53 square miles (336 acres) for a total area of 0.71 square miles (454 acres) to include deep water coral assemblages.

Turtle Shoal Sanctuary Preservation Area



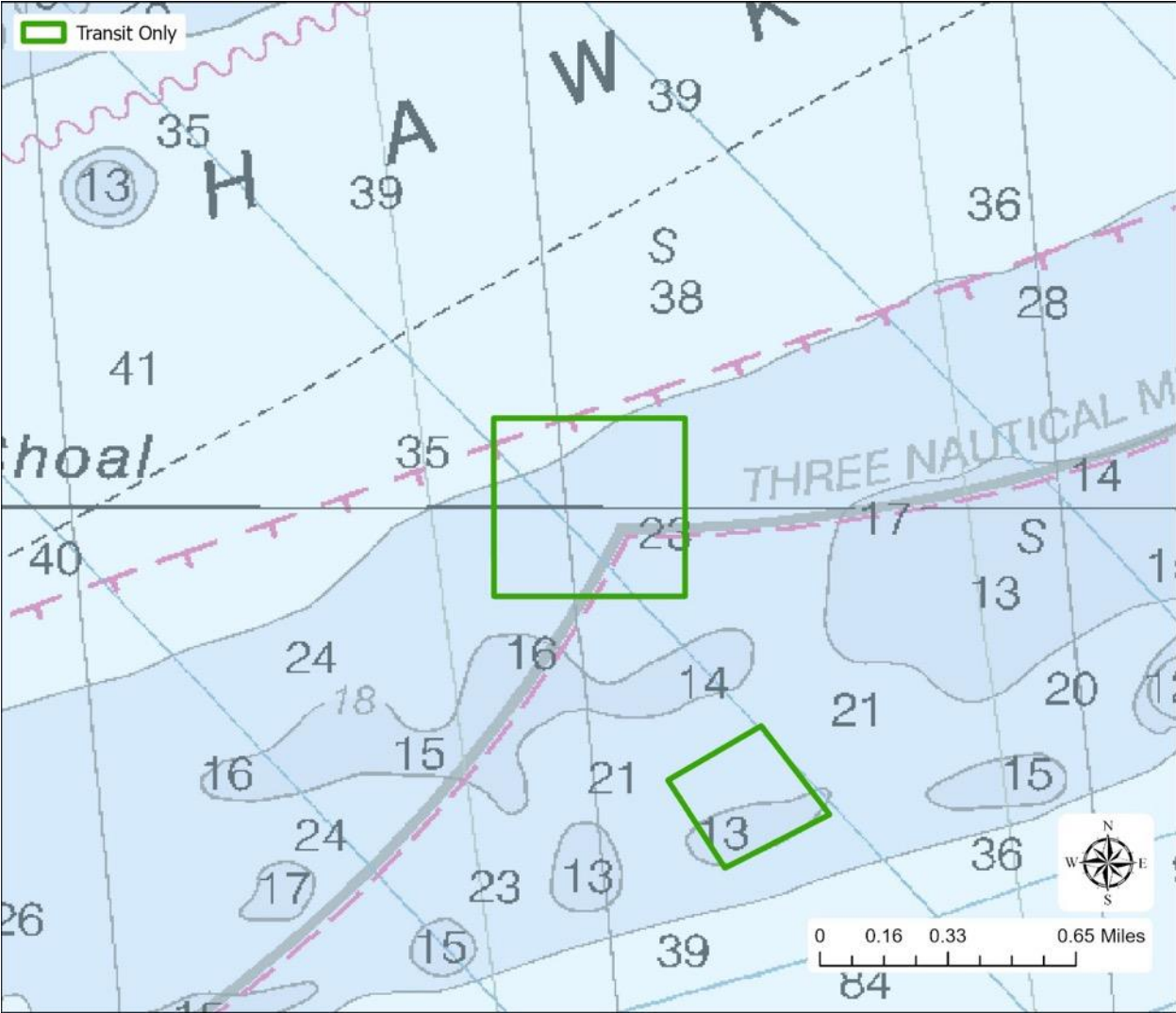
Turtle Shoal SPA protects an important complex of patch reefs surrounded by seagrass beds that historically supported populations of endangered staghorn and pillar corals. This area includes high stony coral cover, resilient reefs, and high fish diversity. The 2025 updated regulations include this area as a new SPA that is approximately 1.4 square miles (904 acres) to include deep water coral assemblages. Implementation of the no anchor regulation is delayed until 2027.

Coffins Patch Sanctuary Preservation Area



This SPA protects a diverse coral reef ecosystem with one of the most prominent reef walls in the Florida Keys. This area historically protected one of the largest populations of endangered staghorn, elkhorn, and pillar corals. Coffins Patch SPA, approximately 0.39 square miles (248 acres), has been a sanctuary marine zone since 1997. The 2025 updated regulations include the addition of a no anchor regulation throughout this zone; all other existing regulations are maintained. Implementation of the no anchor regulation is delayed until 2027.

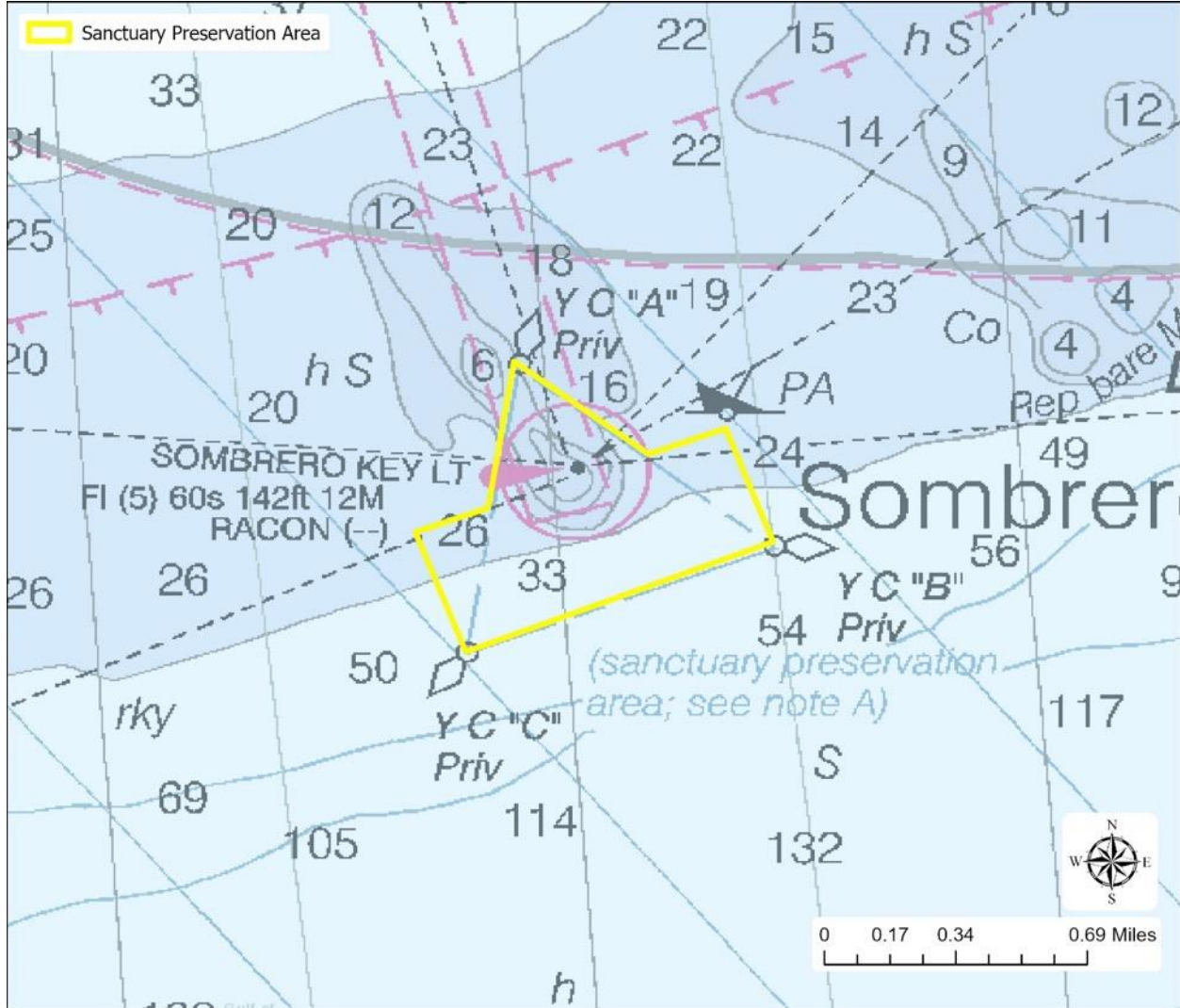
Marathon and Middle Keys Nursery Restoration Areas



Marathon Nursery Restoration Area: The 2025 updated regulations include this area as a new nursery restoration area that is approximately 0.2 square miles (127 acres).

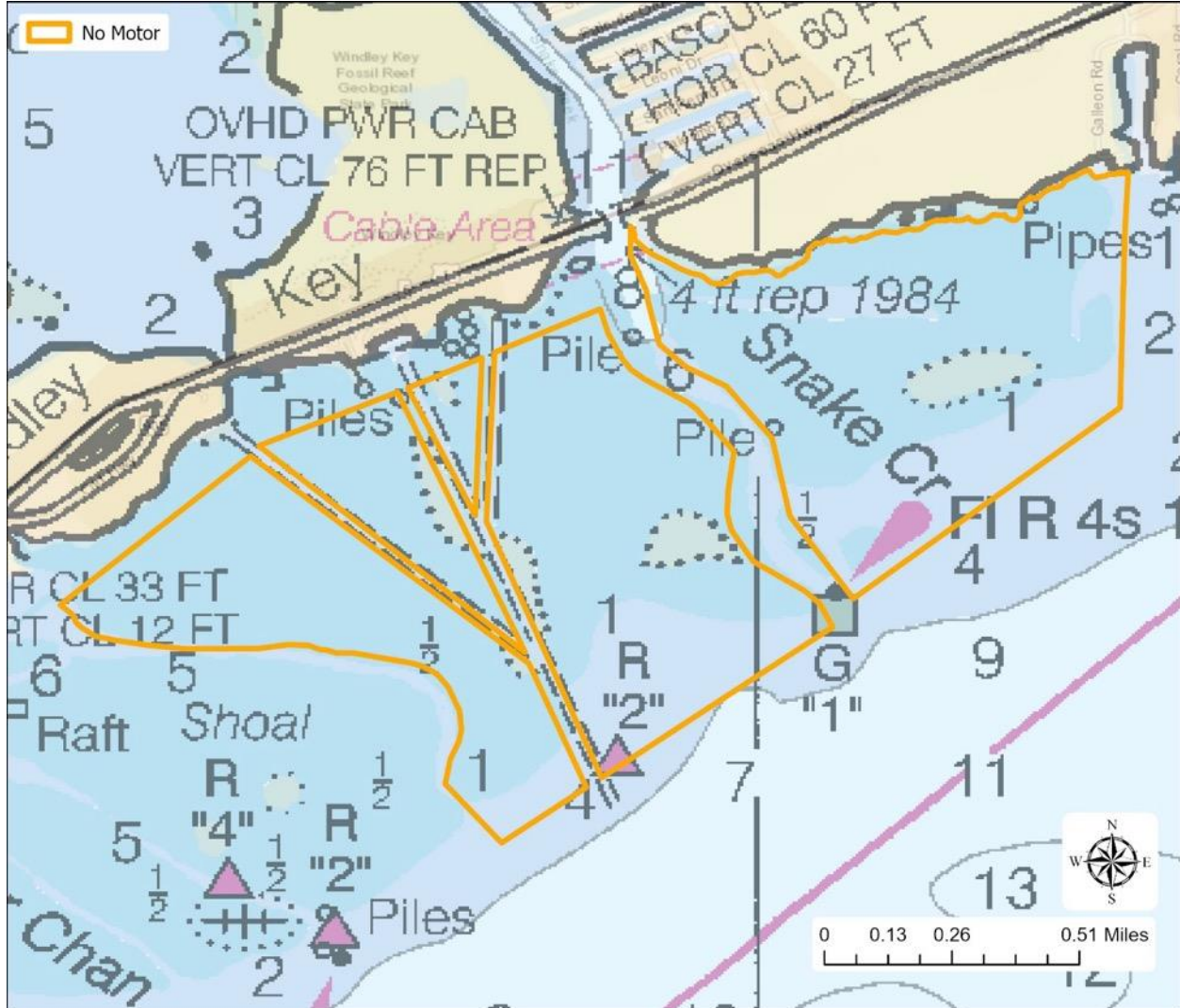
Middle Keys Nursery Restoration Area: The 2025 updated regulations include this area as a new nursery restoration area that is approximately 0.07 square miles (45 acres).

Sombrero Key Sanctuary Preservation Area



Sombrero Key SPA is home to the most extensive spur and groove and deep fore reef community in the Middle Keys. Sombrero Reef is also home to endangered star coral and elkhorn coral populations, as well as brain corals and barrel sponges. The historic Sombrero Key lighthouse is included in this SPA. Sombrero Key SPA has been a sanctuary marine zone since 1997. The 2025 updated regulations include the addition of a no anchor regulation throughout this zone, eliminates the current exception for catch and release fishing by trolling (all other existing regulations are maintained), and expands the zone by approximately 0.07 square miles (41 acres) for a total area of 0.33 square miles (208 acres). Implementation of the no anchor regulation is delayed until 2027.

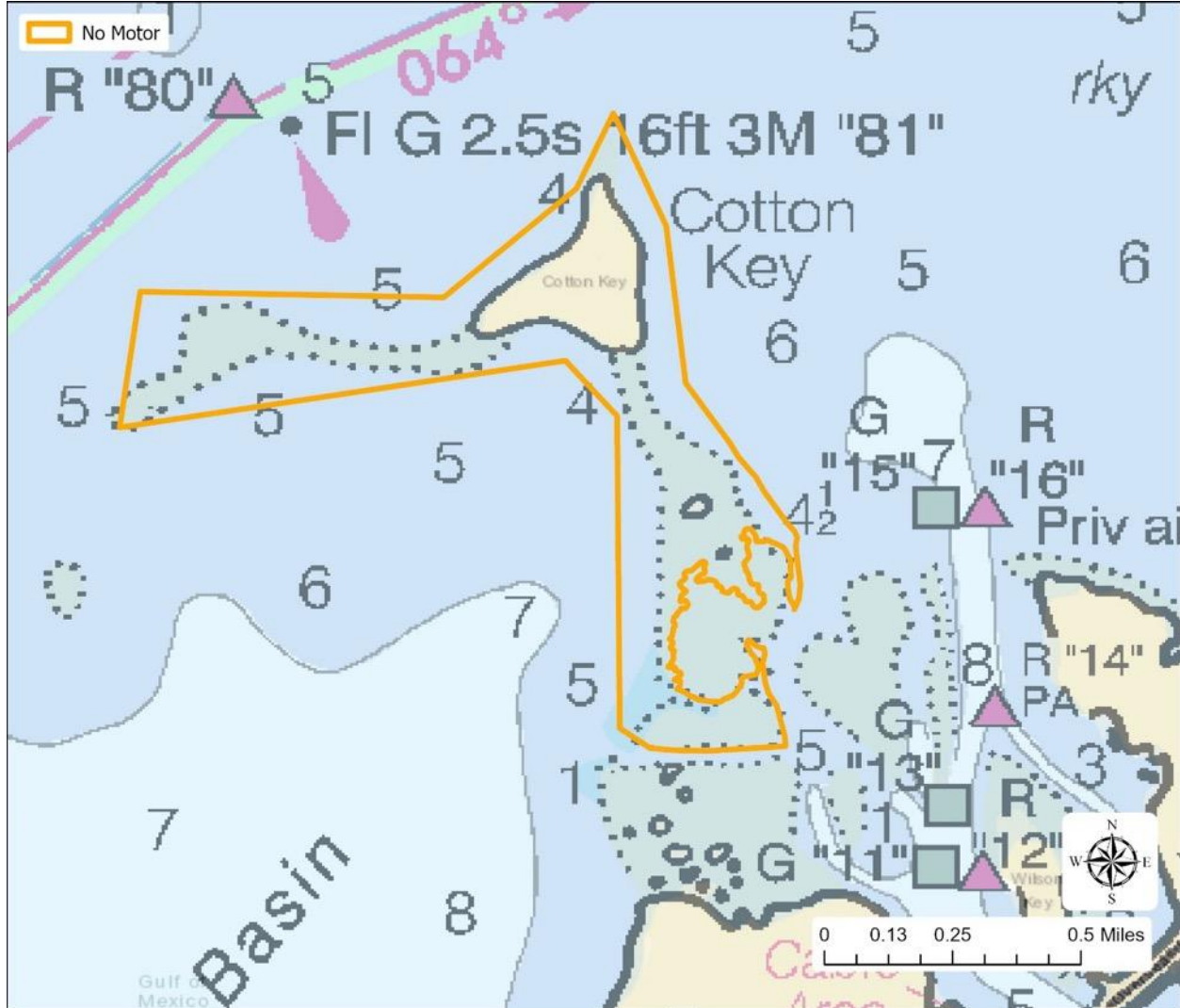
Snake Creek Wildlife Management Area



A no motor zone is in effect to reduce damage to seagrass and hardbottom habitats and to reduce disturbance to birds and fish. Snake Creek Wildlife Management Area has been a sanctuary marine zone since 1997.

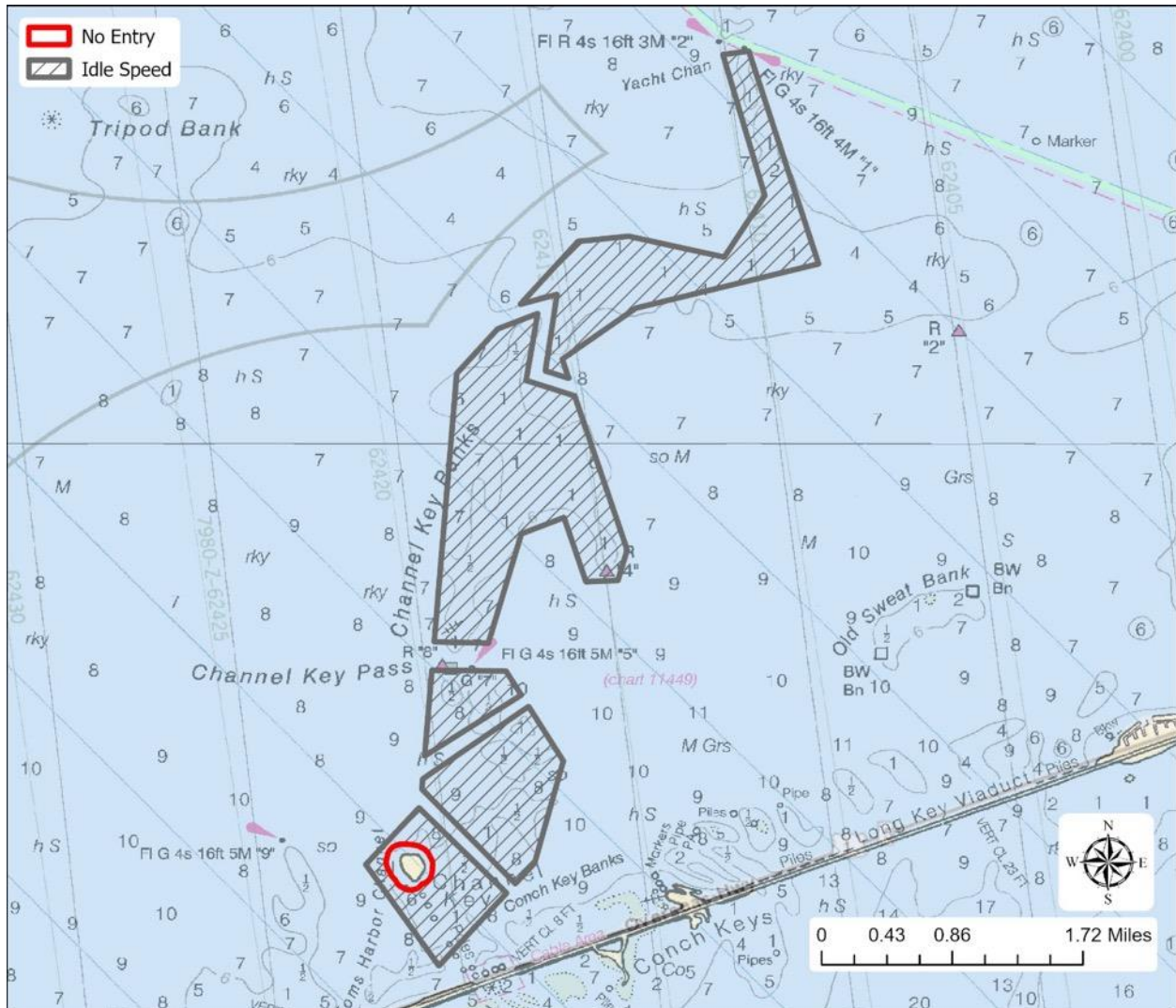
The 2025 updated regulations maintain the existing no motor regulation and modifies the size from approximately 0.42 square miles (271 acres) to 1.1 square miles (686 acres). Snake Creek and the three channels providing access to Windley Key are open for normal operation. This wildlife management area (WMA) is adjacent to existing Monroe County no motor zones.

Cotton Key Wildlife Management Area



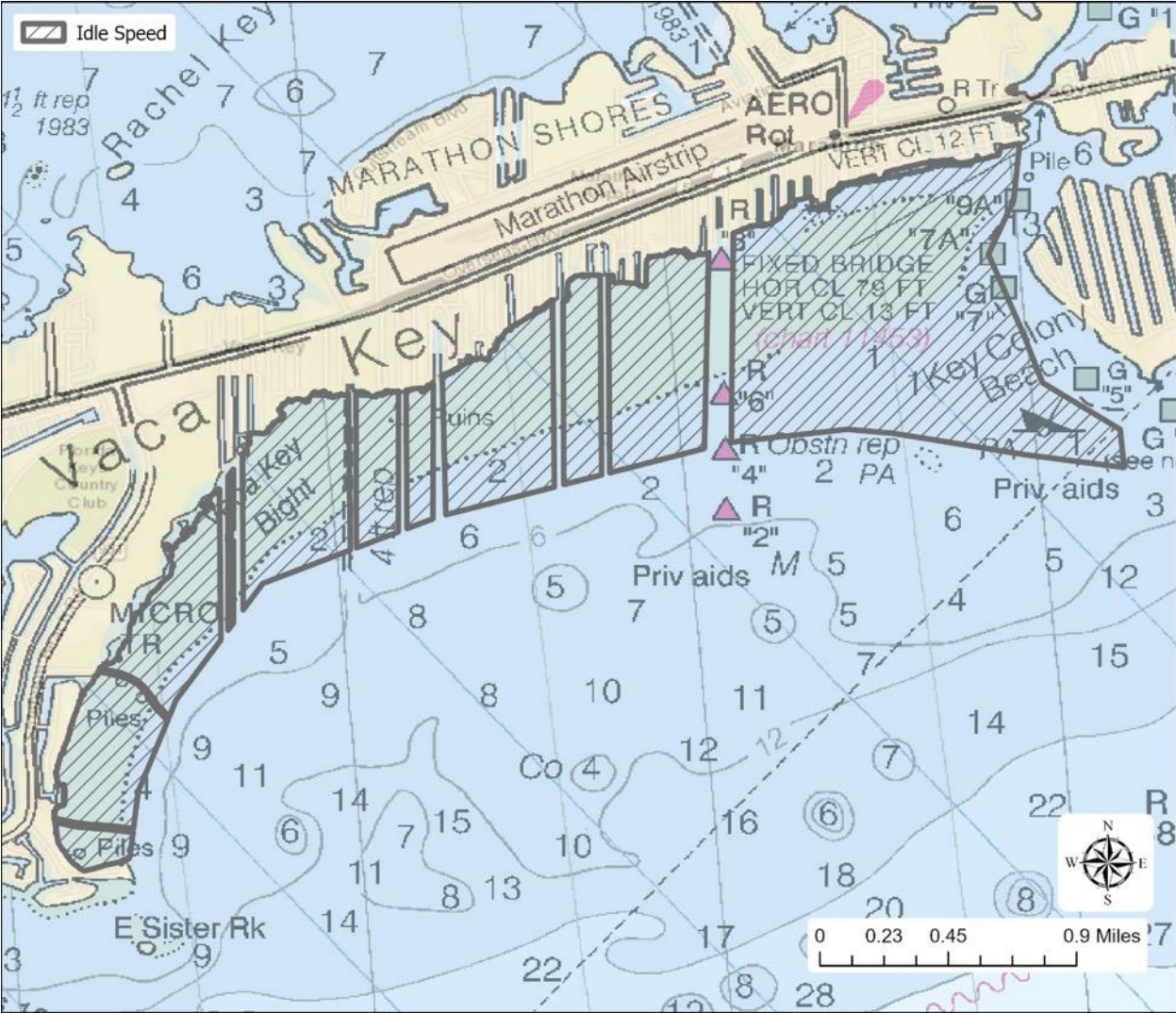
A no motor zone is in effect to reduce damage to seagrass and hardbottom habitats and to reduce disturbance to birds and fish. The existing no motor zone was expanded to protect additional area with heavy prop scarring. Cotton Key WMA has been a sanctuary marine zone since 1997. The 2025 updated regulations maintain the existing no motor regulation and modifies the size from approximately 0.19 square miles (124 acres) to 0.34 square miles (215 acres).

Channel Key Banks Wildlife Management Area



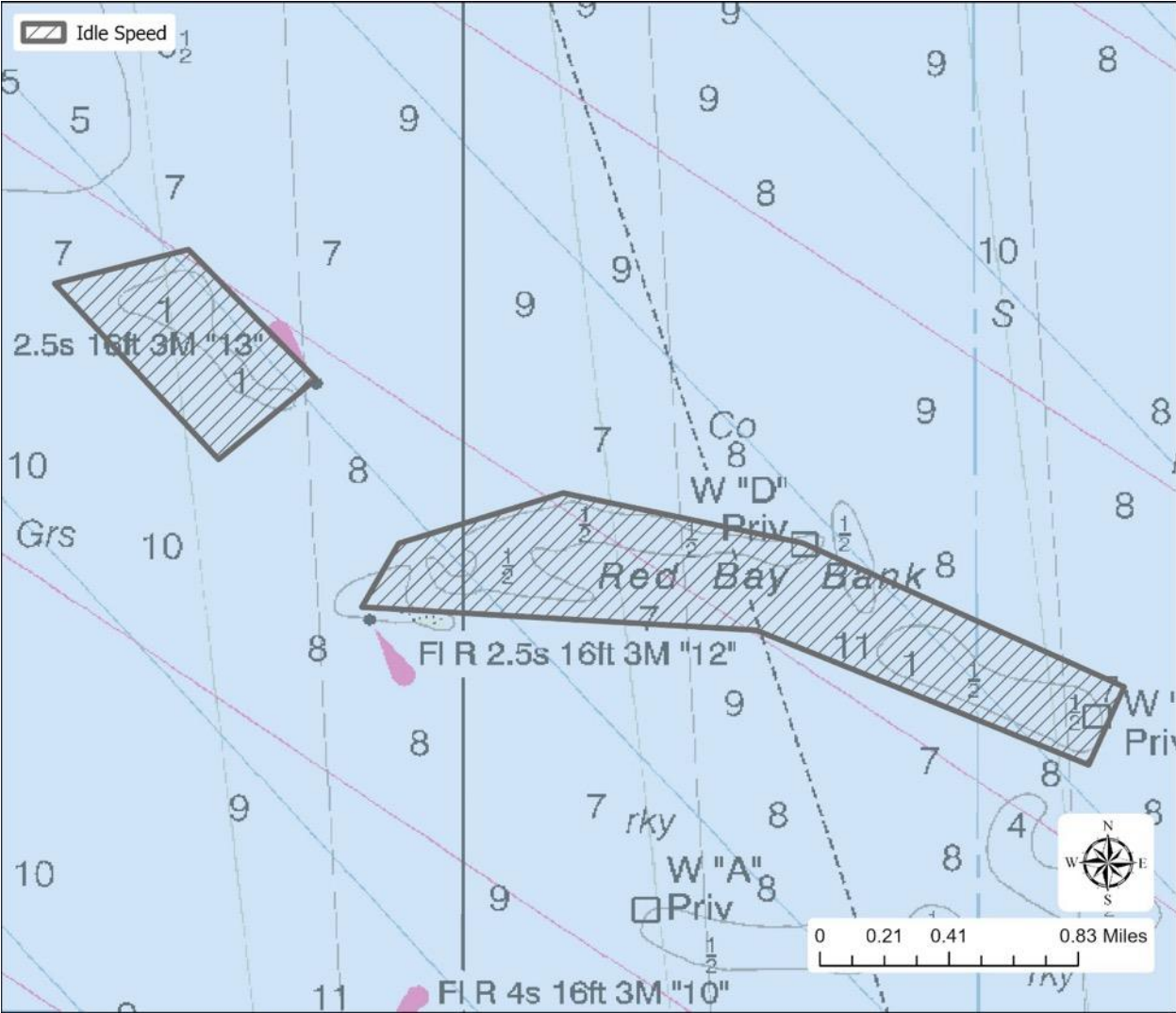
As an area that can be difficult to navigate, a no wake zone is in place to protect this area from boat groundings. In addition, the minimum 100-yard distance no entry zone around Channel Key is to protect wading and migratory bird populations who may use this area to rest and nest. The 2025 updated regulations include this area as a new idle speed no wake wildlife management area that is approximately 3.3 square miles (2,106 acres). This WMA also includes a 0.04 square mile (29 acres) no entry area around Channel Key. The total area zoned is approximately 3.34 square miles (2,135 acres).

Marathon Oceanside Shoreline Wildlife Management Area



This idle speed no wake zone is in effect to reduce prop scars and vessel groundings, which have severely impacted this area. Established channels are open for normal operation. The 2025 updated regulations include this area as a new idle speed no wake wildlife management area that is approximately 1.2 square miles (1,252 acres). Channels providing access to Marathon are open for normal operation.

Red Bay Bank Wildlife Management Area



As an area that can be difficult to navigate, a no wake zone is in place to protect this area from boat groundings. The 2025 updated regulations include this area as a new idle speed no wake wildlife management area that is approximately 0.93 square miles (593 acres).



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