

**SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING ORAL COMMENT
KEY WEST, FLORIDA
OCTOBER 15, 2019**

1. John Bartus, Mayor, Marathon

“My name is John Bartus I'm the mayor of the city Marathon. If I take my entire three minutes, please drag me out because this is really simple. Our city council passed a resolution and with all the whereas clauses that would take longer than three minutes to read, the language that we wanted to make sure the sanctuary council heard was alternative recommendation language associated with the section 3.3.3 pages 50 to 51 of the DEIS, concerning limiting entry to the three SPAs, specifically Carysfort, Sombrero, and Sand Key should be clarified to ensure that the general public shall not be prohibited from entry into those areas. That is a summary of our resolution. I left a copy with you here and we're going to be transmitting it to you in other ways as well. But that said I yield the rest of my two minutes to you getting out of here early.”

2. Douglas Gossage:

“My name is Doug Gossage, I am a business professional and managing member of the Florida Corporation known as Marine Environmental Research Services. In the past 13 years I've been a willing and qualified obedient Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary survey and inventory of historical resources permit holder under the existing programmatic agreement, which has language that allows for public and private involvement with cultural heritage matters. I have made tremendous personal sacrifices in time, effort, and expertise, and private money, financial contribution, at the expense of my families that's my wife and children and in pursuit of bringing to life the secrets hidden below the state and the sanctuary waters of the Keys. All of my efforts were performed with a desire to feed the public's insatiable interest in learning and discovery such as the State of Florida's historical role in the early expansion of European dynasties. My work is being performed under the document known as the programmatic agreement, among the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and so forth. This management plan is included as part of the bigger draft environmental impact statement and that is a problem. The story of the Spanish treasure fleets is real and present along the Florida keys as well as the story of Henry Flagler and his East coast railroad project, which is the reason of all that all people living visiting and doing business in the Keys enjoy the joined land mass as we travel in vehicle on today in these Keys. Some people in the Keys know the historic stories but few outside the Keys know anything about that. That is a shame and evidence of a failure on the part of the state of Florida Division of Historical Resources, which is led and allowed to be operated as the Florida Department of State. NOAA and the advisory council on historic preservation seemed to be content in aligning itself with this Division of Historical Resources within the State Department. I have great respect for the Office of the Governor and Florida's Secretary of State, but hold a probably very naive hope that these offices will take notice of and investigate what appears to be a culture of abuse and discrimination within the Department of Historical Resources, which denies us the public, our rights to discover and know our Florida history. The fact that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement holds buried within its bowels it's proposed draft management plan is severely massacred programmatic agreement for cultural historical resources management, which in the past allowed at least on paper private dedicated persons and groups like my own the opportunity to search for, locate, report, and even after following professionally accepted protocols through a series of permit steps and professional marine archaeologists supervision to recover, preserve, conserve, and see to the proper curation of objects,

rescued from the caustic environment of the ocean. All of this, to the benefit of a majority, non diving public and the socioeconomic benefit of the local economy mainly through museums. I like to quote this excerpt from cultural heritage manager, professional, protégé, academic of the past director and the current ruling Florida Division of Historical Resources. She has paper called creating a shipwreck trail, documenting the 1733 Spanish Fleet Wrecks. Under her subject on public interpretation, Jennifer McKinnon writes for the benefit of her peers. The greatest advantages of interpreting and promoting these shipwrecks are education and protection. By educating the public we promote protection of these cultural heritage sites. Here's the kicker. Perhaps educating may be an incorrect term for what this project hopes to achieve, and reeducation may be a better term for the process. Reeducating the public allowed them to understand what the 1733 fleet was and is, a convoy of ships travelling from Havana to Spain loaded with raw and finished materials, and not a treasure fleet loaded to the gunwales with precious gold, silver, and jewelry. That is absurd. Reeducate us to their narrative that is what she's saying. I have a lot more but I'm out of time."

3. Simon Stafford:

I am Simon Stafford, a commercial trap fisherman out of Stock Island I just like to address you on the Western Sambo Ecological Reserve, my boat tracks are all on the West side of the reserve. I live just on the East side of the reserves off been there now 45 years or something so I know that area pretty well. I've managed to work all around the reserve and I would be in favor of extending out past into the other part that is 90 feet that you might just give you more reef for the lobster to have free range, so if they don't want to leave the reserve then they'll be able to live their whole lives there if they want to. A few points on the idle zone. I think it's really not good. I think the idle zones should be placed on the top of the reef. Maybe if you want to increase the number of moorings and have no anchoring as well that is fine on top of the reef. Most of it, the bulk of it, it would be a big inconvenience, a big setback for me. A shore, maybe 300 feet from the shore could an idle zone and I would be impacted again. With my small boat in the shallow water, she made it not a half mile out to the edge of the corals and it would be an inconvenience. The transit and migration zone in the Tortugas think is a very bad idea. I know people that fish there, the only people who fish there are trappers I don't think they are really a threat to the snapper population. Finally I mentioned in the online comments about shrimp trawling. Shrimp trawling is allowed in the sanctuary and it is a big conflict. I mean, no one knows more than the trawls do that they make a big impact to the bottom some degree but they also impact trap fishermen to a large degree. Basically they made areas unfishable for trap fishermen, lobster fishermen, particularly, west of new grounds north and south of Rebecca Shoal. If shrimp trawling could be prohibited in the sanctuary, they still have vast areas in the Gulf of Mexico to go out. More areas would be opened up to lobster fishermen that might help mitigate some of these closures you're looking at. It would go a long way.

4. Chris Mendola:

As a local fishing guide and Keys resident I want to start off by saying these new proposals are not based on science or data. Closing areas are not the answers to sustainable fisheries and wildlife management. Size limits and bag limits made by state and Federal agencies are the way to conserve our resources. Birds are not being disturbed by quiet four stroke motors. Mangrove islands are not being walked through by anyone, as we all go to the sandbars. Passing skiffs are not throwing bigger wakes than 20 plus knot winds, which pound the islands the majority of the time. These new proposals will affect a lot of guides, commercial fishermen and Eco-tour businesses. For example, catching bait in these areas is crucial. Bully netters won't be able to access spots to catch lobster and eco tour boats will be restricted to entering specific historical areas. In the interest of being helpful, I would like to suggest the more

proactive approach to what you have named the restoration plan. Accurately mark channels and the backcountry to avoid human impact on turtle grass, create programs to encourage responsible creation of artificial reefs. These reefs have proven to increase habitat and influence larger populations of fish. They also happen to be more attractive to the fishermen and the traditional reef bottom. If funding is the issue, let us help you. Install more moorings on natural reef areas, clean up derelict vessels all over our inshore waterways. Implement restoration and cleaning procedures for the areas that do not look like Snipes or Marvin. They happen to be the cleanest islands around because of the people that use those areas. We are the biggest conservationists as locals who care about our environment. We self-regulate to conserve our fisheries. I mean this is how most of us make our living. Why would we want to destroy it? Spending nearly 250 days on the water annually, I personally see what's going on firsthand. We need to pay attention to water quality. Staking signs in the ground, isn't going to help water quality. Let's maybe pay more attention to chemicals like Roundup and pesticides that are entering our waters. All of the old idle zones and no motor zones were not enforced for and the birds are still there and thriving and nesting. Obviously the signs didn't change a thing. We do not need to close more areas that will never be reopened for our future generations. There's been a lot of discussion, some local guys misrepresenting the majority of charter guides and commercial fishing and commercial fishermen as well. As an overall consensus, we are not for these closures. This will be a devastating impact on our local economy.

5. Don DeMaria:

I think most folks would agree that spawning fish deserve some level of protection, it seems to be the level of protection that we have a disagreement on. In 1668 Isaac Walton wrote the Complete Angler about the need to protect spawning fish, prior to that the ancient Hawaiians have taboos against catching fish when they spawn, some of those taboos were punishable by death. I've got a couple papers on that. So here we are 351 years after Isaac Walton, and many more years after ancient Hawaiians and National Marine Sanctuary is still arguing whether we should protect spawning fish. I realize it's not possible or practical to protect every spawning fish on the reef. If we did that you'd have to protect every square meter of the reef. There's something spawning on that reef somewhere year round. Bi-Color damselfish, yellowtails, there's something spawning year round. If you look at certain areas where multiple species spawn, like Western Dry Rocks, and give those special protection, you then protect those bigger reef fish. At western black grouper spawn, mutton snapper, permit, gray snapper, angel fish, surgeon fish, hogfish, and a lot of other reef fish. They're all right there. Like Riley's Hump. And some of these fish spawn at other places, but you've got them all right there at Western Dry Rocks. Some of them don't form aggregations like hogfish that form a harem but they still spawn there. And some species like Black grouper you see them spawning year round but peak in December through March. [Inaudible] Now like any reserve, if you do go in that direction, you should have a fair amount of protection from all methods of fishing. Don't make special exceptions like trolling. Not even sure how it got in there. [Inaudible] I've got that paper too. You know what we need is a success story and Western Dry Rocks could be one. So far what I see, the only success story I see here is Riley's Hump. There's not much else that's been successful. The reefs out there, the water's green. [Inaudible] But despite all the problems with water quality the fish still aggregate in these areas to spawn. I think if we set aside certain areas, for spawning, it could be a success story. Now I was a little disappointed going through the Blueprint that I didn't really see anything on water quality or the number of people. Say you get a handle on water quality and the number of people. Say you get a handle on the water quality and the number of people in the keys, a lot of these other things are just going to give the appearance of doing something. Closing those places in the backcountry, coral restoration, fish corridors, you know until we improve the water quality and get a handle on the people it's going to be about like shuffling the deck

chairs on the Titanic. Looks like you're doing something but the ship's still going down and the reef's going to die. Thank you.

6. Ken Harris:

Back when I was a fisherman, I used to say hire the shortest guy that makes the fish look bigger in the pictures. I'm going to try to do this quick, it's hard for me. I used to do a radio show. I could talk for hours. I'm going to put on two hats, the fishing hat first. We need to have some pretty straightforward discussions here. I know that last comment for personal, I know who he is, was directed more at Will Benson. Well, I don't think you guys understand sometimes is your real enemy is a guy named Roy Crabtree. Roy Crabtree does not want fishing in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Will Benson gets to, with his own effort with that Blue Star idea, that name is what turns people off. At least he got Roy Crabtree to recognize some fishing here in the Florida Keys. So before you hang him in effigy, at least talk to him. Give him a chance to give you his side. Okay. I know personally Will, he's a great fisherman, I've watched him and I get what he's saying. My heart is more with that, but that's not the end. Now, I fished here for thirty two years. I was pretty proud of it and I want you to think of this number. I put it over 30,000 hours, just off the West side of the Marquesas where you now want to kind of and close off. There was no place that shouldn't allow idle speed. That's how I fished. I fly fish for sharks. I love the sharks. I would idle in. I saw turtles, we all see turtles, but if you're going to have real honest discussion, what we need to discuss is in my life, I struck two turtles, killed them both. It was sad. I rescued over 30 to 40 turtles, but one thing they had in common, they were all caught up in polypro rope around lobster traps. I don't want to stop any lobster fishermen. They're very important in what we do here. I like eating them, I know a lot those guys. Can we have less polypro rope? I don't know the answer to that one. You want more turtles, catch the wild ones, 90% mortality when they're warm, 90% success ratio becoming adults if you raise them until their shoulder is 12 inches, but we don't want them to really have that discussion. Blue Star. Get rid of that name. It turns people off. It sounds elitist. It has people that are paying the sanctuary money and it looks disingenuous whether it is or not. That don't want to be the Blue Star. The same people who love monopolies. How about the sanctuary people go and get committees to go out on the bigger tour boats of which I'm now one, that carry 40 passengers and give a gold star. Silver Star, a green Star, you know I get it. Do something like that and make those people adhere. Just the mere fact they say they educate people, it doesn't mean they really educate people. So let's see what's really going on with those boats.

7. Jan Edelstein:

I speak for the Cudjoe Gardens property owners association located at mile marker 21 about 300 homes and we use the water. We pride ourselves on being good neighbors to the sanctuary and knowledgeable and courteous users of it. We spent countless hours and money to help protect it. We've converted canals to flow through and installed channel markers. And then most recently we joined others in this room to go to court to get deep well injection for wastewater at Cudjoe Regional. When I heard the end of [inaudible] close on water quality population, there's over 3 million gallons per day permitted wastewater with its nutrients, remaining nutrients and pharmaceuticals that are still getting disposed of in shallow wells. You've got water quality protection program, but I have not found that the advocates are cleaning up this last bit of our wastewater system after the text. Today it's about general principals, we'll file comments about specifics, what we support. First of all, we urge you to increase enforcement like everyone and we encourage you to educate boaters on the keys, how to avoid damage. We've heard from the TDC representative the percentage of groundings by new boaters. Those of us who are out there see it all the time, rental boats and the increase of new boats since the recession. We support

restrictions that restore or prevent further decline of the resources of this special place. On the other hand, we oppose restrictions that are overly drawn, excessive or simply benefit one class of users at the expense of others. We also oppose restrictions justified by the Keys economy. Yes, an indirect benefit of the sanctuary designation is to protect natural resources that do support some aspects of our tourist based economy, but nowhere does Congress name protecting the economy as a purpose sanctuary legislation and hence there is no regulatory authority to do something. If you're going to impose restrictions, it should be good on environmental data that we can all understand. For example 1600 acres to be close around Barracuda Keys. That's in our backyard. I recreate there, I know lots of people who do kayaks and diving, but we need to drive out to. It says those are going to close because of the nesting shorebirds. I look in a condition report, it says sea bird population remains stable. Why do we have to close it off for them? And another reason you're closing it, we propose to close it, is to protect the conflict with flats fishermen. Well, although the sanctuary has authority to indirectly prohibit one set of users over another when designing restrictions to protect the resource, it does not have authority to pick winners and losers along those who have similar impact. If there isn't already been a particular class of users exclusive rights to some area, please just show it to you. So the 1600 acres to be closed at Barracuda Keys are to be closed to motorized boats, but not according to the chart and the blueprint to fishing. I'm told that some commercial flat fishers expect to avoid the no motor prohibition by using electric trolling motor. Is that true? Or are they barred also? In the details, it says maintain use of channels, how does that compute with closed to motors? This is an example of an overdrawn boundary and might solve a lot of problems for some of my members had that been more accurately drawn or tell us what you're going to do. But to close, remember when imposing rules less is more. The more you add regulations that don't make sense to users, the more you undermine compliance with all the rules. Thank you.

8. Bill Kelly:

This is Bill Kelly. I'm the executive director of the Florida Keys Commercial Fisherman's Association. I would like to address a couple of things about the process here while we're still early on. In the very beginning we had to sanctuary officials to adjust public comment period so that the user groups would be involved here. Oddly enough, here we are with one of the broadest areas that would be addressed here on the opening the commercial stone crab season. So don't be surprised there aren't a lot of commercial fishermen here. We'd like to request now that we see some of these briefing materials and so forth in Spanish as well. Roughly 51% of the commercial fishermen in Key West and Marathon areas are Hispanic. Also I don't see any purposes for public comment in Spanish and I have been approached by several people tonight, we're going to have some Spanish speaking fishermen here. We have some of the members of our association have volunteered to interpret if you would allow that would be greatly appreciated. We're also glad to see if you could maybe schedule an oral Spanish speaking public comment. We've got a 585 page draft environmental impact statement and essentially it's very limited and hardly addressed the big three and all that, no water quality, education, law enforcement. It seems the goal is to restrict or eliminate access to numerous areas because you can do that for free instead of working hard and recruiting someone to address those big three issues. We all know that the best way to protect spawning aggregations is through size and bag limits as was mentioned, or by closed seasons, not closed areas. In 2014 working with the South Atlantic council Spiny Lobster amendment 11, we developed 60 coral protection sites throughout the sanctuary here. The sanctuary vowed they would match it, and make those coral protection sites closed to recreational harvesters as well. Nothing has ever happened there. There isn't a single buoy on those areas. We need help that they're already long identified as outstanding coral locations. We're seeing widespread opposition, as I just was at the fish and wildlife commission meeting there and they're concerned as well. Once you close areas, rarely do

we get them back. The general management plan of 2014-15, most of these closed areas are shut down. We've had four and a half years to readdress this stuff. There hasn't been a reconvene of one single working group or any of the user groups pulled the table to renegotiate or examine what you're putting on the table right now. We're very much concerned about your networking with other agencies, planes for Biscayne national park to shut down the two day mini season. You do that, you're going to send another 35-40,000 people into Monroe County on top of the 40,000 that already come here to harvest lobsters. Law enforcement for the past four years, your budget used to be over \$800,000 in supplemental funding to FWC to assist the three NOAA law enforcement officers to cover 3,800 square miles. That number is now been reduced to about \$347,000. Somebody needs to be banging the drum on your behalf to Washington to get us more money. We'll follow the process here in public comment as well as offer a white paper to sanctuary officials and others. Just remember the commercial fishery and way of life here is valued at more than \$900 million to Monroe County. Second largest economic engine here, 4,500 jobs in a population 79,500 people that are strictly boat related. Thank you.

9. Nancy Andrews:

My name is Nancy Andrews, I'm a retired senior special agent, thirty two years of law enforcement. I started down here in 1980 with Florida Marine Patrol. So today I stand up here and talk to you about one specific area and it's in my backyard. The Key Lois Loggerhead basin, this area I am proposing today and asking you to leave as is, with two enhancements. Your proposal is not only excessive, it's not in the best interest of all users. The proposal limits use to idle speed only for 365 days, 24/7. This area is used by many different types of users from Cudjoe Key, Summerland Key, and Sugarloaf. They're all impacted. Summerland Key residents have to transit that to get to one of only two marinas that sell fuel. Sugarloaf Key residents have to transit through this area to get into our own home or into Tarpon Creek. So you're asking for this massive area to be closed down when there's many people that are using this area. Your proposal not only covers the massive area but also penetrates and encroaches into the US Coast Guard navigational channel, Bow channel. It runs through channel markers six through 10. I am asking you with two enhancements with the digital navigational aide marking these manmade channels that we not only educate all of these boaters where the deep water channels are, it would possibly prevent the prop scarring. The other addition that I like to ask is that all flats fishermen while in this area engage in flying a fish up flag which would tell the public if we educate them, when you see this flag, you give 300 foot distance or idle speed only if you're in the water. If you're in one of these small channels, 50 feet or a hundred feet to idle, that would serve all of us. Well, I mentioned that right now what you're asking me to do, the idle only for 365 days a year, 24 hours a day is for one user group. There's thousands of use that use this backyard. Please listen to us and make these changes we ask of you. Thank you very much.

10. Bob Schoneck:

Hi I'm Bob Schoneck, I reside in Cudjoe Key and what I want to talk about today basically is two areas in our backyard of one of those areas is Barracuda Keys and the other is this area adjacent to Loggerhead Key that is marked. I see this. I'm a virtual user. I don't know business associate no commercial use in the area, but I've been using these Keys for a long time and I enjoying using the waters. What I see here, the closures that you're talking about, making this a no motor area I think is excessive and not required and I believe that, you know, through education we're talking like 1600 acres you're making no motors. I go out there, my little skiff, I want to go into this area with the motor running and I can no longer do that. That is the concern that I have. I have no problem with the fishermen that want to use this area. I respect them and they have just as much right to use it as I do. But when you take something away, and that's the problem I have. What I like to do also, just to point out is let's come up with a better solution.

Something that's not so restrictive and something for all users, not just a single group of one or two users. People use this area for taking their boats out, to take their kayaks and they go in, they should have that part out to come in and use this beach. This other area right in here around the Keys, I personally go out there I swim, sometimes catch little barracuda, catch and release and with the designation of this new order I can't do that anymore. So the question is how we can come up with something that works for all of us and not just for a special group of users. And if we can get together with education and a basic cooperation with one another. Would you use channel markers? Put areas in where we don't hit the flats, you can go ahead and put the sign. One of the things I came up with was why did these areas especially like, the flats fishermen, why can't instead of closing it off, why can't you call for some kind of posted signs saying actively used by flats fisherman. They use their flag up as Nancy said, and we show respect for one another. You know, keep your business slow to idle speed. It just makes common sense to do that versus closing off entire areas. And I guess the area at Marvin Key, I couldn't tell. It's no entry. I couldn't tell exactly how close to the shoreline. And I don't know if it encompasses those channels or whatever, but it seems like an idle versus no entry might make a little bit more sense there. And then again, use the signs that they thought that to designate, you know, there's birds are nesting in the area. So this is 166 acres of closure, through no entry. So I ask all of you that are the decision makers if they know about what we're doing, closing off areas and how could you manage it better by just working together and coming up with some rules and we'll follow them. Thanks very much.

11. Lucas Bacle:

Hello everyone. My name is Lucas Bacle. I'm a lobster fisherman and an off season hook and line fisherman for snapper and grouper. I'm the sixth generation in my family line to make a living from the sea. And at the rate we are being restricted, I'll surely be the last. When I first started 19 years ago, it was so possible to earn a living snapper and grouper fishing. However, increased regulation has restricted down on these fisheries to the point where only a handful of exceptional fishermen are able to make a year round living from it. For most participants, including me, the snapper and grouper fisheries are now secondary but nevertheless viable sources of income. In the real world of Key West commercial fishing, lobster and stone crab trapping is what drives the entire industry and are the last local fisheries in which it is possible earn a living sufficient to live in Key West. Our industry is already highly regulated by state and federal fishery managers and includes quotas and constant reductions on the number of available trap certificates. On top of the fishery management and sanctuary that has already taken away most of our most productive fishing areas like Riley's Hump and Tortugas Bank and now we stand to have even more taken. Each of these areas you propose to take are vital to sustainability of our fishery and will only lead to increased fishing pressure in the remaining areas. In our fishery, we learned to live with fluctuating prices, poor seasons and hurricanes, but restricting our access to the prime fishing areas is something that we simply will not be able to conform to. Thank you.

12. Peter Bacle:

I'm Peter Bacle, I'm the owner of Stock Island Lobster Company. My business started by my father in 1953. We are the oldest fish house in the Florida Keys. For many years and probably still are the largest top side producers of lobsters in the state of Florida. Before the sanctuary came into existence there were approximately 15 other fish houses in Key West. Today there are three and I can assure you each of them, including mine is only marginally profitable at best. What we are seeing, why fish houses have come to this point is due to regulation and restricted access. We are actually 8-10 million pounds less today than we did years ago. There are quotas on every commercial species that we handle in months

instead, so the closures are inevitable. Licenses to fish for anything are hard to come by and prohibitively expensive. Snapper and grouper licenses as well as, lobster and stone crab trap certificates are in a constant state of reduction. There is only one thing that keeps my fish house going today and that's lobster and we need substantial catch of lobster, otherwise we close the doors. I also happen to like what I'm doing. I like the fishing business and I like commercial fishermen. And I feel a responsibility to keep my place open, there are almost a hundred families that depend on my property as the place to operate their business out of. I realize that might be some people in here who would like to see commercial fishing go away completely, but if you would like to see commercial fishing presence maintained in Key West, you should be very careful about restricting our use in ever more areas. Fish houses are very close right now to a tipping point. Once they're gone, they will never reappear. Thank you.

13. Adam Disson (time yielded from Marco Herrera):

I am Adam Disson, I'm here today to stand by for status quo. Take care of what you have before you take more. The history of the National Marine Sanctuary since 2017 has been full of corruption, shady self-serving scientists, so much so that the directors were removed and also investigated. This all led to where we are today. By Sarah Fangman's own admission, the sanctuary was mismanaged. Since the formation of sanctuary the main problem has been water quality, specifically too much nitrogen which has not improved. Since the water quality is the most important factor, you'd think that they would have a sanctuary wide monitoring program to test water on a regular basis. In this current proposal, there's no mention or plan to improve the water quality except for the cruise ship issue. How is that good management? Last year, we experienced the worst red tide event we have ever seen, I hand typed to ask the sanctuary what they were doing about it and where they were testing the water because what I've been seeing, especially west of Key West. They informed me that they do not do testing and to speak to Mote Marine. I spoke to Mote Marine and they are testing the big pine area and now west of the Key West in the part where I was. I then call the state of Florida to find out about whose testing and they told me no one. The red tide was the entire water column down past 80 feet and they did nothing about it. As I've done the past, I did testing voluntary for the state red tide commission. You'd think knowing that the water quality in your sanctuary would be the most important part of the puzzle, not building a very big fancy building with pretty exhibits. So don't tell me where the priorities are because you would have had water testing program and in your proposal, but there isn't one. Most of the closures that they're proposing benefit some of the businesses and hurt others that cannot be. By Ms. Fangman's own admission the dive and snorkel operators benefit on the reef closures because of the restricted access to everyone else. So we all know that big tour companies have full time lobbyists in the capitol working on their behalf. She also said, closing Boca Grande and Woman Key will benefit the flats guides, not everyone else. How is that fair? Closures to benefit certain user groups and exclude others for financial gain. If you close up an area, not just to benefit big tour companies, after all they are a big part of the problem, they'll be thousands of people daily on the reefs, not here, not there. Not their reefs, it's our reefs. The sanctuary's own head scientist stated that the boat people were always our problems. So once again, that's poor management. Sarah also stated that there is a big enforcement problem and she personally has witnessed on numerous occasions and seen people using closed areas. So how can you ask for more when you can't enforce what you have? Also at the meeting we had, she said there's too many user groups and too much pressure on the ecosystem, so how is reducing the area going to make it better? The same amount of people using less are going to destroy it quicker than before. This is already a big problem that they've created the same amount of users with less equals destruction for the remaining open areas. There is no current economic study for the proposals they are putting forth. The last economic study was 2008, we need an economic study that costs what they've

already closed and I can tell you it's costing my company a lot of revenue. No one asked me or frankly cares. Commercial fishing is the second largest driver in Monroe County. Were vital to the economic survival of the County. The South Atlantic fisheries and Gulf counsel does a very good proactive job managing our fisheries. We were one of the few in the country that the national Marine sanctuary controls the area we fish in, not the fisheries. That is understood, so we should not care about fisheries management. There needs to be a thorough study on the damage to the sanctuary already caused by previous closures. If it's concentrated the fishermen in certain areas, which just cause more damage than before the closure. If we reduce the size again the damage will be even greater, because the impact to the ecosystem is worse in less area. This is common sense, not science. I think that this might be by design to get rid of all the fishing in the keys, both recreational and commercial. The more they take, the more we impact the remaining areas. We'll get some point of destruction no matter the size. We can't even go outside the sanctuary because of the shrimp boats. Speaking of shrimp boats they zero economic impact in this County, yet they do most of destruction in the sanctuary. How can that be possible with good management? Cause for those of you and Sarah who didn't know, they drag big nets, chains, thousand pound sleds in many areas of the sanctuary. Inside the sanctuary. They also drag all around the edges of Riley Hump. They also then they drop 500 pound anchors on the reef to catch fish during the day. In the same reef they say they want to protect. You constantly see plastic bags or trash wherever they go. Once again, how was this good management? I represent all the people, especially independent lobster fishery. If you restrict the areas that are licensed and already regularly fished and conduct our business, that will hurt us financially as revenue will go down. Our businesses will lose resell value, our spending and accounting on a daily basis will be reduced and all this while other interests will prosper. Ultimately we won't be able to sell the businesses that we created because they won't be worth enough. When you talk about reducing the area to a local fishery, they and how they impacted the County could be very damaging. That is why I woke up, and said we are against the proposed closures. We can end up with a heavily regulated and managed fishery with nowhere to fish. What then? Current management allows us to use in the sanctuary with no mandatory education or licenses. And how was that good management? You should not operate a vessel in the sanctuary unless you're qualified to respect the resource. That's just common sense. There are many people like myself who spend 280 or more days a year at sea. We are an incredible unused resource that good proper management would be happy to use. I'll finish right. Changes. Namely for instance, there's a lot of resurgence of spiny urchins in the area that I've seen for many years. I mentioned this to the head scientist in a meeting on Friday. Not only did he not know about the impacted the urchins, he didn't even care where it was and that it's not good management. Take care of what you've got before you take more.

14. Al Ware:

I am Al Ware I'm here as a citizen. Thank you council for what you're doing here, for doing your due diligence, for your love of science and some things. I do have some small flaws on your website that I would like to justification for. I'm retired coast guard for 22 years, so my life has been a chart basically. So coordinates a segment are very important to us as, as water. My question is when you, when you highlight these little areas around these islands and so forth, there's no coordinates. We don't know what position it says was a, you know, if its east or west of the little sandbar and you had ensured us, oh Snipe's is not going to be bothered. Western Dry Rocks. We need exact numbers because as you say in your comments that were at high school, you guys need to be educated. We need to read our plans and see what happens and so forth, but I can't make an educated decision if I don't know what you want to close or would you want to do to exactly the exact points. So until you guys give us points or whatever. We can't, we can't make decisions on these. So I just ask that you guys do that. The second thing is all of

the bird sanctuaries or behind, I live at Big Coppitt. Every day, the jets take off. They bank a left over my house, they go over Snipe, and they go over the Bay keys and its 115 decibels at my house. I can only imagine what it, what it is over there. So before for you, you know, start closing it because of us boaters or whatever. I'm going charter [inaudible]. I'm not here for that and that's pretty late. We needed maybe asked the Navy to do something different or maybe, you know, take that up out of the proposal. Why, why is it just us and what we do?

15. Manny Herrera:

Good afternoon, I'm Manny Herrera. I'm a commercial fisherman and I've also been heavily involved in fisheries management. South Atlantic snapper grouper, king mackerel, just recently did the yellow tail stock analysis. Five years ago, Fitzberg called me and invited me to be a working group member for a year. And then we extended another year and held meetings and so forth. And we've never come to any kind of conclusion, had three people fired and here we are today. I asked for one thing in this time, taking one of your SPAs. Okay. That are not working, that weren't working. Okay. I was a science teacher. I said, use it as a control and exclude everyone from the SPA. It didn't matter which one. Now its five years, if we would have done this back then we would have some results. In my opinion in scenes, some of the cases nobody in this room, they agree that not much would've been done in fishery management. We, I was living in South Carolina when we changed mutton snappers to 18 inches. That was a unanimous vote. So, okay. Cause that's when they start spawning. I'm proud of the fact that I'm here doing stuff that matters to all of us here. Okay. We, the fishery was changed to the five fish commercial and April, May and June. They are spawning. Okay. So it's not a commercial fishery, so you won't see the boats you used to see years ago. Commercial fishing, Western Dry Rocks and those, we [inaudible]. We know that groupers are closed four months. Everybody else gets to enjoy their grouper season when they migrate north, we don't, they're here, and they're saying, hi Manny. Hi everybody here in this room and we can't catch them. That's fine. They're bring protected. Okay. Yellow tails. We change since I was a working group member, we changed the fishing year to start August 1st. Now we have had a closure for the past three, four years during June July when those fish start releasing their eggs so we have spawning protection. We've changed hogfish and we've done a lot in fisheries management to protect the species. That means so much to everyone here. I really stress that we don't continue to take closures. This May, okay. When the mother should've been spawning, there at Western Dry Rocks, we had an algal bloom. The water was green. The only thing that you or I could do was pray to see the Gulf Stream come in and clear the water because that's the only thing that was going to clear up. So with that, I need you that we need to protect our waters and clean it up. Thank you.

16. Alan Petrasek:

My name is Alan Petrasek I live on Summerland Key. We appeal in the strongest possible terms, to select alternate one status quo option. We've never observed any action or any activity that harms the Florida Keys national Marine sanctuary, except for the spiny lobster mini season. We disagree that the proposed closures are warranted as residents of Florida Keys. We respect the ecosystem and we do no harm. Please do not implement the draconian measures in alternates two, three and four. There are more productive alternatives. We make the following recommendations, we strongly urge the Florida Keys Marine sanctuary to partner with water quality officials in the state of Florida, the federal government to correct misguided and damaging water management programs in and around Lake Okeechobee and the Florida Everglades resulting in profound and negative effects on seagrasses and water quality that keeps are decades. We strongly urge the Florida Keys national Marine sanctuary to partner with the Florida fish and wildlife conservation commission who abolish spiny lobster mini season. These two days

each year cause more harm than any other user group can do in a decade. We strongly urge the tourist development council to just slow down. Just this, don't stop. Maybe just dial it back just a little bit. It's just these flooding the waterways and the highway with millions of people. Sarah, Michelle, you all could flush out that topic if you so choose and maybe possibly write it into the plan. In closing the entire advisory council, we'd like to thank you for your work. God bless.

17. Bill Wickers Jr:

I'm Captain Bill Wickers. I'm retired, lived here for 72 years, 73 in March. I was on the original sanctuary council back in the 1970s. I have brought with me the water quality section of the original sanctuary. It was so important back there because we watched as our waters turned green and we knew that it was a problem. It doesn't take a scientist to tell you when you go out there and you're used to seeing the bottom at night on the bar and now you can't see it even in the daytime, that there is something going on. But I got involved, because the water quality and I was a fisherman and I was also on the tourist council seven, six years on the board. Now the amazing thing to me is that your new point, there's one that nobody's touched five years, six years now and it's sitting there on a shelf collecting dust, while we had all these problems with the staff and nobodies touched it but even the original people that were on the working groups, they're not even around most of them. This really, really got me upset. Is that nowhere in the entire new plan is the most crucial thing that is affecting our lifestyle, our paradise here, our fisheries, and our reef and that is water quality. There is not one mention in your DEIS this entire book. One third of the entire sanctuary was all for water quality. It took 22 years to get the Keys sewerred up, starting with Key West when they went down 2000 feet and in 1999 and started it all. 22 the years later they finally did Cudjoe Key. Now that was to be a 10 year program. You were supposed to have a water quality plan that was made for the Everglades. We knew that Florida Bay was dying, it was pea soup. We had commercial fishermen come in and tell us the water is so bad. We've had algae that we if leave our traps out too long that the algae will get so thick that it holds the bubbles underwater. Now what we've got, we still have algae and I don't think, do we have it in Florida Bay, we've got it here off Key West and you got it coming off of both coasts, the Caloosahatchee and the Saint Lucie. When it comes out of the Caloosahatchee, it's picked up by the loop current, brings it down and brings it around and brings it to Key West and then up the Keys. And why when we have our neighbors, here we are, we are a backyard playground for Miami Dade and what is their contribution to the Keys? They dump, you know, hundreds of millions of gallons of, you know what I'll call it, sewage instead of the real stuff every day, day after day, and not one person from this County on the County commission or this board or has the nerve to ask them to stop it. Now this kind of stuff has been going on for 20 some years, 20 some years. I thought by the time I would be still alive to see the things that we hoped would have come out of all these agreements, the Everglades protection program, all I saw was a bunch of politicians taking money that was supposed to be spent on cleaning up the water and bringing it South, taking it and using it on pet projects. And what scares me is that you guys, you volunteer your time. This time I did. I volunteered for six years with a hope that we were actually going to have something done. You could take and put those balls that are at the SPAs and put them around the entire Florida Keys and say you can't dive, you can't fish. And what's going on out there is being caused by water quality and it is continues downhill, there' no try to fix it, were way behind the curve and until you wake up, this board has got to realize it's your job. This is your sanctuary. Just like it is everyone else's and it is your job to make sure, just like a young lady said earlier, we need your help in the Everglades. Why don't you all help them out? Help them bring that water south. Why don't you all send the representatives to all of these groups, the South Florida Water advisory council, this is the problem is the quality. What you're all doing is taking band aid and the one band aid that you continually rip off. You've tried to blame everything on the fishermen. Just like this plan right now. Yes, we've gotten fed up, you know why? You

know that this is the undercutting of everything that we have a problem with. We can continue to ruin it but what makes me sadder than anything you've always wanted to zero in the fisherman down here that were put out of those SPAs over 20 years ago are the only people that raised their hand and said whatever is wrong inside those balls, it wasn't us. It had to be the divers or the water quality, it wasn't the fishermen. They did not do that damage, whatever's in there. Thank you.

18. D.A. Aldridge:

Hello I'm D.A. Aldridge. On Behalf of the last stand, I would like to address the multi species spawning aggregations site in the vicinity of Western Dry Rocks. We support alternative four which establishes a Western Dry Rocks conservation area as a transit only zone. We realize that it's not practical to protect each and every site along the reef edge where all fish spawn and most lobsters release their eggs, because that would more than likely mean the entire reef line. However it is practical and essential to give special protection to unique areas of the reef line where multiple species aggregate to spawn. Western Dry Rocks site is such an area and a classic example of what fishery biologist and managers refer to as a multi-species spawning aggregate site. The only other known multi-species spawning aggregation site protected today in the Florida Keys is Riley's hump in the Tortuga area. That site is completely protected with limited access for research purposes. Some of the reef fish species that come in to spawn in the Western Dry Rocks site are black groupers spawning year round and with peaks in December and March, mutton snapper may to June, Gray snapper July to August, permit May to July, hogfish February to March, and yellowtail snapper April to August. Lobsters release eggs April to June. Other reef fish that have either been observed to spawn at or collected for life history work in spawning condition, from the Western Dry Rocks site are queen, French, grey, and blue angelfish and various other marine life species. The board of Last stand is fully aware of arguments brought forth by many, that there are other areas of the Florida keys where commercially and recreational important species such as mutton snapper, gray snapper, black grouper and permits are. However, these are single species spawning sites and not multi-species spawning aggregation site such as the Western Dry Rocks. In conclusion lists demonstrates why the Western Dry Rock site is an important multi-species spawning aggregation site which deserves special year round protection from all fishing both extractive and catch and release. Thank you.

19. Spencer Slate:

I want to thank you for giving us the time to speak to you. I am Spencer Slate, owner and operator of Captain Slate's scuba adventures and I've been at MM80 right here in the Florida Keys for the 41 years. I'm the cofounder of the Keys Dive Association in 1982, president and founder of Florida association of Dive operators in 1983, and I served with Bill, for six years Florida national Marine sanctuary planning council. And we fought those battles to help establish common sense regulations to balance two of the principle goals of the sanctuary. First to protect our reefs fishes within fishes with regulations in a long-term plan for protection, and second but equally as important to ensure that the livelihoods of our user groups are not adversely affected and that they could continue to thrive with the you agreed upon regulations. Our planning council included over 21 civilian and commercial representatives, user groups, like this group and scientists to ensure both goals for achieving lasting positive effects as we all could agree on. Those goals have worked out pretty well throughout the Keys for all. Personally, as a long term dive operator, I barely seen results of our efforts and challenges to help create an environment for the public and private sector, along with NOAA partners and indeed help protect our sanctuary and make it thrive. So here we are again, at a junction where NOAA under new management leadership now feels that many changes are needed to continue protection of our reef tract here in the Keys. The blueprint

encompasses many factors I would like to speak to, I will only address one of those today that is particular to me and my success small operation, the proposed regulation 3X2-6 concerning fish feeding. In short, my entire business plan over the past 41 years has been based my love for and understanding of fish by conducting fish interaction dives and conducting and educating my divers, tens of thousands of them, on how to respect and appreciate our underwater fishes and get a firsthand look at protecting them from harm. The proposed rules states that fish feeding is a threat to sanctuary resources. Please show me the proof behind that. We feed Orimals, nurse sharks and keep them alive in their own water, ocean habitat. Free to go where they want to when we leave and never been bitten by anyone other than our feeders, regardless of claims made by others. Nor is there any evidence at the moray eels and nurse sharks in consistent rate at our interaction become dependent on us for food. They disperse after the dive and resume their normal forage. A study is linked in this blueprint from a Marco Malzero, scientist from Italy the Mediterranean Sea, not the Florida Keys stating "fish feeding may cause changes in their behavior. And in the NOAA blueprint it is stated that fish feeding has resulted in a human safety issues. Again, where the proof as far as my operation is concerned. I found out that I'm the only local professional fish feeder and I was not consulted. The Malzero study was done on damselfishes. Hardly any great relevancy to what I do. Reef fish such as Bermuda chub, yellowtail, creole wrasse, parrotfish, angelfish and damselfish are not part of my interaction dives and are not fed by me or anyone with me. Although I'm not an avid fishermen myself, my son is a guide, so it is okay to allow chumming to feed and crab fish, but not allowing my operation to lead divers and educate them on how to protect our fish. Many of you in this room, go with me, on my fish interaction. My point is if I cannot conduct my creature interaction dives to educate my divers on direct protection and conservation for our underwater creatures, I'll be put out of business. No other dive operator, anywhere in the keys that their business is totally dependent on creature interaction dives but me. I came to Key Largo in 78 and immediately started diving under Steve Cloud who was known as the pied piper of Pennekamp Park, who taught me his love for underwater animals. Steve started feeding fish in the keys in 1954, even before Pennekamp Park or any other type of sanctuary ever existed. For the past 41 years, I've been a proud extension of him and fell in love with our underwater creatures. I asked the sanctuary manager since 1986 who understood my operation and creature interaction dives, I be allowed, grandfathered in to conduct in along with Dan Basta, and while they were at NOAA in DC suggested I be granted a special use permit to continue to keep my business operation. Either options is fine with me, I just want to stay business and introduce my love of animals to our divers to ensure they're getting the protection. Thank you.

20. David Horan:

I came down here in 1964 been down here as long at that. I was involved with the national marine fisheries controversy. We were against it. It was both the people all through the Keys voted in a poll election and voted against it. Now I'm going to speak tonight as the secretary of the air force of the conch republic and for myself and my family and neighbors. Why did a thousand people show up to Key West high school presentation. There's a simple answer. We do not trust you. We had that vote failed, commitments were made. Gee whiz, we'll do whatever the people want. So recently the Keys off Key West, Marathon and Key Largo were closed to everybody other than large commercial dive boats, so called Blue Star operators. That prohibition was specifically passed, specifically passed and repeated in black and white as the NOAA preferred alternative number three. Other than admit it is wrong, Sarah said it was never NOAA's intent, but it actually was. She felt as if families on private boats were not to be excluded, but they were. Again, that's why we don't trust you. Let's talk about the amazing similarity between the NOAA restrictions on the reef and the back country restrictions. No entry, no access, no motor zones, no wake. Think about it, what's the difference out there and back there they just called it

something different. But the effect is the same, keeps us from doing the life that we've always been able to live. NOAA could designate the backcountry as a sanctuary preservation area, front and back doesn't make any difference. They just call it a different name. If you actually look at the comments, listen to the presentation, you're going to have a hard time voting for any of those restrictions. Does anybody believe that when NOAA closes an area, we will ever get it back again? I'll refer you to Micronesia, evidently they couldn't the destruction of their reefs. Over half the Great Barrier Reef died in the last 12 years, despite their best efforts. Coral atolls in the Pacific a hundred miles from any civilization have 95% coral death and we think we're going to cover it with this restoration plan. I'll finish with this, there's two dinosaurs that are standing there and the first snowflake starts to fall. When they look up and they see and one of them says, hey, you think it's going to be any colder. That was called the ice age.

21. Tad Humphreys:

Closures. I have the notion that the unintended consequences are going to be much greater than what you anticipate. One fellow over here in the corner during regular sanctuary meeting said what's the big deal? We have more closures the fish are going to just get bigger. I don't believe that's the case. I think the boating public is going to find others ways to do what they wanted to do that caused destruction of other areas that aren't covered by these closures. I started looking at the restoration plan about a month ago and I paid particular attention to the interactive map and I was having difficulty locating exactly where some areas are and NOAA owns all the charting done in America and other parts in the world. I don't know why you don't have everything on the restoration plan overlaid on one of your graphs or charts. I've been thinking that for a month or even right outside on your table. That's what I was so I think that should be put onto the interact map so people can more fairly evaluate area by area. Western Dry Rocks. I think the sanctuary group is getting into nothing but fisheries management and I don't believe that's your charge. Western Dry Rocks should be left to people who's in their purview agencies for fishing, fishing regulations. I want to speak to the Western Sambo no idle zone, something that nobody has brought up. That is a very wide area. We have pop thunderstorms all the time. I work on one side and live on the other, trying to get home, told myself I'll break the law. The fastest I ever run my boat is when I'm trying to get away from lighting. And you go to endanger a lot of people with that.

22. Taffi Fisher-Abt (time yielded from Josh Fischer-Abt)

My name is Tabby Fisher-Apt. I'm Mel Fisher's daughter, world famous treasure hunter and I represent this hat the historic salvage policy council. The Keys are very unique, we all know that. The history is unique here and it's important to me. Wrecking and salvage has a long history in the Florida Keys. I'm not a biologist, I'm not an economic major. I can't make claims to know what's best for the fish and the reef, or what's economically best for the other fishermen and charter boats and tourism industry. But common sense tells me that when I read through this 580 page plan and I find things in there about shipwrecks that are based on opinions or flaws or misinformation and not scientific facts, that it makes me wonder, this is also true with all of those other parts of the plan effecting all those other industries. That said, I hope that there is some, someone out there looking out for all of them. From what I've heard tonight, it sounds like there is. I understand that the Florida Keys national Marine sanctuary thinks they did this in the interest or the best intentions of saving the natural and historical resources for the public's best interest. But my industry has had zero representation on this new plan. Our own advisory council members were told, Corey Malcom was told, there's no issues with the shipwreck permitting. There will be no changes in the shipwreck law. That is totally not true. We were not represented. We had no working groups. I've heard that from other people. So we may be small, but we have just like everyone else, we definitely have issues. So whoever told Corey that a working group was not needed

was lying. So after the fact this 580 page plan comes out and now six weeks later, as of this Thursday, we will have our first meeting to assess all of these changes to our industry. The commercial salvage industry alternative one is the only alternative. Status quo. Way to go. Today's the day you can't do anything else. You'll make us all outlaws, and unfortunately that's going to create pirates. They're going to outlaw shipwreck salvage in the Florida Keys, unless you have a novelty claim. Well there not outlawing it, only if you want to keep anything that you find. Well I have to tell you this is a 180 degree change from the original plan back in the 1990s. This is like Deja vu up here right now. Say no to NOAA because they made promises and they're not keeping them. What happened was the first proposal, I have tonight to fix things is for the sanctuary to reinstate and honor the lapsed programmatic agreement. Instead of using the new one in the plan now, reinstate the old one as is and then we need to do some work on even that to make it better. That plan was well thought out and it had vast public input and user group input. It should be renewed as is until the constituents have had a fair shot and voice in any new plan. In a 2015 correspondence between Brian Lescher of the Advisory council on historic preservation, Florida and NOAA were both urged to renew the existing programmatic agreement until there was a replacement that had been properly vetted. But they chose not to, they just let it lapse. My family has been doing this since the late 60s, we've been in national geographic, and we've fought with the federal and state government over the ownership of wrecks. We went to court for seven years, 140 hearings and we ultimately won 100% ownership of these shipwrecks in the United States Supreme Court. Three years later we found gold and silver, it's not a myth like it says on the sanctuary stuff where it says shipwrecks full of gold are a myth, it's not a myth, and it's real. Its history. We have a database that's online, its free, you can go look at it, and you don't even have to give us an email address. We have over 200,000 artifacts right there. You can search by coins, you can search by iron spikes, whatever your interest is. I know my time is up, but we are putting together a very detailed point by point, with page numbers of issues we hope to address hopefully this meeting on Thursday will be pretty cozy. I want to say I'm sure there are many good ideas on protecting and restoring our environment in the plan. But from what I'm hearing they are outweighed by the encroachment on the rights and livelihoods of too many individuals and industries in the Florida Keys. So I say support one, status quo way to go. Today is the day.

23. John Buckheim:

Hi my name's John Buckheim, I'm a commercial fisherman here in Key West. I consider myself and I think everyone in the room would vouch for me, I'm probably the most diverse commercial guys down here. We do everything from sword fishing, bully netting for lobster and stone crabs, and deep drops west of the Tortugas. We fish in the Gulf and we fish in the Atlantic. I just like to say that I think you guys have really missed the ball on this. We're not, it's not water quality thing is a huge water quality is huge, but how are we really going to fix that in this County when it's coming from outside the County. Let's focus on things that we can actually do here: building an artificial reef program, putting in more channel markers. We're arguing about mutton snapper, we don't need to argue about mutton snapper. There's no problem with the mutton snapper of population or ever has been. We stopped fish trapping 20, 30 years ago. That was all that was needed to done. We'd come along, what did more size limits, more this more that. The fish are fine, there's not a fish problem. We need to really focus on building up infrastructure for the fish to live on. Some of you won't really like this idea of rolling sanctuaries. Anything that we've ever done is that a closure and we never gotten it back. If we had something that was guaranteed to have it back two years, no matter what, it has to come back in two years, I would vote for it. If you had a zone move down the keys, that was closed, when it reopened, two years, it continued to move down, give the model time to rest, giving the fish time to come back. That's something we can all look over to. When area comes back, we all get a benefit from it. Everyone wins.

This whole idea of just closing areas, it's not fair to anyone here. The bully netters, they haven't been considered at all. The bully netting industry, is the only industry here in the keys that young kids can get into at a reasonable cost. 10 grand, you can be a fully outfitted, bully netter, licensed and everything. 75% of the lobster I caught bully netting were in these zones that are potentially becoming no motor zones. You're going to create criminals out of kids that are out there are hardworking, that have put all their money into building this bully net boat. They've gone out and they found an area where they actually make some money. They're not bothering anyone. They're out at two o'clock in the morning, minding their own business. Now we're not going to be able to fish these areas because somebody else wants to catch a lot of fish, seven days. There's no conflict of interests here. Some of these trolling motors can cause more damage than our small outboards. I think that we just need to totally take a step back and take a big picture approach. This whole thing, it's not so much closing this little tiny box isn't going to fix anything. I'd go Western dry rocks my entire life. It's a flat piece of bottom. Some fish do come there and congregate, black grouper aren't one of them, mutton snapper are, there's not a problem there. Yellow tail not a problem there. Permit not a problem there. The picture and we're wasting a lot of our time, money and energy on things that aren't the problem. We need to go to artificial reefs, everything from the Vandenberg all the way through to the lobster a lot of you won't agree with me there either. But the more structure, the more fish. I don't care if throw a tree in a bass pond, it means more bass congregate around that tree. You're the Louisiana. It's most diluted place I've ever been. There's more fish there than anywhere because of the oil rigs. There's, there's solutions to all of this. We should have FADs out in the blue water, all the trolling guys. We could be a world class fishery, but we're just kind of not allowing it to have this pass that everybody time to focus on the big picture here and not get stuck on the small stuff and we all just want to see his place improved. That's all.

24. George Blanco:

My name is George Blanco. My family has been here for quite some time. My mom's family has been here since 1970, my dad's family in the 60s. My father was born here, was also a commercial fisherman. I'm a commercial fisherman and lobsterman. When you had the first meeting at Key West high school, I was very concerned. A lot of these area you guys want to shut down is where I put about 90% of my traps. Those areas pay for every one of us. I live off of that, but you know, there's a lot of facts that I think are going against this, that I want to talk about but I don't have too much time. I'm going to read my most concern was. At the other meeting, I spoke with MS Sarah Fangman. I asked her you know, I've heard the proposals, I want to know if we didn't like the proposals, what we could do about it. Could we have a vote about it, if our community would have a say? From my understanding in the 90s when we didn't have a whole, 87% of the community voted against it, but it still went ahead and did what you wanted to do. I feel like I'm being mugged right now. Like I'm being robbed of my livelihood, my community, they aren't going to be able in the future generations to experience the stuff I've experienced without them having to say, you know, this is the United States of America. Four people can't make up, you know, how we living and how we obviously survive and we have no say in the matter. We need to have a say, I think we should have some kind of vote on it. Whether you move or you want us, I understand you guys want hope and I want you to hope, but a lot of this stuff to close out, there's no purpose. Everyone says it's a water quality issue. Closing down, shutting down areas, it's only going to hurt our community. I mean they would want on certain facts he wants to go down. You said earlier, our number one industry is the tourism, but her number two is commercial fishermen. Living on Big Pine Key, those guys are all commercial fishermen. You take away these areas from us, we're going to have to go out more, were going to get crammed in one area. Right now where I fish at, I will pull my gear and move it over and that bottom was fine. Federal officers come through when

they're gone, I take my gear. But if I can't fish that area, I'm going to go where miss maybe Sarah, she fishes in a bay area, I will go where she's at and we're going to be crammed into this one area. We're going to have fights for these areas and we will do more damage than good. I really like to see you guys get more feedback from us. Were out there every day and it's really heartbreaking that I see people go out there have three day study and they come back. Oh yeah this is what I want. How is that right? How was the three days? You're going to base all of our community. You know our commercial industry, on the guy that works at discount auto wants to take his kids to Snipes, he can't go because they had heard the three days. I said Oh we have an issue which closing this areas. I mean even the coral that you guys plant back there when the waters bad, it's going to kill the outplant. I think we got to turn it a different direction than closing this and taking this away from us. You know, I want, I want to work with you guys. I agree with like for you guys supporting commercial fishermen. We see stuff that you guys haven't seen and I for one is to see but I think you're going about it the wrong way and I think these guys, they agree. Rethought and work with us. That's what I wanted to see. Thank you.

25. Paul Robinson (time yielded from Zell Robinson):

My name is Paul Robinson and my brother and I were born and raised in the keys, 1953 for our family. In one form or another, we've been looking for a shipwreck known to have sunken in the vicinity of American Shoal. We filed an admiralty action against that ship in 1975 as Marine archeological preservation incorporated. Then again in 1984 Bronze Cannon Corporation which is currently active and a preexisting to the sanctuary, that's an important point. I am here to report the corruption and abuse that gone has unchecked in the sanctuary for decades. I complained to Sarah my experiences and that of my colleagues, the deplorable treasure hunters. I can't speak for all of them, but my observations is that they've all suffered the same abuse of their civil rights including freedom of speech and association and press. They also were denied due process under the color of law. Quickly, I'll come back because this three minutes thing really messed me up now I haven't been through my lines. So excuse me. In 1997, sanctuary management made solid promises to the public, an apprehensive public. There was concern that treasure hunting would come to an end. Personnel in the sanctuary were being burned in effigy. They came forward and said no, we're not going to stop it. We're going to facilitate it. Well since they've issued 61 permits and not one permit has been allowed to go to completion. Now that raises the question. Either the public is thoroughly inept or the sanctuary is thoroughly corrupt. I want to tell you they're thoroughly corrupt. So anyway, it is a perfect precedent the sanctuary is the 1972 Miami dolphins of corruption. The sanctuary has never honored as partners. Never. That it's in the dog and pony show from the start. Let me tell you this little deal here is a dog and pony show. The appearance of transparency is created in the appearance of public participation. Do you think that any of these people here are wringing their hands, clutching their pearls, wondering how this is going to hurt them? No. They know exactly how this is going to turn out. We should get paid for the dance their putting us through. Let me give you an example. I'll just how I've been screwed by this Blueprint. In 2013 I had a survey and inventory permit. It was renewed in 2013 and they said your permit has been renewed for an additional two years. You use of pitcher type, water driven in accordance with permit guidelines. Some really important to go look for shipwrecks, new magnetometer surveys and all that. What look then, the whole step seven and step seven allows for the recovery of artifacts for identification purposes in some onerous requirements. Nobody's ever done it in 30 years. Nobody's ever done it. So when I permit is coming around about to be renewed, am the serial abuser assigned to my case gets wind that we're about to be the first ones. She started talking to me about, Hey, we're not going to renew your permit. You should've reapplied. I said what you are talking about reapplied. Well, what does that mean? She, she's well, we need that to document any changes. I said I'm not going to let you play around, what's going on. We went back and forth, it's obvious she's lying. It's obvious I know her lying. It's so awkward, I

can't go on. I said, you know, if they do, it's going to be 600 grand minimum after lawyers' fees. He says well then we'll all pay Hey, I'll take you were a man shouldn't be in decades. Anyway, moving on. So they get wind that I'm about to do this thing. So what they do, survey and inventory permit, if you can find something of value now you've going to go get research and recovery. Nobody has ever gone for one, they won't let us have it. So I got there ready to renew my thing, this is how corrupt these people are. NOAA has determined that the project requires a research and recovery application, due to the use of water operated dredge and the potential for excavation. This is the same thing they gave me in 2013, now they're using an excuse not to renew my permit. How can you explain that? You know, moving on. I haven't agreement with the president of the national association of black scuba divers, great bunch of folks. They're going to come in and work with us, right? Super-duper. Guy calls me up and say, Paul, I can't do it. Why not? I can't get caught in the war between the archaeologists and the treasure hunters. He says he can't do it. He indicated that the serial abuser in my case told him that if you wanted to keep his good standing in the sanctuary, stay away from the treasure hunters. Now this woman is issuing me a permit on one end, and obstructing and sabotaging my permit on the other end, trying to deprive me of what's due. The reason she wants to cut you off from your history, you don't know what your history as they're trying to crush our ability. There's no reason for it. This archaeologist just came on board. What? We're down to seven permits and he wants to crush them. What's wrong with that? They are trying to institutionalize the American experience here in the Florida Keys. They will have us marching down a hill, they don't care if they drive you out of business. They'll still be getting their cut from their job, everything will still be going great for them and we're just screwed and they're not listening to us and I just wondered what do we do? It's a nightmare. It's like living in a science fiction movie, were begging them to stop and their just going to march right on with more government gibberish while were out there trying to make a living. [Inaudible] What kind of grief is that to better in generality of sanctuary? [Inaudible] The way they abuse it to stop treasure hunters, a deprive the community of its history, always seem to apply. They were representing someone in the future more deserving of American experience. This golden boy in the future he may not even show up. We're here now. We're paying our taxes now we're paying their paychecks now. We're stuck on this planet and we need some air.

26. Kathy Rockett:

My name is Kathy Rockett, I own Rockett Tropical and I have lived here my whole life making my living since mid-eighties off of the ocean. I'm a fourth generation fisherman and I've watched every so many years, time and time again, us locals being taken advantage of. It's never that you guys worry about taking from the tourists, it's always from us. It's always taking from us and you know, we're getting sick of it. That's right, people are angry right now because we have over and over and over again trying to make our living and we work and bust our butts doing it. And again, it's like we aren't even a consideration. So a few pointers that I want to make. First off I wanted to mention that some of the people on the board used to actually make a living off the ocean. Some of them that approve and want this to go through also rapped our ocean line with 40, 50 jewfish at a time and then they come in here and they want to let, you know, take everything from the people that are trying to make a living, it's not right. I'm sick of it because what you guys don't understand is we locals are the ones that pick up the garbage. We locals are the ones that turn the rocks back over when the tourists come along not knowing any better, they turn them over. We are the ones that always take care of the ocean and not the tourists. So why are we always the ones impacted? What is wrong with imposing a toll when the, all these tourists come down here for taking advantage of Monroe County and leaving behind their garbage and [inaudible] there's no toll fee for them to come into our county. It's ridiculous. I'm sick and tired of being the one that pays the taxes, the licensing, and everything that goes along with making a living

down here. Plus, by the way, we are the highest cost of living in Florida now. We've now surpassed Palm Beach County, Palm Beach. [Inaudible Due to audience clapping] And I make a living, and so does my son, and so does my ex-husband, and everybody that I know that's making a living is the ones that are impacted. And it's not fair, we're all just sick and tired of it. And then you say one thing and do another. That I've seen happen over and over again. Or you come up with these stupid laws, like 20 inches across the board on grouper limits. And I mean just the stupidest things that have come out of this. Now there is nothing. It seems to me that there's not much we can do. Big Sugar has ruined the Everglades. And we know that's our filter system, so as far as the water goes pollution you walk down, if you walk on the main roads, you'll see the pollution comes from mostly from another country. So if there's anything you need to do by putting the toll in there, we could actually propagate our coral and really make an impact on our reefs. 22.5 million Tourists come down here every year. 22 and a half million dollars a year. That's all I'm saying.

27. Daniel Smith:

Hope you guys are having a good night tonight. Hello my name is Daniel Smith, I'm a licensed captain and scuba diver and commercial fisherman here in the Florida Keys. I spent most of my life around or in the water, around in or on the National Marine Sanctuary. I find it hard to speak to a group of people who basically have to be here and have no desire to listen. But I was trying to reference to Sarah, but Sarah at last meeting said, we're trying to do small, but trying to do something small is better than doing nothing at all. Said the second guy, I've reached out to organizations dozens of times over the last five years and I've received receive zero positive response. So here's my opportunity. Doctors can only recommend an effective treatment plan after coming to a correct diagnosis and after reviewing all the symptoms. Your presentation is cosmetic makeup for a patient that has terminal treatable disease. Chemical and nitrate filled water from central Florida is that disease and you are the pharmaceutical industry trying to profit off of good old fashioned cure-all called "over policing". Your entire presentation is a grasp for money. You're funding has been cut and the system you have created will accommodate your financial failures. As in the Peter Gladding vessel in the national marine sanctuary being totaled. All right, Will Benson. Wow. I bet you're real proud of your Peter Gladding award. My dad is Arthur Sader. He was arrested in 1997 for defending himself at his place of business from Peter Gladding, hell of a guy. The results of this altercation got Peter a broken leg and a bruised ego. Many people in this room remember that and I bet I just put a whole bunch of smile on a bunch of people's faces. But in that article you agreed, it was written by Don DeMaria a citizen, any decision you could see his bias was established way before 1997. Will, you, Peter and Don have a lot more common. You're a bunch of liberal hippies, mad little people trying to serve, self-serve down the road you're looking to go. You're a bunch of mad, envious little people trying to serve everybody else, sell everybody else down the road while looking out for yourselves. You guys are the real blue stars. And to NOAA, stop playing political chess and actually answer questions. How much money was each plan actually going to cost? How much money was going into your resort research center at Ballast Key? Why does NOAA and FWC find it acceptable to implant propagate against the local population trying to abide and conquer, perpetuate your own industry created lies. That is basically what I see of your blue star. And some of your friends from resource conservation are sitting in this room and the willingness to know through experience you have failed to protect. They are not sitting in these seats you see in front of me. They're sitting in the seats back there and being ignored. The South Atlantic Reduction Program should have been stopped at 500, we are now below 500. [Inaudible]. The goal of the criminal scam across the board, non-transferable permits means the industry will die with the last generation and knowledge will not be passed down. These are just a few examples. Laws cannot be passed when dyed with bias and malicious intent and that's exactly what you guys do. You're destroying an entire industry and we're losing

knowledge that it takes to sustain the population. It is sad to say you have left the science industry and joined the propaganda train. These are actions, have ruined your credibility and made it completely, that it made people completely distrust anything you say. Ballast Key is being turned into a resort for researchers, you're trying to live an all-inclusive lifestyle on government funding. While living off that expensive [inaudible] spaces. Whenever they try to provide you with information. By the way, the difference between education and indoctrination is education is a tool used to think, indoctrination tells you to stop thinking and just use the tool. You're trying to take Western Dry Rocks on the basis that [inaudible] seed neighboring areas. That is what you said about Riley's Hump 30 years ago. Seeding that's a joke. Your examples and explanations are idiotic and in Southern Tortugas illogical. Your Tortugas Ecological Reserve failed. I was part of research doing offshore surveys. And at the time the surveys were done consistently throughout all zones of Florida Keys national Marine sanctuary for a decade. And then the program was just renewed. This is an embarrassment that you could consider it scientific data. I would love to talk further about my experiences and what I viewed and how this is completely immoral and how you guys accept information you're accepting of funding provided fully by the state, National Marine Sanctuary and NOAA, independent researchers all to get that data, and then use that poor data to increase your funding and further perpetuate your bias. I would love to make connections and contact with anybody who would like to utilize my knowledge and experience to improve the resources we have and to improve this little place we call home. Thank you.

28. Greg Oropeza:

That's going to be a tough one to follow. My name is Greg Oropeza, I'm a fourth generation local. I've been fishing, diving for the last thirty years, and my father before me, my grandfather before me. I'd like to first start off by reminding this organization that what you do is manage this resource in trust for us. Not just you, but us, everyone. And there's a lot of focus on the us vs. you, and I think, like Johnny B said, the big picture isn't in this. If we look at water degradation, ocean acidification, which is the real cause of our decline in the reef. None of what is being proposed in my non-scientific opinion is going to fix that. Let's start with what has been done already. And recently, the last couple of weeks there's been buoys, in the back country, for example. I had no idea that some of these places have been off limits. I had never had a resource violation. As a law abiding citizen, you would think that myself, my friends, my colleagues would know. A lack of enforcement is issue number one. Let's enforce what has already been implemented, but has failed because of the lack of enforcement. I've been boarded by the FWC once in the last 10 years. Let's put the millions of dollars that were spent on this study, this exercise, into enforcement. Regarding the back country, simple common sense solutions. Let's put aids to navigation. Let's put a simple identifications of where's the channel markers so people won't run aground. One of the biggest issues and the same was said at the high school was that a lot of these issues are regional and that we can't really address regional issues and me respectfully disagree with that. We have county commissioners, we have FWC who has implemented some great regulations recently. People made this through. We have the governor who at least as long as I can remember is actually focused on water quality. You're the national government. You are the federal government. Your ability to work with regional players and forge relationships, which has not been done, should be the forefront to bringing implementation to regulations that are already bring some real positive change. The last thing I want to focus on. One issue, I frequent the Tortugas a lot. It's a very special place. My grandfather actually built some of the structures that are on Loggerhead today, back then Coast Guard was in control. The proposed closure in Tortugas based on what has been presented in the study is flawed. For one the site it talks about in the Tortugas North and the Tortugas RNA reserves which state that fishing is allowed, which is completely false. It's in there that fishing is allowed. You are not permitted to fish in Tortugas North, you're not even allowed to anchor without a special permit. 46% of the national park within the

boundaries are remain closed to fishing, to anchor, you got roughly a hundred square miles of close area already. The add mythical corridor I think would be unjust and we strongly urge you all to reconsider some of these regulations from taking public lands, public resources from us.

29. Steel Rockett:

My name is Steele Rockett. I'm a third generation conch and I make my living strictly off the ocean [inaudible] and I always have. I run my own business commercial spearfishing both the Atlantic and Gulf side of our islands. I also supply the aquarium trade by collecting fish and invertebrates in the region as well. There's only about 50 marine life divers left, partly because of closures like the one being proposed. By no means am I against regulations, without them we would have nothing left. But these new closures are taking things too far. They will keep chipping away until every area is a sanctuary. This is their goal, no matter how they put it, we can't let this happen. Whether you're a diver, fisherman, trapper, or anyone who makes a living under the water. Will be negatively affected by this. Thank you.

30. Deedee Vaughan:

My name is Deedee Vaughan, I'm a local resident here. I've spoken with a lot of my friends, neighbors and somehow got told I should say a couple words out what we thought [inaudible] Lower Keys. We've seen regulation in Florida has had successes and failures. Without regulations a lot of species that we wouldn't still have access to today. But regulation implemented too quickly and without public support is not only less successful but can breed discontent from the biggest advocates of the local environment our neighbors and the local residents. Without the support of the local community, who will care for the reef, sea grass beds, or breeding grounds survive. If we, and these are some of the options that I heard mentioned that I think would be really good to implement: if we may currently utilize sandbars, establish recreation zones rather than closing them off. People are still going to go places to hang out, to enjoy local environment. It's why we're all here. It's why we work so hard to live here, why we need so much to live here. So if we made established recreation zones that are currently being utilized may already have some damage to them that would save the other areas that are still pristine, still have chance to grow and cultivate new ecosystems. Provide better marked channels in the backcountry to prevent scarring. We all know back there it can be, we got people that know how to get there, people that don't. If we can make it better we hire locals that have tried to put up markers to show that they get places safely, they get places environmentally soundly, and then the people following them will as well. Let's promote that, let's enforce that. Mandatory education for boat rentals. A lot of people that come down here and rent boats, all you have to say is, yeah, I know how to ride a boat, I know how to drive a boat, and they don't. Let's get that going for everyone. Let's make sure they know how to drive a boat, charge them for that and put that funding into enforcing them to be here, open an account, work with established companies using the oceans for surveys, salvage, et cetera, to combine efforts doing data collection and sharing information. We've got people out there that care about the environment. Let's make positive partnerships with those people and use their resource, them as a resource. Basically. If the residents are ostracized from environment, who's going to be there the environment's advocate, who's going to care if the reefs are still safe. And whether or not we save them, if nobody cares about it, nobody's going to want to make sure that happens. Generations have seen what, no regulation looks like that's not what I think needs to happen, but we also see what over regulation looks like and that can cause economies to crash. But let's bring this together in a way that the entire community can come together as one.

31. Greg Daniels:

Before I start I just want to make a request of the council to please pay attention to the speakers and not your phones or your papers. My name is Greg Daniels. I can't believe that I am here some close to 30 years later, doing this fight again. As a young man, I was able to participate in the first round. Again I can't believe I'm here once again. The sanctuary that we have now is the compromise that was worked out then. I can't believe we're back fighting the same fight, is the same fight. Okay? The sanctuary rules have not been enforced. But you're asking for more. Why don't we take a step back, enforce your rules, get things going, and then come back and we'll talk to you about it. You're just now putting markers up. I do remember when they first went in. I also remember when there were channel markers so you could navigate through the back country. Most of us know how to get around back there, but a lot of people don't. Proposal after proposal I see that one of the issues is [inaudible] prop scarring. Let's put us some fricking channel markers in then. But instead of putting them in us went back there and took them out. And it was some 30 years or 25-30 years ago. I remember them there. And you I remember them the sanctuary has trust issues. The trust issues that we have with sanctuary is that we are continually lied to you say one thing then do another. You said it the blue star program this is going to be a blue star program only area. They said, well, wait a minute, that's not what we meant. It is what you meant because it's, what you wrote down this plan was vetted how many times. It's not like it was put together on Tuesday night and presented to us on Wednesday. Hundreds of people I'm sure read through this and everybody said, yeah, this is good, this is what we need. That's the problem. That's why we hope, don't think, you know, we trust you. You guys have serious trust issues. There are special interests. Every one of these zones is been put together by special interest. By the blue star, the closed zones out in front of Cudjoe, the Barracuda Keys, everything else. They've all been put together by special interest groups. Let's concentrate instead of fighting about this, let's concentrate on education, channel markers and getting the word out that this is what the sanctuary is here for. Right now. We haven't done a thing. You can go to a closed section of the reef and an open section and they look nearly the same. Do your job with what we gave you 30 years ago, come back to us in 10 or 15 years and we'll talk about it. We're all here to protect it. We all want it protected but you guys haven't protected it.

32. Ross Broucek:

I appreciate everybody's time. This will be fast. I'm speaking on behalf of myself. I've heard a lot of great ideas for the audience today, particularly water quality monitoring. The sanctuary has a plan that's been run for 25 years. Its claims the water quality is improving, but there's clearly a disconnect between what everybody's seeing and what the water quality monitoring programs showing. So potentially looking into that something I would certainly urge the sanctuary to do. The idea of the artificial reefing program that somebody mentioned I think is a great next step. We are zoned out that our reef is falling apart. We need habitats for our fisheries artificial reefs can provide that habitat if they're done correctly and also provide diving opportunities. We still have warm, clear water and people won't really know the difference I don't think between a cool statue and a coral reef, they're from Ohio. I'd also like to say that the size of the shrimp trawling in the sanctuary is all pretty interesting. I don't know enough about it all to speak. Well, I appreciate that, but it sounds like its pretty destructive and it's really deterring a lot of other people from fishing that area, so potentially looking into that thinking about how we can restrict that may be a good idea. I am in support of something going on at Western Dry Rocks. Western Dry Rocks is a multi-species spawning aggregation site, there's seven species that likely spawn there: permit, Black grouper, Mutton snapper, mangrove snapper, mahogany snapper, spadefish, and yellowtails. They all spawn in the months from April to August, all those species I just listed have something, and they spawn sometime during there. And four of the seven only spawn during those months. So a full year closure does limit a lot of things from my understanding it a lot the wintertime fisheries out there that are really important for King fish, for sails or for all the other things that go on in. It's a place that you get

protection from North winds. So a year around closure is, it's almost over- it's overprotective, it's needless it seems. But seasonal closure could provide some benefits and protect these spawning fish. I heard from the audience that we can use bag limits and size limits to kind of regulate our way out of efficient spawning aggregations, but we know we have, what's it called, discard mortality in the keys. And that's when you catch a fish, it gets hooked, the shark gets it, or you release a fish and the shark gets it. When discard mortality is very high bag limits and size limit changes don't work. With permit there are already you can't even keep when then when the season, so it's not a lot to do at that end. So with that and also the last line about Western dry rocks and they said if you're going to limit access, limit to everybody: no divers. We're going to have exponentially growing tourism occurring in the Florida Keys. We don't, and that's already open to unanticipated businesses that we never saw coming. So for a place that's going to be protected make sure sure it's no access and it's very clear that nobody can find some industries some way to dive in there that affects the spawning fish and everything else.

33. Beth Ramsey :

Ms. Fangman, Sarah, I understand you came to us under difficult circumstances. Coming into replace the sanctuary superintendent, who along with his deputy superintendent, was ousted after a yearlong investigation into waste, fraud, abuse, and hostile work environment. And just a couple of months after hurricane Irma devastated our lower keys. The majority of this Restoration Blueprint was created under the leadership of that now ousted sanctuary superintendent whose reputation for fraud and dishonesty will remain a shadow over this document. Then you have the difficult task of selling it to our community. Sarah I would like to think that had you been in charge of this project since its inception that it would have been more open and transparent and community involved document. I would like to think that public notice of intention to create new regulations would have been properly noticed in the local paper and on the radio. I do think had this document gone through transparent, open and involved public process that we would be standing here today with a document more palatable to the public. But none of that happened. There are many issues the public take exception to. The most common concern are the issues of public access. The public has been very vocal in expressing their opposition to any aspect of this document which would restrict or impede in any manner their ability to access their local reefs and Back Bay sand bars. I, as do many, don't feel the sanctuary has been particularly honest in the discussion involving access to Carysfort, Sombrero, and Sand Key reef, and the Blue Star Dive Operator program. Statements alerting the public to this issue appeared in the free press newspaper August 28th this year. With the sanctuary discussing quote, "an experiment in controlling human carrying capacity for Carysfort, Sombrero, and Sand Key." With Mr. Bruckner stating quote, "it's a challenge to say who can go there and who can't." As this reef access issue progressed it was made public to our board of county commissioners on September 5th. It seemed that honesty in this issue was starting to come to light. The sanctuary was admitting as currently worded the sanctuary preferred option would not allow the public access in these three reefs, and the sanctuary was admitting this was an unfortunate error in wording. But then the sanctuary backtracked. With statements ranging from lawyers made us put this in to the public misunderstood. Because it's silent on public access therefore doesn't apply to the public. These misunderstood and silent not statements are simply not true and is any restriction limiting access to, excludes all other, unless specified. Lawyers concur. This lack of honesty and word play does not instill public trust in the sanctuary or this document. Lack of public trust is furthered with the sanctuary stating in email and then two recent public meetings quote "if and how public access is restricted is up for public input." This statement makes it clear that while, perhaps the wording limiting access to our three local iconic reefs was not in error but was intentional and two, that this probation remains on the table. Given clear and overwhelming public outcry on this reef access issue. I want to know if the sanctuary is committed on record right here, right now, that this language will either be removed or rewritten to

ensure unrestricted, continued access to the public. Okay you're not going to answer. Also on the subject of our back bay sandbars the public has been clear on this subject as well, stating they do want any new "no go" zones. I.E., no motor, no access, no entry. Which would restrict, or hinder, our ability to enjoy our favorite Back Bay sandbars. FWC commissioner Rodney Barreto was correct in his statement last week saying, "Closures should be the last resort". Does the sanctuary commit to removing from this blueprint these new no zones which would effectively close our Back Bay sandbars to our local community? And finally, I would like to know if this sanctuary commits to representing the will of the majority on any and all aspects of this document? I. E. If the majority of the public response is option number one across the board, dump this plan, leave it alone, is that what the sanctuary will do?

34. Brad Vickery:

My name is Brad Vickery. Seems to me that this plan is a solution to a social problem yet it fails to address some things that have been mentioned today that you addressed, you have all this grass being chewed up, put in the damn channel markers. You've got a problem with people dropping anchors out at the reef, so we add some more mooring balls. When we talked about the real elephant in the room, the real problem here, its agricultural runoff and nutrients from Big Sugar. Why are you saying it's this that or the other? Now, I live here in the Florida Keys but I was born in Hawaii and the North Hawaiian Islands are a real good example of what NOAA does when they get their hands on something. NOAA has basically shut down the more than 250 miles of the Hawaiian Islands. There's no access to anybody except NOAA. This little club called NOAA and their cronies who get to dive and fish that part of the world, the native Hawaiians aren't allowed to. And they don't trust NOAA and you know the Hawaiians are pretty trusting people. Their plan is to shut us out. Say oh we're a dive club. This plan is a legacy document you're kind of stuck with and it was born under a director who's been run out of town, who's a criminal and a crook? And dishonest. You know, and people don't trust sanctuaries, they're not transparent. Why don't we can this doc and let's start from scratch. Let's go back and start again and do it in an open and honest and transparent manner where you're actually working with the public instead of shoving this down our throats.

35. Aimee Rodriguez:

My name is Amy Rodriguez. I am the wife of a commercial fisherman who currently fishes in the Marathon area. I want to start off by saying that I am completely 100% against this blueprint for many, many reasons that I don't have time to explain today, but I did voice my opinion and I will be posting it on regulations.gov and that we'll be sending it out to our congressmen, our senators, anybody that will listen because this is unfair to all of us. With that said, there are over 580 pages to this blueprint that I haven't been able to sit down and read. Even half of it is, it is made for an attorney to read, not a local fisherman that spends their time outside trying to make a living. And you're trying to close these areas for them or extend them or put more regulations on top of what they already go through. Not only with the sanctuaries trying to, you know, close off the area but with NOAA and NMFS and you have to pay this and that you can't fish this fish when in reality, you know, the Congress report specifically, tells you what is overfished and what is not. According to the blueprint, what I have read, it doesn't have any scientific updated basis. I don't understand how we're having this conversation today again because many years before this the same thing has been tried to be implemented and we find ourselves fighting and fighting and fighting for our rights and our livelihoods. That's why everybody is here being affected today because of this Blueprint. So I would like to request more scientific, and the reason why, that has not been answered. Why? So for example, you are trying to close this section, why? You already have 3,800 square feet already. You're trying to hit more than 750 square feet for what? Did you fix the

originally already 3,800 square ft.? Why are you trying to submit this proposal without any proof where we can see this? The answer I got out of all of these meetings was look on the website. When I looked on the website, I'm not computer literate, I did go through the website. It doesn't have any pictures, any proof, and any statements saying what is wrong with the areas that you're trying to extend or implement a closure or no motor zone or anything else that you're trying to propose. It's affecting all of us. And I don't think you realize that. So well we all have our opinions I guess. Okay. So one more thing I want to add. My husband is a commercial fisherman. He's affected every day. The challenges aren't that the commercial fishers are damaging these areas. It's part of life. It's just the evaluation of hurricane Irma, for example, you stated it on your blueprint, so is that the fisherman's fault or is that just life in general? It's the sea, it changes. So if it changed because of the reason that you want to implement this, this big closure or restriction. What happened to the original ones that you are already had? Where is the damage there? Is it still damaged? Because if it's still damaged then fix that one first and leave us the hell alone. So just to conclude my proposal is if I can find it, I'm sure somebody's going to give me their three minutes because I'm going to finish what I have to say. So what I propose number one, is to eat your blueprint. To make your blueprint to, why don't you look deeper into maybe costing these recreational tourists that are coming in school 'me. Make the permits a little larger and make them pass a little more so they can see and understand the regulations so when they go out in the sea, they don't do the damage that you're trying to say the commercial fishermen do. And number three, this is for all of you. Write your comments on regulations.com. Send it to your governor, send it to your city council, and send it to everybody that will listen. And if you need help, I can write it for you.

36. Jessica Johnson:

I just want to say I grew up here and I been going to Snipes and Marvin and Mud my whole life. We always bring back more trash that we find there we clean the tourist trash up. We clean Boca Chica road up, we clean Big Coppitt up, and we clean Boca Grande up. We clean it. We care, we love this place. The locals love this place. When we take people to the reef we educate them. We don't touch the reef. Don't touch that fish. No, you can't get that. We educate them. I think there needs to be more education for the tourists there needs to be more regulation on the runoff coming into our ocean. We need more boys so there's less anchor damage. We need more markers so there's less damage of the grass. There are so many rules it's hard for me to keep up with the rules. And you know I'm always looking for what's the rule on, on that fish. Well, you got to know the rules so, and we respect their rules and want to follow the rules and want to protect our place this place, but shutting this off to the people that live here that's wrong. We love it, we want to be part of it, we want to take care of it but shutting off is not the solution. I think there are a lot of good ideas, but the other thing is enforcement. I don't see Fish and Wildlife out there. They don't, there's just no enforcement. I understand what you guys are trying to do, we all want to protect this beautiful place we live and we want to protect our rights and our freedoms to enjoy these places and take care of them. Thank you.

37. Robert Pillar:

My name is Robert Pillar. I've lived here in the Florida Keys for 42 years. I'm the director for the Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's Association as well. First of all I'd really like to say thank you to the council and all of you are having this meeting on opening day of the stone crab season. On this day we have to put out thousands of traps out to go fishing and you had the meeting tonight so we really applaud you and thank you very much. Second of all I was also involved in the first round for this 30 years ago, I had blonde hair but I was involved in this. And I remember getting the same BS all over again. The intercostal water markers were removed by Curtis Kruer back in the early nineties when we dealt with him talking

about all the new big cows are eating more grass than the small cows and all kinds of BS, but those markers were removed by the intercostal waterway from Key Largo to Key West. Billy Knauss's father was a buoy tender there and they tended buoys the whole way up and down the shore. You got a few recreational areas out there that need to be preserved so that no other area gets used or destroyed. We been using the same areas for years and years and everybody in this room has their own place they like to go to. So why don't you just let the people use those areas and go close the other ones? You know more damage is done in two days of mini season. How many of you talked about mini-season? Not one of you. Water quality is the issue. Closing zones, it fixes something people don't even understand. Grouper and stuff like that grouper are raised up here to a certain size and they swim up in the gulf and they go up there and that's where they fish the grouper, the mutton fish, the red fish and all that. Same thing happens with black grouper and stuff like that. They don't stay here that long. They go other places, they don't all live here. You go out another day and I've visited the Banana River area. We went to a meeting up there a few years ago. They made them quit using Roundup in the Banana River area because it was killing and destroying their blue crab fishery. They stopped using it for two years then a blue crab fishery began. None of the things we got going on down here. You got raw sewage coming out of Key Biscayne. Nobody said anything about the raw sewage and it comes down here and we've got miles and miles of it. Also what about all the cruise ships you got dumping tanks out here every day when they come in. We've been closed to Tortugas banks for 20-25 years, we haven't seen this incredible amount of fish that's supposed to swim back up here when you closed that zone. It looks just the same as it did. And what I also want in my closing I want to applaud you on Is the fact that you were going to have no public speaking for this meeting being made down here, but you're going to have public speaking in Ft. Myers and Miami, is that because you want to discuss with those people up there how you're going to sell off [inaudible]. Thank you.

38. Lee Sterling:

My name is Lee Sterling I'm a commercial fisherman. I've been coming to this room for 30 [expletive] years. Nothing done. Except for Billy Causey, the snake oil salesman, who set us up with these people. First let's address Sand Key. Now you won't get a [expletive] thing there. That's all [expletive]. Sand Key, you know what you're little friends on the staff, years ago told us, you guys never did any impact studies you just actually drew a bunch of lines and that's what you did and that's why you want the west side of Sand Key, because you didn't get it all. Then you told us user groups will adjust. I've adjusted for 30 [expletive] years. You know what? I'm tired of adjusting. Every time you come you take 20% 25% of my bottom, when you took my hogfish you take a chunk of my income. Every time you take something, you should get a reduction in pay too. Josef Stalin, the communist dictator, said it doesn't matters who tallies the votes and I don't want the sanctuary staff tallying my comment. I want an independent third party. It's like two wolves and a sheep deciding what's for dinner. Okay let's get all on to Sean Morton. What the hell man? They redacted all that stuff. 362 pages of information we're not allowed to have. I'm a big boy. If Sean was a swinger like they say he was taking sanctuary boats and doing his thing and chasing after staff, I need to know that. He left behind all the council members who were doing the fraud with him. They're still here. Why did Sean Morton not go to jail? Why did he not have criminal prosecution against him? Oh no, NOAA takes care of its own. That's why there's no accountability, no consequences and they feel they can do any [expletive] thing they want. By the way, Andy that little biologist, you [expletive] up last year. All of the conchs died. During mini season we had a virus come through 90% of all the conchs behind the reef died, we called you and you put off coming to the reef for three months. And that's what the sanctuary does, they cover everything up and they screw us.

39. Howard Livingston:

Hello everybody I'm not originally from the Keys but I got down here as quick as I could. Because I love this place. One thing that brought me to the keys was the water. And that's what's going on here. Everybody here either loves this ocean or they make their living from it. And the most knowledgeable people I've ever, ever met are the fisherman and the generation of conchs who year after year after generation after generation, have protected these waters. Those of you I think that should have a say in this and I, trust me, I tried to read the how many pages it was and I couldn't ever, it was a lot. But what I do know and what I do think is if something is this difficult to get people to buy into, it was like pushing string. And there's a lot of discussion about these earlier folks that were in charge of it and were perhaps not above board. Maybe it's time to take a breath and re-look at it together, because, I promise you, everybody is smarter than any one of us or any ten of us. And those people that have lived here for generations and generations that know these waters. They know why things work, why they don't work. And I think those are the people that really should be involved with making this thing either work or not work. [Inaudible] if you close an area, I promise you we're going to go someplace else. [Inaudible] We're going to go someplace. So I mean you have to think about that you're going to go more of an impact on a place you're not even thinking about now. So thank you, and the other thing I got to say, this is probably not going to be very popular, but I think miniseason is just the biggest rape of this ocean. And if you've never gone out during mini season you should do that because it will break your heart. And I know we're not talking about that, but that to me is something that needs to be taken care of and needs to be monitored. I don't know how it goes. I'm not that smart. Anyway, that's all I got to say, thank you.

40. Charles Fricke:

Alright I'm not really good at speaking so I'm just going to start. I live on Cudjoe. Monkey, monkey island, also called Lois Key, the flats guys wants to close an area behind Monkey Island where, I'm all for the flats guys, they can make money. If they want to put up a flag so no one goes close to them so we don't run close to them, but they want to close that area 365 days out of the year when that's not all tarpon fishing. I cut through there when I'm trapping, I go through these cuts, natural cut. I go through the cut. Pull my gear, come home. If I got to come home with a different way, go back out into the open ocean. I run into either Bow channel or Kemp channel I'm burning more fuel, waste my time and it's taking longer for me to do it. I'm all for them fishing, if we could run a certain distance away from them, that's fine. But closing the whole area off just to one user group. I just don't agree with that. I've been fishing for over 30 years and I never had a problem before. So thank you very much.

41. Greg Bringle:

My name's Greg, I was born and raised here. And I'm commercial but a lot of these ideas that you guys have are wrong. They just, they're not going to work. The areas around Western Dry Rocks that you're talking about closing, you don't need that. We have fishery management, already and it's doing fine. I go out fishing in the Atlantic. I go fishing in the Gulf. I go fishing out West. I go fishing up East, I'm always catching mutton snapper. That's the main reason to close Western Dry Rocks and there's no reason to do it. One of my biggest concerns is idle only around any shoreline within what, a hundred yards or 300 yards whatever it is. That's going to cause more damage. A boat like mine, I have to get up on a plane my prop wash is going to damage more seagrass by doing that and everybody's boat's going to do it. Flat's boats. When a boat gets on plane, comes off of plane, the prop gets deeper in the water. You're going to have these boats causing more damage, slowing down just to go by an island and for whatever reason that is, I don't know. I don't know if that's a flat fishing [inaudible], that's what I was told, but I'm not sure, but it will cause more damage and it's going to cause, it's going to mean hours of idling around to get somewhere. It's going to take hours or days. There's a lot of other things, but I'm going to finish.

To answer your quote our kids will thank us. We don't want this, but they will thank us. They won't because with these continued closures my kids are going to be looking at pictures and reading stories when they're living in Georgia because we cannot continue to live here.

42. David Paul Horan (time yielded from Michael Ware):

This is a proposed expansion of the sanctuary and it changes every part of our boundaries, regulations, use, marine zones, everything. Now what's the justification for increased resource protection or the supposedly allowing quote unquote compatible uses? Pray tell, what do they think is a compatible use? Now say that different regulations should have the least possible adverse economic impact. Any decision should all be based on whether the proposed actual regulation is actually necessary. Is the proposed environmental benefit necessary when compared to the restriction previously unrestricted rights. James Madison made it really clear, he said the constitution, our rights against wrongs. If particular restriction is necessary it wouldn't be opposed. Our sanctuary is 3,800 square miles. We have 57 individual marine zones, so the expansion isn't really necessary. Congress found that 3,800 square miles was big enough, now the sanctuary manager wants to make it 20% bigger without legislative approval. The majority of the present 3800 square miles is owned by the state of Florida. They haven't figured that out yet. Because through the consent of the state of Florida the sanctuary can regulate within state boundaries. The proposed so-called restoration plan allows the sanctuary manager to regulate navigation, fishing, access to the islands within the federal wildlife refuge, changes of use, the list goes on and on and on. Now one of the primary uses, which is in the implementation of the proposed sanctuary restoration plan, was whether legislative power within the state's boundaries is now vested in the sanctuary manager. Folks it's not. The governor has the right to veto it all. He's already said, Hey, closure, ought to be the last option. Fact is, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary establishes specific geographical areas. That's a legislative act that no person in the administrative branch of government can change without legislative authorization the sanctuary does not provide, nor set, parameters for establishing priorities or other means of identifying or choosing what resources it's intended to protect. It creates a lie. A lie is fungible goods like you know, here's the environmental, here's historical resources, here's archeological resources, but they're saying that they can regulate all of them. Now when the state of Florida makes the fundamental policy decision on the side of regulatory power within the portion of the sanctuary owned by the state and delegates to the sanctuary manager the task of implementing those policies that would not be a violation of the separation of powers of government. But until then it is. Alternate number one, a lot of people are in favor of that, I am. 3800 square miles of regulation and then alternates two add 750 miles to the existing sanctuary. That's a 20% increase in the size of the sanctuary. I was involved in those collisions with the reef with those big ships. We established the navigational zones off the reef where they cannot go. This is kind of like, well, we'll do it again. The NOAA preferred alternative number three, that's the preferred alternative, it includes provisions protecting live rock harvesting. Why? You know why, because there's nobody on the sanctuary advisory council that's a live rock harvester. NOAA alternate number four, I looked at it and I thought that is so bad and so restrictive even Last Stand and the Nature Conservancy will probably oppose it. I was wrong. Last Stand got up here today and said they were all in favor of four. The draft restoration plan maintains alternate 2 is the least restrictive. It wants 31 new marine wildlife areas, six new sanctuary preservation zones. The least restrictive also has idle speed, no wake, no anchor, no trolling presently allowed. Zones in three year phase out of bait fishing, do you think any of these people actually go fishing because you got to catch bait. Alternate number 3 adds 41 new marine zones restricted access, no entry, supposedly these are necessary to protect fish, birds, or turtles. Has there been a documented increase in fish, birds and turtles in and all of those new zones. NOAA's alternative number 3 puts three new modified and restricted access Sanctuary preservation areas. It will no longer

allow for trolling or catch and release and for the bait fishermen, the collection of bait fish direct quote "is no longer consistent with the goals and objectives of the sanctuary management". Here we are 29 years later and it's no longer consistent. Now, the preferred alternative by NOAA actually limits the number of users to the reef tracts to only the Blue Star. They backed off of that. Did they back off of it because it was not done correctly? No, they did exactly what they thought they wanted to do and created such an outcry they had to back off of it. It is important to note that all these regulations fail to create the results the sanctuary is promising, they will be back. With more restrictions in more areas. No question. Because if you think our most popular zones and then you transfer them, the less and less desirable zones and then show up there, we're going to overpopulate those and in a very short period of time that's going to be the NOAA preferred alternative. Now the NOAA alternatives two, three, and four and on Marvin, Barracuda Keys where they prevent motors. The Lower Harbor Keys, Mud Keys, Snipes, Marvin, Sawyer, Contents, Lower Keys, Upper Harbor Keys, these are all no entry. And then Woman Key, Boca Grande, Marquesas Key are no access, no entry. But they never noticed that the islands are defined by mean low tide. Think about that people. How big is Snipe on Mean Low Tide, it's five times bigger than the island. And yet they're not going to give us the figures on what they're trying to exclude. It's the end of common sense to think that closing the most popular areas will not overpopulate the remaining areas. In the future, closing the remaining areas will be necessary. In 1982 there was a traffic jam, because, called by the overreaching of the federal government agency that started the Conch Rebellion. The new proposed overreaching draft sanctuary restoration blueprint is a lot worse than a traffic jam. The government won't give back anything once the government takes it away.

43. Larry White:

Evening ladies and gentlemen, my name's Larry White. Most of you know me. Anyway. I've been a lifelong resident here, I grew up here and I've seen all the changes. Lifelong resident and although the intentions may have been good, as well know not everything has worked out for the greater good. Like I said I grew up here. I commercial dove tropical fish for over 30 years. Charter boat, tour boat, fishing boat and I do a lot of activities out there at snipes. To take that away would hurt my business, the people employed. Sorry, but kind of unclear about the boundaries. My opinion is instead of closing or expanding areas of interest on their proposal to protect whatever species it may be, let's look at the big picture and try to fix the major problems and our environmental disasters that occur every day due to runoff, pumping bilges of whatever into the ocean and then what would actually be a clean pristine full of life water environment. If they can channel their efforts and resources on working towards what is the real problem, an environmental tragedy that causes red tides, algae bloom, and flesh eating bacteria. All of these things are really bad Florida and the Keys will no longer be a tourist destination and everything you're trying to protect will be dead anyway. That's just my opinion. Furthermore I don't know how they can justify getting a paycheck when they throw this Blue Star crap on the wall and see what sticks. I think it's ridiculous and ya'll should just go home.

44. Carla Bellenger:

This is an intimidating crowd to talk in front of. But I'm Captain Carla Bellenger. We have a small business, Java Cat, six passengers sailing, kayaking, and snorkeling. We go out to the Key West National Wildlife Refuge. I also have another six passenger, actually it's a 5 passenger charter boat, out of Geiger Key. We have Geiger Key Paddle Co. We do mostly paddle tours. And I was a community volunteer for the Shallow Water Working Group and I went to every meeting and I had good intentions and that was in 2012. And I started working in the back country when Danger Charters was only a six pack, and Wayne Boggs was the captain, I was the mate. But sailing that boat, Java Cat, and Restless Native, another 6

passenger, and occasionally flats boat, Lucy what not. I've seen the changes. I was there when the mooring balls were put in. I agree with that. There's a lot of our bottom, once the mooring balls came in around Archer Key that brought in, when it's windy, all the other boats, especially dolphin watching boats which I was a member, the second member of the Dolphin Smart program starting in 2007 and I went several years with that program; it's no longer active. I think instead of shutting down Archer Key and Snipes, today I ran a charter and I went to Snipes. I ran through some channels that are shallow channels that are not marked, you know. To take those away from us is not what I volunteered all that time for and I'm a little disappointed and I apologize for my friends out there that maybe I might be a part of that. But I encourage you, I want, I was there in 2012 and I invite anybody on the sanctuary to come out with me and let me show you the damage and what can be done. I am for more mooring balls. Please do not close Archer Key down. I've been working and making my income off of Archer Key, Mud Key, Snipes, and all that area for 20 years. So I encourage any of you to come out. It's easy to find me. My name is on the Shallow Water Working Group, for more mooring balls, I'm for not shutting down with the sandbars and David Horan's right. It was super high tide. I've never seen the water as high as it was today out at Snipes. But when it's local tide, sand bars galore. Where are these people going to go once you shut that down? You're just going to push out everybody including my company to other islands. And so I don't really have any planned words or what not but I feel like I to stand up and say something. I will be submitting written comments for you to review. But if anybody wants to come out and talk to me, I am pro more mooring balls. I don't really do fishing, so I can't speak for the fishermen, but I just feel like there's a lot of information that the sanctuary is not aware of down here in the lower keys. So if you would please be mean more involved, come out with us, and thank you. I do know that that you're trying to do well. And I was there for those meetings. I listened to the scientists and I do agree with some stuff, but to shut down, and I was shocked and, I'm a little nervous about my name being out there on that working group. So please reconsider, please reach out, and good luck. Thank you.

45. Richard Arnold :

I'm going to start. First of all, thank all ya'll. I was under the impression I was going to meet the advisory board, not the actual NOAA board. I'm five generations from here. Not, that I think that entitles me to anything. More than anyone else. We might want Key West to look better, be better, the islands and be better. Sure. But the problem is laws only affect the honest man, anyone in law enforcement understands that. If you start shutting down the sand bars where we've been going for generations, you're going to push, like Carla said, people to other islands and we're going to start squeezing other places. Those islands are what makes the keys wonderful. Not only that, but the fort, Marquesas, all these islands all the way through, I'm not just talking about Snipe and Marvin. For years we've had to defend them, we've had to come up and speak and while we all want the water quality and stuff to be better, I think sometimes people don't realize if we had simple channel markers that we wouldn't have to care about the turtle grass being tore up. Nobody's ever done that [unintelligible]. Their simple solution is shutting it down. At least now you have the people all in a concentrated area, and I think don't even look at that. Making the fort, that zone bigger, where it's less fishing, isn't really done to make the kind of difference that we're looking at. Is it really, as a biologist, I'm sure you could sit and say, well, the math works, because sometimes it doesn't. We're getting water runoff from all over the other places affecting us. I want, I remember as a kid going Sand Key and it was a beautiful sand bar. It's gone now. Sometimes hurricanes affect the keys and it's not our fault. Well, one thing I can tell you is that the keys out of the islands from the fort, to Snipe, or Mud, Marvin [inaudible] are cleaner now than they ever were when I was a kid. People clean up their trash now. People will pick stuff up, [inaudible]. We don't want that shut down. So we're making that extra effort. And I think all of us here feel like it's

nothing to do [inaudible]. And you might not be intentionally doing that, but that's not what we feel. So shutting down these islands and restricting us more, I don't believe is the answer. I don't have all the answers, but I think that [inaudible] really look at it and think about when you start shutting them down you're going to push people to other places. And please let us stay where we are and enjoy what we have and let us just keep looking for a solution. We all want to have a better, Key West. So with that, thank you for your time.

46. Don Kirkpatrick:

Hello my name is Don Kirkpatrick, I work for Sunset Watersports. The issue of my concerns, with the proposed alternative for marine zones for Western Sambo to Boca Chica sandbar. Out of the four alternatives two are the same. So everybody is really only giving us three choices. Number one leave it as it is as a sanctuary preserve. Number two, and three, have no anchor and idle speed only. And number four, no entry to the sand bar at all. I'm not sure what the differences is between this sandbar and all the others that are not being threatened. Except this one which is a highly looked at fishing area at certain times of year. This sandbar is very local and fortunately very easy to find. Closing this sandbar not only would hurt one user group, it would make it better for another a problem which I do not believe exist. Also all the boat rentals and boat owners would now be heading out to the refuge where they would could cause more possible damage. So in closing I'd like to see Western Sambos stay on alternative one, status quo.

47. Louis Cave:

So I'm Louis Cave I'm one of the younger ones here, you know, I wasn't around for the last meeting, I wasn't old enough, but if I could've been there I would. I've seen firsthand through the years and years I've been on the water, since I was one month old I've been on a boat, and I've seen firsthand that the fisheries are alive. They're there and the sanctuaries are placed on the living coral system that are already, it's living, existing. The ones that are not in the sanctuaries are dead because they've been dying from natural causes that we can't control. So expanding the sanctuary isn't going to help. And why does something have to be in the sanctuary in order to help it? We can help something that's outside of the sanctuary while still fishing. And fish responsibly. We contribute so much to the population just by throwing chum that brings fish to us. We throw more money than some of you guys make in a year just to invest in our location. Fish come to us, they're not dumb. They like structure. So what do those sanctuaries have? Exactly what the fish want, what is outside the sanctuaries? Nothing that they want. So perfect example: I'm fishing all the way from Miami to Key West my entire life. Miami had Boat Light, one of the best bait holding spots in Miami period. Until the tower was removed. What was in the other sanctuary? No longer have any baited there. Perfect example. So structure when added in a location that necessarily didn't have to be sanctuaries. I think everybody would benefit. The fish populations would remain healthy, the coral could regrow. Give people a chance to disperse and fish throughout different regions rather than concentrating them by taking away locations that they can't fish from. So, you know, I may be young, but I have a lot of experience under my belt and I've seen it firsthand that a lot of you guys, I probably have more experience on the water than you.

48. Erica Sterling:

Hi my name is Eric Sterling, I'm sorry I have to read from this because I do work a lot and I've worked unfortunately had to spend my time dealing with this today and that wasn't what I was planning. I'm second generation conch I've used the water around keys my entire life. My family has used them for

over a hundred years. I start by asking, what problems are you being solved with this new plan? The simple answer is none. Although there are clearly problems and issues that exist with the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. You're not tackling the hard issues. In my opinion, the two biggest issues are declining health of the reef and the damage to the turtle grass, neither of which are really being addressed with these restrictions. If you want to improve the health of the reef then improve water quality by cleaning up the nearshore waters that are polluted with sunken abandoned and derelict vessels. Then restore water flow to reduce the high salinity. Maybe the millions of dollars spent on salaries, websites or what you call research for what you're proposing should have been spent on a massive cleanup of the surrounding [inaudible] the scarring damage to the turtle grass and the prop scarring, I have two very simple fixes: put up channel markers in the back country and get rid of lobster mini-season as everyone has said. My understanding is that channel markers have never been wanted by you because you would prefer boaters not even attempt to go in the back country. In regard to mini-season, I've witnessed the damage done year after year, as tourist's rape and pillage our waters and run their boats around during the two day mini-season. Closing off areas is not the answer, but it appears sanctuary has a desire to keep expanding its footprint with no entry, no take, no motor zones, no anchor, primarily for those that live here and to the point that we are not even going to be allowed to use our resource. A lot of people here either make a living using these waters or like me try to make the waters a part of our life. Although at the September 24th meeting at the Key West high school, we were told that new signs that are popping up in the back country were areas that were already restricted. I disagree with that. They have been designated on a map, but they have never been enforced. Boaters have been using them. There had been no signs and no enforcement in those areas. So now not only are you starting to enforce those areas that we will not be able to use but you want to make, he would like to take more of those areas. Other proposed changes include a no anchor between Boca Grande and Woman Key encompasses a sand bar that my family, and I frequent on summer weekends. My kids love spending time there. So now you're also affecting kids in our community, which I cannot tolerate or allow. None of the proposed restrictions make sense or have any scientific evidence that prove the changes will help the sanctuary in any way. I am actually an attorney and have been unable to understand how this proposed plan works and how it makes sense. Anybody can take out a Sharpie and draw lines on a map, but that doesn't make it right. This board really needs to consider how those lines affect people's lives on so many levels. I would urge you to take alternative one which would be no change.

49. Breanna Santana:

Hello my name is Breana. I'm 12 years old and my mother's family came here in the 1880s. I'm asking you not to take our waters from us. It's for the kids they say, but I don't agree. The tourists are the problem in my opinion. They litter and mess up our sea life. Taking our waters is not the solution. How come they don't have reports on increased amounts of tourists at these locations? I've been on the water since I was a young child so I say no to what they say. We need a majority voting system, the tourists need to be educated on our ecosystem, classes [Inaudible] before boating. Please don't take our waters. Thank you.

50. Mel Fishcer:

Yeah I'm going to be very short. My mom spoke for a while earlier. My name is Melvin Fishcer-Abt, Mel Fisher was my grandfather and we are representing submerged cultural resources. And over the past few months I've attended multiple sanctuary meetings about the restoration blueprint and how the sanctuary advisory council keeps saying it's all about the sanctuary. Yet the beginning over 55% of the

people who voted against implementing the sanctuary at all. Yet here we are expanding again. Today knowing there are hundreds of other comments online and written directly against any further expansion of the sanctuary all I've heard from these sanctuary advisory council members is how much more are we going to do? You guys are not representing your constituents in my opinion, you are representing big government and the people who are behind you. Alternative one is the only way to go.