

# Update: The Florida Keys and South Florida Ecosystem Connectivity Team

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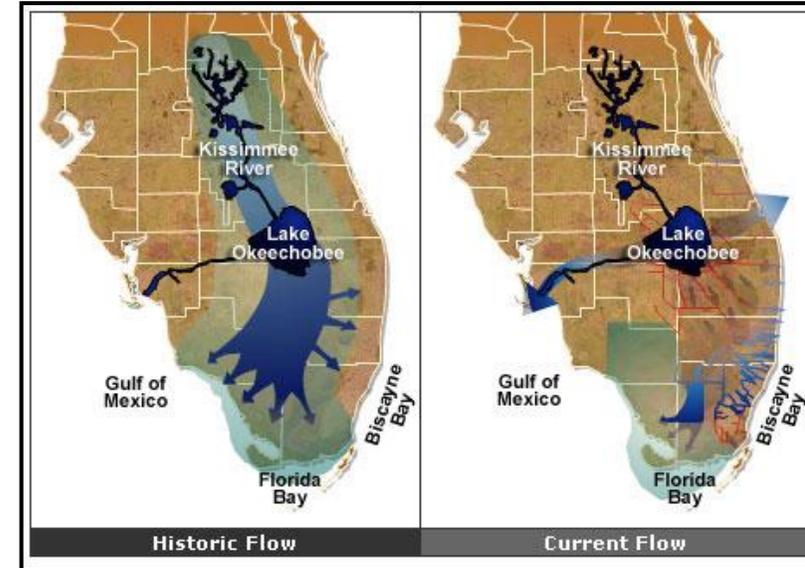
February 16, 2021

**Sanctuary Advisory Council  
Meeting**

Photo: Shawn Verne

# Working Group Beginnings...

- In 2020, the WQPP Steering Committee reviewed top water quality issues in the Keys and adopted a number of priorities.
- South Florida Regional issues were identified as a top concern for water quality:
  - Everglades restoration
  - Mainland wastewater infrastructure



## Working Group Beginnings...

The Steering Committee passed a resolution to:

“Develop a South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee...[to include] members from the Sanctuary Advisory Council and WQPP Steering Committee...to strengthen engagement with and provide input to the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force.”

## Working Group Beginnings...

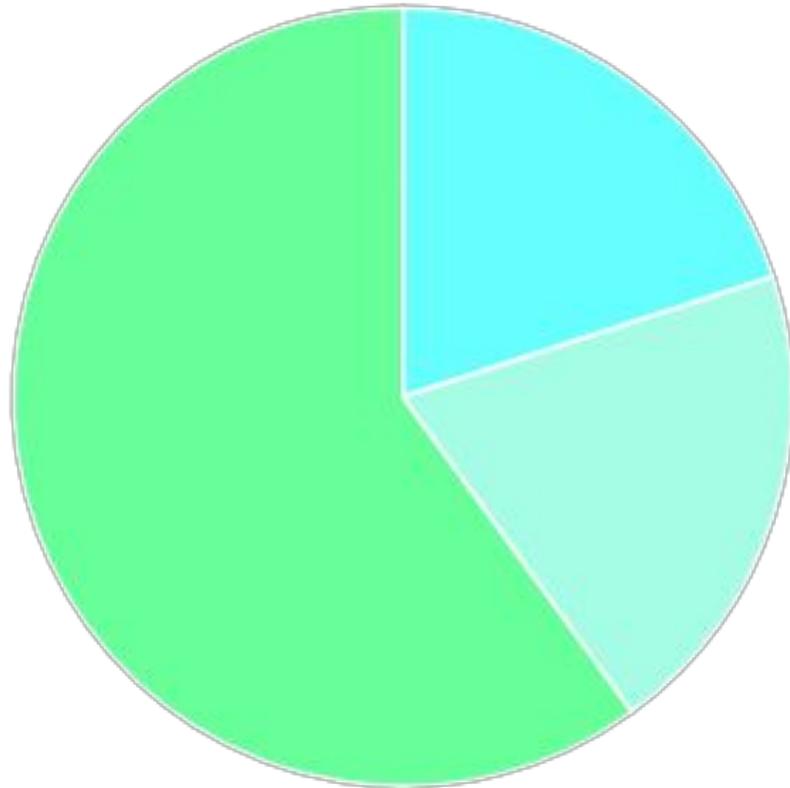
- The Sanctuary Advisory Council drafted and passed a resolution to develop a working group entitled: **The Florida Keys and South Florida Ecosystem Connectivity Team**



# Ecosystem Connectivity Team Objectives

- a) Inform and engage members of the SAC, WQPP and the Florida Keys community in South Florida Ecosystem Restoration...
- b) Ensure the interests of the FKNMS are represented in South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force and other relevant decision-making processes...
- c) Facilitate regular participation by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and South Florida Water Management District at working group, SAC and WQPP meetings...
- d) Provide a platform for collaboration... on South Florida Ecosystem Restoration and other South Florida regional issues of mutual interest and most urgent importance to the Florida Keys

# Ecosystem Connectivity Team Composition



**Maximum of 15  
seats**



Working Group Chair:  
**Jerry Lorenz**

FKNMS Staff Lead:  
**Karen Bohnsack**

\*No more than half should be SAC/WQPP members. Goal of a working group is to allow greater community involvement.

## SAC Volunteers

- Jerry Lorenz (Chair)
  - ❖ S. FL Ecosystem Restoration/FL Audubon
- Joe Weatherby
  - ❖ Diving – LK/Artificial Reefs International
- Erinn Muller
  - ❖ Research & Monitoring/Mote Marine Lab

## WQPP Volunteers

- Chris Bergh
  - ❖ SAC Conservation and Envr./ The Nature Conservancy
- Shelly Krueger
  - ❖ Florida Sea Grant

**Goal = 6 representatives between the WQPP and SAC**

# 9 community seats have been identified for participation on the working group

Constituency	Potential Organizations to Contact
Conservation & Environment (Policy)	Florida Bay Forever National Parks Conservation Association Miami Waterkeeper
Conservation & Environment (Science)	Everglades Foundation Coral Restoration (TBD)
Diving	Dive Equipment Manufacturer's Association (DEMA) Blue Star Operator (TBD)
Fishing (Charter and Commercial)	Florida Keys Fishing Guides Association Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's Association
Academia	Florida International University College of the Florida Keys

## Next Steps:

- Confirm representatives for community seats
- Schedule 1<sup>st</sup> meeting: March 2021
- Set up working group website @ <http://floridakeys.noaa.gov/review/workgroups.html>
- Provide regular updates for the SAC/WQPP

# March 2021 Meeting Objectives:

- Introduce working group members
- Review the purpose, objectives, structure and operating guidelines for the working group
- Initiate discussion on key aspects of Everglades restoration or other regional topics for this group's attention
- Accept public comment
- Review and assign action items



# SAC Input

- Questions?
- Confirm Volunteers for the Connectivity Team
- Feedback on composition of the Connectivity Team?
- How and how often should updates from the Connectivity Team be provided to the SAC?

# Thank You!

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