

**Grounded and Abandoned Vessels
Impacting Coral Reefs
United States Coral Reef Task Force
December 5, 2001**

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Office of Response and Restoration**

Presentation Outline

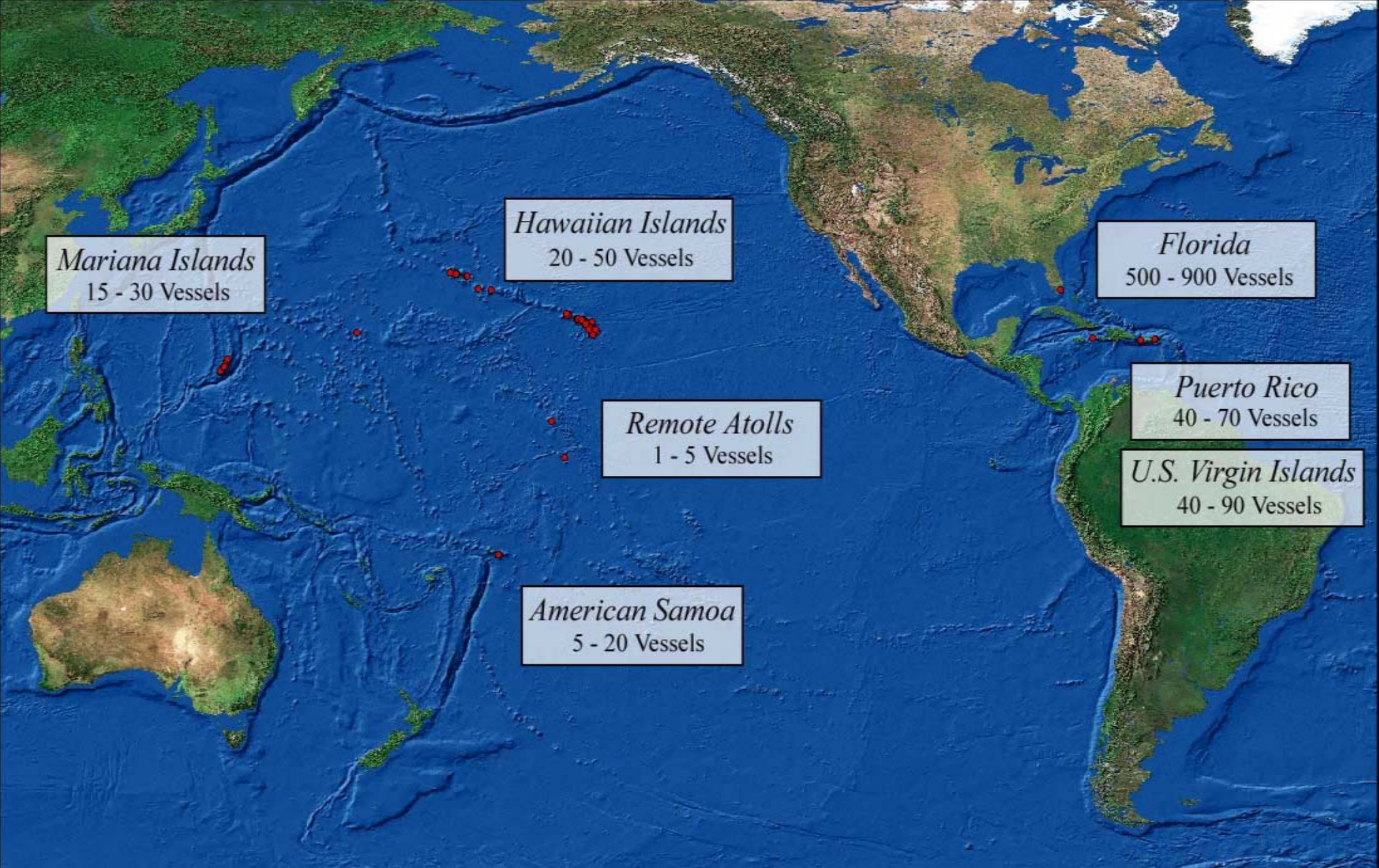
- **Issue definition**
- **Database status**
- **Agency roles**
- **Legal authorities**
- **Marine insurance**
- **Case histories**
- **Potential solutions**
- **Next steps**



Threat from abandoned vessels

- Physical crushing of habitat
- Wildlife entrapment
- Threat of oil spills and other pollutants
- Impediment to navigation
- Illegal dump site for oils and wastes
- Nutrient enrichment and invasive species
- Visual eyesore and loss of tourism



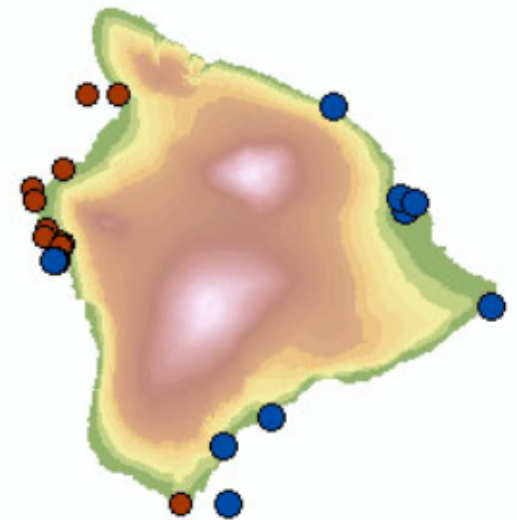
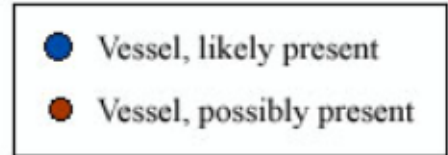
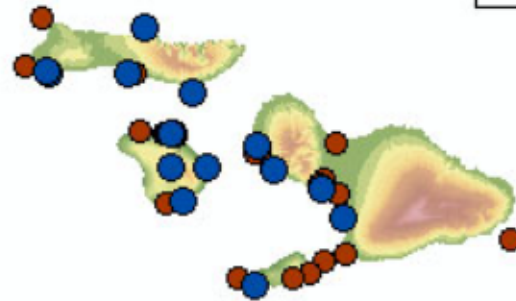
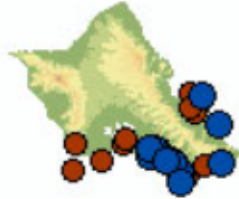
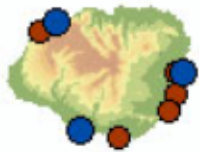


Abandoned Vessel Inventory: Overview of Contents



Abandoned Vessel Program
NOAA - Damage Assessment Center
December, 2001

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Abandoned Vessel Inventory

Overview of Vessels in the Main Hawaiian Islands

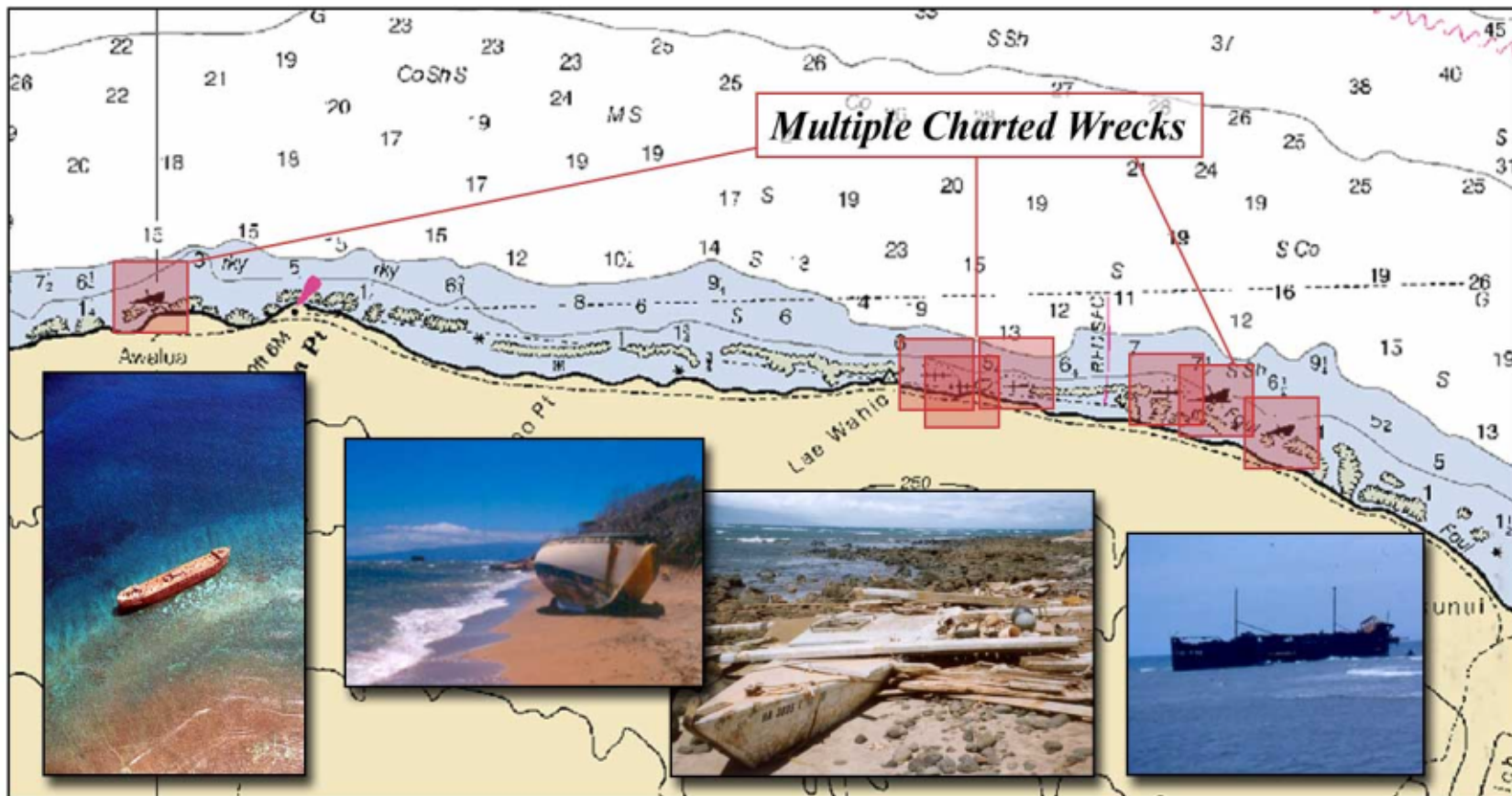


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Shipwreck Beach

North Shore of Lana'i



Ferro-cement Freighter

grounding circumstances unknown

Sailboat & Trimaran

these and other recent wrecks are scattered along shoreline

Steel Harbor Oiler

grounding circumstances unknown

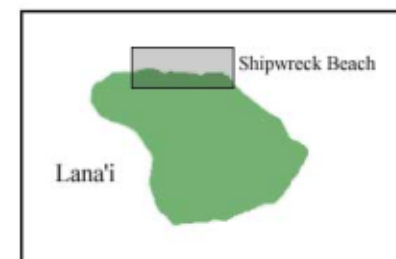


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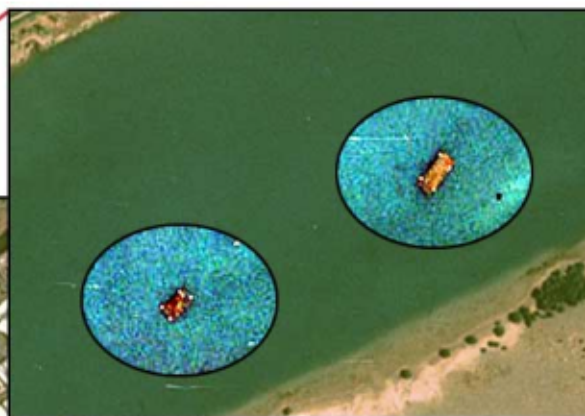
Image credits
Center map: NOAA Chart 19351, 9th edition
Freighter: Christopher Polihale

Sailboat, Trimaran, Oiler: Maritime Archaeology and History Program at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa



Keehi Lagoon

Honolulu, Hawai'i



2 Submerged Barges
World War II era; Navy;
not removed in recent
State - Navy actions



Unknown Vessel
charted as visible wreck;
possibly debris from a
larger wreck

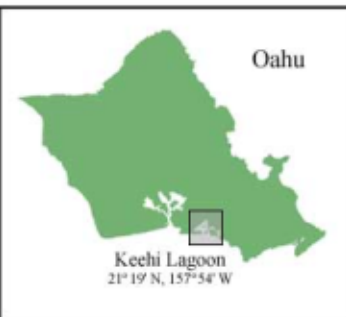


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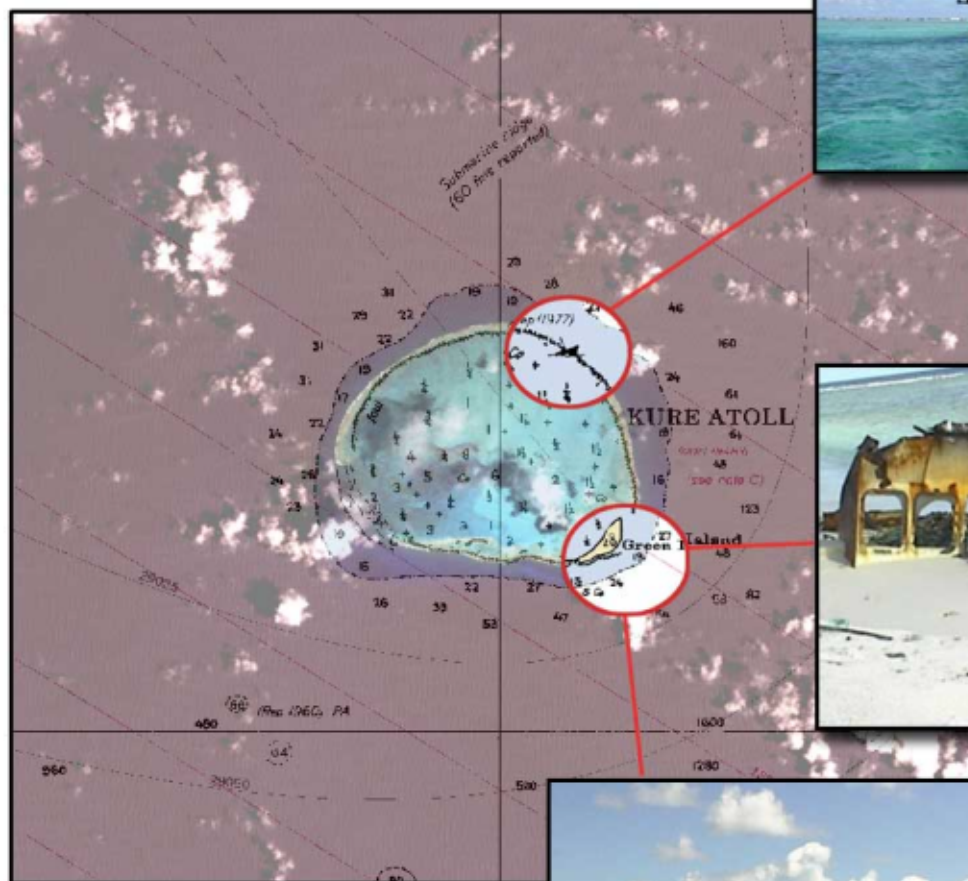
Image credits

Center map & 2 Submerged Barges: Aerial photograph courtesy of NOAA's Biogeography Program
Unknown Vessel: Courtesy of the Maritime Archaeology and History Program at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa



Kure Atoll

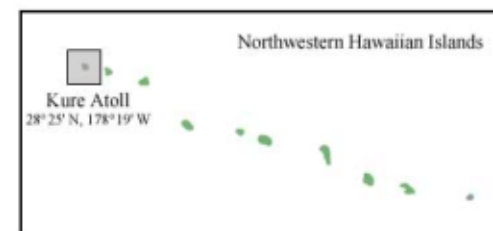
Northwestern Hawaiian Islands



Unknown Vessel
reported in 1977,
hull piece still on reef



Paradise Queen II
ran aground in October, 1998,
hull pieces and gear scattered
on reef and shore



Abandoned Vessel Program
NOAA - Damage Assessment Center
December, 2001

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Image credits

Center map: LANDSAT 7 image (courtesy of NOAA Sanctuaries) overlaid with NOAA Chart 19480, 7th ed.
Unknown Vessel: Photo taken by David Canny, used with permission of NOS, NMFS, USFWS, and Hawaii's DLNR
Paradise Queen II: NOWRAMP Expedition 2000 and Bernice P. Bishop Museum

Federal Agency Responsibilities

- No single agency has clear authority and funding to address abandoned vessels
- Coast Guard
- Army Corps of Engineers
- NOAA
- Department of the Interior
- EPA
- Navy



Legal Authorities

- **Admiralty Law**
- **The Oil Pollution Act and Clean Water Act**
- **The National Marine Sanctuary Act**
- **The Rivers and Harbors Act**
- **Abandoned Barge Act of 1992**
- **The Abandoned Shipwreck Act**
- **Intervention on the High Seas Act**
- **The Park System Resource Protection Act**
- **The Endangered Species Act**

Admiralty Law

- Incidents involving vessels generally fall under admiralty law
- Historical focus on commerce and protection of shipowners rights rather than the environment
- States cannot alter the “characteristic features” of admiralty law



Marine Insurance Considerations

- Insurance is only a partial solution
- Derelict vessel often equals derelict owner
- No standard coverage for salvage and wreck removal
- Many wrecks were insured vessels
- Cost of removal may often exceed insurance limits



Case Histories

- Jin Shiang Fa
- Swordman I
- S/V Karma



F/V Jin Shiang Fa

- American Samoa: Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge, October 1993
- 100,000 gallons diesel spilled; Salvage effort ceased after insurance ceiling reached
- Vessel broke apart spreading debris over 175,000 m² of reef and causing chronic reef impacts
- .



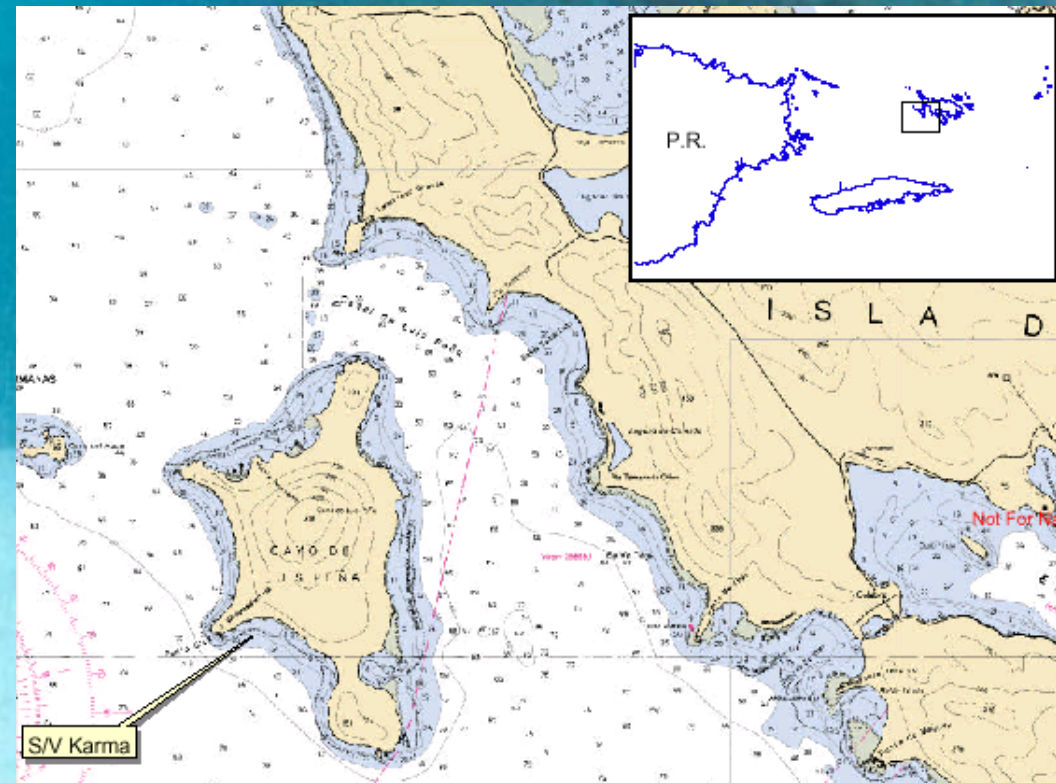
F/V Swordman I



- Pearl and Hermes Reef, NWHI
- June 5, 2000
- 10,000 gallons of diesel, 70 miles of longline gear
- Removed and scuttled in 6,000 feet of water
- Response covered by OPA trust fund

S/V Karma

- Fajardo, Puerto Rico, Summer 2000
- Intentional scuttled w/o permits to create an “eco-tourism” venue
- Seagrass and coral habitats at risk
- Vessel remains
 - no pollution threat
 - no threat to navigation
 - private property



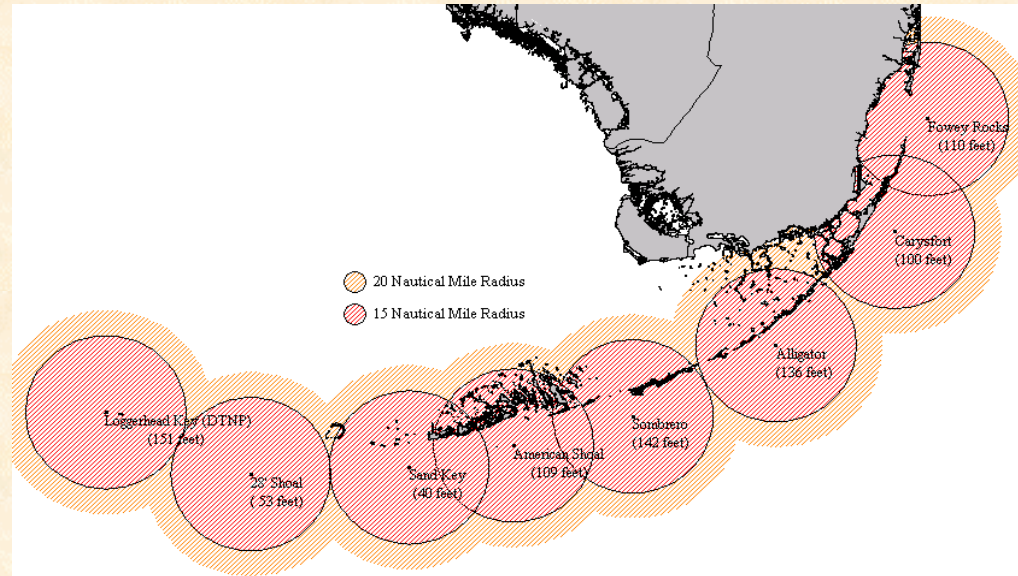
Potential Solutions

- Increase Grounding Prevention Measures
- Increase removal and restoration authorities with dedicated funding
- Expand protected areas



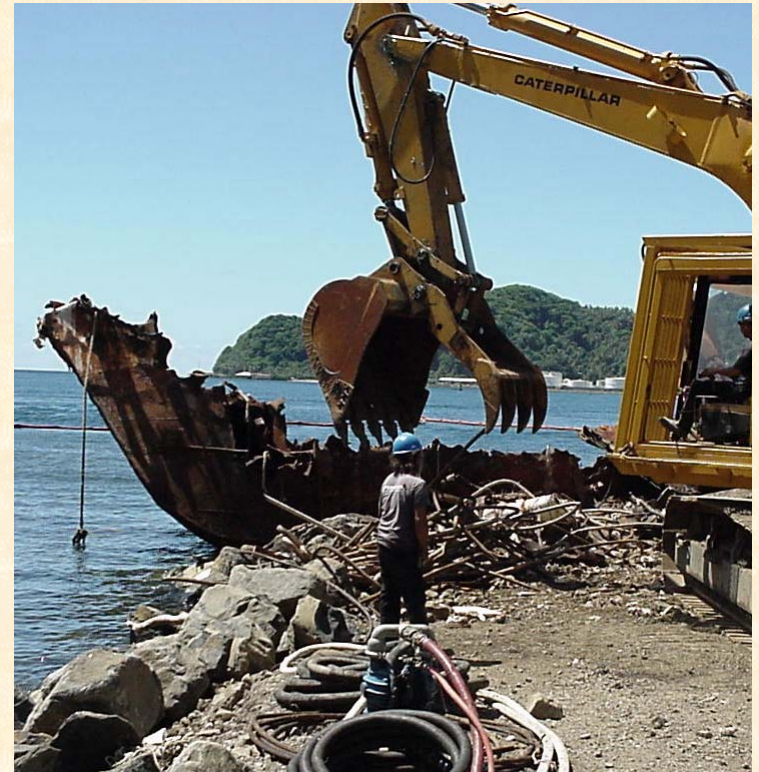
Prevention

- Navigation Aids
- Programs to facilitate proper disposal of derelicts
- Address factors that lead to abandonment



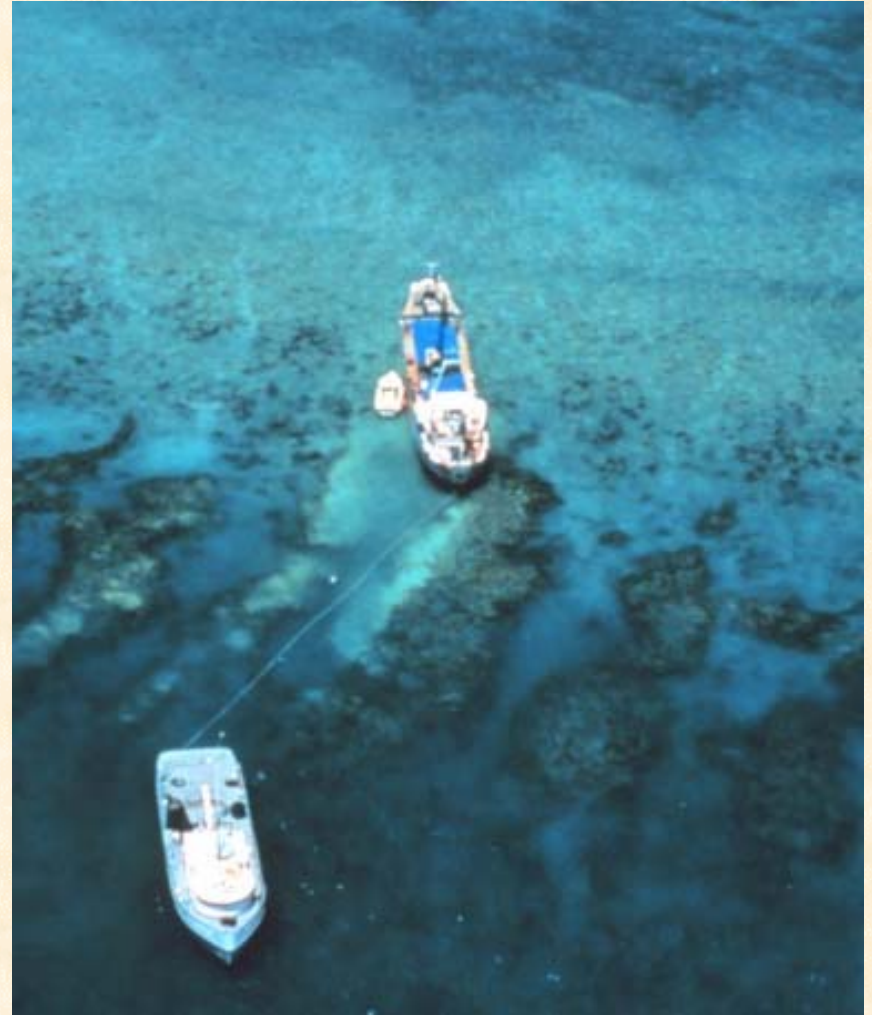
New Removal and Restoration Authorities

- Concerns vary regionally and among agencies
- New legislation would benefit from broader discussion
- Amendments or new legislation should include:
 - Removal and Restoration
 - Injunctive Relief
 - Revolving Source of Funding
 - Definition of abandonment



Expand Protected Areas

- The strongest authorities for removing vessels and restoring grounding sites exist in protected areas
- National Marine Sanctuaries Act
- Park System Resource Protection Act
- However, both lack dedicated funds



Next Steps and Recommendations

- Continue coordination among agencies, including broad review of the “White Paper” and potential legislative agenda items
- Continue collection of data and prepare case histories
- Foster development of standard methods and protocols
- Seek funding to remove high risk vessels
- Agencies with existing authorities should be encouraged to utilize those tools to the broadest extent possible to prevent to reduce the next generation of abandoned vessels.