

May 2006 Public Comment: Nicholas Callendar

To: U.S. Coral Reef Task Force
Re: Coral Reef Concerns

I am marine magnet student at South Broward High School and we take snorkeling field trips to coral reefs all the time. I have always loved the ocean, but the time which I got a true understanding of it was the first time I saw a coral reef. I got to see so many animals and it helped me to get a real feel for how the sea is. It was one of the most beautiful things I had ever seen, but I learned so much from it. At school, we learned all about coral reefs and how important they are to the environment. We learned all about their inner workings and about all the animals that rely on coral reefs to survive. We also learned about all the dangers to the reefs and the effect that has on an ecosystem.

In Florida, we have to protect our oceans. Year after year, I see less of what you would expect to see in the ocean. The ecosystem is becoming less vibrant, and most of the animals seem to no longer be there. It's important to protect these areas so we can preserve what is so beautiful about Florida's waters.

Why are we allowing our coral reefs to be threatened like this? We have enough problems with coral bleaching and disease that we do not need pollution pumped into coral reef areas, or in our oceans for that matter. If we do not protect these areas, not only are we losing the coral reefs, but we are also losing the animals that rely on them.

I would appreciate something to be done about the destruction of the reefs. We need to protect what we have and not take it for granted. We have already realized this with national parks to protect our forests and wildlife, why not coral reefs? We don't want to lose something so special to the state of Florida.

Yours Truly,
Nicholas Callender