

Coastal Resource Management & Coral Reef Conservation in Florida

U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting
Palau · November 2005



Chantal Collier
Coral Reef Program Manager
Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas

Florida Update



- Oceans & Coastal Resources Management Act
 - *Oceans & Coastal Resources Council*
- Gulf of Mexico Alliance
- Marine Protected Areas
- Florida Reef Resilience Program
- Local Action Strategies
 - *Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative*
 - *SEFCRI Needs: Monitoring, Mapping & Research*



Florida Update

Florida Oceans and Coastal Resources Act (HB 1855)



- Passed the Florida legislature May 6, 2006
- Primary goal is to improve linkages between science and management
- Mandated the creation of the *Florida Oceans and Coastal Resources Council* and set forth the duties of the Council
- Initially charged with developing research plan and performing resource assessment to guide and coordinate coastal and marine research in Florida



Florida Update

Gulf of Mexico Alliance

- Composed of the five U.S. states bordering the Gulf of Mexico and soon to be joined by the Gulf States of Mexico



5 Priority Areas:

- Reducing nutrient loading
- Improving water quality
- Restoring coastal wetlands
- Identifying Gulf habitats to inform management decisions
- Gulf of Mexico environmental education to foster stewardship



Florida Update

Marine Protected Areas

Dry Tortugas National Park Management Agreement

- **Approved by Governor Jeb Bush and Florida Cabinet**
- **Expands protection for the state's coral reefs and underwater resources at the Dry Tortugas**
- **Natural/Cultural Zone (54nm²) to include recreational fishing, scuba diving, snorkeling and boating**
- **Research Natural Area (46nm²) reserved for non-extractive recreation, research and educational activities, with a square-mile radius surrounding Fort Jefferson remaining open for recreational fishing. Commercial fishing is not permitted within the park**

Biscayne National Park Management Plan

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Management Plan

Aquatic Preserves Management Plans



Florida Update

Florida Reef Resilience Program



- Built upon the MOA signed at the December 2004 USCRTF Meeting
- Initiated by the State of Florida, The Nature Conservancy, NOAA, and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
- Collaborative effort designed to improve our understanding of factors that influence long-term resilience on Florida's reefs
- Initial focus on creating a spatial framework and in-water response plan to bleaching events



Florida Update

Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI)



LAS addresses 4 focus areas of concern:

- **Land-based sources of pollution**
- **Fishing, diving, and other uses**
- **Awareness and appreciation**
- **Maritime industry and coastal construction impacts**



Southeast
Florida
Coral Reef
Initiative



Florida Update

Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI)



140 Local Action Strategy projects:

- 42 (30%) implemented in Years 1-2
- 83 (59%) proposed for Years 3-5
- 15 (11 %) need support



Southeast
Florida
Coral Reef
Initiative



Florida Update

SEFCRI 2004-2005 LAS Highlights



- Completed 3rd year of SECREMP
 - Completed benthic maps for Broward Co. & initiated Palm Beach Co. mapping
 - Increased technical capacity to support LAS implementation
 - Conducting an education and outreach needs assessment and developing targeted outreach tools
 - Conducted a pilot coral biomarker study to identify links between LBSP and reefs
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- Initiated development of rapid response and restoration guidelines for coral reef injuries in southeast Florida



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Florida Update



SEFCRI LAS MANAGEMENT NEEDS

Monitoring

Establish long-term, standardized, region-wide water quality monitoring program in southeast Florida

Mapping

Map benthic habitats in Martin and Miami-Dade Counties

Research

Identify sources and sinks of pollutants

- Determine flux of pollutants:
 - transported by groundwater
 - exiting wastewater treatment outfall pipes and ocean inlets
 - from oceanic and atmospheric sources
- Determine net flux of pollutants from above sources to reef communities
- Identify and trace signals of anthropogenic activity through the use of biogeochemical and biological tracers and indicator organisms



Florida Update

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection recognizes and is deeply indebted to the many stakeholders and partners who have contributed their time and expertise to the development and implementation of the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative.

- Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Martin Counties
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Biscayne National Park
- Florida Sea Grant
- National Coral Reef Institute at Nova Southeastern University
- Tropical Audubon Society
- Cry of the Water
- Environmental Defense
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Ocean Conservancy
- Greater Fort Lauderdale Diving Association
- International Game Fish Association
- Vone Research
- Ocean Watch Foundation
- And many others



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Thank You

For more information on SEFCRI including the complete Local Action Strategy visit:

www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/programs/coral/

Or contact:

Chantal Collier

FDEP/Office of Coastal & Aquatic Managed Areas

Coral Reef Conservation Program

Biscayne Bay Environmental Center

1277 NE 79th Street Causeway

Miami, FL 33138

Phone: 305-795-1208

Email: Chantal.Collier@dep.state.fl.us

