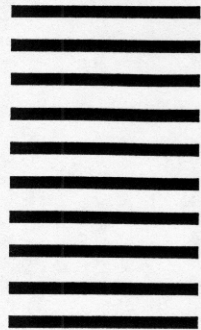


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Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
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Marathon FL 33050

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HOW TO USE THIS RESPONSE FORM

Use this response form to let us know what you think about the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and proposed rule for the Tortugas Ecological Reserve. Please provide your comments to the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary on the reverse side of this form. Feel free to make additional comments on separate sheets of paper and enclose them with this postage-paid form as well. **Please include your name when you respond.**

Name: _____

U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
P. O. Box 500368
Marathon, FL 33050
Phone: (305) 743-2437
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A copy of the Draft SEIS and proposed rule for the Tortugas Ecological Reserve may be obtained by calling (305) 743-2437, or on the internet at www.fknms.nos.noaa.gov/tortugas

For more information on the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and the Tortugas 2000 process, visit www.fknms.nos.noaa.gov

FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

WHAT: The Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and proposed rule for the Tortugas Ecological Reserve detail the alternatives being considered by the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary for establishing a “no-take” ecological reserve to protect the critical coral reef ecosystem of the Tortugas. The preferred alternative contained in the Draft SEIS involves establishing a 151 square nautical mile reserve that consists of two sections, Tortugas North (91 nm²) and Tortugas South (60 nm²). The Sanctuary’s ecological reserve regulations would be applied to the Tortugas reserve and, combined with regulatory actions of other state and federal agencies, would prohibit taking of marine life, anchoring and vessel discharge. In addition, access (except for transit) to both sections of the reserve would be through a no-cost, phone-in permit system, and mooring buoys would be installed to allow vessels to use the area without harming coral or other organisms on the seafloor.

WHY: Combined with other management tools, the Tortugas Ecological Reserve would help the Sanctuary to achieve its goal of balancing resource protection with multiple compatible uses of Sanctuary resources. The proposed reserve would help preserve the richness of species and health of fish stocks in the Tortugas and throughout the Florida Keys and also safeguard important fish spawning areas and valuable deepwater habitat. Restrictions on vessel discharge and anchoring would protect water quality and the unique coral reef resources of the area. The proposed reserve’s geographical isolation would help scientists distinguish between natural and human-caused changes to the coral reef environment.

WHEN: Members of the public are encouraged to provide input on the Tortugas Ecological Reserve proposal during the public comment period, from May 18 - July 31, 2000.

WHO: The preferred alternative for the Tortugas Ecological Reserve was recommended by the Sanctuary Advisory Council based on a consensus of the 25-member Tortugas 2000 Working Group. The Sanctuary is also working in cooperation with the National Park Service, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, each of whom is considering regulatory options for the Tortugas area.

YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT TO US — Please provide your comments in the space below (use additional paper if necessary) on any aspect of the Draft SEIS and proposed rule for the Tortugas Ecological Reserve. **Please include your name when you respond.**