

Coral Reef Conservation in Florida: 1998-2008

U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting
Washington, D.C. · February 27, 2008

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Coral Reef Conservation in Florida: 1998 - 2008

October 19-20, 1998

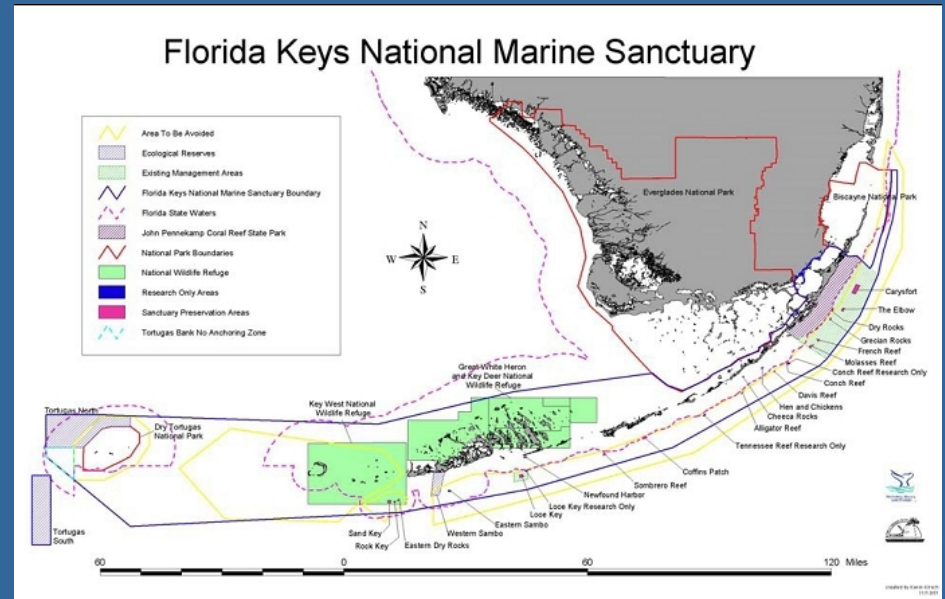
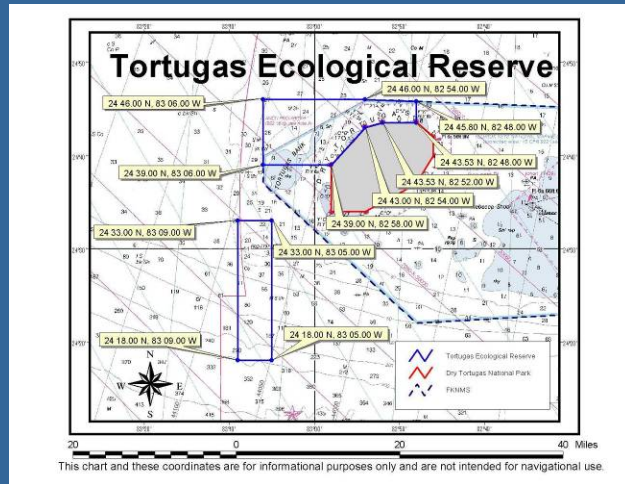
Florida hosted the first U.S. Coral Reef Task Force meeting in Biscayne National Park



Coral Reef Conservation in Florida: 1998 - 2008

July 1, 2001

Florida Governor
Jeb Bush and his Cabinet
implemented the Tortugas
Ecological Reserve



Encompassing 151nm², the
Tortugas Ecological Reserve is
the state's largest no-take area

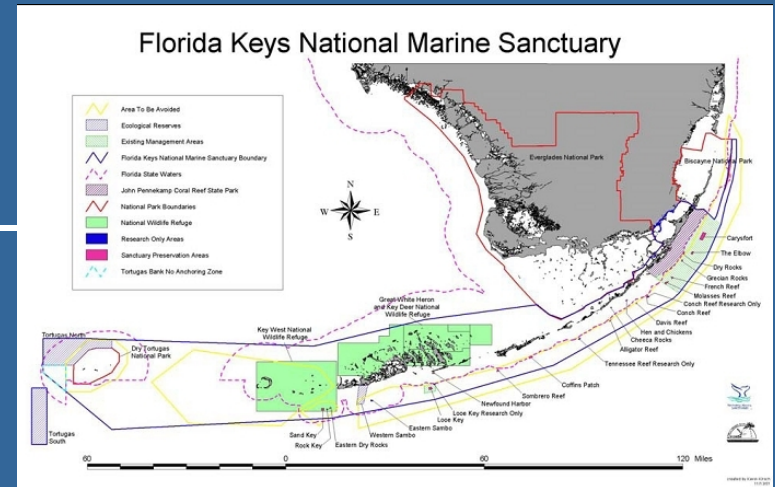
1998

2001

Coral Reef Conservation in Florida: 1998 - 2008

June 19, 2002

No Discharge Zone (NDZ) implemented by US EPA in state waters within the FKNMS



December 1, 2002

3000nm², encompassing entire FKNMS, designated by International Maritime Organization as Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA)

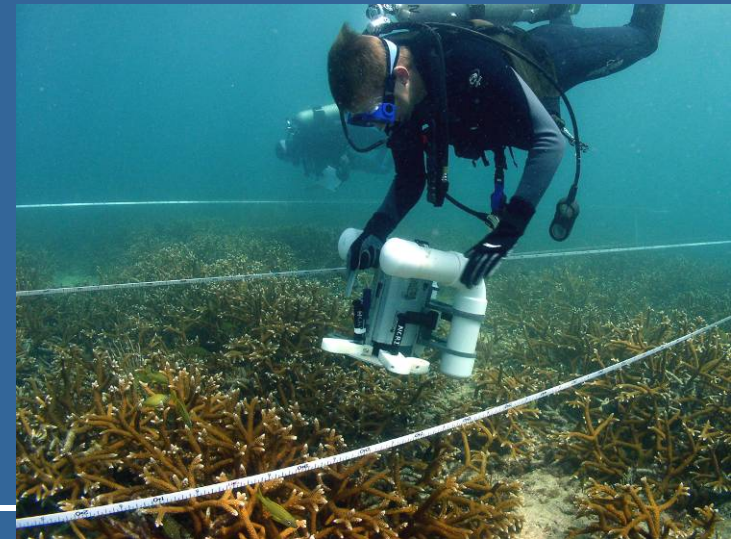
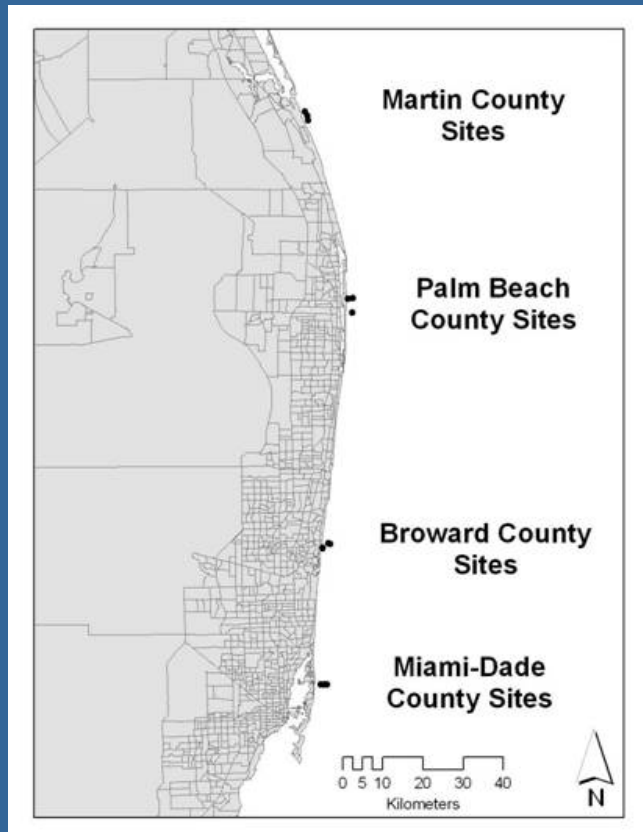
1998

2001 2002

Coral Reef Conservation in Florida: 1998 - 2008

April - June, 2003

Sites were selected in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties to initiate the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Evaluation & Monitoring Project (SECREMP). Sites in Martin County were added in 2006. (LAS Project)



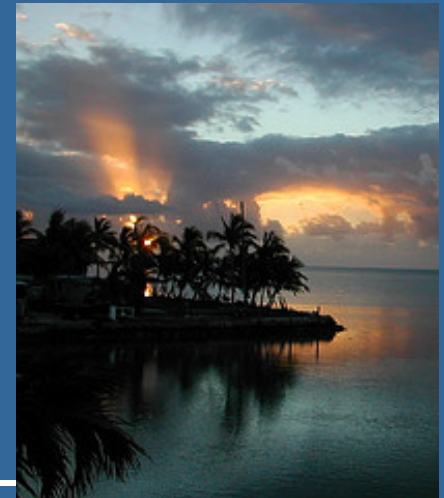
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June 25, 2004
Little Venice
Sewage
Treatment Plant
dedicated in the
Florida Keys

May 4, 2004

Florida launched its Coral Reef Conservation Program, and completed development of its Local Action Strategy plan - the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative - in December 2004

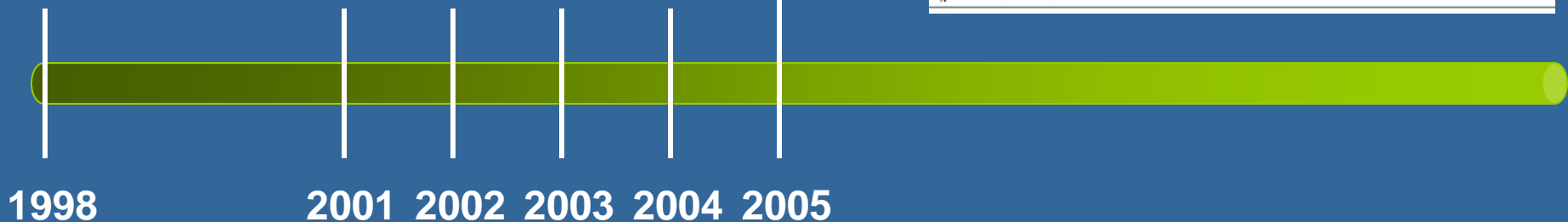
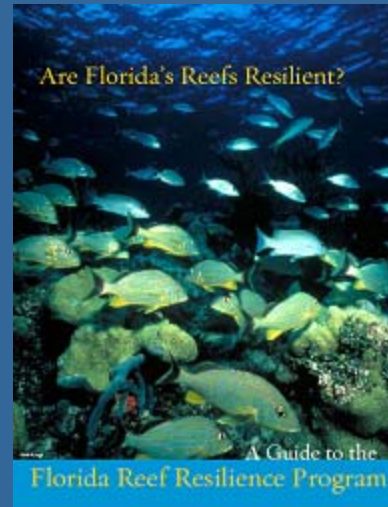


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July 2005

Through the Florida Reef Resilience Program (FRRP), reef managers and scientists initiated a disturbance response monitoring plan from Key West to Martin County.

Preliminary results indicate spatial and temporal patterns in coral bleaching, disease, and mortality, and demonstrate that some coral species and reef types may be more vulnerable to disturbance than others.



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January 2006

FDEP Coral Reef Conservation Program assumed responsibility for response to vessel groundings and anchoring impacts in southeast Florida



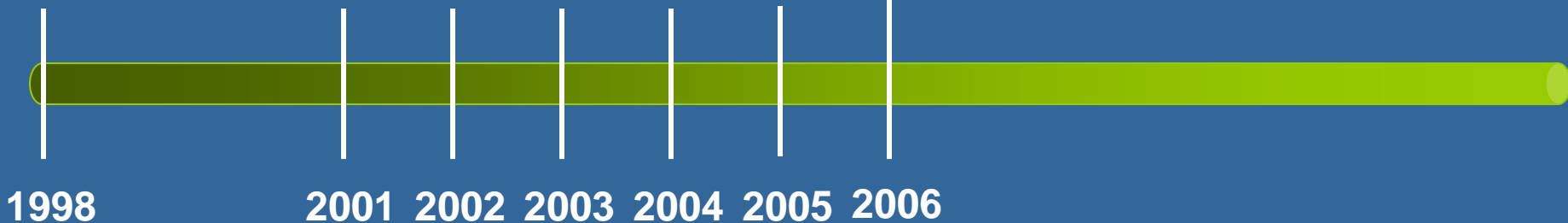
January 2006

Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center opened in Key West



March 2006

FKNMS commissioned its first dedicated law enforcement vessel, the 57-foot *P/V Peter Gladding*



1998

2001

2002

2003

2004

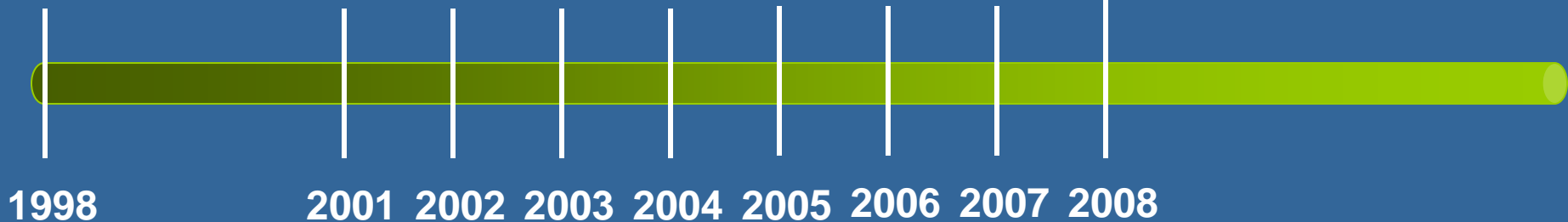
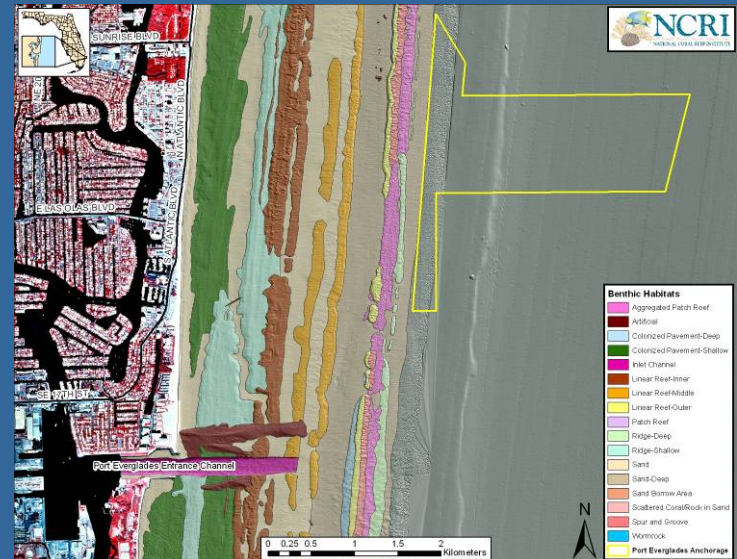
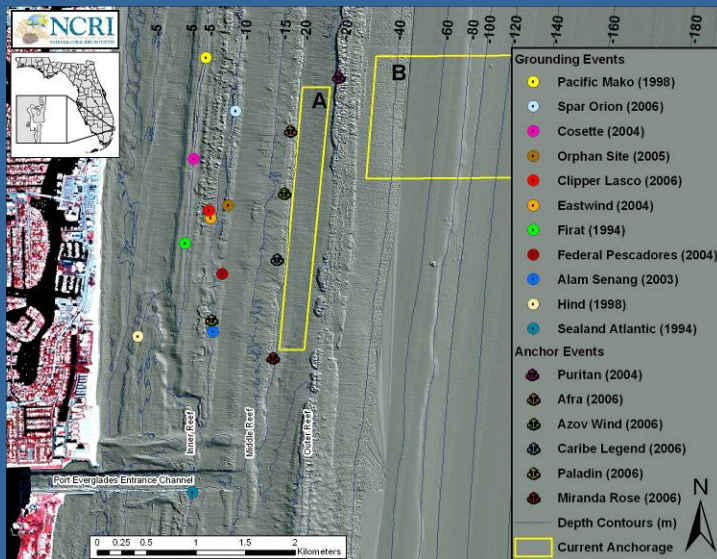
2005

2006

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February 5, 2008

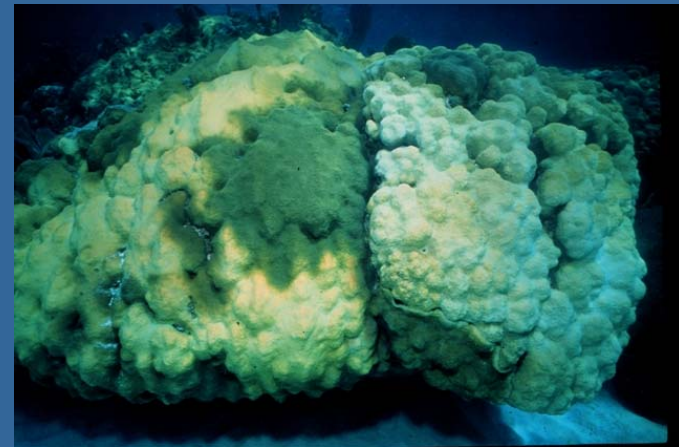
USCG published the final rule amending the Port Everglades anchorage area and regulations, effective March 6, 2008.



We have had many successes...

BUT...we have failed
to stop the decline of coral reefs

From 1996-2004, in the Florida Keys:
Elkhorn coral (*Acropora palmata*) declined 73%
Star coral (*Montastraea* spp.) declined 64%



1999

2008



2008...

...Challenges...

...2018

- **Climate Change**
Need: cultural change, sustainable clean energy, environmental conditions which support reef resiliency and recovery
- **Polluted Inland and Coastal Waters**
Need: numeric nutrient criteria for coral reefs, improved wastewater and stormwater treatment and infrastructure, improved development design and coastal construction techniques, continued Everglades restoration
- **Destruction and decline of coral reefs due to physical impacts (direct and indirect)**
Need: strengthened federal, state, and local regulations to protect coral reefs from physical impacts
Need: appropriate regulatory review and enforcement to ensure the highest degree of avoidance/minimization of impacts from coastal development projects
* avoidance and minimization is crucial because mitigation success is limited and has failed to fully replace the lost services resulting from coral reef impacts (USFWS 2004, USCRF Resolution 8-4)
- **Limited knowledge of other stressors causing coral decline**
Need: research on coral genetics, bleaching/disease resistance, reproduction, restoration, recovery rates, MPA size/placement, and the relative quantities and effects of pollution sources on coral health
- **Severely limited capacity to address existing and new challenges**
Need: expanded human and technical resources, continued and strengthened partnerships, science that translates to management, on-site action to respond to threats to coral reefs, adequate funding, stakeholder support

Challenges...

Can we as individuals, as agencies,
and as the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force,
challenge ourselves to:

- **commit** to a common statement of what we are working towards as a collective body
- make bolder **decisions**
- **act** more swiftly
- **fully protect and conserve coral reefs?**



Yes, We Can

