

Science, Service, Stewardship



Vessel Groundings

U.S. Caribbean

November 17, 2009

NOAA
Restoration
Center

NOAA



Caribbean Vessel Groundings

- Typically 10-15 Incidents Annually
- 1- 2 Large Vessel Groundings
- Majority of Impacts from Rec Vessels
- Generally only able to respond to Oil Tanker Groundings (via OPA)
- Little to no response for majority of incidents.





Significant Increase in 2009

- 4 fold Increase in Incidents Reported
- More than half had moderate to significant coral damage.
- 46 Incidents so far, on track for 60+.
- Increase attributed to better reporting because rec boating time is down.
- Still estimate we are notified less than 50% of the time.





2009 Reported Vessel Groundings





Why groundings matter in the big scheme of reef demise...

- Impacted Corals are often 100's of years old and a key part of the coral reproductive strategy.
- Impacted Corals have often already shown resilience to bleaching, LBSP, and disease.
- These physical impacts are locally major threats to coral reef health and integrity and present a direct disturbance to the coral environment that can completely alter a reefs structure and function.
- After these acute disturbances, fragments are subject to abrasion, scour, and sedimentation which ultimately result in death..





Before and After – St. Croix, USVI

37' M/V Slippery When Wet













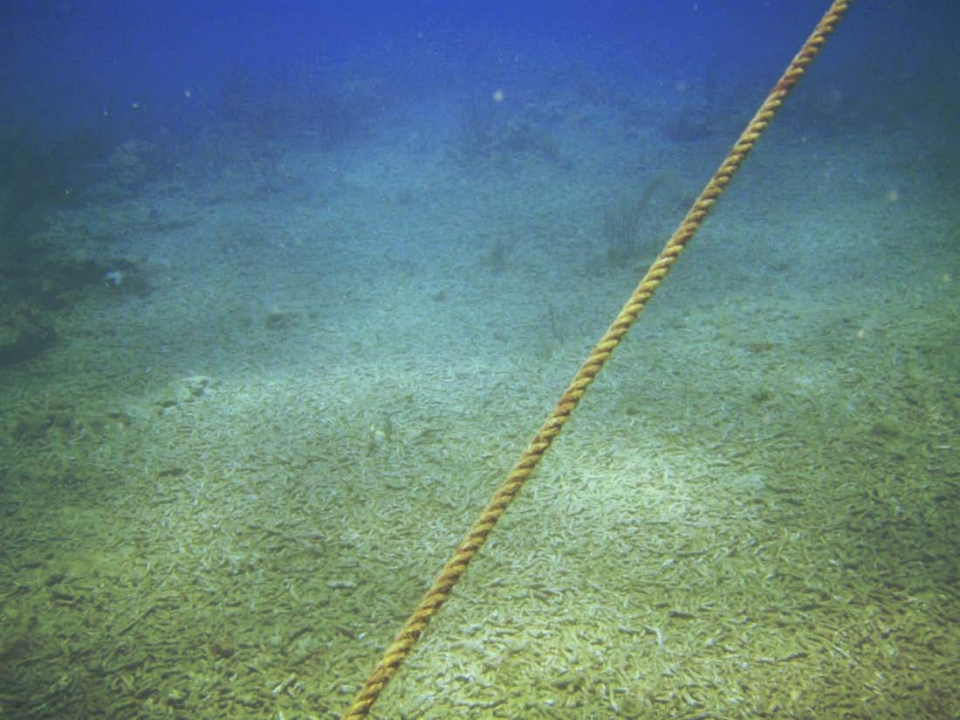
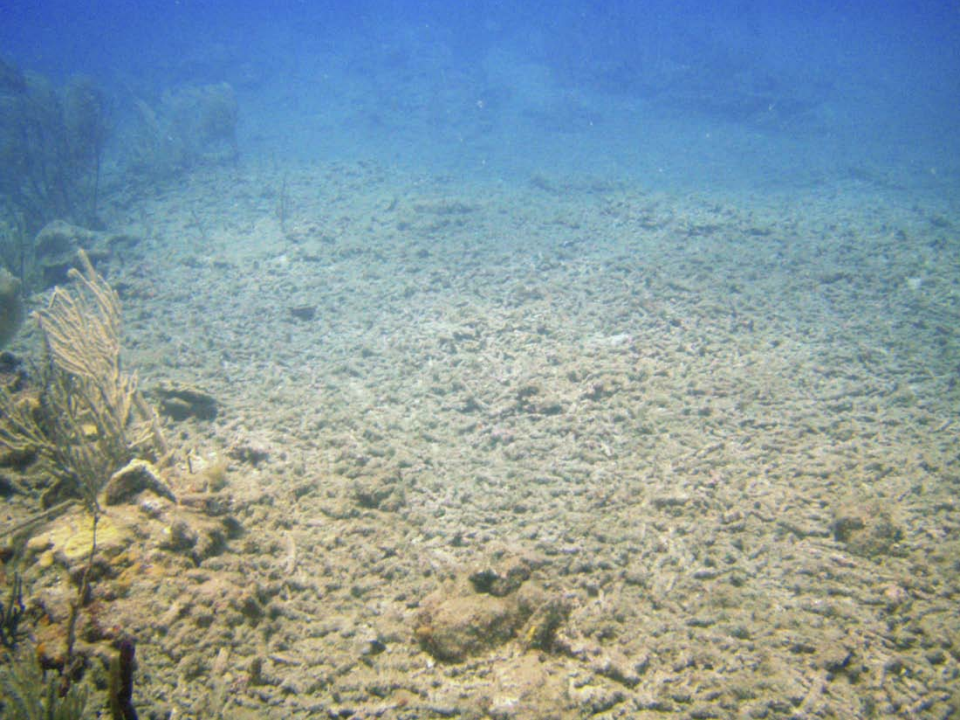














SPERCHIOS

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What were we doing about it...

•Improved Coordination

- USCG
- PRDNER & VIDPNR
- Commercial Salvors
- Boating Community

•Response Capacity

- New Dedicated NOAA Staff
- Small Response Fund Established
- On-call Logistical, Dive, & Scientific Support Contract



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This allows:

- Emergency Response
- Site Stabilization
- Coral Reattachment







354

352

351

350



















April 19th, 2009 Grounding of the

M/V ATLANTIQUE



M/V Atlantique





M/V Atlantique





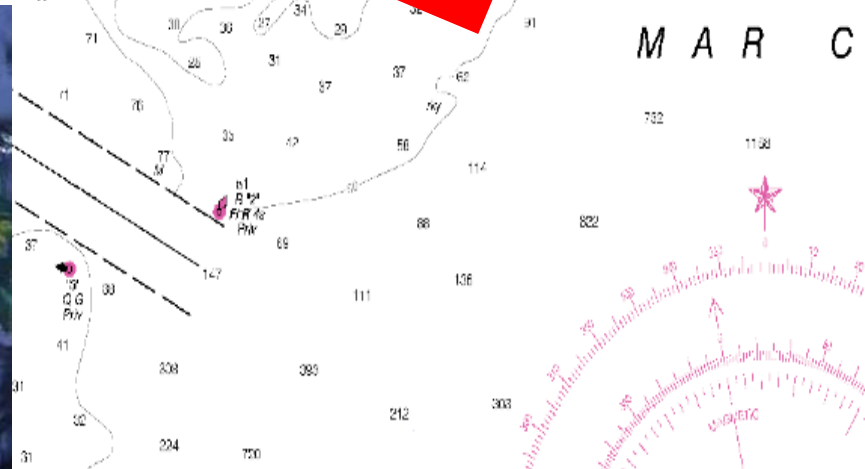
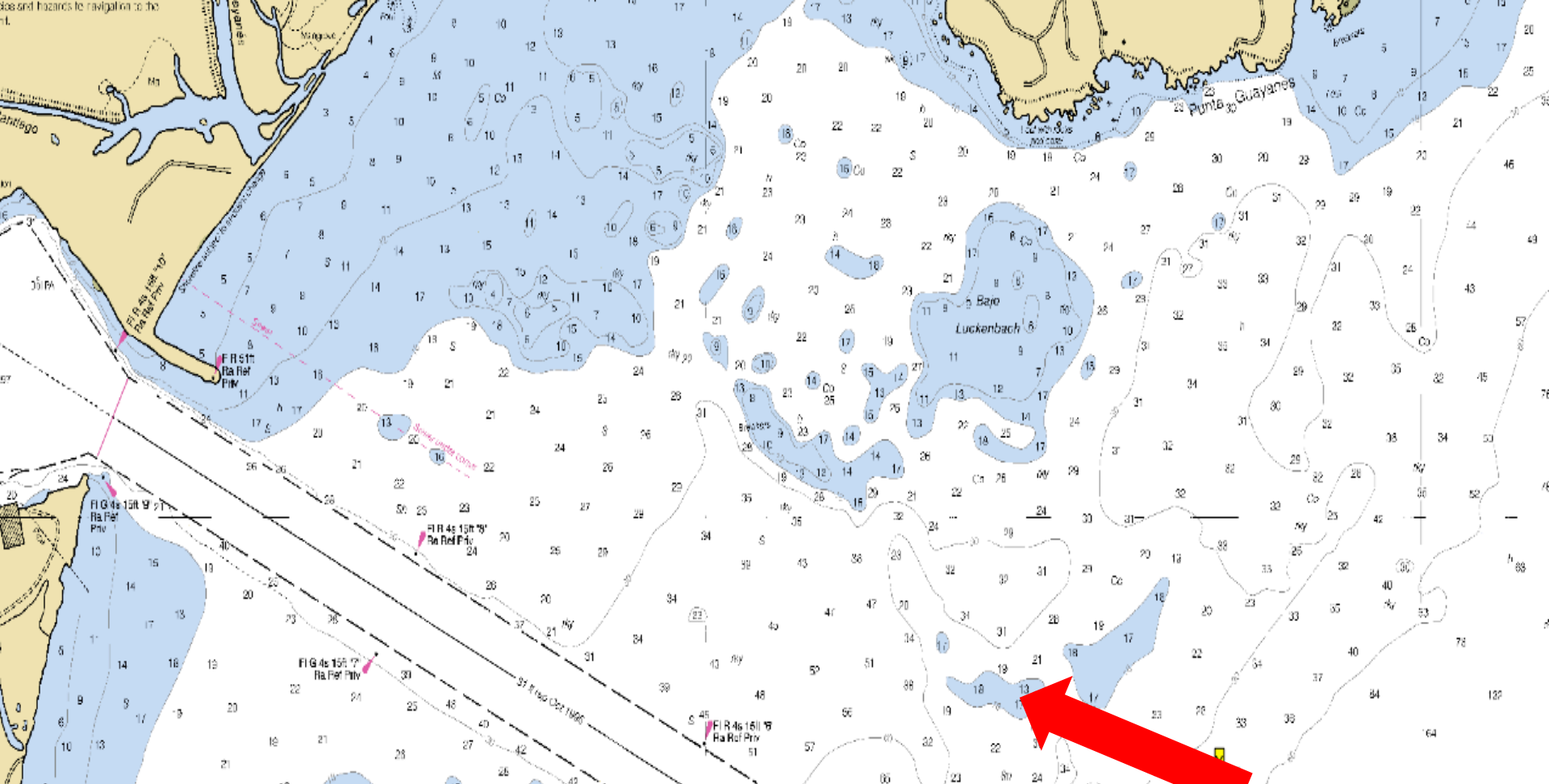
M/V Atlantique





October 28, 2009 Grounding of the

T/V PORT STEWART



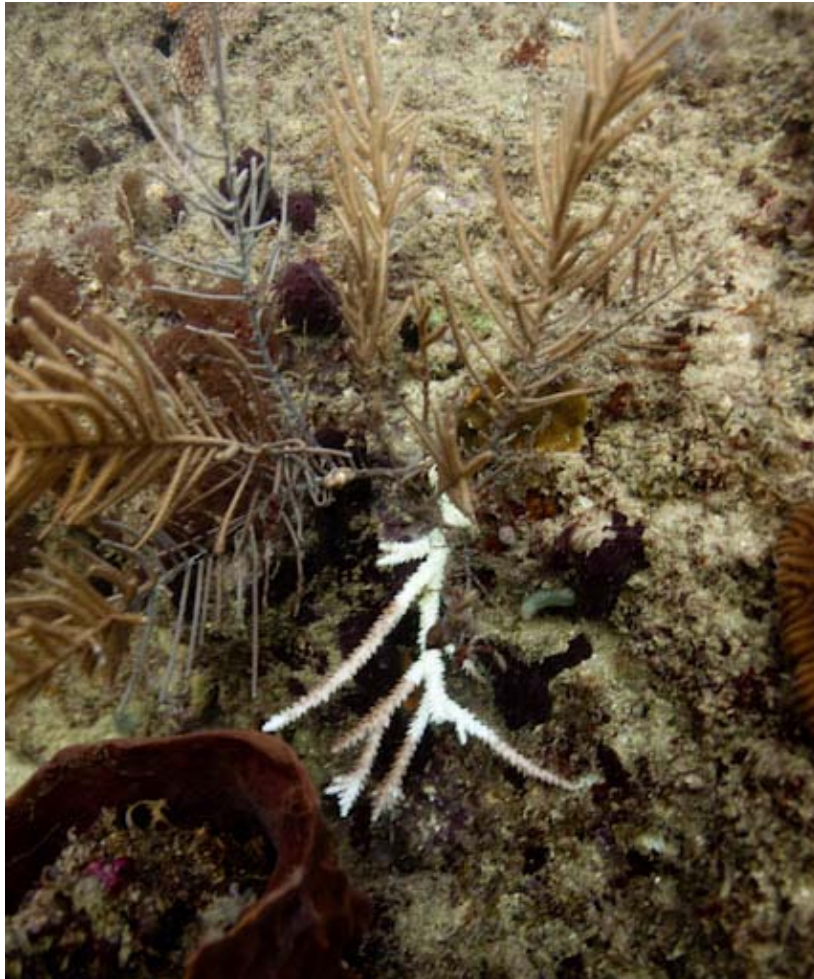


T/V Port Stewart





T/V Port Stewart





T/V Port Stewart





T/V Port Stewart





T/V Port Stewart





T/V Port Stewart





T/V Port Stewart



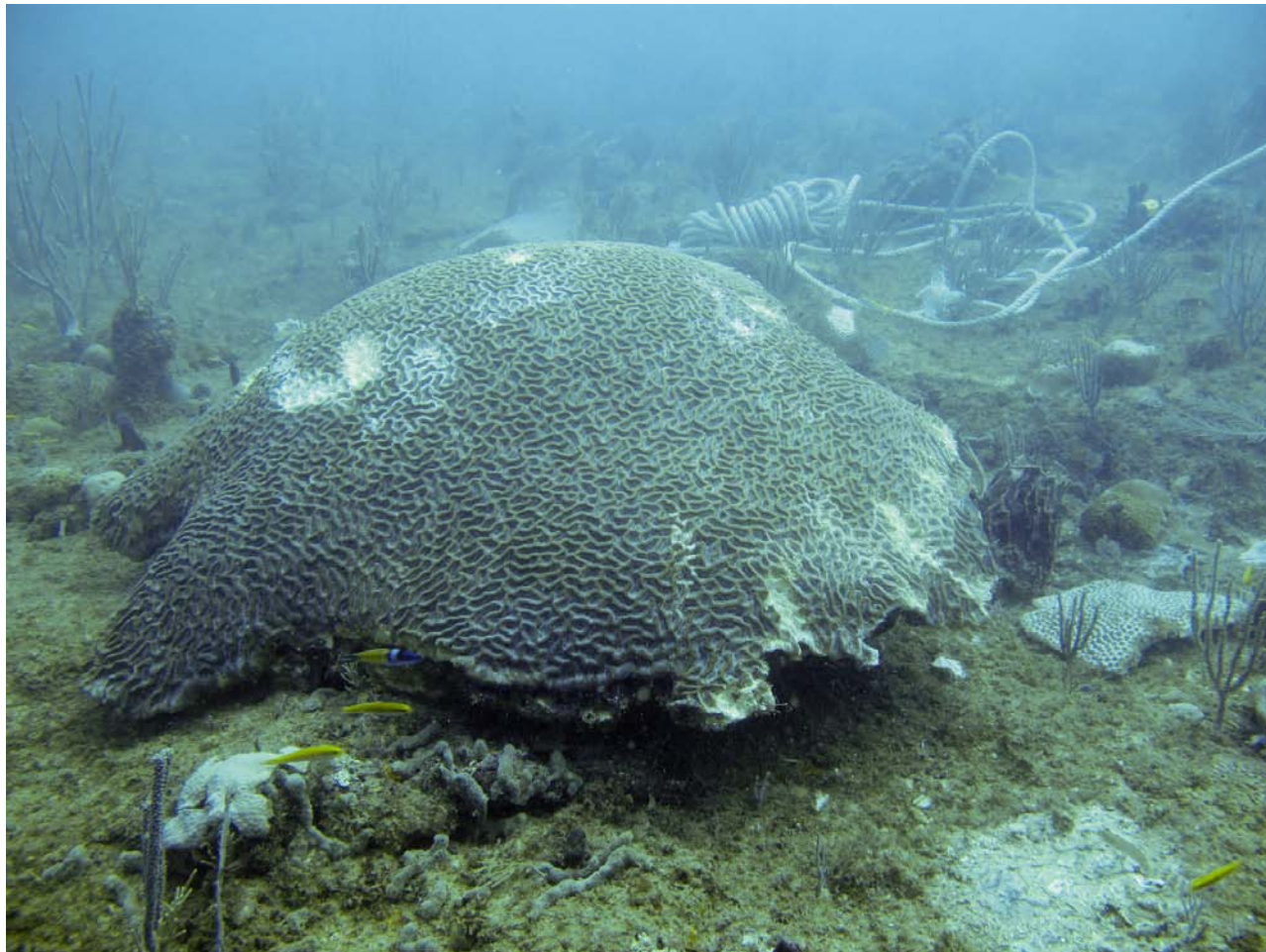


T/V Port Stewart





T/V Port Stewart





Continuing Limitations

- Lack of Clear Statutory Authority
- Limited Funding
- Response to only a Fraction of Sites
- No Long-term Site Restoration



To Report a Grounding

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or

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