

FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Marathon Garden Club, Marathon
Tuesday, February 17, 2009**

MINUTES

Members Present

Chris Bergh	Don Kincaid
Jeff Cramer	Jerry Lorenz
Jack Curlett	Martin Moe
Jon Fajans	Ken Nedimyer
Dolly Garlo	Bruce Popham
Richard Grathwohl	Gary Randolph
Susan Hammaker	Brad Simonds
Debra Harrison	Jim Trice
David Hawtof	

Alternates Present

Clinton Barras	Corey Malcom
Jason Bennis	Bob Smith
Peter Frezza	David Vaughan
David Makepeace	Scott Zimmerman

**Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call/ Approve Minutes from December 9, 2008 Meeting/
Adopt Agenda for this Meeting/Chairperson's Comments/Introductions**

Chairman Bruce Popham called the meeting to order at 9:05 A.M.; Jack Curlett then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ken Nedimyer moved that the minutes of the December 9, 2008 be approved; Dolly Garlo seconded it. Scott Zimmerman asked that the minutes be amended to note that he was present. Chair Popham deemed the minutes approved with this addition. *ACTION ITEM:* Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) Coordinator, Lilli Ferguson, to include Mr. Zimmerman's name in the list of attendees in the final December 2008 SAC meeting minutes. Chair Popham asked if there were any additions or changes to the agenda and, as there were none, deemed the meeting agenda for the meeting approved.

Chair Popham thanked the staff for making the arrangements for this meeting. He noted that February is Water Quality Awareness Month. He announced that this might be Superintendent, CDR David Score's last SAC meeting, though he might be back in April. CDR Score welcomed Sean Morton, his replacement, who arrived last week. CDR Score said Mr. Morton has been helping him with the '09 budget, and with working with the administration. On behalf of Mary Tagliareni, CDR Score thanked those in the room who answered the education and outreach call about Water Quality Awareness Month. Billy Causey said that CDR Score would be coming back in 18 months [after his assignment commanding a NOAA vessel concluded]. Dr. Causey encouraged people to talk to Mr. Morton, and said he had just been working in the White House, on the Council on Environmental Quality. Mr. Morton said he was happy to be here. Mr. Nedimyer presented CDR Score with a Coral Restoration Foundation shirt and said one of the corals, from the adopt-a-coral initiative, would have his name on it. CDR Score expressed his appreciation and announced that he would take command of the ship on May 9, and that while his

schedule had not been finalized, he would be gone for the bulk of March getting qualified at the Merchant Marine Academy.

Superintendent's Report – CDR Score, Superintendent (Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary [FKNMS], National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA] Corps)

- CDR Score said he had sent the group information about the nomination process for Dr. Jane Lubchenco as the Administrator for NOAA. In recent remarks she made, FKNMS was the only sanctuary site that she specifically recognized in her hearings.
- The Continuing Resolution was still in effect, he noted, and he said he had been spending a lot of time doing budget formulation.
- He noted that there had been a rash of recent boat groundings in other parts of the country and world, and FKNMS had been called on for its expertise in these matters, due to being proactive in conservation and restoration. While FKNMS had not had any recent large ship groundings, he said smaller boats, such as shrimp boats and a casino boat, have gone aground, and it was a challenge using public dollars for cleanup of others' messes. He mentioned FKNMS had grants out there and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) did a great job with derelict vessels, but it was vessels that were not derelict that have been a problem.
- He announced a group was in the Keys working with FKNMS staff members doing a 10-year facility evaluation for the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS); FKNMS was putting together requirements 10 to 20 years into the future, and part of the message was that FKNMS needed a visitor center at the top of the Keys, which was straight from the SAC's recommendations. He said FKNMS had to close its Marathon office due to some budget shortfalls, but did want to get back there. Things were pretty good in Key West, he said but FKNMS did want some more signage there.
- He said there was a new Dolphin SMART member, and the program was also starting to get going in other places, including in Alabama and Hawaii.
- Regarding the Eco-Discovery Center, it was well utilized, he said, and he mentioned recent exhibits and events there. The Sanctuary Friends Foundation of the Florida Keys (SFFFK) will sponsor the opening of the Clyde Butcher "Living Waters" exhibit, he announced. Mr. Butcher is currently promoting energy conservation, including putting L.E.D. lights, in his own museum, CDR Score noted.
- He recognized Todd Hitchens and all of the Team O.C.E.A.N. efforts, and mentioned an upcoming Cow Key Channel cleanup.
- CDR Score also thanked everyone who helped Ms. Ferguson with preparing for this SAC meeting; she added her appreciation as well.

Agency Report Highlights:

NOAA ONMS Southeast Region Report -- Dr. Causey, NOAA

- Dr. Causey said people within ONMS were really excited about Dr. Lubchenco, from Oregon State, becoming the new Administrator; she knows the program, and she has a marine science background. She knows science and ecology and is big right now on the topics of climate change and marine protected areas, he said. She also helped found a group called COMPASS, which takes science to the public via education messages. It will be up to her how much focus would be put on any one area of NOAA's programs.
- On another topic, Dr. Causey said the group would be getting some letters soon (or may already have gotten them) from the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. He noted that he, CDR Score and Mr. Morton cannot lobby the group, but the Foundation could, and he briefly mentioned some of the uses of Foundation funds. Chair Popham asked that anyone on the SAC who had not received the packet to contact him or Ms. Garlo. Any letters should be sent as an individual, Chair Popham said.
- Dr. Causey mentioned work on two reauthorizations was underway; the National Marine Sanctuaries Act and the Coral Reef Conservation Act (CRCA). There is a hearing on the CRCA the afternoon of February 25. A lot of the funds from the Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) come to the region,

including to FWC, he said. Kacky Andrews now heads up the CRCP and is doing a good job, he felt. He said she has formed four different working groups and they are all active and moving along.

- The other two sanctuaries in the southeast region are currently involved in management plan activities, Dr. Causey said. The boundary expansion working group of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary's advisory council has recommended expanding the sanctuary to nine other coral reef areas in the northwest Gulf of Mexico. The sanctuary will try to finish the management plan within next 6-8 months, but will not start the boundary expansion action until after the management plan is finalized. The Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary's advisory council working group recommended an expansion of a research area.

- Dr. Causey announced that the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force would be meeting soon, and also the coastal managers meeting would be taking place in DC soon. During that time, all of the ONMS Executive Team members would be making Hill visits.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Report -- Kent Edwards, DEP

- Mr. Edwards said Lee Edmiston would have been at the SAC meeting, but there were travel restrictions due to the tight budget; he plans to attend when he can.

- Regarding the VANDENBERG, Mr. Edwards said it has been handed over to the City of Key West. Cleanup should be done within the next 30 days, he said; FKNMS will sign off on the cleanup before it leaves the shipyard in Norfolk. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) artificial reef group was working closely on this as well. After the vessel arrives in Key West, about 30 more days of preparation is needed before deployment, which would need to occur before June 1, due to insurance and hurricane issues, he concluded.

- Mr. Edwards noted FKNMS staff members were working with DEP regulatory folks on the issue of anchoring on submerged lands and Mr. Hitchins and other staff members would be working with them and looking at certain vessels and barges. Anchoring over some resources for the long term causes damage. The submerged lands are owned by the state, and a lease should be issued for long term anchoring. He said there should be some oversight of what activities are happening where. He noted he would like to have this issue as a presentation item for the next SAC meeting, with a speaker from the submerged lands office. *ACTION ITEM:* Ms. Ferguson to include the request for a submerged lands presentation among other requested topics for the Superintendent and SAC Chair to consider including on the April 2009 SAC meeting agenda. Mr. Edwards added that, related to the issue of anchoring, FWC and DEP folks would be making a sweep of liveboards, mostly for safety and sanitation issues.

- Mr. Edwards said there was a bill being considered by the state legislature, for additional protection on corals; the main point was that it fixed a loophole for penalties, as the previous penalties were not described. He has said he had not had a chance yet to review this for consistency with FKNMS regulations.

- He noted there were a lot of state budget talks going on now; Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas and DEP had generally come out well in those talks.

- Mr. Curlett asked if he had any updates about the cleanup around Card Sound Road. Mr. Edwards did not, but per Major Michael Edwards, it continues. The major issue was dealing with squatters, Major Edwards said. Mr. Curlett said he noticed someone dumped two wooden boats where a cleanup was done and a rail put up previously; Major Edwards replied he thought those were two boats that had been removed from the area as part of the cleanup.

- Richard Grathwohl asked about regulation of shoreline fishermen. Mr. Edwards replied he had not heard anything. John Hunt said the FWC had been working on this issue and was developing a fee structure for just the shoreline fishers. He did not know if it would go into this legislative session, but that he could find out. *ACTION ITEM:* Mr. Hunt to check into when the fee structure proposal for shoreline fishers would be considered by the Florida legislature, and provide that information to the SAC.

FWC Report -- Major Edwards, FWC

- Major Edwards spoke about FWC law enforcement. He said the current budget situation was a somber time for the state and nation. Nine people had been moved over so that they are supported by FWC; they were originally supported through the Memorandum of Agreement with FKNMS, which had been affected by the Continuing Resolutions over the past couple of years. Work is underway to get the money back in the future, he said. Reductions in funding affect resource protection and patrols. This year, they would not be able to increase the patrol, but would do the best they could. They continue to lose personnel due to people taking jobs with higher pay at federal agencies. They are hiring new people, but these people need to be trained, and they need experienced officers to teach them.
- Due to a previous dive safety issue last year, a new SCUBA diving unit was being put in place, Major Edwards announced; it will be under the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute's diving scientists.
- Major Edwards provided a review of recent grounded or derelict vessel issues, including one that occurred the morning of the SAC meeting.
- FWC would be working with [Miami-]Dade on response and enforcement in areas north of Key Largo where large shipping is excluded, but where large ships are traversing, Mr. Edwards said.
- Regarding the VANDENBERG, though he was not sure of the timing of its arrival, he noted FWC would be providing security.
- Finally, Major Edwards announced that Capt. Laurie Luher would be taking a new position in West Palm. He noted she taught him a lot about FKNMS and about budgeting.

NOAA Office of General Counsel for Enforcement and Litigation, Southeast Region -- Karen Raine, NOAA

- Karen Raine briefly reviewed cases from the past fiscal year; she noted that sometimes cases began earlier than that. In '08, the region had over a hundred cases, under several federal laws. A large percentage of these were sanctuary cases. She provide a review of statistics for FKNMS, which included 37 cases involving groundings, six cases involving fishing in Sanctuary Preservation Areas, one discharge case, one Area To Be Avoided case, three anchoring cases, as well as cases on fisheries and other topics.
- She also announced summary settlement amounts had been increased.

FWC Report, cont. – John Hunt, FWC

- Mr. Hunt spoke about FWC research and science issues. He referred to the handout he provided Ms. Ferguson, which was included in the SAC meeting packets; it describes recent FWC changes to marine fishing regulations.
- He said he was not able to attend the Florida Bay conference due to budget issues, so he could not report back to the group as had been requested, but he did provide Ms. Ferguson with a link to the conference website, which she forwarded to the SAC via email.
- Mr. Hunt then talked about a project in the Tortugas. It started last summer, and involves 60 sonic taggers on the bottom, and tagging fish in the Dry Tortugas, and in the Ecological Reserve South at Riley's Hump. The tagging showed the fish travel between these areas. He said he would provide a report with more details to the group later. *ACTION ITEM:* Mr. Hunt to provide a more detailed report about the Tortugas fish tagging research to the SAC at a later date.
- Working with others over about a year, a fledgling restoration ecology group had recently formed, Mr. Hunt said. They have reached out to some members of the SAC, and will be reaching out to folks in various agencies, building partnerships. About 70 restoration ecology ideas have been brought up over the last week, so there is no shortage of ideas for work, he said.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Report – Anne Morkill, USFWS

- Anne Morkill announced that an informal group of managers met recently to discuss management of resources along the whole Florida Reef tract. One of the things they are looking at is the issue of marine zoning, for more consistent messaging; they are still learning each others' challenges, including their regulatory authorities. They want to take a comprehensive marine zoning approach that each agency will

implement. This will also pave the way for the group to provide ideas to West Palm Beach and Broward for managing their reefs.

- Ms. Morkill passed around a fact sheet on a draft five year action plan on climate change, and reviewed how the USFWS is trying to address this challenge. They are looking on the large level, examining adaptation, partnering with other federal agencies, and how climate change will affect fish and wildlife resources. She mentioned she and another person would be representing the southeast region on a national team working on the issue.

--She also passed around another handout about the Florida Keys Python Patrol. They now have an 800 number for reporting sightings of large-bodied snakes. Many pythons now expanding from the Everglades to the Florida Keys; they are working to have an early detection rapid response system. She encouraged everyone who sees a large snake to call the number provided. In response to a question from CDR Score, she noted that the call goes into an automated system; one of the choices gets to the Monroe County Sheriff.

South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Report -- Thomas Genovese, SFWMD

- Tom Genovese said the District has put in for more than a billion in stimulus funds, but he did not know if it would receive any.

- He reviewed that there was a bond validation hearing on the purchase of the U.S. Sugar lands. He said the matter was continued by the judge to mid March, which tightens up the schedule. A bill was being introduced to throw this to a referendum; in the interim, the District was still doing planning and research about what to do with those lands, and holds two workshops per month. Information about this is on the District's web site under "River of Grass", he noted.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Report -- Patricia Bradley, USEPA

- Patricia Bradley announced that the USEPA representative for Region IV had changed; Fred McManus was promoted. Her office, Research and Development, is now looking at coral research at the system level. They are planning workshops, including one in June in Florida, and she would like to request time on the next SAC agenda to talk about this. *ACTION ITEM:* Ms. Ferguson to include the request for a USEPA coral research presentation among other requested topics for the Superintendent and SAC Chair to consider including on the April 2009 SAC meeting agenda. Ms. Bradley inquired about when there would be a report card coming from the Florida Reef Resilience program. Chris Bergh replied that he did not know, but that the USEPA had their data.

Public Comment

- Joe Boyer asked if there was any plan to put a research vessel into the long range planning mentioned earlier. CDR Score replied that one in the 85-foot range would be included. A team of designers would be coming down at the end of February, he added, and he would be asking Scott Donahue and Brian Keller to reach out to the scientific community, to determine the community's needs. Dr. Causey encouraged Mr. Boyer to bend Dan Basta's ear whenever he got the chance about this. He said all the sanctuary sites wanted a research vessel, but noted in the past, Mr. Basta has responded pretty quickly to demonstrated needs.

- On another topic, Mr. Boyer said he wanted to make the council aware the Florida International University was no longer working with the District to do monitoring in the bays, and said it would behoove the council to look into the status.

Joanie Nelson said she had heard Bill Becker's show the day of the meeting and the day before. Lionfish and pythons are new invaders, and she wondered if they could be included in a zoo instead of killing them. She felt the tourists would be interested. She suggested a partner could be the Sheriff's office, with their zoo, and that a bounty for people to bring live individuals could be offered. Chair Popham encouraged her to stay for the scheduled lionfish presentation later in the meeting. CDR Score said it was

good to capture some put them on display as this was a good educational tool; he added that had been done previously with batfish, and that there were lionfish on display in aquariums in Georgia and Florida.

Mr. Zimmerman announced that the Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's Association held a board meeting on February 9, and they voted unanimously to lend support request by the ONMS for additional funding. He said he had a letter he wanted to pass onto the sanctuary about that. He said had a draft letter to provide to Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and he wanted to work together with the staff before releasing it.

Chair Popham mentioned again about the event being held by SFFFK on April 4, and referred to a handout that had been provided to the group about it. It would be a feature fundraising event, which would allow people to meet Mr. Butcher at the Eco-Discovery Center.

Debbie Harrison said she had not seen an area on the agenda for the information she wanted to provide to the group, so said she would announce it during the public comment period. Mr. Zimmerman had asked her if she would support Jeff Cramer as a representative to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC), as Tony Iarocci was stepping off that council. She accepted, adding that the SAFMC has jurisdiction over waters from the Carolinas down to Keys waters, and she highly recommended and supported Mr. Cramer. She encouraged others to write a letter supporting him too, if they wished. She said Mr. Zimmerman had a draft of the letter and asked if he could provide it to Ms. Ferguson so she could provide it to others who wanted also wanted to write a letter. *ACTION ITEM:* Mr. Zimmerman to send a draft letter supporting Mr. Cramer as a representative to the SAFMC to Ms. Ferguson, so she may provide it to interested parties who might want to write a letter. Chair Popham reminded the group how he had mentioned at the October SAC meeting that he had been to a meeting with Roy Crabtree, and it was agreed there was an opportunity for cross-pollination between the two groups. This would be a good way to make that happen, he felt. Ms. Harrison wondered if it would be appropriate for the sanctuary to make a recommendation supporting the nomination of Mr. Cramer. Dr. Causey mentioned in the past, it had been most effective to work with the governor's office. Chair Popham suggested this matter be revisited later during the agenda.

SAC Ecosystem Restoration Working Group Report – Jerry Lorenz, SAC

- Dr. Lorenz reported that the group met two weeks ago. The first thing they talked about was the idea of a calendar of Keys environmental events. They were looking for places any environmental group could post upcoming events. Ms. Garlo said SFFFK was in the process of putting up a central calendar for these things; Clinton Barras was the webmaster. They were still working out the approach, for the SFFFK calendar, but people may be able to post directly in future, with monitoring, probably by the Foundation's administrative assistant.

- Dr. Lorenz said the group also talked about a proposed Keys lighthouse debris cleanup. As Jon Fajans noted this topic was on the meeting agenda for the afternoon, Dr. Lorenz did not address it further.

- Dr. Lorenz reviewed that the group had discussed the C-111 project. The group that was set up to plan for this project had multiple meetings about how best to set up Phase One of the project to restore freshwater flows to Florida Bay, and ultimately, to the sanctuary. All the stakeholders agreed to one alternative, he said; groundbreaking was to be in June or July, but he said is now looks like it will be September through December. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) balked at the plan, and felt the alternative selected was too expensive, Dr. Lorenz related. The agency would have to buy the land. SFWMD owns the land and they want today's price, he said. The ACOE wanted to go with a different alternative that did not really deal with ecosystem restoration. Everything was negotiable at this point, Dr. Lorenz felt. He then read an abbreviated version of a draft resolution he had prepared. Dr. Lorenz moved the resolution be adopted, seconded by Richard Grathwohl. Brief discussion ensued. Susan Hammaker asked if the one alternative that had been agreed on by everyone did not include ecosystem restoration. Dr. Lorenz said the alternative agreed to by the stakeholders did; it would be a step process

that would change the operation one step at a time. It would show how much water would be needed for the correct flow rate. The District approved that, but the ACOE felt it was too expensive; the alternative the ACOE wanted really did not satisfy the stakeholders, Dr. Lorenz said. CDR Score asked if Dr. Lorenz knew where the Park was on this. Dr. Lorenz said they were on board with the alternative, and had representatives in the group. Dr. Causey noted that he was sitting in Tim Keeney's seat until someone was appointed by NOAA at Task Force to replace him. In several partner meetings, they had been happy with this, and he said the timing was right for this right now. The motion passed unanimously upon roll call vote.

The wording of the resolution follows.

**FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION FAVORING CONTINUED EXPEDITION
OF THE C-111 SPREADER CANAL PROJECT**

February 17, 2009

WHEREAS Florida Bay is part of Everglades National Park;

WHEREAS the flora and fauna of Florida Bay and the Florida Keys have suffered due to change in water management practices;

WHEREAS fish and wildlife populations are under significant stress within the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary;

WHEREAS Florida Bay is exhibiting serious signs of decline;

WHEREAS the total economic value of fishing in the Florida Keys is highly valued;

WHEREAS the completion of the C-111 projects are absolutely crucial in order for Florida Bay to receive benefits from the restoration projects planned throughout the Everglades ecosystem;

WHEREAS implementation Phase I of the C-111 Spreader Canal is the only hope in the immediate future to reduce seepage from Taylor Slough into the C-111 canal;

WHEREAS \$70 million is currently being held by the South Florida Water Management District to proceed with the expedition of Phase I of the C-111 Spreader Canal project;

WHEREAS groundbreaking for Phase I of the C-111 project was scheduled for September;

NOW THEREFORE, THE FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY AVDISORY COUNCIL RESOLVES AND RECOMMENDS:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District should:

- Ensure the planning and permitting process for the Alternative for Phase I of the C-111 Spreader Canal project as identified by the stakeholder working group proceeds without further delay or additional setback due to negotiations between the USACOE and the SFWMD.

Passed unanimously on this date: February 17, 2009.

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Mr. Bergh commented that it would have great to have been able to review the resolution prior to the SAC meeting, as it was easier to vote on something more thoroughly digested. Dr. Lorenz apologized that he had been unable to do this, and had planned to circulate the draft resolution to the working group in advance, and he did not. Chair Popham seconded Mr. Bergh's comment and asked respectfully that the group to get these items to Ms. Ferguson in advance [for her to provide to the entire SAC], so items for review and vote are not a surprise. Ms. Ferguson stated that another reason to do this was so the public knew the item would be considered during the meeting. *ACTION ITEM*: All voting and nonvoting SAC members and alternates proposing a draft motion or resolution should strive to circulate it to the full SAC several days or more in advance of meetings for group members' consideration. [Editorial note: draft SAC meeting agendas are usually approved by the Superintendent, in consultation with the Chair, then released to the SAC and public two to three weeks ahead of each SAC meeting date. Items proposed for SAC consideration/vote should, whenever possible, be included in the draft agenda. A request to add an item to a given agenda should be directed to the Superintendent and Chair for their consideration, with notice provided also to the SAC Coordinator.]

- Dr. Lorenz said the Working Group also talked about the sugar lands deal and that, at the Everglades Coalition, Secretary Sole had made it clear that state would not keep all of the land in the agricultural area; some of it would need to be sold back, traded, or otherwise taken care of. There had been workshops with different modeling efforts to show what the essential pieces of the property were that would need to be kept or traded for, that would allow for some sort of restoration. He said he understood the SAC had passed a resolution on this topic in December. Since then, he said the Everglades Foundation has been organizing a campaign to try to get various business groups, individuals, government agencies, civic organizations and municipalities to sign on to a letter in support of acquiring the lands for restoration. He wondered if the SAC could sign on to a letter, with CDR Score or Mr. Morton as a representative, or if it was allowable to amend the previous resolution. After brief discussion, CDR Score said the SAC could send a letter to him and he could pass it to the State or whoever else requested. Dr. Lorenz asked specifically if CDR Score could sign on to the Everglades Coalition's letter, representing the SAC. CDR Score replied he did not know and he would have to look at that and what it entailed; it could not be done if it violated the public process. CDR Score said he could go to the Coalition, telling the organization that the SAC had discussed this several times, and that the SAC unanimously supported it through resolutions. Dr. Lorenz moved, seconded by Mr. Fajans, that those appropriate resolutions from the SAC be assembled and sent [by CDR Score] to the Everglades Foundation. CDR Score asked him if he meant specifically the land purchase, and Dr. Lorenz replied, yes. CDR Score agreed he could do that. Dr. Causey said CDR Score could submit a package, without any specific signatures, using items already in the public record. Ms. Harrison asked that the motion be amended to have CDR Score also send them to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. These amendments were accepted.

The motion passed unanimously upon roll call vote.

Below is the text of the motion.

That those appropriate resolutions from the Sanctuary Advisory Council, specifically on the land purchase, be assembled and sent to the Everglades Foundation and to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

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ACTION ITEM: Superintendent CDR Dave Score to consider/follow up on the recommendation of the SAC to send the SAC resolution already introduced into the public record supporting the acquisition of lands for Everglades and Florida Bay restoration to the Everglades Foundation and to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

- Regarding chairing the SAC Ecosystem Restoration Working Group, Dr. Lorenz said that he had discussed at the last meeting of the group that he would like to resign, as he was too busy. Mr. Fajans volunteered to be the chair of the group, he noted. Chair Popham congratulated Mr. Fajans for taking on this role. Dr. Lorenz added that, recently, the group's focus had been on issues of water flow coming into the sanctuary, and not so much on coral and seagrass; while the group would not turn away from Everglades restoration, he said it planned to focus more on those topics.

- Ms. Harrison made an announcement related to climate change and energy, topics the working group had focused on previously in a public workshop, along with their impacts to the Keys and Everglades ecosystems. She said on February 26, Florida Power and Light (FP&L) would be breaking ground in Arcadia, Florida, for the largest solar energy plant in the country. CDR Score asked if FP&L's strategy was shifting over the long term, and if the company was still going down the nuclear pathway. Ms. Harrison said FP&L took Governor Crist's direction seriously, and when the governor asked the company to stop its plans for power plants using coal-fired, as he was for a clean energy future, the company pulled back on its plans. The governor also asked the company to pursue nuclear power, per Ms. Harrison.

Ms. Harrison said nuclear power was one of the more expensive types of energy and there are associated water use issues and waste, but it is thought that using that type of power would reduce carbon emissions. Nuclear power is part of FP&L's plans for the future, including for the expansion of Turkey Point, she affirmed. Mr. Grathwohl added that Florida Keys Electric recently installed some solar panels.

- Chair Popham talked about putting zoning back on the Working Group's radar; he said there is still a lot of opportunity for education and outreach and that possibly the group could work with the SAC Education and Outreach Working group on it. Mr. Fajans asked if the SAC would want the Ecosystem Restoration Working group to work on a prioritization of the list, and Chair Popham said it would.

SAC Education and Outreach Working Group Report -- Martin Moe, SAC

- In the spirit of education and outreach, Martin Moe, Chair of the Working Group, brought some larval *Diadema* to show the SAC. They were 28 days old. He briefly reviewed his efforts to culture *Diadema*. He said there was a need to be able to develop a hatchery program to rear many thousands of them for experimental restoration uses, and he has been working on that.

- Mr. Moe provided an overview of the discussions of the SAC Education and Outreach Working Group at its meeting January 27. Regarding the regularly scheduled education and outreach organization presentations at SAC meetings, the group discussed possibilities for the April and June meetings, and he and Mrs. Tagliareni were working on confirming them. Any suggestions for future presentations should be directed to him or Mrs. Tagliareni.

- Mr. Moe reviewed an update on SFFFK, provided to the group by Ms. Garlo; she had been unable to attend. The group has worked closely with SFFFK, and will continue to, he said. Glenn Patton resigned in December, but Diana Ruelens, Peggy Russell and members of the board were stepping up to fill in the gaps. The planned Reef Week was scaled down, to a “Friends in Focus” weekend April 3-4 at the Eco-Discovery Center. SFFFK is looking for articles and information the Florida Keys its ecosystems. Also, SFFFK applied for three grants to support education activities.
- Regarding signage in the Keys, Mr. Moe said he noticed that, at the entry to the Keys, there was no announcement of FKNMS, and he thought a small sign would make sense. The working group had a long discussion about signage. Mrs. Tagliareni talked about signage efforts underway, including an effort from the Key West Ambassadors, working with FKNMS staff members, to put up signs; the possibility of a billboard was also reviewed. Mrs. Tagliareni said that if the Protect Our Reefs grant for signage was received, the staff would work with the Department of Transportation on putting up a sign on the 18-mile stretch.
- The Working Group also talked about a sanctuary visitor center in Key Largo, Mr. Moe reported. This idea has been around for a long time, and there was general agreement that one was needed. Mr. Moe wondered if some of the economic stimulus money could be used for a center. Mrs. Tagliareni and Dave Vaughan pointed out that developing and building a center is one thing, but that long term operational and maintenance plans and funds are also needed. This was a good idea for when the timing is right, Mr. Moe said.
- The working group tabled discussion of an electronic inventory of education and outreach organizations in the Keys as the Monroe County teachers may take the information that exists and develop it for County use. Ms. Ruelens had added that the Community Foundation of the Florida Keys was also putting together an inventory of local nonprofit organizations.
- Mr. Moe reviewed an idea from Alex Score to develop a calendar of environmental events, and the group determined that since SFFFK had an electronic newsletter and was working on an online calendar, this would be excellent avenue for development of such a calendar.
- Ms. Garlo added to the comments about the “Friends in Focus” weekend, saying that there was a flyer available about it, and that the evening portion had limited seating. She also said that Ms. Russell was putting together “Blue and Green Events” for corporate groups; there is unused space and time at the Eco-Discovery Center, available for groups to reserve.
- Ms. Morkill asked about FKNMS staff engaging the office working on the Overseas Heritage Trail on an upper Keys visitor center; that group was planning to a visitor center. Mr. Moe said Mrs. Tagliareni did mention that, and thought she had been in contact with them on its development. Nancy Diersing is a part of that advisory group as well. She said they were planning a facility for 2013, and it was a good opportunity to work together.

Lionfish Update, Status and Action Strategies -- Lad Akins, Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF)

- Lad Akins spoke about lionfish in the Atlantic, noting these fish had the capacity to do some serious damage to our ecosystems. Lionfish first showed up in the Bahamas in 2004, and one was recently found in the Keys by a visiting REEF member (January 6, on Benwood Ledge). He provided a graphic showing the wide potential lionfish range in the region, and reviewed REEF’s lionfish field operations. The organization had done work in the Caribbean, facilitated through volunteers and partnerships with a number of organizations, including with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). REEF habitat surveys showed the lionfish did not seem to have a specific habitat requirement, and Mr. Akins noted they were becoming some of the most abundant fish on the reef in the Bahamas. REEF members have collected and dissected the fish to learn about them for science, and have been more successful collecting with nets than with spears. He noted lionfish have been found to eat over 50 different types of fish, plus crustaceans. Lionfish research has also been conducted in the Red Sea.
- Regarding next steps, he felt that in the Florida Keys, early detection and rapid response were critical components of the efforts. He noted that after he had spoken to the SAC last June about lionfish, REEF

worked with others in a two-day lionfish workshop to develop strategies. The detection strategy would have everyone on the water reporting to a central point, and that information would go back out to responders. A jurisdictional map with points of contact was developed. In addition to wanting to get rid of the lionfish, it was also important to learn their habits, environmental parameters, and impacts on the reef, he noted. When the lionfish was reported in the Keys in January, it was located, collected, and had data gathered from it less than 24 hours after it was sighted, he said. REEF planned to continue working in partnership with many others on rapid response efforts and on outreach and awareness, using stickers, posters and talks. He passed around stickers produced with a small grant from the sanctuaries office, and pointed out that there are two reporting numbers, to MEERA, with REEF as the secondary number. The stickers would be disseminated by FKNMS staff and others. Mr. Akins encouraged people to let him know if they had other ideas for distribution of the stickers, beyond the venues already planned. Finally, he said the “wanted” posted for non-native species would be redesigned and reprinted to focus more heavily on lionfish, and that REEF has committed funding from the NOAA aquatic invasive species program to do training workshops about lionfish response in both the upper and lower keys, dive operators and key agency personnel, probably beginning in the late summer.

- Mr. Akins then took questions and comments from the SAC. Mr. Moe commented that it appeared that it would not be possible to eradicate lionfish in the Keys, based on the experience in the Bahamas, and that it might be appropriate to provide instructions to people utilizing the resources about how to kill the lionfish themselves. Mr. Akins agreed that it is possible the fish might spread, but that it was important to gather as much data as possible right now. Beyond the initial response, he agreed local control might be useful. Dr. Causey said he tended to agree with Mr. Moe, that rapid response was needed now; he saw them when diving in the Red Sea along with other types of fish, and that there may be a predator there keeping them in check. He felt that there may be a lack of lionfish predators in this area. He added that this area is more vulnerable than other areas as the diversity of fish species is lower. Mr. Akins said the predator in the lionfish’s native habitat is not yet known. Ms. Harrison agreed the lionfish were a threat to the Keys, and said she would like to see all possible tools used to get people on board. She said she did not see why people with nets could not take out the lionfish, and if possible, rewards could be set up through dive centers. CDR Score said that the FKNMS had been involved in the lionfish planning efforts, and that the biology of the fish was known. He believed it was clear that eventually the area would be overwhelmed, but stated that he wanted the response to happen in an ordered way. He noted there were issues with permitting in protected zones and with misidentification, and he agreed research was needed, but that it was also a management problem. Mr. Moe said that it was important for the public to know the fish were dangerous. Dr. Causey encouraged all the agencies to work in a consistent, coordinated way, and for them to continue working with REEF; he also agreed education was an important component. Mr. Vaughan thanked REEF for taking the lead. He reviewed that MEERA started and was funded on the national sanctuary level, then was funded by FKNMS, and in this last year, was funded half by FKNMS and half by funds from Protect Our Reefs. He concluded that MEERA was also working on this, and he would hate to see that go to waste. CDR Score replied MEERA was absolutely critical, and that the stickers were useful, so that the public was not confused about where/how to report lionfish. He said hearing from the SAC on support for funds for lionfish efforts was important, and lionfish was a big issue, but not the only one. Bob Smith commented that he also applauded the efforts undertaken, but added that there will need to be a management system to anticipate and deal with a “wild west” mentality. Ms. Hammaker said she had been looking for ways to be useful in her SAC role, and between lionfish and the python, she would be happy to get these issues on as many agendas as possible. Chris Bergh added there were many invasive species, including plants and microbes, and encouraged people to think about the next problem species that will emerge. He mentioned Congressional legislation designed to keep the problem from getting started. CDR Score said the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science had gotten funding to do just that, with lionfish as an introductory species. Other comments made included the need to look at quick permits to address areas in research-only areas (made by Mr. Grathwohl); getting a notice sent out with recreational fishing licenses (made by Mr. Cramer) ; and mentioning the danger of lionfish spines in future outreach messages (made by Mr. Moe). All of these ideas were acknowledged as being

useful for consideration. Mr. Akins concluded by reiterating that, at this time, the important thing is to get the message out to report sightings, and that he agreed that thinking about control workshops was a good idea.

Debris Field Cleanup around Keys Light Stations -- Jon Fajans, SAC

Mr. Fajans provided a handout about a project to remove debris from under and around lighthouses of the Florida Keys reef tract. He said he had planned to go through this topic with the SAC Ecosystem Restoration Working Group and then present to the SAC on it, but then he had an opportunity to apply for funding through the President's stimulus package. He had been asked to put together a proposal in three days for a "shovel ready" project. He made a presentation showing debris at various lighthouses, which has fallen off over time, and said there was debris at most of the lighthouses in the Keys. The Coast Guard replaced many things on the lighthouses, but made little effort to retrieve debris that came off during storms. He said some of this debris is mobile, and shifts around during storms; it could also trap other debris, like trap lines. Some corals have grown on the debris, and these would be ideal candidates for transplant. The Florida Institute of Oceanography (FIO) would be the lead agency on this project, if funded for the requested \$399,360, and would work with a number of participating partners. He said that while the Coast Guard did not have funding to do this debris removal, the agency would participate in the project as much as it could. FIO would also work with local salvage companies and dive shops. The work estimate was five days for each of eight sites (not including the Dry Tortugas, which would entail a separate permitting process). Advance preparation time would also be needed to salvage corals. Mr. Fajans said he thought some of the debris could be reused or recycled.

- Mr. Fajans then took questions and comments from the SAC. Corey Malcom asked if any consideration had been given to the historical nature of things, and asked if FKNMS staff members would be involved with identifying and preserving items of historical significance. Mr. Fajans said his personal observation was that unique things had already been removed. Mr. Malcom added that there could also be things there that might be from a shipwreck, and Mr. Fajans said they did find a cannon at Molasses Reef Light. Mr. Fajans said the project would be stopped, if needed to deal with such items. Don Kincaid said he thought that most of the debris items would not be able to be used again. He also asked about Cosgrove Shoals not being on the list, and said there were 50-60 pressure cylinders there. Mr. Fajans said it was not included since it involved a separate permitting process. Mr. Kincaid also said he knew of a whole lighthouse submerged in 17 feet of water. Mr. Fajans said he would follow up with Mr. Kincaid afterward to get information about that site, and commented that he hoped the work could continue on, after the initial project. *ACTION ITEM:* Mr. Fajans to follow up with Mr. Kincaid to get information about a submerged lighthouse in the Keys. Mr. Moe said there are old batteries at one site, and he wondered if hazardous waste had been considered. Mr. Fajans replied that the CG had retrieved the batteries in the 1990s. He said he was not aware of any batteries remaining, at least clearly visible ones. He added there were some cylinders at Sand Key, and some engine or generator parts, but that there did not appear to be any oil or fuel. He added that he had an upcoming meeting with the Coast Guard, and would ask them if their hazardous materials team could do some surveys before the debris cleanup. *ACTION ITEM:* Mr. Fajans to inquire if the Coast Guard hazardous materials team could survey the project sites prior to the project beginning. Chair Popham asked if Mr. Fajans knew when he would be told if the money was approved; he did not, but thought it would be soon.

Water Quality Protection Program Update -- CDR David Score, NOAA

CDR Score provided this update on behalf of County Mayor and SAC member, George Neugent, who was not present. CDR Score said Mike Peyton was now the chair of the water quality steering committee, and that follow up meetings had recently been held. Regarding special studies, Mr. Peyton wanted to see what the key questions were, and how EPA could come in and help support them. CDR Score commented that all of the municipalities and the state were strategizing on funding, and wondering about meeting the 2010 deadline. He felt a lot of progress had been made since 2000; it was clear there was a plan. Once the key issues were addressed, he said help from the EPA would be needed to address

secondary impacts, such as canals with wrack in them and other nutrients loading the system. The status on the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) was that there was reasonable assurance that the county and state would meet the TMDLs and manage inputs of nutrients to outstanding Florida waters. DEP submitted the Reasonable Assurance Document (RAD) to the EPA; the EPA had comments and sent them back to the RAD team, which made revisions, and sent it back to DEP. After that, it will go back to the EPA. The budget was reviewed, CDR Score said, but it is a question since FKNMS was on a Continuing Resolution, but that the EPA would continue to fund the Water Quality Protection Program. However, as Mr. Boyer had mentioned earlier, there was lack of funding for that monitoring, and CDR Score said they do not want to do new things at expense of longstanding investments. Mr. Boyer asked about the funding, and CDR Score said there was a real interest in the special studies component and things like the sublethal effects of mosquito spraying, upwelling, etc., but that it was all tied to funding. He added that Bill Kruczynski had been working on a complex book about water quality, that many in the room had contributed to, but that he thought Mr. Kruczynski wanted to get this done before he retired. Ms. Hammaker added that wastewater projects are already beginning, and that there will be a request to double the funding this year. CDR Score stated the ACOE is beginning to make reimbursements to municipalities now, and the money was beginning to change hands, which has been a long time coming. Mr. Grathwolh commented that he hoped DOT would be responsive with bridges, and oil and grease coming from them, as bad accidents can lead to fuel in the water. Chair Popham said it was great that this steering committee was meeting again, as there was a year and a half when it did not meet.

Water Quality Monitoring Status and Trends -- Scott Donahue, FKNMS

- CDR Score introduced Mr. Donahue, and said that Mr. Donahue was spearheading getting the Technical Advisory Committee reinvigorated. Mr. Donahue presented on an update of the water quality programs, reviewing that there were three core water quality monitoring programs in place. Summarizing the decades of data was a large task, he said, and he encouraged people with questions to check with the original researchers. The FKNMS and Protection Act of 1990 authorized EPA and the governor, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, to develop a Water Quality Protection Program for the FKNMS, to identify problems and take corrective actions. The three core monitoring programs consist of the Water Quality Monitoring Network, the Seagrass Monitoring Network, and the Coral Reef Evaluation and Monitoring Program, he noted. He reviewed the purpose of each program, the data measured for each, and the frequency of data collection.

- Long term trends were shown by 13 years of water quality. These included elevated levels of nitrite in nearshore waters, elevated levels of four variables in the back country (driven by Florida shelf water flowing through); total phosphorus concentrations seeming to drive phytoplankton biomass; and most variables were relatively consistent from year to year (with some seasonal changes). He noted trends inside the FKNMS are influenced by regional conditions outside sanctuary boundaries.

- Regarding seagrass monitoring, species composition in beds was related to nutrient availability. There was no significant overall loss of seagrass coverage in FKNMS, but there were shifts in species dominance in benthic communities, pointing to an increase in nutrient availability. Mr. Donahue said that it was difficult to determine whether nutrients are entering the system from outside or inside the sanctuary, and whether they originate from natural processes or human-induced activities. He felt improvements in wastewater treatment and better land management would contribute to better overall water quality, which was important for healthy seagrass meadows.

- Results of the Coral Reef Evaluation and Monitoring Program showed decline in coral cover in all regions, but a slight increase in two regions, between 2006-2007. Coral cover remained relatively stable since 1999, except for a downward trend in the deep and shallow fore reef and a boulder star coral in 2005-2006. He said bleaching and coral diseases likely contributed to declines seen in coral cover and species richness. Ms. Harrison asked what was the jump was in 1996 to 2000, and Mr. Donahue said he would have to defer to the principal investigators to answer that. Mr. Nedimyer said it was after a bleaching event. Mr. Donahue noted reductions in coral cover and species richness at the program's monitoring stations in the Keys was attributed to multiple recurring stressors. Since monitoring began,

the program had not noted significant increases in coral cover. Ms. Harrison asked why the program did not look at increased temperature; Mr. Donahue replied that the list of factors studied was not an all-inclusive list. Mr. Bergh said there were different types of stressors, like hurricanes in pulses, or long term ramped disturbance of increased temperatures, and that they interact. Mr. Kincaid noted there was another project focusing on bleaching and disease. David Makepeace asked about references to the lack of herbivory, and Mr. Donahue agreed that was an additional factor that could be considered on trends. In summary of the coral program results, he said there are a lot of unmapped and uncharacterized patch reefs, located in and around Hawk Channel, and these might contribute significantly to the overall stony coral cover in the FKNMS. He also said the complete or partial loss of a boulder star coral colony represented a large decrease in coral cover and ultimately, habitat structure.

- Mr. Donahue said he, Mrs. Diersing, and other FKNMS staff members were working on one-page summaries of scientific monitoring and other information, which people would be able to reference. CDR Score this was one of the outcomes of the marine zoning workshop, which indicated the public wanted easily understandable information about research and activities. CDR Score added there were also other studies besides the ones Mr. Donahue reviewed. Mr. Donahue said he was also working on information about zone monitoring and the FKNMS Condition Report. In answer to a question by Chair Popham, Mr. Donahue said there were no 2008 data available for his review, and that normally, time was needed after data collection for analysis. Dr. Boyer added that usually, data from a given year would be available the following summer.

- Mr. Donahue had some general, overall conclusions, including that continued ecological monitoring was critical for understanding changes in the Florida Keys, and the changes in water flows as a result of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program would influence water quality in the Keys. He added that most of the data were available on the Water Quality Protection web site.

- Mr. Bergh commented that there were other studies and ways of looking at this, and that people and the media tend to go to this data set, since it was the longest. He thought there was a need to bring in other data sets, for broader understanding. CDR Score said that had been discussed at the Water Quality Protection Program meeting, and it would be addressed in the Technical Advisory Committee as it started up again. Dr. Vaughan said he agreed there needed to be a focus on higher temperatures and bleaching, and wondered if the water quality data could interact with the coral data to get at the big picture. Mr. Donahue said that it could, but it would probably take a number of years; there is a need to redo the science plan and look at new hypotheses. Alex Score commented that the Climate Change Linking Environmental Analysis to Decision Support program is almost done, and it is using the water quality data and looking at bleaching. As part of this, an online tool is being created to show areas that are possibly more resilient than others, she said. Mr. Cramer inquired if anyone had looked at African dust and corals; CDR Score mentioned a researcher with a theory about incidence of African dust and a correlation with coral decline, and that Ms. Bradley and the EPA were looking at bioindicators for coral, and other researchers were looking at other aspects of coral ecosystems. Ms. Bradley said that her program was looking at stressors and working on a research program related to figuring out causes of coral decline. She said she was working with others on laying out that research program.

Public Comment

There was none.

Education/Outreach Presentation: National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) -- Jason Bennis and Rob Clift, NPCA

Jason Bennis introduced Rob Clift of NPCA, and Mr. Bennis passed around information about the Eco-Mariner program to the SAC. The web site for the program is www.ecomariner.org. The idea came up about five years ago with discussions with some people in the room about the status of Florida Bay, per Mr. Bennis. Mr. Clift said NPCA was a distinct organization from the National Park Service, and one of its efforts was bringing education to Florida Bay. Eco-Mariner will be an online educational course, that will address habitat and wildlife issues, and it has been endorsed by other groups. He said there was a

need for the course due to a basic lack of understanding of such things as seagrass damage, the economic value of the bay to the Keys, the connection of the Everglades to coral reefs, etc., and completing the course would help people enjoy Florida Bay without damaging the resources. Mr. Clift explained that there are four parts of the course, geography, protection, threats, and regulations, and he showed the group some highlights from the course, such as the channels in Florida Bay, how to identify fish, techniques for protecting Florida Bay, and regulations relevant to boaters. Mr. Clift said the next steps were to finish the course in 2009, for a release in April with associated outreach, and to get more community support.

In answer to a question from Mr. Moe, Mr. Clift said all of the information was available via computer. Mr. Bergh asked about the length of time needed to take the course, and Mr. Clift responded that it might range from half an hour to an hour and a half. Mr. Makepeace asked if the course would be updated each year, and Mr. Clift replied that it would. Mr. Trice provided some background information, saying that an anonymous donor had made large donation of funds to the Park, and had wanted most of it to go towards enforcement. The gears then shifted into supporting the Eco-Mariner program. There was a desire to require that boaters in the Park become Eco-Mariner certified (which which they would receive a medallion). Mr. Clift said the idea of the course was to change behaviors, and that it was being translated into Spanish (but at this time, not into Creole). There would also be a version for people with dialup service. He noted the program will be adjusted over time, and may even be exported to other organizations, such as the National Park Service, later. Mr. Grathwohl wondered why the program was not being done in sanctuary waters, and CDR Score reminded him of the donation that had been made that supported the Eco-Mariner program.

Mr. Trice asked what NPCA needed from the SAC. Mr. Bennis mentioned a draft resolution on the program that had been provided to the SAC, and he moved adoption of it, seconded by Dr. Lorenz. There was some discussion. Mr. Trice requested that the language about a VIP kickoff be removed from the draft, and suggested a wording change, from “fully supporting” to “supports”. Mr. Bennis accepted these revisions. CDR Score said some of the wording, such as the use of logos, triggered actions such as need for legal review. Bennis said he understood that if the SAC passed the resolution, he and Mr. Clift would then follow up with CDR Score on whether the actions could be taken or not. CDR Score agreed, and said he was fine with the wording staying in, but that he wanted to manage expectations that FKNMS may not be able to do all that was requested in the resolution. The motion passed unanimously upon roll call vote.

The wording of the resolution follows.

A RESOLUTION OF THE FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL IN SUPPORT OF ECO-MARINER, AN EDUCATIONAL COURSE DESIGNED TO HELP BOATERS AND ANGLERS ENJOY AND PRESERVE FLORIDA BAY

February 17, 2009

Whereas, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) was established in 1990 to provide for the protection of the spectacular marine resources surrounding the Florida Keys; and

Whereas, the statute establishing the FKNMS conveyed to the Sanctuary the responsibility of managing all impacts affecting these resources whether generated from within or from outside the boundaries of said Sanctuary; and

Whereas, the Gulf of Mexico, the southwest coast of Florida, and Florida Bay is connected through currents and has a significant impact on the fisheries and resources of the FKNMS; and

Whereas Florida Bay makes up 1/3 of Everglades National Park which is a nationally and internationally recognized site and one of America's most unique and fragile natural treasures; and

Whereas the Florida Keys and Florida Bay support a substantial and economically significant fishing industry that drives much of the approximately \$9 billion total economic value of fishing in Florida; and

Whereas the economy, fisheries and quality of life in Key Largo, the Florida Keys and Monroe County is dependent upon the health of Florida Bay; and

Whereas the clear waters and renowned flats fishing of Florida Bay are drawing an increasing number of boaters and local communities and users of Florida Bay have expressed concerns about the Bay's health; and

Whereas fish and wildlife populations and habitat are under significant stress within Florida Bay and FKNMS

Whereas Eco-Mariner will teach park users about the Bay's fragile ecosystem and how to safely navigate the Bay's shallow waters and should help reduce the extent of seagrass habitat damage and improve the fishery

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THE FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL SUPPORTS ECO-MARINER. IN ADDITION, THE NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THROUGH ITS SUPERINTENDENT THAT THE FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SUPPORT OR ENDORSE ECO-MARINER SO THAT:

- The FKNMS name could be used publicly to support the **Eco-Mariner** program content and its mission to help boaters enjoy and preserve Florida Bay;
- The FKNMS name/logo could be appear on website screen(s) in the on-line version of **Eco-Mariner**, specifically on the webpage for all supporting organizations;
- The FKNMS name/logo could appear on **Eco-Mariner** branded printed materials (including information packets, press releases, fliers, banners, advertisements, fact sheets, letterhead, etc.);
- A web link on the **Eco-Mariner** website will be provided to the FKNMS website and the FKNMS is encouraged to add a web link on our website to the **Eco-Mariner** website;
- The FKNMS may use **Eco-Mariner** content, components, messages, etc. to further support the FKNMS mission, outreach efforts, or public communications.

Passed unanimously on this date: February 17, 2009.

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ACTION ITEM: Superintendent CDR Dave Score to consider/follow up on the recommendations of the SAC to support or endorse the Eco-Mariner program.

Unfinished/New Business

Mr. Nedimyer, seconded by Mr. Moe, moved to support the nomination of Mr. Cramer to the SAFMC. There was no discussion and no one was opposed, and the motion was deemed passed unanimously by Chair Popham. Chair Popham then asked CDR Score about fleshing out the recommendation, and CDR Score agreed he would.

The text of the motion follows.

To support the nomination of Jeff Cramer to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

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ACTION ITEM: Superintendent CDR Dave Score to consider/follow up on the recommendation of the SAC to support the nomination of Jeff Cramer to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

Mr. Fajans then moved that a motion on the lionfish issue be adopted, seconded by Dr. Lorenz. There was no discussion, and no one was opposed, and the motion was deemed passed unanimously by Chair Popham.

The text of the motion follows.

That the Sanctuary Advisory Council recommend to the Sanctuary Superintendent that the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary do all that it can to fund and support programs to monitor, educate the public, and remove lionfish from the Florida Keys by supporting projects such as REEF, and Mote's MEERA and any others.

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ACTION ITEM: Superintendent CDR Dave Score to consider/follow up on the recommendation of the SAC do all that it can to fund and support existing and any other programs to monitor, educate the public, and remove lionfish from the Florida Keys.

Adjourned, 3:15 PM.

Submitted respectfully by Lilli Ferguson