

**EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 16, 2010 MEETING OF
FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**RESOLUTION ON THE PROPOSED NOAA RULE REGARDING DISCHARGE FROM
MARINE SANITATION DEVICES INTO THE WATERS OF THE
FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY**

February 16, 2010

Whereas, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is considering a proposed rule prohibiting the discharge of effluent (sewage) from vessels' marine sanitation devices into Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary waters and to require marine sanitation devices be secured to prevent discharges within sanctuary boundaries, and

Whereas, vessel sewage discharge has been prohibited in state waters of the Sanctuary since their designation as a No Discharge Zone by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2002, and

Whereas, although 65 percent of the Sanctuary is within state waters, the remaining federal waters, with the exception of specially-protected zones, currently permit vessel sewage discharge, and

Whereas, current sanitation treatment devices do not kill all viruses found in wastewater, nor do they remove nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrogen, a contributor to degraded water quality and toxic algal blooms, and

Whereas, excessive amounts of nutrients harm coral reef ecosystems by stimulating the growth of fast-growing aquatic plants and algae, which in turn smother and kill live coral.

Now, therefore, the Sanctuary Advisory Council of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary resolves as follows:

We recommend that NOAA expeditiously adopt and actively enforce the proposed rule prohibiting the discharge of effluent from vessels' marine sanitation devices into any and all waters of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and requiring that marine sanitation devices be secured to prevent discharges within Sanctuary boundaries. We further recommend that the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary continue to support the installation of land and boat-based pumpout facilities and continue to educate the public about the availability of pump-outs and the importance of pumping out.

Passed on this date: February 16, 2010.

The Council is an advisory body to the sanctuary superintendent. The opinions and findings of this publication do not necessarily reflect the position of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, or the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.