

May 2006 Public Comment: Wayne MacWilliams

I find it a bit sad and disheartening that we have been solicited to express comments about the condition of our coastline waters. Why, because if the Task Force was doing its job it is abundantly clear that they are dropping the ball. If they were divers, (which to have their jobs in this field they absolutely should be) then they could grade their own performance and certainly make the necessary adjustments.

I was born and raised here 48 years ago in Miami, and I have dove from Dry Tortugas to North of Palm Beach. As well as several locations around the world. I have personally seen the decline in local marine life. From everything such as tropical fish right up to reef fish, pelagics as well as invertebrates. Which of course leads to degradation of the coral reef ecosystem itself. I have swam through algae blooms that smother the ocean floor, seen my fair share of coral bleaching, poor visibility due to run off, diseased marine life, silt and sediment that cover reefs and grassy areas etc.

I realize there are no simple solutions but it doesn't take rocket science to accept that the reefs and their inhabitants need help and a break from our disregard. If we could stop additional shoreline development and go back and improve on the systems that affect the oceans as well as cease to take from the oceans for a period of time to allow a sustainable recovery.

Would that effect oceanfront development-yes, would that effect fisheries, tropical fish collectors, lobster,shrimp and crab harvests etc-yes--however to bad. It seems that the only time they care is when they deplete a source (grouper, snapper,conch, land etc)then change equipment to accommodate the depletion of another source and so on. These animals,land including reefs do not have a voice-that is YOUR JOB! It won't be the first or the last time people have had to alter or change their profession. We simply do not have the good sense in those industries to properly govern ourselves for the betterment of ALL, that includes the all encompassing environment. When its gone its gone. No more coulda, woulda or shoulda done this or that. The time is not tomorrow or I'll leave that to the next administration. Learn the important word-NO. Our surrounding waters and their inhabitants in essence are sick and tired and need a break, your job is to give it to them!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Regards,Wayne