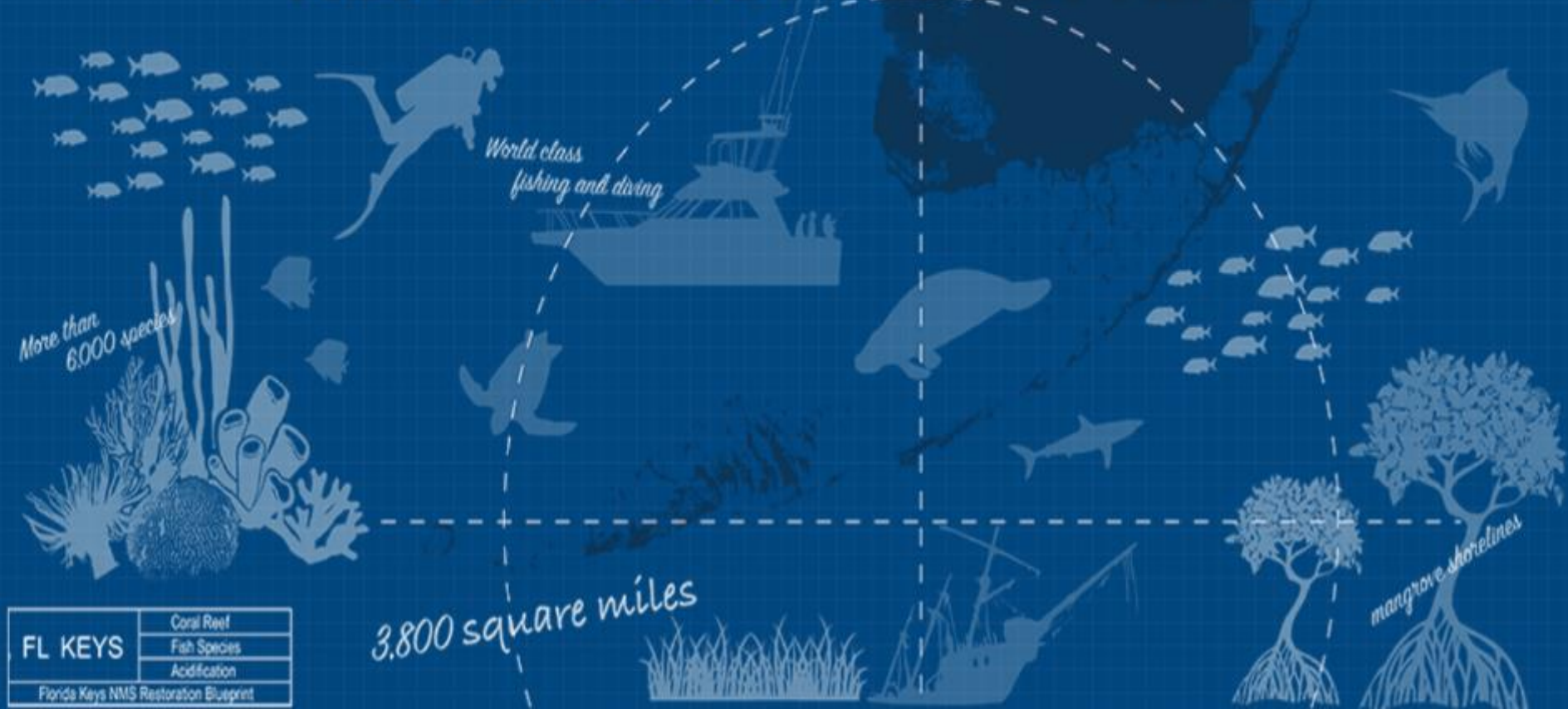




# FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY RESTORATION BLUEPRINT





# Presentation Outline

- Why Create a Restoration Blueprint
- Proposed Rule highlights specific to Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council comment letter and authorities
  - Sanctuary boundary
  - Sanctuary-wide regulations
  - Marine zones & associated regulations
- Socio-Economic Analysis
- Management Plan
- Public outreach products and tools





# Economic Impact of Visitors

A Healthy Florida Keys Ecosystem Provides:

**\$2.9 Billion**

in tourism spending\*

**44%**

of Jobs  
(Highest percentage in FL)\*\*

**60%**

of Monroe County economy\*\*



\*Gazal, Andrew & Burns/2021

\*\*TBD Economics/2019



# Blue Economy of the Keys



## **Tourism**

5.3 million visitors in 2019

## **Boating**

4.5 million boaters per annum

## **Diving and Snorkeling**

1.86 million divers and snorkelers per annum

## **Commercial Fishing**

79% of the catch from the sanctuary is processed in Monroe County

## **Recreational Fishing**

2.7 million people fish in FKNMS each year

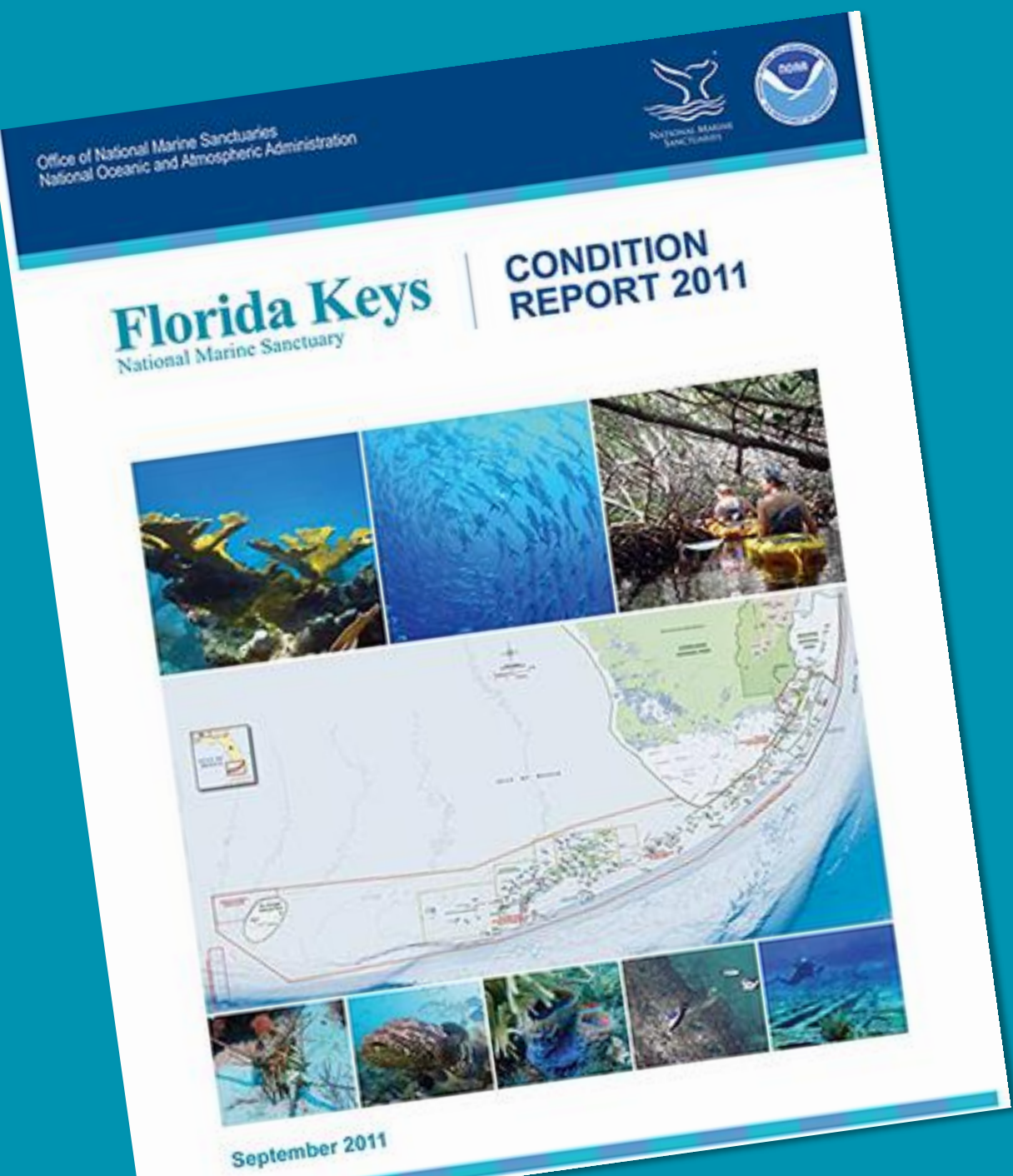




# **NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE FLORIDA KEYS**

The Future of the Keys Marine Environment is at Risk

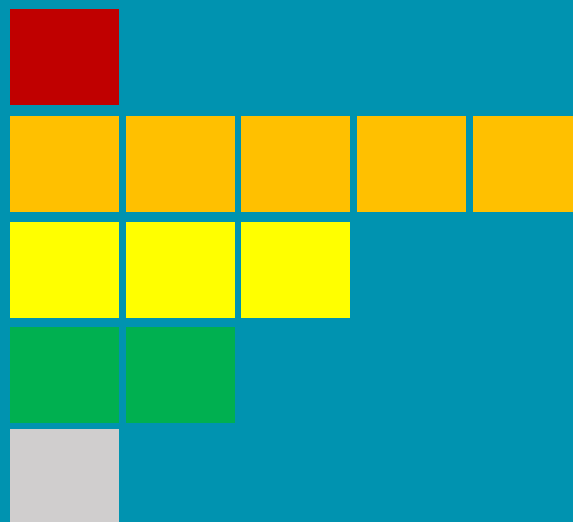




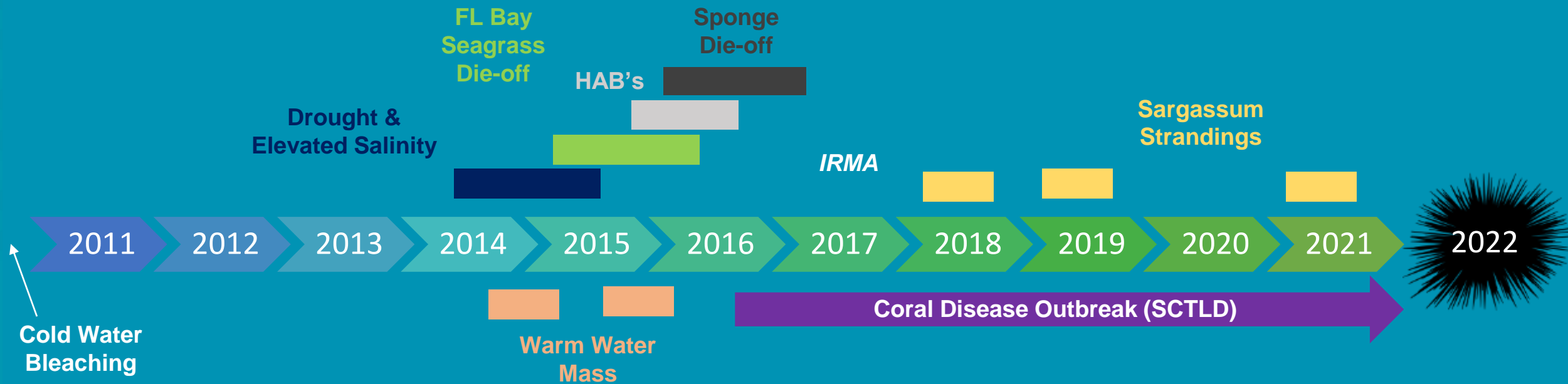
17

QUESTIONS

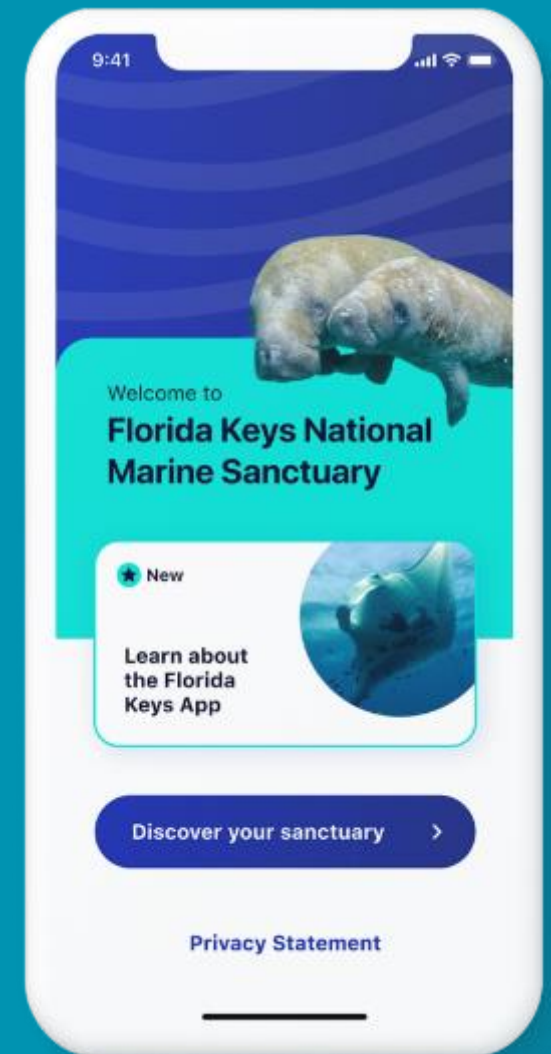
on the health of the ecosystem



# Since 2011...



# Local Action to Enhance Resilience

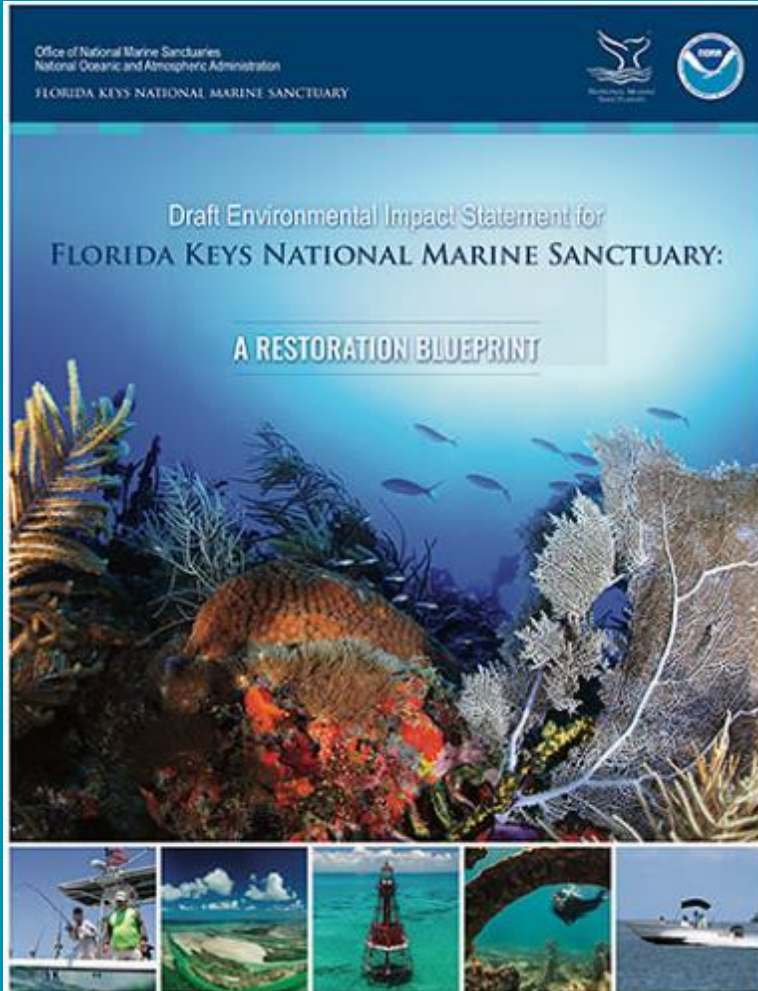






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# Notice of Proposed Rulemaking



Proposed regulations for:

- Sanctuary boundary
- Sanctuary-wide regulations
- Marine zones & zone-specific regulations

Proposed Rule is informed by:

- Public and agency comment
- Updated socio-economic and environmental data

Pulls from all four alternatives included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

\*Management Plan is a separate document

# GMFMC comment letter topics & FKNMS proposed rule content

Topics in 2020 GMFMC comment letter	Included in the proposed rule
<i>Tortugas Corridor marine zone</i>	<i>Not included</i>
<i>Idle speed no wake in all SPAs</i>	<i>Not included</i>
<i>FKNMS Live Rock Aquaculture permit</i>	<i>Not included</i>
Boundary expansion at Pulley Ridge	Included
Temporary Regulation for Emergency & Adaptive Management	Included
Traditional Fishing definition and process for coordination	Included
Baitfishing permits in Sanctuary Preservation Areas	Included
Water Quality and FKNMS role	Included in draft management plan





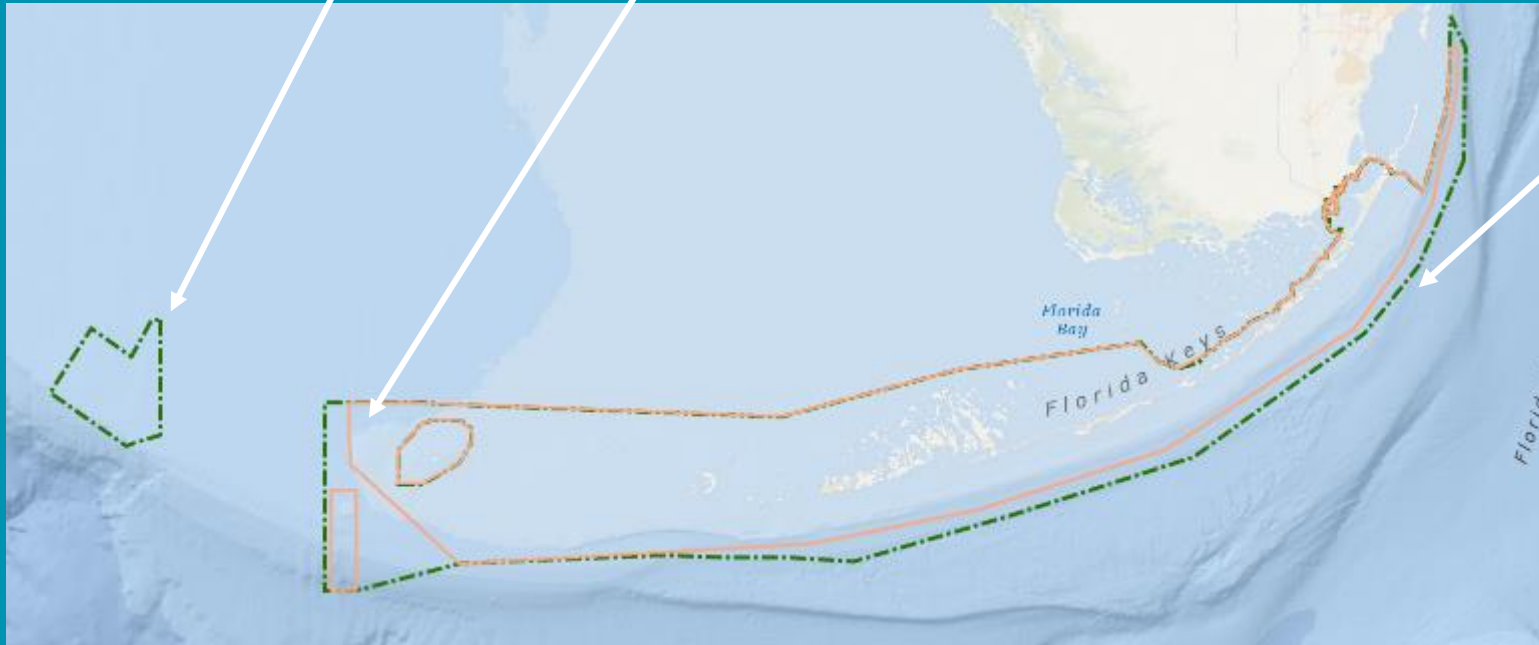
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# Sanctuary Boundary: Proposed Expansion

Nationally Significant - Pulley Ridge

Connectivity - Tortugas Region

*Connect & Preserve Special Habitats*



**Consistent regulation** - Expand boundary to include areas already closed to large vessel traffic



Existing: 3,800 sq miles



Proposed: 4,800 sq miles



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# TEMPORARY REGULATION EMERGENCY & ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

*Act Quickly to Respond & Protect*

Proposed regulation:

180-day action + optional 186-day extension

3 Categories:

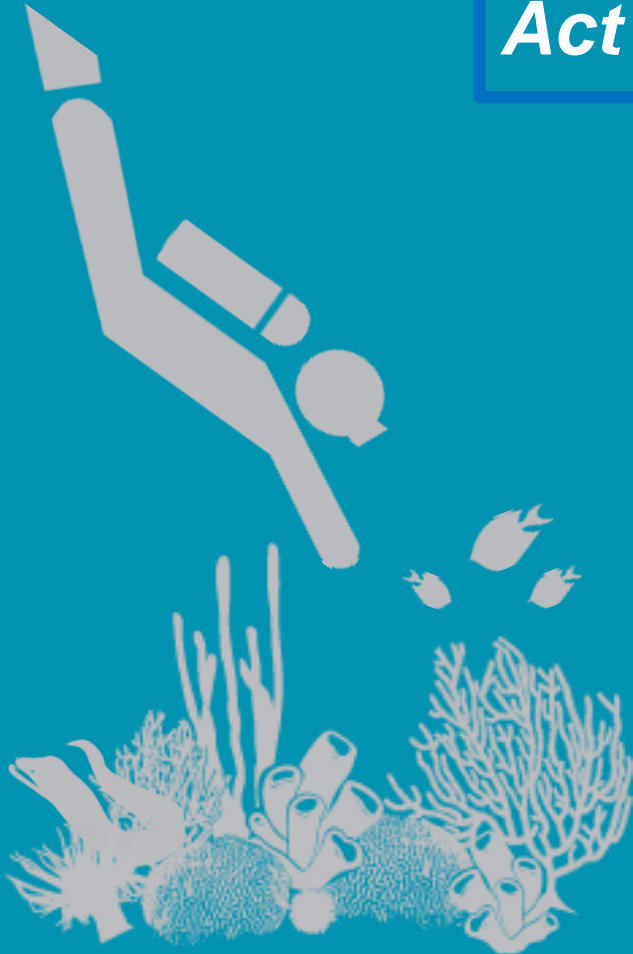
Minimize  
resources  
impacts

Initiate  
restoration

Facilitate  
timely  
research



Sets process for implementation







# Traditional Fishing

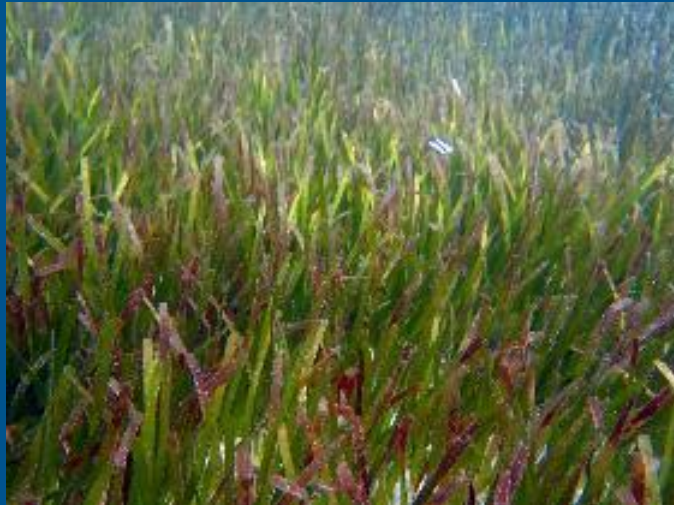
*Traditional fishing* means those commercial or recreational fishing activities that were customarily conducted within the sanctuary prior to its designation as identified in the 1996 Environmental Impact Statement and Management Plan for this sanctuary.

## Next Steps and Implementation:

- Work with NMFS, FWC, and the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic FMCs on an updated Protocol for Cooperative Fisheries Management to:
  - clarify traditional fishing activities, and
  - develop a transparent process to evaluate new or modified fishing activities and other relevant changes to fisheries management.

# Marine Zones & Associated Regulations: Proposal Goals

- Protect sensitive habitats and ecological functions
- Facilitate ecosystem restoration
- Simplify and create consistent regulations



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Photo Credit: Shawn  
Verne





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# SANCTUARY PRESERVATION AREAS

*Separate Conflicting Uses, Protect Habitats, Create Consistency*

## 17 SPAs:

- 2 new
- Combine 2 existing
- Eliminate 2 existing



## Prohibit:

- Discharge
- Fishing or taking marine life
- Anchoring





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# SANCTUARY PRESERVATION AREAS

Propose to expand 2 SPAs

*Protect Deep Reef Habitat*

Carysfort Reef  
(3.78 sq miles)



Inset maps  
show  
existing and  
proposed  
rule.

Alligator  
Reef



Sanctuary Preservation Area



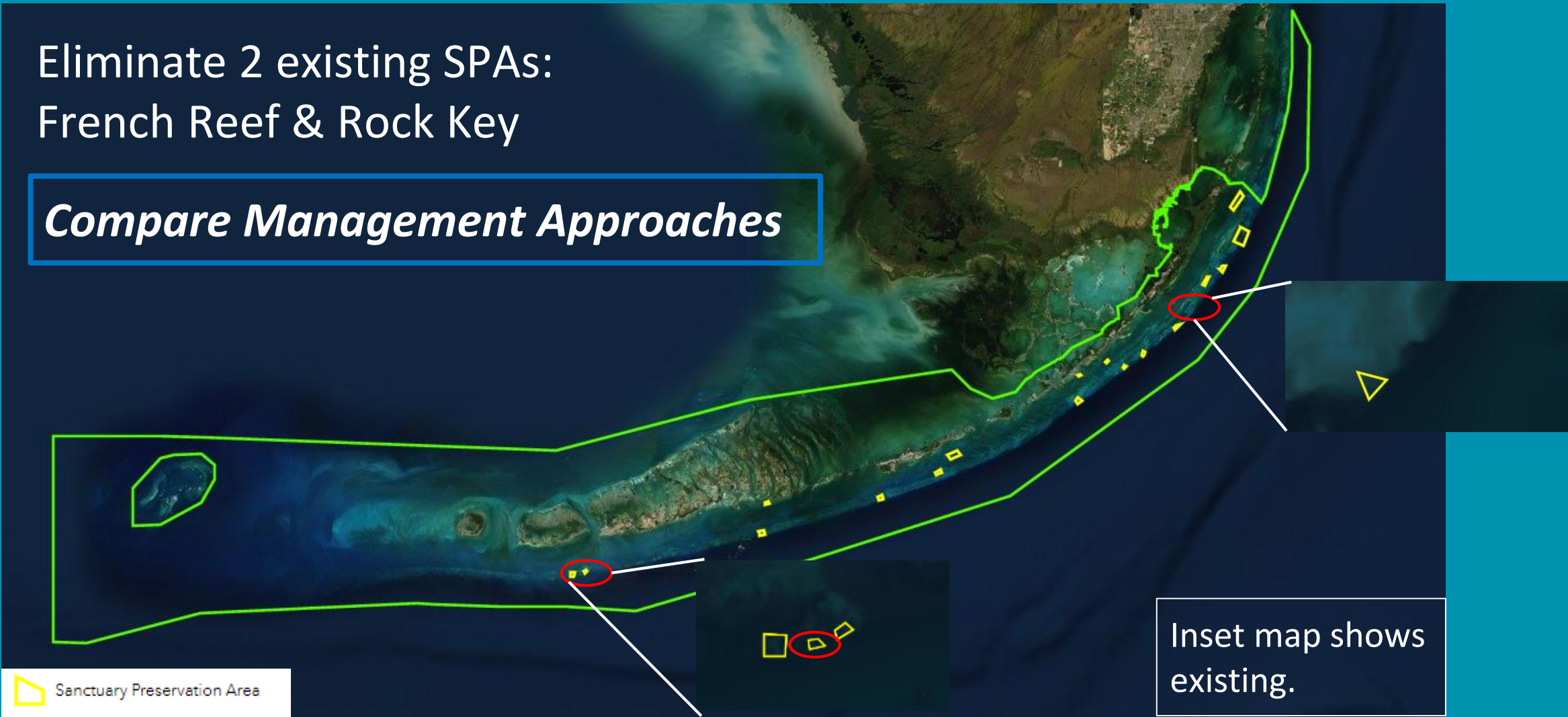


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# SANCTUARY PRESERVATION AREAS

Eliminate 2 existing SPAs:  
French Reef & Rock Key

*Compare Management Approaches*





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# CONSERVATION AREAS

## *Protect Contiguous, Diverse Habitats & Facilitate Research*

### 6 Conservation Areas:

- All existing
- Eliminate Looe Key Special Use Area



### Prohibit:

- Discharge
- Fishing or taking marine life
- Anchoring, *except* in Western Sambo shoreward of reef line
- Entering except for continuous transit; stopping in Western Sambo is *allowed*





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# Tennessee Reef Conservation Area

*Facilitate Research, Protect Habitats*

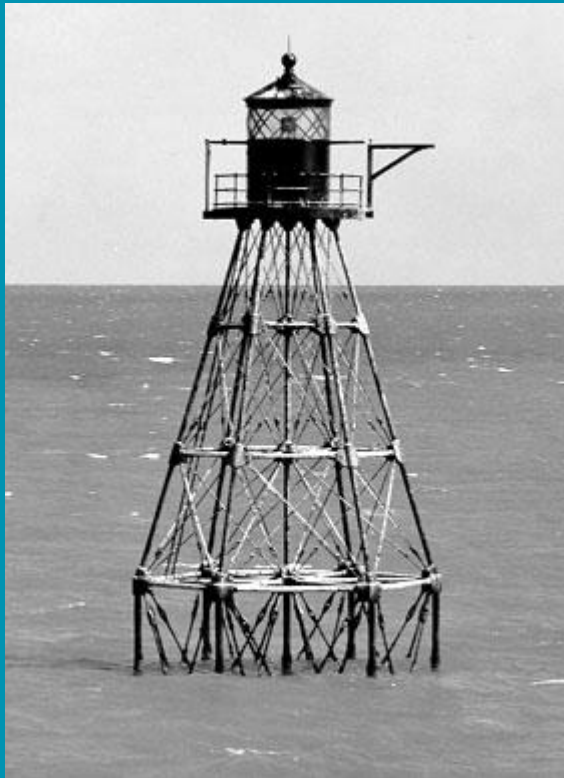
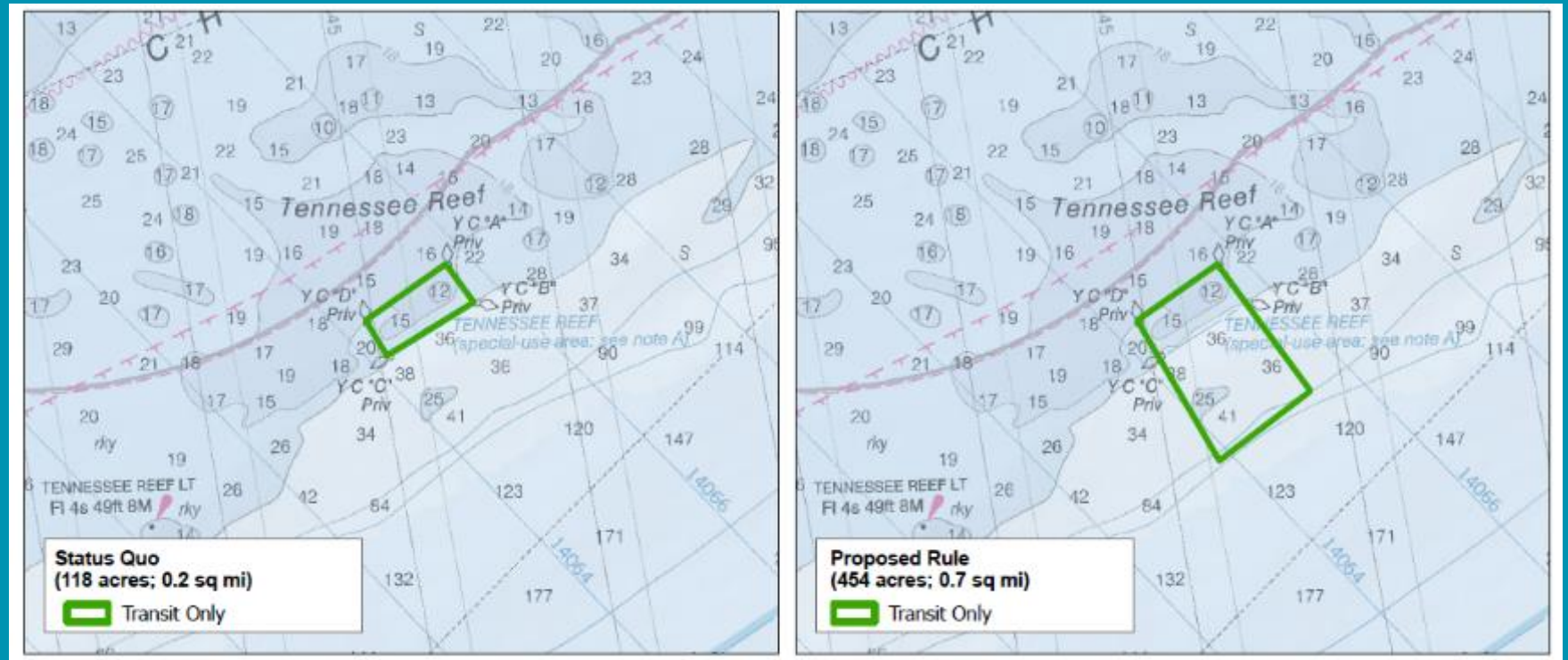


Photo Credit: USCG



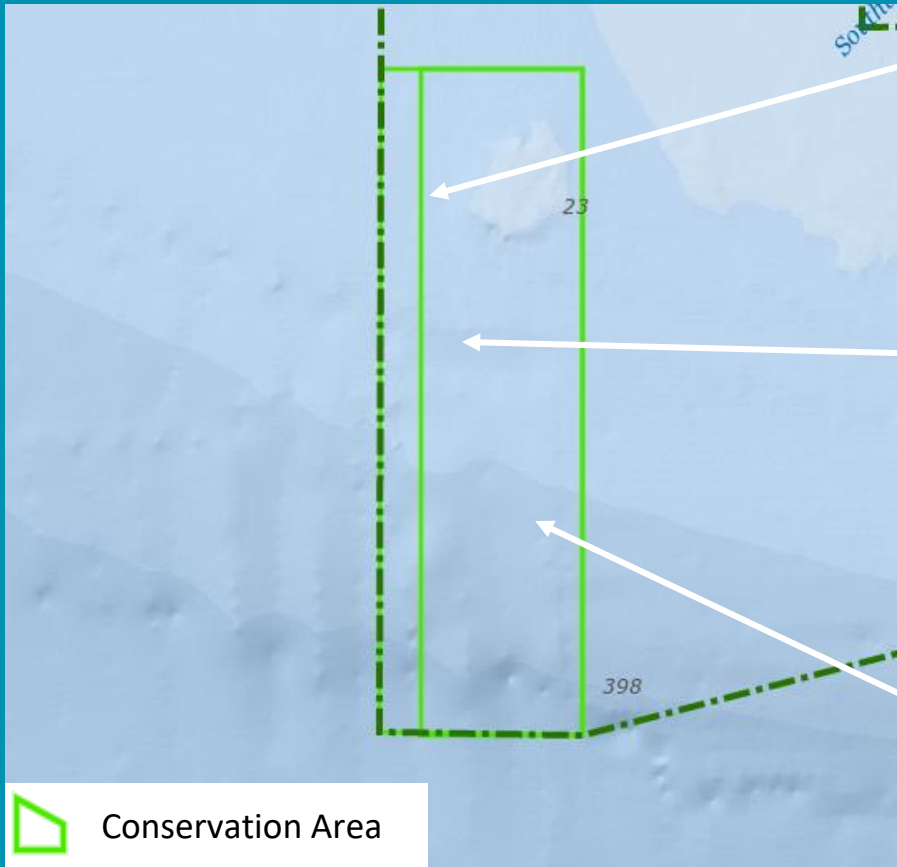




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# CONSERVATION AREAS

**Modified:**  
**Tortugas South (90.38 sq miles)**



***Protect Additional  
Fish Spawning  
Habitat***



Photo Credit: NOAA NCCOS/UNCW UVP



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# RESTORATION AREAS

## *Protect Nurseries & Facilitate Restoration*

Proposed new zone type

Create a restoration permit category



### 4 Habitat Restoration Areas

- Same as SPAs - no discharge, no take, no anchor



### 9 Nursery Restoration Areas

- Same as SPAs + transit only

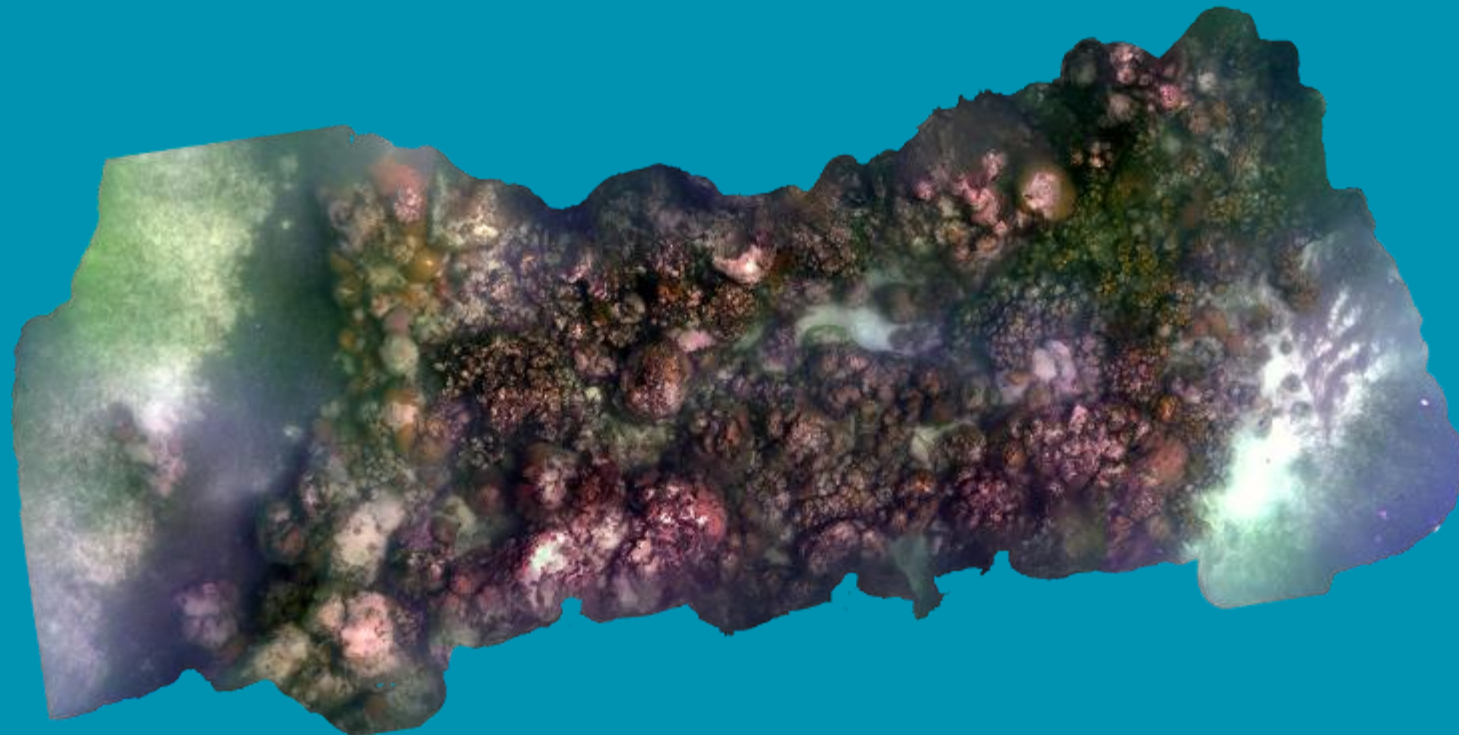
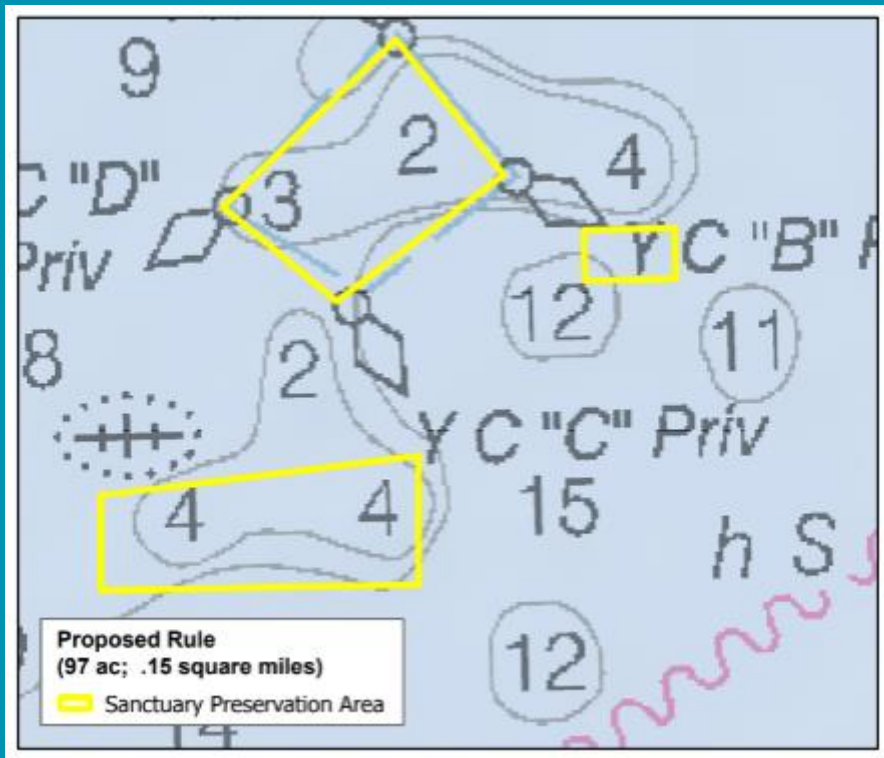




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# RESTORATION AREAS

## Cheeca Rocks East and Cheeca Rocks South Habitat Restoration Areas - proposed new (0.15 sq miles including Cheeca Rocks SPA)







# WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

## *Protect & Minimize Wildlife Disturbance*

### Wildlife Management Areas

#### 47 Wildlife Management Areas

- 23 proposed new
- 2 existing combined into one
- 2 existing proposed eliminated

#### Regulations vary:

- Access and use restrictions address location-specific resource goals
  - Idle speed no wake
  - No motor
  - No anchor
  - No entry





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# WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

## Proposed Rule



- No Entry
- No Anchor
- Idle Speed
- No Anchor Vessels Greater than 50 m
- No Motor
- Transit Only and No Anchor April 1 to July 31
- No Motor and No Anchor

# Socio-Economic Analysis

## Benefits

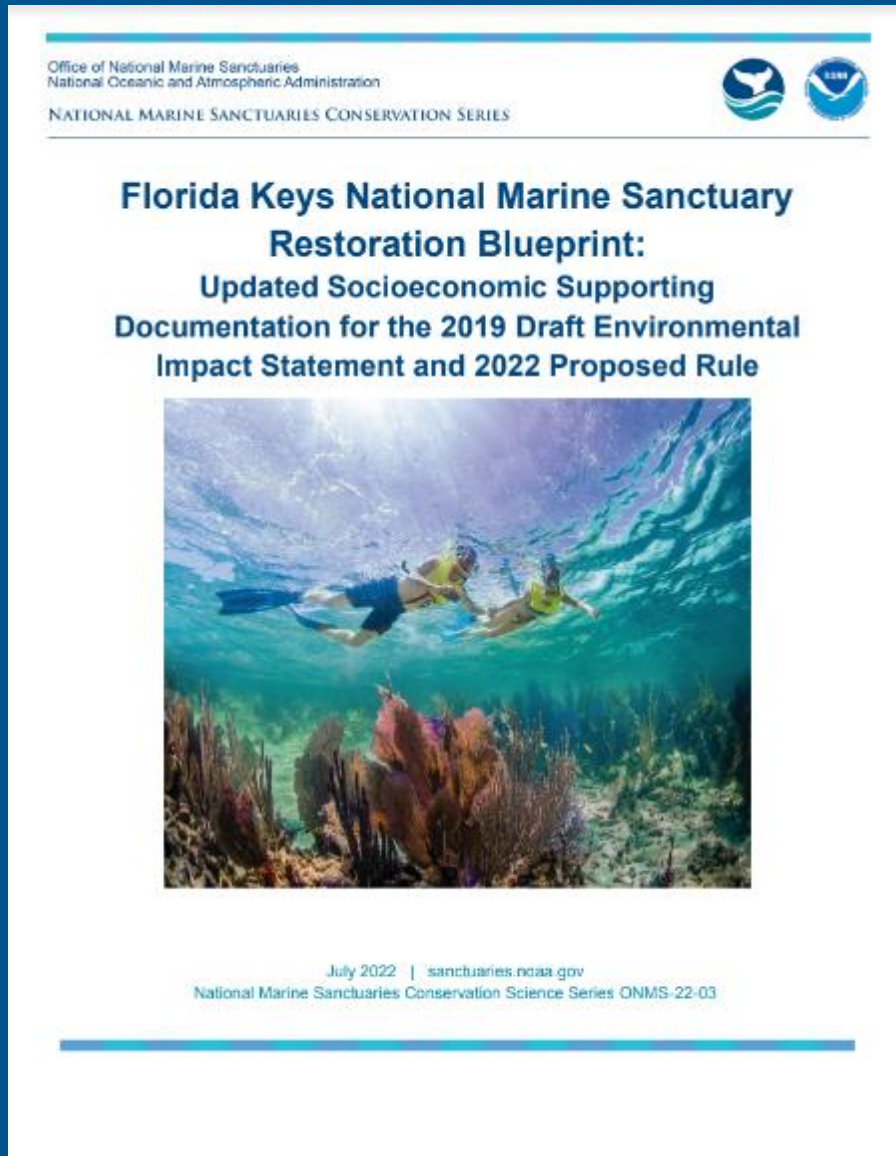
Maintaining the flow of services afforded by healthy marine ecosystems:

- productive fisheries
- tourism
- recreational opportunities
- non-market value

## Costs

Maximum potential loss (assuming no replacement):

- less than 1% of annual revenue for all affected fisheries (commercial and recreational)
  - Excepting lobster fishery (~2% annual loss)







## Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Restoration Blueprint: Revised Draft Management Plan



[floridakeys.noaa.gov/blueprint/](https://floridakeys.noaa.gov/blueprint/)

# Management Plan

**Focuses on understanding and improving the condition of sanctuary resources through reducing threats and addressing emerging issues**

Proposed actions focus on:

- targeted research
- updated and adaptive management efforts
- regulatory compliance
- community involvement
- stewardship



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# Management Plan: Priority Themes

- Management Effectiveness and Adaptive Management
- Water Quality
- Restoration
- Visitor Use Management
- Enforcement
- Stewardship and Engagement





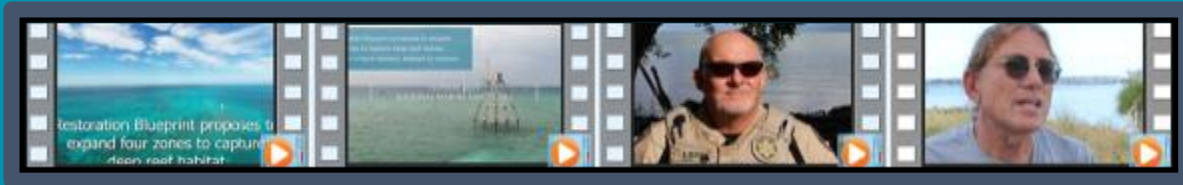


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# Resources for public engagement:

<https://floridakeys.noaa.gov/blueprint/>

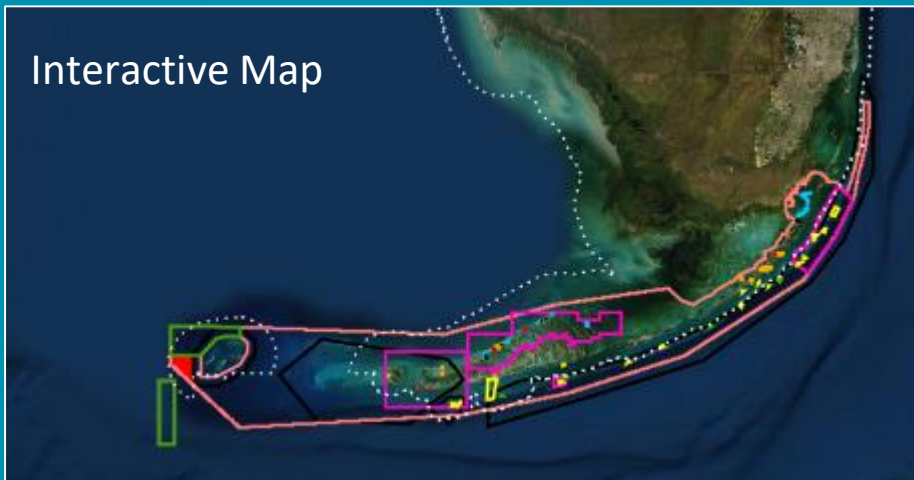
## Video Library



## Document Library



## Interactive Map



## Public Meeting Information & Registration Links

COMMENT  
NOW

## Summary Presentation



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Presentation Outline

- Why Create a Restoration Blueprint
- Restoration Blueprint timeline and status
- Proposed Rule highlights
  - Sanctuary boundary
  - Sanctuary-wide regulations
  - Marine zones & associated regulations
- Public outreach products and tools
- Next steps and how to stay engaged



Photo Credit: Carlos Arana/SeaLegacy



# Public Engagement Opportunities

## ASK QUESTIONS

August 16 - Virtual Q&A

## PUBLIC COMMENT

August 30 - Virtual Public Comment

September 20 - Key Largo - Key Largo Coral Shores High School Auditorium - 6 p.m.

September 21 - Marathon - Marathon High School Auditorium - 6 p.m.

September 22 - Key West - Key West High School Auditorium - 6 p.m.

October 18 - Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting, 9 a.m., Marathon



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[FloridaKeys.noaa.gov/blueprint](https://FloridaKeys.noaa.gov/blueprint)