

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Special Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting: Cetacean (dolphin and whale) Strandings in the Florida Keys

Meeting Date, Location, and Time:

This meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 17, 2002 at the Marathon Garden Club, located at MM50, in Marathon, FL. The meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. and will adjourn at approximately 9:30 p.m. Public comment is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. An in-house dinner for Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) members will facilitate timely adjournment of this special meeting.

Meeting Purpose and Scope:

The purpose of this special SAC meeting is to provide a forum for discussion of all perspectives on the topic of cetacean (dolphin and whale) strandings that occur in the Florida Keys. Strandings of other marine species or non-stranding issues related to dolphins and whales will not be addressed at this meeting.

Expected Outcomes:

Sanctuary and NOAA managers hope to utilize the SAC as a neutral, local forum for reviewing the particular aspects of this topic. SAC members will be given the opportunity to review factual information related to cetacean strandings in the Florida Keys. Based on this information, SAC members will be asked to determine if valid concerns or issues requiring further clarification exist. If such concerns are identified, SAC members will be asked to further define these issues and formulate recommendations that can be forwarded to NOAA.

FKNMS Role:

The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is involved in the topic of cetacean strandings because dolphins and whales are important biological resources of the Sanctuary for which NOAA has trusteeship. The SAC has proven itself to be a neutral forum in which local community issues can be impartially discussed. The Board of County Commissioners recognized this role when it asked the SAC in August 2001 to review this topic.