



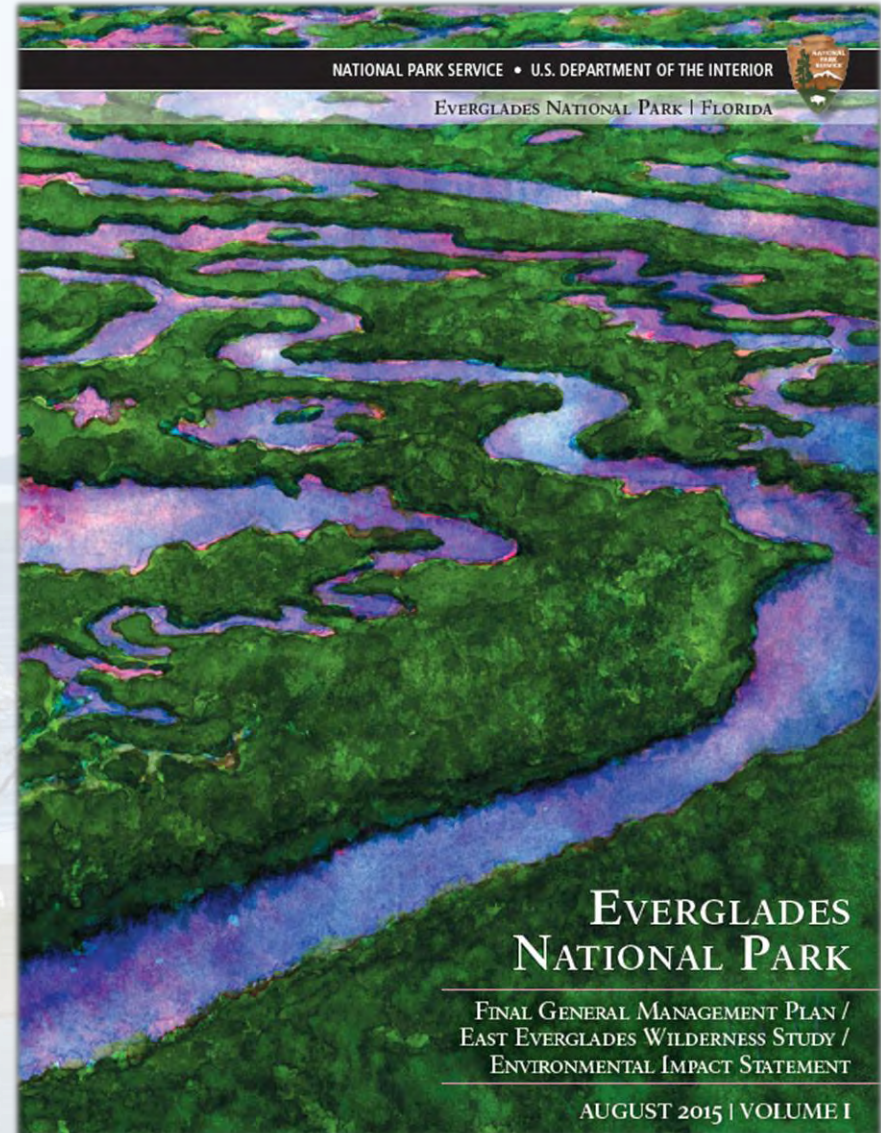
Everglades National Park

Update to Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary – Sanctuary Advisory Council

Final General Management Plan/
East Everglades Wilderness Study/
Environmental Impact Statement

October 20, 2015

Pedro M. Ramos, Superintendent
Fred Herling, Park Planner



Agenda

- Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary – Sanctuary Advisory Council motion
- Key Changes to Preferred Alternative – Draft to Final GMP
- Next Steps
- Questions and Discussion



FKNMS Motion/Recommendation (April 16, 2013)

- “ENP...should investigate in greater detail stakeholder comments on the scope of the pole and troll zoned areas delineated in the preferred alternative within Florida Bay. This should include potential deepwater access channels into or through the zones and potential use of idle speed zones...”
- “Final GMP should include language that allows for adaptive management of the zoning”
- “Emphasize integration of a boater education permit program into the Final GMP”
- “Emphasize the establishment of an ENP Advisory Committee which could assist with implementation phasing of the GMP”



Considerations with Additional Analysis and Stakeholder Involvement for Revising Preferred Alternative – Florida Bay

Factors used to evaluate revisions to Florida Bay resource protection and access

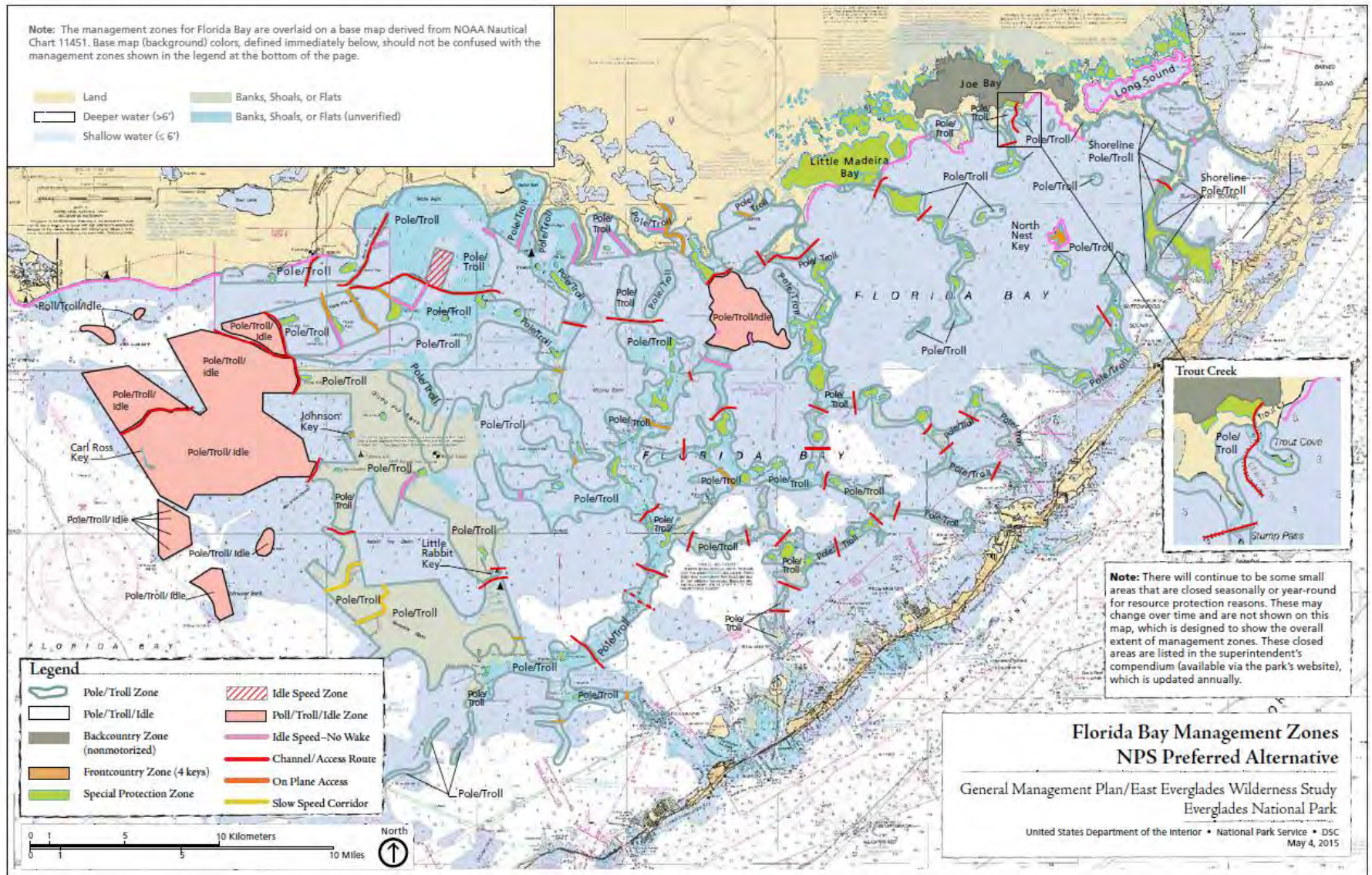
- Water depth – identify areas of deeper water for on-plane access and transit.
- Water depth – identify shallow areas with seagrass and wilderness resources that show clear evidence of worsening impacts.
- Alternative access options – identify nearby, similar or other ways to navigate to destinations or across the bay.
- Important resource concerns – identify important areas for threatened and endangered species, nesting birds, shallow water habitats, etc.
- “Unintended Consequences” – identify areas in the bay and strategies being considered that could have unintended consequences, and could lead to worsening conditions for resources and visitor enjoyment (e.g., drawing attention to destinations that have been historically difficult to access and largely used by very experienced boaters such as Sandy Key Bank (therefore, the Pole/Troll/Idle concept).
- Destination vs. Transit – identify the primary purpose for providing access to an area in the bay (i.e., whether it’s to get to an important destination or transit across the bay), and identify the appropriate type of access to support that purpose (e.g., Nine-mile Bank, Crab Lake, Bob Allen West and Coon Key Passes).

Key Aspects of the Preferred Alternative – Florida Bay

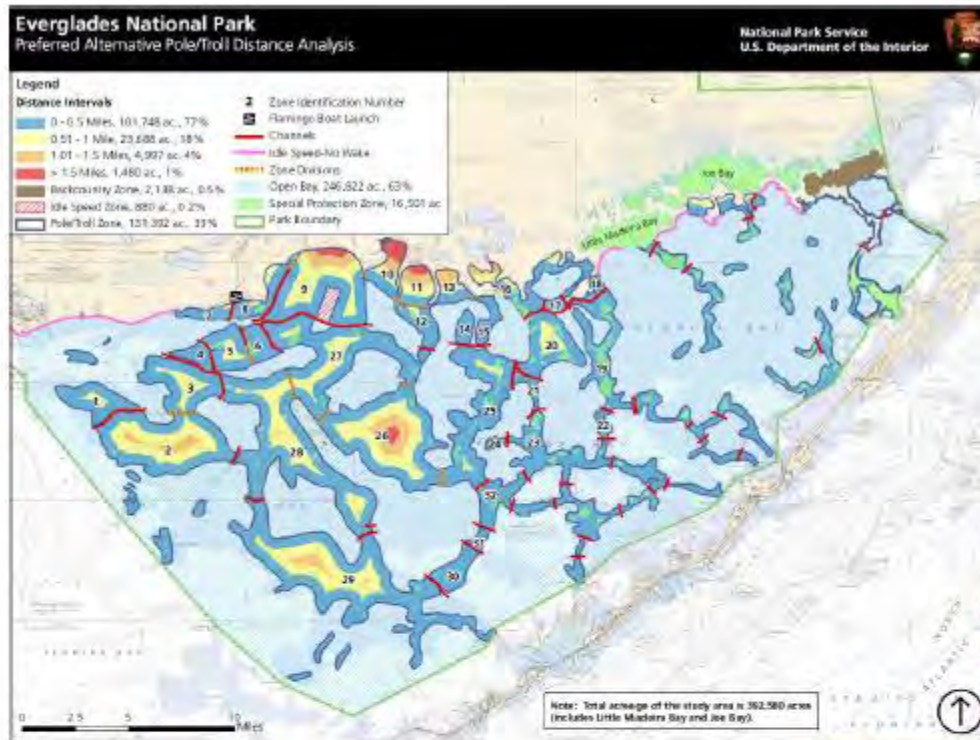
- **Strategies refined based on stakeholder collaboration**
- Establishes a mandatory boater education program to enhance resource protection, safety, respectful use
- Zones and protection goals tied to peer-reviewed science
- Establishes 144,000-acre zone network (pole/troll, pole/troll/idle, special protection and backcountry; idle- and slow-speed corridors)
- Establishes stakeholder advisory committee, user- and resource-capacity goals, and adaptive management program to monitor, analyze results and identify strategy modifications



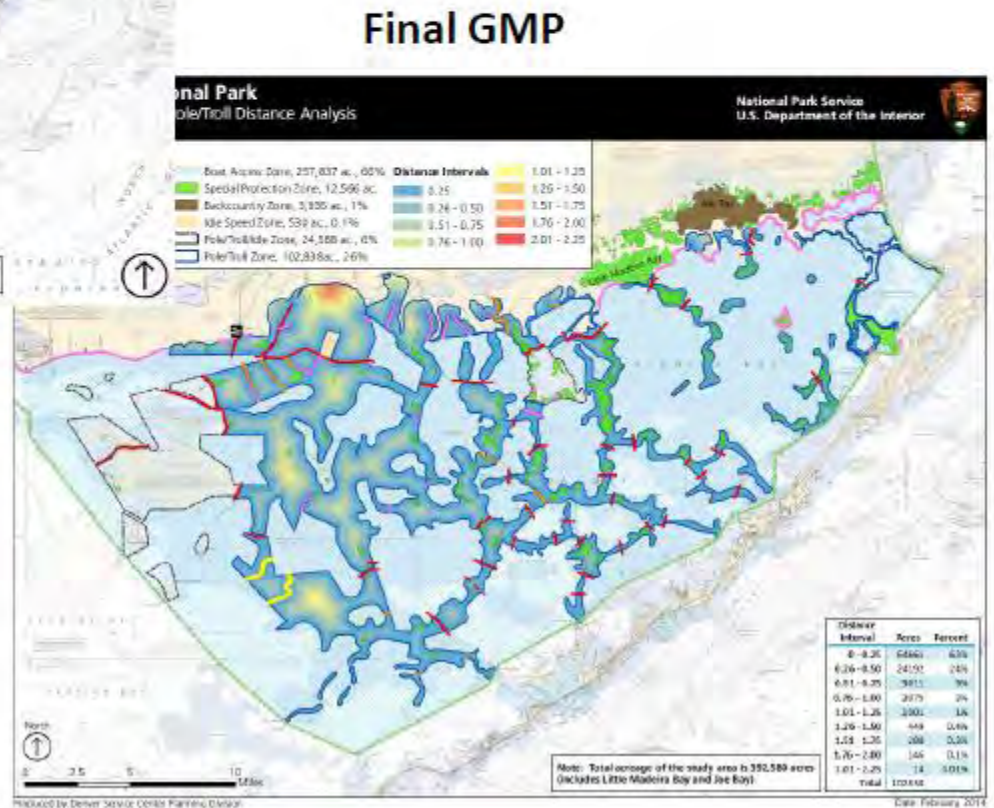
Key Aspects of the Preferred Alternative – Florida Bay



Zoning Changes – Draft to Final GMP for Florida Bay



Draft GMP



Key excerpts from stakeholders on the Final GMP

Excerpts from National Parks Conservation Association Statement (August 28, 2015)

“This plan will provide much needed and widely supported protections to the marine environment of the Everglades ecosystem. NPCA celebrates the work of our allies of scientists, anglers, fishing guides, park staff, and others to ensure that boater education is a seminal component...and new pole-troll zones will go a long way to enhance the visitor experience and protect the seagrass beds and mangroves in Florida Bay. These marine enhancements will also ensure a more resilient ecosystem to combat the effects of climate change and sea level rise.”

“Former and current park staff deserve deep praise for their commitment to ensuring that the final management plan will protect and preserve Everglades National Park – the anchor of South Florida’s four national parks... NPCA is proud to have worked so closely with the park and its myriad stakeholders for more than a decade through the process to achieve a positive plan that will be embraced by and benefit so many diverse interests.”



Key excerpts from stakeholders on the Final GMP

Excerpt from Recreation Industry and Conservation Organizations Statement (Sept. 1, 2015)

“The level of responsiveness of Everglades National Park officials to our community’s input is reflective of how good public policy should be developed.”

“The recreational fishing and boating community expressed its collective appreciation to Everglades National Park officials for meaningfully addressing concerns that were raised during the GMP development process... Given that this GMP will guide management actions for the next 20 to 30 years, it’s critically important that we get it right...the GMP strikes an appropriate balance of management measures to safeguard resources while allowing for reasonable boating and fishing access.”

“The recreational fishing community recognizes pole and troll zones are an important management tool to conserve shallow water habitat, but these zones must be established at a reasonable size and with access corridors to allow anglers to still reach the area...We are pleased to see a cooperatively developed plan that protects our natural resources as well as boater access in a balanced manner”



Key Aspects of the Preferred Alternative – Everglades Paddling Trail



- Trail system modified based on stakeholder dialogue to provide diversity of visitor experiences
- Establishes the 120-mile Everglades Paddling Trail, a less-traveled route that paralleling 99-mile Wilderness Waterway
- Includes seasonal non-motorized and slow-speed segments for improved backcountry recreation
- Ties together natural and cultural resource history and stories



Recent and Next Steps

- Release of Final GMP (August 2015)
- Record of Decision Approval (October 2015)
- Begin implementation (2016 and beyond) – details to follow



Questions and Discussion



“There are no other Everglades in the world. They are, they have always been, one of the unique regions of the earth, remote, never wholly known.” Nothing anywhere else is like them; their vast glittering openness, wider than the enormous visible round of the horizon...

It is a river of grass.”

Marjory Stoneman Douglas - 1947

