

FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Hyatt Place
1996 Overseas Highway
Marathon, FL 33050
Tuesday, October 20, 2015

MEETING SUMMARY

The following serves as a summary of the October 20, 2015 FKNMS Advisory Council Meeting. This summary does not constitute official minutes of the meeting. Draft meeting minutes will be distributed in advance of the December 8 Advisory Council Meeting for approval by the council.

Cheeca Rocks Coral Reef Ecosystem Restoration

Bill Goodwin, FKNMS Resource Manager presented on a recent coral reef ecosystem restoration effort. Damage to Cheeca Rocks reef from an adrift Aid To Navigation (ATON) buoy impacted 150 square feet of broken and dislodged living coral colonies and reduced 260 square feet of non-living coral reef framework to rubble. The Sanctuary response, science and buoy team successfully re-stabilized every living coral colony and loose rubble salvaged from the damaged area. The goal was to create relief — the height and three-dimensional structure of healthy natural reefs — that would make for good fish habitat. Follow-up monitoring is scheduled one, three, six and ten years from now to track the long-term success of the restoration.

Everglades National Park Management Plan

Pedro Ramos, Everglades National Park Superintendent and Fred Herling, Everglades National Park Planner presented on the Final General Management Plan updating the management plan and regulations of the Park. They presented highlights of some of the changes outlined in the Final General Management Plan including establishing a mandatory boater education program, new pole/troll, pole/troll/idle zones and idle and slow-speed corridors, incorporates an adaptive management program, and establishes an advisory committee to inform park management. These changes are intended to protect natural resources, increase safety and allow continued use and enjoyment of the park. He also noted efforts to enhance the overall character of the park and the visitor experience.

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary 25th Anniversary Celebration

Mary Tagliareni, FKNMS Deputy Superintendent for Operations and Education presented on plans to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Sanctuary. A celebratory dinner is planned for the evening of November 7 (rsvp here: http://store.nmsfocean.org/category_s/31.htm) and a Family Fun Festival is planned for Sunday, November 8. The Family Fun Festival will take place from 1:00-5:00 and includes activity booths, a free kids Fishing Clinic (2:00-4:00) live music, and a pig roast. Both events take place at the Islander Resort, A Guy Harvey Outpost. All are invited, Advisory Council members are encouraged to volunteer at the Family Fun Festival. Contact Mary.Tagliareni@noaa.gov for details.

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Southeast Region Report

Billy Causey, Southeast Regional Director, provided an update on recent activities of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries southeast region. Of note include potential new sanctuary site nominations and a sister sanctuary partnership with Caribbean partners. The sister sanctuary effort is founded on ecological connectivity of the sites and includes the Florida Keys and Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuaries and existing marine protected areas in Mexico and Cuba. Sister Sanctuary designation and activities will include sharing data and information, lessons learned, and partnering on research and conservation efforts.

Marine Zoning Decision Support Framework

The Advisory Council heard about a decision support tool that is being used to analyze the marine zoning recommendations that the advisory council and working groups provided to the sanctuary for analysis as part of the marine zoning and management plan review update. Dan Dorfman, Marine Conservation Planner with NOAA's National Center for Coastal and Ocean Science, explained how this tool works and presented a few of the analysis results. The decision support tool utilizes data from a suite of 235 conservation features, and based on ecological representation criteria for those features, identifies ecologically important areas. This information can then be used to assess and analyze the working group and advisory council marine zoning recommendations. Information from this decision support tool is one component of many that is being used to inform management plan review and will be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Public Comment

Public comment was provided by one individual:

- Julie Dick, Everglades Law Center provided public comment on behalf of Last Stand and Florida Keys Environmental Foundation

The council is an advisory body to the sanctuary superintendent. The opinions and finding 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.