

Our Florida Reefs Community Planning Process
North Community Working Group
CHARTER
Approved April 28, 2014 - Version 01

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CHARTER PURPOSE

This Charter is an agreement by members and alternates who compose the North Community Working Group of the *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process, stating that we understand and accept our mission and will abide by the guidelines, policies and procedures in this Charter.

CONTEXT

In 2000 the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, which was established in 1998 by Presidential Executive Order, adopted the "U.S. National Action Plan to Conserve Coral Reefs" that called for the seven U.S. states, territories and commonwealths with coral reefs to develop "Local Action Strategies" (LAS) to address degradation of coral reefs. These are locally driven plans for collaboration among federal, state, territory and non-governmental stakeholders to identify and implement priority actions needed to reduce key threats to and continuing degradation of coral reefs.

The Florida Reef Tract extends approximately 350 miles from the Dry Tortugas north to offshore of Martin County. Management of the southern two-thirds of the Florida Reef Tract, south of Key Biscayne, is guided by management plans officially adopted for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Dry Tortugas National Park and Biscayne National Park.

In order to develop a Local Action Strategy for the northern third of the Florida Reef Tract, north of Biscayne National Park, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Coral Reef Conservation Program and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) formed the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI) in 2003, which is a multi-stakeholder group with over 70 partners. SEFCRI's mission is to develop and support the implementation of an effective strategy to preserve and protect southeast Florida's coral reefs and associated reef resources, emphasizing balance between resource use and protection, in cooperation with all interested parties. SEFCRI is chaired by the Manager of the FDEP Coral Reef Conservation Program.

SEFCRI in 2004 developed a Local Action Strategy for the northern third of the Florida Reef Tract. This LAS identifies 4 key threat areas, issues, goals, and objectives, and contains 140 projects focused mostly on collecting data to understand and reduce threats to coral reef resources. With most of the data-collection projects implemented, SEFCRI is now transitioning into a management action phase in which information from these projects will be used in another stakeholder-driven process in support of the SEFCRI mission.

The *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process is a high-priority project in the SEFCRI Local Action Strategy. It calls for formation of Community Working Groups (CWG) composed

of representatives of groups who have a stake in coral reefs offshore of Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin counties.

MISSION

The mission of the *Our Florida Reefs* North Community Working Group is to collaboratively develop a prioritized list of recommended management actions to preserve and protect southeast Florida's coral reefs and associated reef resources and to reduce continuing trends toward declining coral reef health, emphasizing balance between resource use and protection, and to provide information needed to implement priority management actions.

PRODUCTS

The North Community Working Group (North CWG) will develop a prioritized list of recommended management actions focusing on coral reefs offshore of Palm Beach and Martin counties, while the South Community Working Group (South CWG) will concurrently develop a prioritized list of recommended management actions focusing on coral reefs offshore of Miami-Dade and Broward counties. Both groups will consider and include management actions that would benefit the entire northern third of the Florida Reef Tract in addition to their local region. Both groups will provide information for implementation of priority management actions, with input from SEFCRI.

How Products Will Be Used

SEFCRI will coordinate with the CWGs to combine the two lists into one list, which will then be reviewed by the general public at a series of public meetings targeted for fall 2015. The CWGs will then have the opportunity to modify the combined list based on public comment and input from SEFCRI.

The prioritized list of recommended management actions will form the basis of a management plan for southeast Florida coral reefs. SEFCRI will take the recommendations to the appropriate management agencies to work with them on recommendation approval and implementation. Additionally, SEFCRI may choose to put recommendations forward for funding approval through their own internal process.

Alignment with Existing Strategic Plans

Three plans exist that refer to management of the northern third of Florida Reef Tract:

1. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) - Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) - Florida's Coral Reef Management Priorities 2010-2015
2. Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) - Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) - 2011-2016 Strategic Plan
3. Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative: A Local Action Strategy.

These plans are important because funding to implement coral reef projects is more likely if the funding request is linked to goals and objectives in one of these plans. The Community Working Groups will become familiar with these plans, and will try to align their listed management actions with issues, goals and objectives in these existing plans in order to increase the likelihood that CWG-listed actions will receive funding for implementation.

CONSTRAINTS

The prioritized list of management actions and details for implementation are recommendations from the CWGs to SEFCRI. As this is a community-based process, there is no mandate for SEFCRI and any other entity to implement these recommendations.

Scope of work and timelines are defined and therefore constrained by funding grants and contractual agreements that provide support to the *Our Florida Reefs Community Planning Process*.

Community Working Group meetings will adhere to applicable requirements of Florida's "Government in the Sunshine" Act and FDEP policies regarding public meetings.

HOW WE WILL WORK TOGETHER

Collaborative Values

North CWG members and alternates understand that we can accomplish more together as a group than separately as individuals. We therefore agree to interact with others involved in this process in ways that support the core values of collaborative group decision-making:

1. Full Participation
2. Mutual Understanding
3. Inclusive Solutions
4. Shared Responsibility for Implementation

We understand that the benefits of adhering to these collaborative values are stronger members, stronger groups, stronger agreements, and broader support for action.

Group Norms

We will develop group norms that intentionally support and help us to act on our values as a collaborative group. Our group norms will be simple reminders of how we will treat each other and how we will approach our work together. Our group norms will be appended to this Charter after our approval, and can be modified as needed.

Consensus-Based Decision Making

We understand that the more CWG members understand and support decisions, the more likely it is that our recommendations will be implemented. We therefore agree to participate in a process of consensus-based decision making, which means doing the hard work of trying to reach a high level of agreement on substantive decisions, guided by the facilitator and by the core values of collaborative group decision-making. This will involve polling to determine level of agreement and further discussion if needed to resolve differences, followed by voting.

Decision Rules

We will agree on two decision rules: one for voting on informal procedural decisions and one for voting on formal recommendations (listing and prioritizing management actions). Our decision rules will be appended to this Charter after our approval. Our decision rules can be modified if a quorum (at least 50% of all CWG members) is present and if 83% of those present vote in favor of a modification to a decision rule.

Voting

When voting on formal recommendations (listing and prioritizing management actions), a quorum of at least 50% of CWG members must be present at the meeting. Only CWG members can vote on formal recommendations. Alternates can vote only on informal procedural decisions.

MEMBERSHIP

Selection of Members and Alternates

The North Community Working Group will have up to 25 members representing groups in Palm Beach and Martin counties who have a stake in coral reefs. The South Community Working Group will have up to 25 members representing groups in Broward and Miami-Dade counties who have a stake in coral reefs. SEFCRI will select non-government CWG members based on criteria evaluated through an application process. Applicants will submit a CWG application with letters of recommendation. SEFCRI may ask for further information or to interview the applicant. Government representatives will be appointed to the CWG by their respective agency and will submit an application to ensure that they meet the same criteria for selection of CWG members.

Each CWG member may select an alternate who, when the member is not able to attend a meeting, will do so on behalf of the CWG member and will represent that stakeholder group. CWG members will select their alternate based on the same criteria for selection of CWG members. A list of CWG members and alternates, with contact information, will be appended to this Charter.

Members and alternates will serve until completion of the *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process, defined by submittal of a final combined list of prioritized recommended management actions with information on implementation for priority actions. This process is expected to be completed by October 2016.

Attendance

CWG members will make every effort to attend CWG meetings and events in person. If a CWG member does not attend more than 4 meetings or does not attend more than 2 consecutive meetings, and does not arrange for their alternate to attend CWG meetings when the member cannot, then the SEFCRI Chair may choose to remove and replace that member.

Attrition

A CWG member or alternate may resign at any time by sending an email to the SEFCRI Chair. If a CWG member or alternate resigns or is removed, they will be replaced according to the procedure described in this Charter.

Removal

CWG members and alternates serve at the discretion of the SEFCRI Chair who may, after consultation with SEFCRI members and the facilitator, recommend removal if a CWG member or alternate:

- is convicted of a felony offense,
- uses their position as a CWG member or alternate for personal gain or to advance a personal agenda,

- physically threatens or harms anyone during a CWG meeting or event,
- intentionally misrepresents the *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process,
- refuses to recuse them self during discussion of matters in which they are determined to have a conflict of interest,
- has a change in professional affiliation or personal circumstances such that they can no longer represent their stakeholder group or,
- consistently violates this Charter.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

CWG members and alternates will openly acknowledge any real conflicts of interest and refrain from using their position on the working group to secure unfair or inappropriate privilege, gain, or benefit. We will openly acknowledge any potential or perceived conflicts of interest to prevent misunderstandings that could detract from the success or credibility of the *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process.

CWG members or alternates who have a real or potential conflict of interest in a matter before the CWG will identify such conflict prior to discussion of that matter. The CWG will decide, after discussion and vote, if that member or alternate should recuse them self from discussion and/or voting on that matter. If agreement on recusal cannot be reached by the CWG, then the SEFCRI Chair will decide.

COMMITTEES

The Community Working Groups may create committees as needed to accomplish specific tasks. Committees will abide by this Charter.

PRIMARY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Facilitator

The facilitator of the *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process is an independent neutral professional who works in service to the client (SEFCRI) and the Community Working Groups, to impartially guide them as they work to achieve their mission.

The primary roles and responsibilities of the facilitator, detailed in the facilitator's contractual agreement, are to coordinate with SEFCRI to:

- Design and facilitate CWG and other meeting processes that adhere to collaborative group values of full participation, mutual understanding, inclusive solutions, and shared responsibility for implementation;
- Facilitate development and adoption of CWG policies and procedures (Charter);
- Work with each CWG to develop a coordinated Work Plan;
- Identify goals and objectives for meetings to achieve overall goal;
- Facilitate meetings to achieve goals and objectives;
- Coordinate meeting logistics as needed for proper meeting preparation;
- Develop process and public agendas for all meetings;
- Provide appropriate notice for all meetings and send meeting reminders,
- Assist with informal meetings that allow CWG members to continue working between CWG meetings;
- Coordinate with CWG members for requests for additional work and;

- Review meeting summaries provided by SEFCRI.

CWG Members

The primary roles and responsibilities of Community Working Group members are to:

- Be committed to successfully achieving the mission of this effort;
- Actively and constructively participate in CWG meetings throughout the duration of the *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process;
- Enhance their knowledge and understanding of topics related to preserving and protecting the Florida Reef Tract;
- Prepare for meetings by reading information provided;
- Follow-up after meetings by completing assignments;
- Prepare alternate to participate constructively in meetings if/when needed;
- Understand and accurately represent the interests of their assigned stakeholder group;
- Facilitate exchange of information obtained through this process with their stakeholder group and obtain authority, when necessary, to vote on behalf of the stakeholder group;
- When necessary, clarify whether they are speaking as representatives of their stakeholder group, as individuals, or for a broader constituency;
- Work collaboratively with other CWG members and SEFCRI;
- Balance regional perspective of the Florida Reef Tract with localized knowledge of southeast Florida, and;
- Accurately and fairly represent the activities of the *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process.

Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative

The primary roles and responsibilities of the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative and its various teams and members are to:

- Guide the overall development and successful completion of the *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process;
- Coordinate with the facilitator to efficiently plan, prepare for, and conduct CWG and related meetings that are accessible to the public;
- Provide information and assistance needed to enable the CWGs to fulfill their mission, and;
- Review and provide input on CWG recommendations regarding management actions, their priority, and implementation details for priority actions.

Public Observers

The primary roles and responsibilities of members of the public are to:

- Understand the mission of the *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process;
- Learn about topics related to preserving and protecting the Florida Reef Tract;
- Actively and constructively participate in the *Our Florida Reefs* Community Planning Process by providing verbal or written comments during designated times at CWG meetings or providing written comments via the *Our Florida Reefs* website (www.OurFloridaReefs.org), and;
- Consult with and provide input to CWG members who represent their interests.

WORK PLAN

Each CWG will develop a Work Plan designed to achieve their mission in a timely manner and to produce a prioritized list of recommended management actions, with implementation details for priority actions, that is broadly supported by CWG members.

The Work Plan will include general goals for each meeting, meeting dates, and timelines for products. The CWG will review this Work Plan at each meeting and amend as needed. The Work Plan will be appended to this Charter after our approval.

COMMUNICATIONS

To assure transparency and equity, and to avoid perception of bias, CWG members and their alternates will submit questions and requests at CWG meetings or via email to Meghan Balling with the FDEP Coral Reef Conservation Program at Meghan.Balling@dep.state.fl.us or 305-795-1221. FDEP will respond to questions and requests from CWG members and their alternates at CWG meetings or via email to CWG members and their alternates, as appropriate.

PUBLIC ACCESS

CWG meetings are open to the public. All CWG meetings will be publicly noticed, although meeting room size may limit the number of seats available for members of the public. Meeting agendas, summaries, presentations, and information will be posted on the *Our Florida Reefs* website. The public will have various means of submitting comment: 3-minute verbal comment during a designated time at CWG meetings, and written comment at CWG meetings and via the *Our Florida Reefs* website (www.OurFloridaReefs.org).

CHARTER REVISIONS

This Charter will remain in effect until the dissolution of the Community Working Groups. Revisions to this Charter may be made by the Community Working Groups as they determine is necessary.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. North Community Working Group - Members and Alternates

Stakeholder Group	North CWG Member	Alternate (as of 05-08-2014)
Academic Institution	Crystal Lucas	
Academic Institution	Mitch Comiskey	
Citizen at Large	Evelyn MacQueen	
Citizen at Large	Michael David Anderson	
County Rep	Carman Vare	Janet Phipps
County Rep	Kathy Fitzpatrick	Baret Barry
Diving Interest	Peter Friedman	
Diving Interest	Lou Romano	Stan Mihalecz
Diving Interest	Nikole Ordway	
Enforcement	Ron Messa	
Environmental NGO	Andrea Graves	Mike Renda
Environmental NGO	Greg Braun	
Environmental NGO	Vincent Ecomio	
EPA	Richard Harvey	
FDEP	Irene Arpayoglou	Kelly Egan
Fishing Interest	Oliver Green	
Fishing Interest	Scott Fawcett	
Fishing Interest	Butch Olsen	
FWC	Jeff Beal	Erin McDevitt
NOAA	Dana Wusinich-Mendez	Jocelyn Karazsia
Private Business	April Price	
Private Business	Lee Shepard	
Private Business	Mike Brescher	
Water Sports	Tom Warnke	

Appendix 2. Group Norms

- Be committed to achieving the mission.
- Be tough on issues and ideas but easy on individual people, and always seek common ground.
- Be respectful of the speaker.
- Every idea is worthy of being heard.
- Be prepared, and participate.
- Stay on point and be respectful of others' time.

Appendix 3. Decision Rules

Procedural Votes – Charter (group norms, work plan, decision rules), criteria for listing and prioritizing management actions, all other votes

Decision Rule = 65% of those present

Formal Recommendation Votes - Listing and prioritizing recommended management actions

Decision Rule = 83% of those present, at least 50% quorum required

Appendix 4. Work Plan

WORK PLAN - NORTH COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP

Approved at 03-27-2014 meeting (version 07)

GOALS ↓			Thur. Mar 27, 2014	Mon. Apr 28, 2014	Wed. May 28, 2014	Wed. Jun 25, 2014	Wed. Jul 23, 2014	Wed. Aug 27, 2014	Wed. Sep 24, 2014	Wed. Oct 22, 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014
CWG: Get organized (Charter, Work Plan)			Mtg 1	Mtg 2								
CWG: Learn about coral reefs and issues from SEFCRI and each other			Mtg 1	Mtg 2	Mtg 3	Mtg 4	Mtg 5	Workshop - Decision Support Tool				
CWG: Develop shared interests & vision for southeast Florida coral reefs			Mtg 1	Mtg 2	Mtg 3	Mtg 4	Mtg 5					
SEFCRI: Provide criteria for listing and prioritizing management actions							X					
CWG: Develop management actions								Mtg 6	Mtg 7	Mtg 8		
SEFCRI: Review CWG management actions											X	X
	Jan 2015	Wed. Feb 25, 2015	Wed. Mar 25, 2015	Wed. Apr 22, 2015	May 2015	Jun 2015	Jul 2015	Wed. Aug 26, 2015	Sep 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015
SEFCRI: Review CWG management actions	X											
CWG: Review SEFCRI comments on management actions		Mtg 9										
CWG: Refine and prioritize management actions		Mtg 9	Mtg 10	Mtg 11								
SEFCRI: Review CWG prioritization of management actions					X	X	X					
CWG: Review SEFCRI comments on prioritization & refine as needed								Mtg 12				
CWG: Assemble implementation information for top-priority management actions								Mtg 12				
SEFCRI: Combine North & South CWG lists									X			
SEFCRI: Plan public meetings									X	X		
SEFCRI: Convene public meetings for comment on management actions											*	
SEFCRI: Compile public comment on management actions												X
	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	Apr 2016	May 2016	Jun 2016	Jul 2016	Aug 2016	Sep 2016			
CWG: (optional) Review public comment & refine list of management actions	Mtg 13 optional		Mtg 14 optional		Mtg 15 optional							
SEFCRI: Prepare final report						X	X	X	X			