

Prioritized List of *Our Florida Reefs* Recommended Management Actions

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| Priority 1 | N-70 | Protect and restore mangroves, seagrass beds, oyster reefs and other estuarine habitats. |
| | N-146 | Establish and implement a Marine Protected Area (MPA) zoning framework for areas of special interest within the OFR region to enable sustainable use, reduce user conflict, and improve coral reef ecosystem conditions. Tools that could be used to improve coral reef habitat may include no-take reserves, no anchor areas, restoration areas, and seasonal protection for spawning aggregations. |
| | S-99 | Increase number of FWC enforcement officers; funding for enforcement; recruitment and retention of on water officers to improve enforcement for better protection of resources. |
| | N-68 | Reduce and regulate fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides, and pesticides and promote BMPs to reduce nutrient and pollutant loading to improve water quality and provide protection to the reefs and promote the use of Florida friendly herbicides and pesticides-to eliminate adverse impacts to the coastal environment and its watershed. |
| | N-82 | Support and promote existing and create innovative new initiatives that increase storm water storage, and reduce stormwater runoff, enhance treatment, increase reuse, and reduce nutrients and other contaminants to the watershed, especially from surface water, to restore healthy estuaries. |
| | N-78 | Reduce ground water pollution from sources such as septic and storage tank infrastructure to watersheds associated with priority reef areas to improve water quality and reef health. |
| | S-104 | Set new and appropriate water turbidity standards and support the efforts to improve turbidity monitoring methods for marine construction to limit damage from coastal constructions to reefs and associated habitats. |
| | N-69 | Support and provide money incentives and initiatives to restore and preserve wetlands north of Lake Okeechobee to stop discharges to coastal estuaries to protect estuaries and reefs. |
| | S-28 | Support Everglades flow restoration to reduce LBSP and improve water quality in estuaries and inlet contributing areas connected to the coral reef ecosystems of SE Florida. |
| | S-65 | Nominate the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative region for consideration as a National Marine Sanctuary to be co-managed with the State of Florida to engender protection and benefits, a legal forum, discussion, understanding and collaboration, and balance uses towards sustainable resources. |
| | N-71 | Maintain and coordinate a unified monitoring program to detect, identify, and eliminate sources of pollution flowing through inlets to improve water quality and protection to reef. |
| | N-97 | Target, prioritize, and implement LBSP reduction activities at identified pollution hotspots within SEFCRI watersheds to improve coastal water quality. |
| | S-92 | Protect reefs from anchor damage during beach and coastal events (i.e. festivals, air shows, etc.). |
| | S-120 | Improve management and maintenance activities of beaches to reduce impacts to coral reefs (including nearshore reefs), make beaches more sustainable, and minimize need for future renourishment projects. |
| | N-35 | Develop and implement a cross-training program for local marine units and beach patrol officers, to improve recognition of conservation regulations, increase law enforcement presence on the water and provide additional enforcement for peak periods to build relationships between agencies and decrease marine-related violations. |
| | N-137 | Designate the entire SEFCRI region as a particularly sensitive sea areas (PSSA) and/or area to be avoided (ATBA). |
| | S-8 | Establish coral reef gardens, which are areas for the recovery, restoration, and recruitment of corals and fish, created under strong guidance from scientists and monitored by the community through an educational campaign. |
| Priority 2 | N-5 | Enhance the SEFCRI Florida reefs and ecosystems curriculum, including educating educators on available resources, and mandate that it be taught once in elementary school, once in middle school and once in high school (every school year) to provide science-based foundation for making future decisions to protect coral reefs. |
| | S-25 | Strongly encourage elected and regulatory officials to oppose extensions to dates established in existing sewage treatment outfalls legislation to ensure the timely closure (prior to 2025) of all treated wastewater outfall pipes and build/upgrade infrastructure for advanced water treatment and reuse capacity to improve ocean water quality. |
| | N-113 | Eliminate Lake Worth inlet port expansion project to reduce siltation on coral reefs and keep coastal communities and habitat in balance. |
| | N-114 | Reinstate funding for regulatory agencies (reinstate SED FDEP Dive Teams) to provide in water permit compliance monitoring as needed for reef related projects, and assist other agencies with monitoring (fish/coral surveys). |
| | N-116 | Coordinate and implement regional "living shoreline" objectives to increase the use and protection of natural infrastructure (e.g., coral reefs, native vegetation, mangrove wetlands) to provide natural barriers to storm surge and maintain coastal biodiversity with the agreement of property owners. |
| | N-1 | Educate the public on the effects of land-based sources of pollution to reduce the amount of pollutants entering storm drains and waterways |
| | S-1 | Remove tires and debris from failed Broward County (Ft. Lauderdale and Deerfield Beach) (a.k.a. Osborne tire reef) artificial tire reef projects and the reef tract to eliminate damage to existing corals. |
| | S-100 | Support redefining the Port of Miami anchorage zone to remove four areas with reported coral from the existing anchor zone, reduce anchor damage currently being caused by ships anchoring zone which includes some coral reef. |
| | S-102 | Develop and integrate more effective quality control procedures in the regulatory framework, and triggers within permits for corrective action during coastal development projects to ensure protection of marine habitat and species. |
| | N-44 | Educate relevant judges and prosecuting attorneys on the importance of imposing penalties for environmental violations that are severe enough to prevent future violations. |
| | N-15 | Promote citizen supported organization (CSO) Friends of Our Florida Reefs to enable better community engagement in coral reef efforts and target funding for conservation activities more effectively and efficiently. |
| | S-108 | Revise/create UMAM (Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method) for coral reef environments to improve application of this rule to coastal ecosystems, to provide more consistent/accurate calculations, and to ensure ecological functions are maintained. |
| | S-103 | Incorporate existing, and adaptively integrate, Best Management Practices into project design and construction practices to avoid and minimize impacts to coral reefs from coastal construction projects. |
| | S-97 | In order to reduce habitat damage that occurs during lobster mini season, maintain lobster mini season but reduce the bag limit to six lobsters per person per day to be consistent reef-tract wide, and require the review of educational materials and completion of an educational quiz in order to receive an annual spiny lobster permit. |
| | S-2 | Create and fund one SEFCRI-wide mooring buoy program as a more coordinated and cost effective way of protecting reefs from anchor damage. |
| | N-25 | Strengthen penalties and fines for non-compliance of reef- related regulations, to include civil penalties, to discourage illegal activities, and to express that violations will not be tolerated. |
| | S-54 | Apply for United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) world heritage site status for entire Florida Reef Tract to increase awareness and appreciation of the ecological and cultural significance of Florida's coral reef ecosystem. |

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| Priority 3 | S-114 | Create and implement a mechanism that allows permitting agencies to apply lessons learned from past projects to future projects to minimize impacts to resources and improve success of mitigation activities. |
| | S-124 | Facilitate the creation of regional (inlet-to-inlet) beach management strategies, such as can be achieved through a beach management agreement (BMA), which take an ecosystem approach to projects such as beach nourishment and storm-water pipe removal to maintain beaches and protect resources. |
| | N-59 | Establish maximum size limits to complement existing regulations for ecologically significant reef-associated fish species (including but not limited to grouper and snapper species and hogfish) to increase numbers of the larger, more fecund individuals within the southeast Florida assemblage. |
| | N-8 | Promote public education programs like “be Floridian”, “rain gardens”, “nature scape”, and “Florida Yards and Neighborhoods” to encourage eco-friendly yard and garden maintenance to help reduce the amount of nutrients and other pollutants reaching the reefs through residential run-off. |
| | N-120 | Encourage influential entities to lobby for legislation to overturn current legislation restricting bans on plastic bags to protect marine habitats and wildlife. |
| | N-75 | Promote/offer free pump out stations to better water quality and allow boats a better option than dumping off shore. |
| | S-125 | Request FWC to make a rule change in the marine life rule to better define the word “take” (take, touch, anchor on, or damage in any way) to improve enforcement of Coral Reef Protection Act. |
| | S-107 | Encourage region-wide biological monitoring (e.g. via BMAs) to document condition of resources that may be impacted by nourishment projects and inform regulatory decisions to ensure ecological functions are maintained. |
| | S-101 | Create a training program based on existing Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will be required for coastal construction on-site project contractors to be implemented by January 1, 2020, as required in a coastal construction permit. |
| | S-67 | Provide incentives to divers and fishermen to eradicate invasive species of marine organisms proliferating the SEFCRI coral reef system to provide a natural ecological balance of marine and plant life for the coral reef system. |
| | N-117 | Improve impact minimization and mitigation activities for unavoidable impacts to resources to reduce and offset lost ecosystem function; including the use of non-traditional mitigation strategies. |
| | S-95 | Perform comprehensive study to determine how to improve law enforcement management to match assets and personnel to public needs to increase efficiency and improve employee retention. |
| | S-116 | Maintain the ecological function of the wrackline by reducing beach raking practices. |
| | N-23 | Following the example and spirit of successful “Blue Star” programs in Florida other develop areas of the world, create a voluntary marine industry education/certification program in the SEFCRI region to increase professional and consumer user awareness, responsibility, and personal pride, leading to voluntary reduction of typical user reef damage and negative impacts. |
| | S-87 | Modify or enhance existing regulations to increase protection for parrotfish and other important herbivores for coral ecosystem protection. |
| | N-19 | Make nautical charts featuring reef benthic natural resource coverage in the SEFCRI region widely available and accessible to boaters. |
| S-106 | Establish an educational turbidity monitoring certification program to improve the quality of turbidity data that are used to evaluate project-related threats to resources. | |
| Priority 4 | S-110 | Eliminate over beach discharge of water to eliminate those sources of beach erosion reducing the amount of beach fill needed which may improve near shore water quality. |
| | N-123 | Develop and implement a sustainable finance plan to support coral reef conservation efforts in the SEFCRI Region. |
| | S-86 | Ban live mounts of all shark species (catch for the sole purpose of taxidermy/mounting or marketing with no intention to retain) in order to reduce shark mortality due to charter fishing practices that ensure mount sales and dockside marketing and promote proper handling and release techniques for shark species to reduce mortality in catch & release scenarios. |
| | N-94 | Create, support and promote a certification program and adaptive Best Management Practices for all golf courses (similar to Blue Star for dive industry and clean marina programs) to provide an incentive mechanism for golf courses to eliminate adverse impacts on the coastal environment and its watershed. |
| | S-98 | Simplify FWC rules and regulations to reduce complexity (fish sizes fork length versus overall - snapper one size, grouper one size, and pelagic) to make rules simpler and standardize catch size limits for important species with similar life histories and appearance to make it easier to enforce regulations and catch within limits. |
| | N-64 | Encourage voluntary labeling of lead line for all cast nets over six feet, as well as reporting the day, time and coordinates of any lost nets to St. Lucie Inlet Preserve State Park staff, SEAFAN, or participating local dive shops for retrieval on an as needed basis, for commercial and recreational fisherman, within the preserve to prevent and track lost gear (ghost nets). |
| | N-37 | Continue to improve existing Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission hotline and significantly increase (at least double existing investment in) marketing about the hotline to more efficiently report emergencies or violations, send pictures, and be able to report a problem to assist agencies to enforce the regulations that protect our coral reefs. |
| | N-36 | Develop a stakeholder initiative to raise the cost of recreational lobster stamps statewide and dedicate the additional funds for improved species enforcement in the southeast Florida region (including Monroe County). |
| | N-7 | Offer an online exam to receive a discount on fishing licenses (create an incentive-based program). |
| | N-14 | Enhance distribution of materials (continue current activities) highlighting the economic and recreational values of southeast Florida reefs to enhance awareness by residents, elected officials, and visitors. |
| | N-18 | Augment existing fishery and coral reef education programs to incorporate multi-cultural fishing practices including addressing environmental ethics. |
| | S-91 | Develop a telephone app to allow the public to photograph violations and document time, boat numbers, GIS coordinates, and violation to state FWC and federal enforcement personnel to improve regulatory compliance and enforcement and improve public involvement, outreach and education concerning coastal protection in Florida. |
| | N-21 | Develop and distribute welcome information digital video or image packages for new Florida residents and visitors that provide information on impacts to reef systems and how they can be addressed to raise awareness and influence behavior change to reduce impacts to reefs. |
| | N-27 | Establish co-management agreements with capable and responsible local communities and NGOs to address staff capacity gaps at FWC and FDEP. |
| | S-75 | Initiate voluntary donation program from all reef users via licensed dive boats or fishing boats/charters. This donation would support reef conservation programs or projects. |
| | N-41 | Develop a voluntary “Florida Reef Tract Stewardship and Job Creation fund” fee to fund education and conservation programs. |
| S-52 | Create an effective reef protection mascot/logo campaign to increase awareness for protection. | |

Focus Area Color Key:

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| Education and Outreach |
| Enforcement |
| Fishing, Diving, Boating, and Other Uses/Restoration |
| Land-Based Sources of Pollution |
| Maritime Industry and Coastal Construction Impacts |
| Place-Based Management Strategy |