

# Our Florida Reefs Community Working Groups Yearbook



## ***Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Members***

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		Nikole Ordway	Force-E Divers	<a href="mailto:nikole_padi@yahoo.com">nikole_padi@yahoo.com</a>	9
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	Enforcement	Ron Messa	National Oceanic and Atmospheric	<a href="mailto:ron.messa@noaa.gov">ron.messa@noaa.gov</a>	10
	Environmental NGO	Greg Braun	Martin County Conservation Alliance	<a href="mailto:dgregbraun@aol.com">dgregbraun@aol.com</a>	5
		Dr. Vincent Encomio	Florida Oceanographic Society	<a href="mailto:vencomio@floridaocean.org">vencomio@floridaocean.org</a>	6
		Andrea Graves	The Nature Conservancy	<a href="mailto:agraves@tnc.org">agraves@tnc.org</a>	7
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		Scott Fawcett	S.P.F. Fishing Charters, Off the Chain Fishing	<a href="mailto:fishscottyf@bellsouth.net">fishscottyf@bellsouth.net</a>	

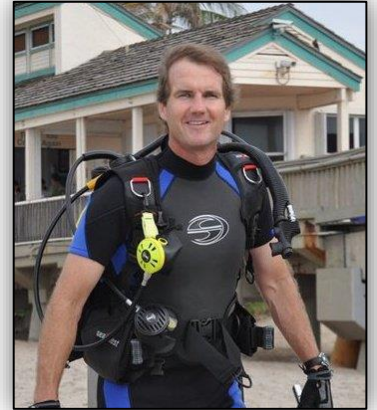
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		Lee Shepherd	Intracoastal EcoSystems, LLC	intracoastalecosystems@gmail.com	13
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	Watersports	Tom Warnke	Surfrider Foundation	trwarnke@hotmail.com	16
South	Academic Institution	Dr. Dick Dodge	Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center	dodge@nova.edu	6
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	County Government	Dr. Ken Banks	Broward County	kbanks@broward.org	4
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	Enforcement	Don Vacin	Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission	donald.vacin@myfwc.com	16
	Environmental NGO	Jane Fawcett	Vone Research	jfawcett@bellsouth.net	7

		Scott Sheckman	Friends of the National Ocean Policy	scott@isheck.net	13
		Angela Smith	Shark Savers	angelasmith@rcn.com	13
	Federal Government	Dr. Jim Bohnsack	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	jim.bohnsack@noaa.gov	5
		Lt. Ruth Sadowitz	United States Coast Guard		12
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		Manuel Toldeo	Toledo Sales, Inc.	mannyt@bellsouth.net	15
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		Alex Sommers	Institute for Supply Management	alex_sommers@yahoo.com	14
		Stephanie Voris	Calvin Giodano & Associates, Inc.	svoris@cgasolutions.com	16
	State Government	Jennifer Peterson	Florida Department of Environmental Protection	Jennifer.M.Peterson@dep.state.fl.us	11
		Mason Smith	Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission	mason.smith@myfwc.com	14
	Watersports	Howard Lustgarten	Roof Management Solutions	howard0734@aol.com	9

## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Michael David Anderson – Citizen at Large, North

David is originally from Sheffield, Alabama. He grew up recreating on the Tennessee River and vacationing along the Gulf of Mexico. He has always held a keen interest in marine life and became a certified scuba diver in the early 1990s. At the time, marine science remained a hobby and an area of interest as he pursued his Bachelor's degree in history from Auburn University and a Master's degree in geography from the University of Alabama. He then accepted a job to live in Nassau, Bahamas, and taught in the Natural and Environmental Sciences Department at the College of the Bahamas. While in the Bahamas, he took advantage of the great Scuba diving opportunities to receive his Rescue Diver and Divemaster certifications. After a couple of years in the Bahamas, he moved stateside and attended the PhD program at the University of South Carolina, specializing in coastal and marine geography. He now resides in Highland Beach and works for the City of Boca Raton as a Marine Turtle Specialist at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center. He is also an Adjunct Professor at Broward College, a member of several academic and environmental organizations, and an avid fan of Auburn University athletics.



### Dr. Ken Banks – County Government, South

Dr. Ken Banks works for Broward County, in the Environmental Protection and Community Resilience Division as the manager of the Marine Resources Program. He is responsible for the management and implementation of interdisciplinary research teams and programs related to coral reef mapping and monitoring (using LIDAR, multibeam and side scan sonars, low altitude aerial photography, and *in situ* diver mapping techniques), coastal water quality, marine resources damage assessment and restoration, coastal engineering projects (erosion studies, wave and current studies, environmental assessments, and mitigation projects), and coastal conservation. Dr. Banks also helps develop policy for coastal resources management.



### Jeff Beal – State Government, North

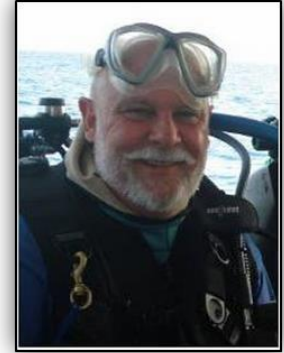
Jeff Beal is a Biological Scientist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission's Marine Estuarine Subsection. He's worked in the field of aquatic habitat conservation and restoration in Florida for 20 years, focusing mostly on fish habitats and water quality improvements. He conducts grant-funded projects involving the restoration of aquatic habitats (mangrove marshes, seagrasses, coral reefs, floodplain wetlands, and river oxbows) and associated monitoring of biological and environmental parameters. He's actively involved in FWC's Florida Marine Fisheries Enhancement Initiative, a program designed to address the needs of our future state coastal fisheries. Each of fourteen sites statewide will encompass a three-pronged Marine Enhancement Center approach toward state-of-the-art fisheries enhancement: hatchery-reared species, coastal habitat restoration, and environmental education. Previous employers include the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Caribbean Marine Research Center, Florida Institute of Technology, and Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute. He received a BS in marine biology from Jacksonville University and an MS in marine science from Florida Institute of Technology.



## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Dr. Jim Bohnsack – Federal Government, South

Dr. Jim Bohnsack is currently a Supervisory Research Fishery Biologist with NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service at the Southeast Fisheries Science Center. He is also an Adjunct Professor at the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, University of Miami, and a founding member of the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF). Dr. Bohnsack received his BS from Tulane University and his MS and PhD from the University of Miami. As a marine ecologist, he conducts research to better measure and understand the influence and impacts of human activities on marine ecosystems. His goals are to provide necessary knowledge to help sustain and restore coral reef productivity, improve fishery management, and increase public understanding, appreciation, and awareness of the importance of marine ecosystems.



### Greg Braun – Environmental NGO, North

Greg Braun is a professional ecologist with over 20 years of experience in environmental projects in Florida, the Bahamas and the Caribbean. Greg specializes in natural resource assessments, coastal and freshwater wetland ecosystems and habitat restoration projects.

A Certified Environmental Professional, Greg provides ecological consulting services to governmental agencies, non-governmental conservation organizations and private property owners. He serves on the Steering Committee of the Southeast Florida Scrub Ecosystem Working Group, Martin County's Land Acquisition Selection Committee, and the Board of Directors of the Treasure Coast Chapter of the Florida Association of Environmental Professionals.

A graduate of Florida Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of Science degree in Oceanography, Greg's company, Sustainable Ecosystems International, is based in Jupiter, FL, and focuses on threatened and endangered species, including Florida scrub-jays, manatees, gopher tortoises, Johnson's seagrass and a variety of beach and dune species.



### Mike Brescher – Private Business, North



### Dan Clark – Citizen at Large, South

Dan Clark is the President of Cry of the Water, a coral reef conservation group in Broward County. As a diver of over 35 years he has historical knowledge of local reefs that he uses to protect our marine environment. Seeing the decline in the local reefs he formed Cry of the Water to conduct coral reef health surveys. He was the first to document and report the thicket of *A. cervicornis* (staghorn), the high diversity ledge off Ft. Lauderdale, and two new colonies of *A. palmata* (elkhorn) in Broward County. Using his underwater video skills he produced video tapes and CD's to raise awareness of our local reefs. Dan has been a member of the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative since 2002, participating on numerous projects over the years.

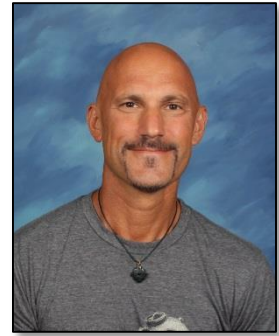




## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Mitch Comiskey – Academic Institution, North

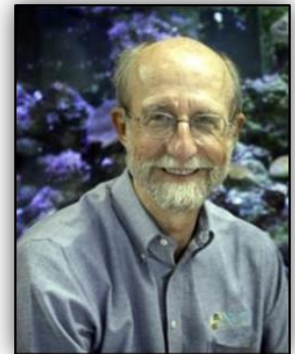
Mitchell Comiskey has spent 27 years as a public school educator. He has a degree in marine science and works to infuse his love for our ocean and coral reefs whenever possible into his curriculum. In addition, he is an avid diver, boater, kayaker and marine photographer. These hobbies have allowed him to witness firsthand how the diversity of life on our unique coral reefs are continually threatened by the pressures of our coastal community and in need of protection in order to survive.



### Skip Dana – Fishing, South

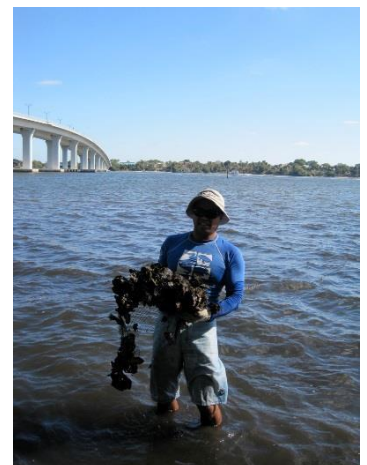
### Dr. Dick Dodge – Academic Institution, South

Dr. Richard E. Dodge is Dean of, and Professor at, the Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center. Dr. Dodge is also Executive Director of the Center's National Coral Reef Institute which is devoted to providing management research outcomes on reef monitoring, assessment, and restoration. Dr. Dodge received his BS from the University of Maine, and his MS and PhD from Yale University. He is the author of many publications in the scientific literature and reports for various agencies and companies. He has expertise on the effects of natural and man-induced impacts to coral reefs and is well versed in assessing and analyzing effects from physical damage and pollution on coral reefs. This includes experience with sedimentation effects, bomb range impacts, ship grounding damage, adverse effects of oil to coral reefs and coral reef environments, and studies and projects evaluating impacts of coastal construction, development, and liquid natural gas ports. His experience includes economic analysis and use of Habitat Equivalency Analysis.



### Dr. Vincent Encomio – Environmental NGO, North

Dr. Vincent Encomio is the Senior Scientist at the Florida Oceanographic Society (FOS). Vincent arrived at FOS from Fort Myers, Florida, where he worked as a Research Associate in the Department of Marine and Environmental Sciences at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU). At FGCU Vincent conducted research on the effects of freshwater releases, sedimentation, and red tide on oysters and clams. Prior to that, Vincent did his graduate research at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. He earned his PhD in Marine Science by comparing the effects of disease on oyster biochemistry and physiology among oyster stocks with varying disease tolerance. For the last 5 years, Vincent has been responsible for implementing and expanding FOS' oyster restoration program, a program which has not only worked to restore oysters on the Treasure Coast, but also directly involved local communities in this effort. Vincent is also actively involved in furthering citizen science activities at Florida Oceanographic to engage the community and inspire environmental stewardship.



## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Jane Fawcett – Environmental NGO, South

Jane Fawcett is the Operations Officer of Vöñē Research Inc, a well-respected non-profit organization comprised of highly skilled volunteer divers that work together to provide research, education, conservation, and preservation of Florida’s oceanic and maritime historical and archaeological resources. Presently Jane is working on the “Coral and Fisheries Habitat Restoration” project using Biorock technology in the Town of Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, a collaborative effort between Vöñē Research and Global Coral Reef Alliance. She oversees a Special Activity License to harvest corals of opportunity. The Biorock reef restoration project is the first of its kind in the United States and the only one in the world using solar powered buoys. She has been snorkeling and diving in Broward and Monroe Counties for over 40 years. She remains committed to the motto of Vöñē Research, “Diving to Make a Difference” and ensuring that the beautiful local reefs are protected for future generations.



### Kathy Fitzpatrick – County Government, North

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### Peter Friedman – Diving, North

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### Andrea Graves – Environmental NGO, North

Andrea Graves has been with The Nature Conservancy for 19 years and has experience in community education and outreach, writing and editing, partnership-building, preserve management and oyster habitat restoration. In her current position as the Director of Blowing Rocks Preserve, she is responsible for overseeing operations, management and staffing of a 73-acre barrier island sanctuary with a heavy public-use component. This has made her well aware of the area’s coastal resource management issues as well as the need to balance sustainability of the natural system with sustainability of the community and economy. As a boat owner and avid snorkeler, she also has a personal commitment to protecting southeast Florida’s coral reef system. Andrea will serve on the Our Florida Reef Community Working Group as a representative of the environmental non-governmental organizations in Martin and Palm Beach counties.



### Oliver Green – Fishing, North

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## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Rebecca Johnson – Private Business, South

Rebecca Johnson has her own consulting firm, Triumph Fundraising. She works with local, state and federal elected officials to raise money for their campaigns. Her clients include South Miami Mayor Philip Stoddard who is endorsed by the Sierra Club, former Miami Beach Commissioner Michael Gongora who started the city's Sustainability Committee, and the senior Senator from Florida, Senator Bill Nelson, among others. Organizations in the Arts and in Education are also among her clients, such as Miami City Ballet and Adopt-A-Classroom.

She first came to Miami on a 5 week work assignment in 2000, and has never left. An enthusiastic Miami Beach resident, she has served her city as a member of the Community Development Advisory Committee, which advises the Commission on the distribution of its Community Development Block Grant funds, was a mentor to high school girls in the Women of Tomorrow Program, and is currently a volunteer at the Humane Society of Greater Miami.

A native of Southern California, Rebecca grew up waterskiing, camping on the beach and exploring the tidal pools at Cabrillo National Monument. Her environmental commitment was heightened during her undergraduate experience at the University of California Santa Barbara, the site of the first major oil spill that was the impetus for the creation of Earth Day. More than 20 years after the spill, the beaches were still so polluted with oil that no one dared to walk barefoot in the sand.

Participating in Our Florida Reefs gives her the opportunity to combine her love of the ocean and animals in a way that benefits her beloved South Florida community.



### Cindy Lott – State Government, North



## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Howard Lustgarden – Watersports, South

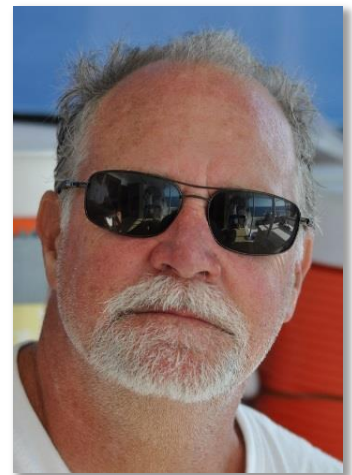
Howard has waterfront homes in both Jensen Beach, Fl. and Ft. Lauderdale and is an avid recreational boater and "sometime" fisherman. He and his wife Lynn-Ann practice all methods of sustainability when it involves our waterways and oceans. He has always had ties to the ocean starting with his earliest years growing up in Oceanside, NY. His lifetime love of the ocean has made him realize how important our coral reefs are to all sea organisms and life on earth.



### Jim Mathie – Diving, South

Jim Mathie retired in 2007 after serving 30 years with Deerfield Beach Fire Rescue. He advanced through the ranks as a Firefighter/Paramedic, Rescue Supervisor, Fire Inspector, Training/EMS Lieutenant, Battalion Chief and retired as a Division Chief. His responsibilities as a Division Chief included Emergency Medical Services and Emergency Management. For over 25 years Jim was also an adjunct faculty member at Broward Community College in the Emergency Medical Services Department. He holds an AS from Broward Community College in Fire Science, a BS from Nova Southeastern University in Public Administration and has completed numerous courses toward a MS at Florida International University in Adult Education. He received the Fire Chiefs' Association of Broward County 2010 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Jim's retirement allowed him to fulfill a life-long passion of diving. Author of two books, *Catching the BUG: The Comprehensive Guide to Catching the Spiny Lobster* and *Catching the Spear-it! The ABC's of Spearfishing*, Jim combined his years as an educator, underwater hunter and story teller to create these easy-to-read publications. Jim established CHIEFY, LLC in 2011 and his website can be viewed at [www.chiefy.net](http://www.chiefy.net).



### Jena McNeal – County Government, North

Originally from Iowa, Jena received her BS in Biology and Environmental Studies from Iowa State University and Master's in Marine Policy and Affairs from the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science. Currently she is the Artificial Reef Coordinator for Palm Beach County's Department of Environmental Resources Management. Jena previously worked for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) in the Submerged Lands and Environmental Resources Program. While there she worked in the compliance section for Environmental Resource Permits. Jena has also worked for FDEP's Coral Reef Conservation Program where she was the Reef Injury Prevention and Response Coordinator. Through these positions she has gained experience with the protection and mitigation of mangroves, seagrass, and coral reef ecosystems. Jena is also on the Board of Directors for the Friends of Our Florida Reefs.



## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Ron Messa – Enforcement, North

Special Agent Ron Messa has been with the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement for over 7 years and has been an investigator for over 23 years having also worked with the Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Customs Service as a Special Agent. The NOAA Office for Law Enforcement (OLE) is dedicated primarily to the enforcement of laws that protect and regulate the use of our nation's living marine resources. NOAA fisheries Special Agents have authority to enforce over 100 legislative acts under 35 statutes related to the conservation and marine resources and have jurisdiction of over 3.4 million square miles of water. Most NOAA OLE enforcement activities are conducted under one of the following laws: Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), and the Lacey Act. Special Agent Messa has investigated and had successfully prosecuted violations under all of the previously mentioned laws. Special Agent Messa has been recognized for his investigative work with the U.S. Department of Commerce gold medal and as an Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer of the Year by the U.S. Attorney's Office. From October 2011 – November 2014, Special Agent Messa served as the Acting Assistant Special Agent in charge overseeing investigations, operations and administrative functions for the NOAA OLE Miami Field Office area of responsibility which included the entire Atlantic coast of Florida extending around to Naples, FL including the Florida Keys and the Caribbean.



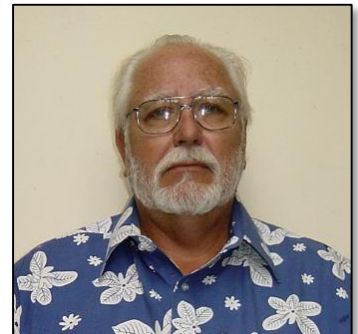
### Nick Morrell – Diving, South

Nick Morrell is one of the co-founders of the Miami Dade Reef Guard Association, started in late 2009 to promote mooring buoys on the coral reef adjacent to Miami Dade County. Nick comes from Poole, Dorset on the south coast of England and started diving at 16 as soon as the local dive club would let him use Scuba equipment. He received his physics degree from the University of Leicester, England and went on to work in the telecommunications industry. He is a PADI certified Master Scuba Diver Trainer and teaches part-time for South Beach Divers in Miami Beach as well as holds a US Captain's License for 6-pack boat operations.



### Dr. Kevin Muench – Fishing, South

Dr. Kevin Muench, has degrees in marine ecology and fisheries and a lifelong interest in coral reefs. He has visited and observed reef ecology and habitat for the last 50 years from the Atlantic and throughout the Pacific oceans observing the healthy reefs from decades ago to the current declining status of reefs worldwide. He has worked as a scientist in state, university, international and private firms all over the world. South Florida reefs from the 1960's to present is his ongoing concern with a focus on keeping our reefs healthy for the future. He has worked with and keeps in contact with both federal and local fisheries agencies, universities, as well as the International Game Fish Association, The Bass Federation, Bonefish & Tarpon Trust. He was a former fishing charter captain, dive shops owner and an advanced scuba instructor. He is an IFGA tournament observer with many years of contacts with event organizers, captains, guides and fishermen. He is vice-president of the Hollywood Hills Saltwater Fishing Science and Social Club, and attends many local fishing and science meetings.



## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Edward 'Butch' Olsen – Fishing, North

### Nikole Ordway – Diving, North

Nikole Ordway works at Force-E Scuba Centers as their social marketing manager and event coordinator as well as a PADI Master Instructor, Emergency First Response Instructor, Diver's Alert Network Instructor, Reef Check Course Director, Shark Saver's Florida Volunteer Coordinator, President of the SouthFlorida HammerHeads, founder of SCUBASirens, and a Diveheart Instructor. Nikole is originally from San Diego, CA and started diving at age 12 with her father. Nikole attended the University of San Diego State University and graduated with a degree in biology, with an emphasis in zoology. She became a dolphin trainer and dive supervisor for the US Navy's Marine Mammal program and was with this program for four years. After years of cold water diving, she decided to change it up and moved to Oahu, Hawaii in 2008 and pursued her boat captain's license and learned to breathe-hold free dive. After Hawaii she re-located to Florida and worked to become a PADI instructor.



### Jennifer Peterson – State Government, South

Dr. Jennifer M. Peterson, an Environmental Consultant at the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, reviews projects that are permitted by the Beaches, Mining, and Ports Program to evaluate potential impacts to coastal resources (such as hardbottom habitats and corals) and provides suggestions regarding monitoring and mitigation. Jennifer was born and raised in Tallahassee, Florida; she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences from Florida State University (Go Noles!) in 2007. Jennifer recently completed her dissertation "Ecological interactions influencing *Avicennia germinans* propagule dispersal and seedling establishment at mangrove-saltmarsh boundaries" at the University of South Florida. Jennifer is a field ecologist and has worked in a wide variety of Florida's coastal ecosystems. Her research interests include conservation biology, landscape ecology, ecological interactions, and ecosystem function. Jennifer aspires to improve the protection, management, and restoration of Florida's natural resources by applying ecological principles and research findings.





## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### April Price – Private Business, North

April Price is a native Floridian, born and raised in Fort Lauderdale and has resided on the Treasure Coast since 1984. As a teenager she worked with her father in his public relations and advertising firm on projects such as the Miami International and Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Shows, as well as political and promotional ad campaigns.

She married her husband Tim in 1978. They have raised two daughters; both girls have earned diplomas from Florida State University.

Along with her husband Tim, she founded and ran Southern Yacht Service from 1989-2002. April served on the board of the Marine Industries Association of the Treasure Coast from 1989-2004, including terms as vice-president and president. She also serves as the secretary for the Marine Industries Association of Florida. She served as the Governor's Appointee to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission from 2005-2007. In 2009, became the Governor's Appointee to the Florida Boating Advisory Council and continues to serve representing marine environmentalists.

Since establishing her own business in 2009, she's worked with the Pt. Salerno Seafood Festival, the Martin County Reef Builders Tournament, Blair Propeller, Marsh Island Club Marina, Sebastian Inlet Marina, Fort Pierce Oyster Festival, the Indian RiverKeeper, Martin County's Lionfish education program, founded Sea-Life Habitat Improvement Project, Inc. (SHIP) and has produced the Treasure Coast Waterway Cleanup since 2008.



### Lou Romano – Diving, North

Growing up in Miami during the early 1960s, Lou was fortunate to be involved in SCUBA, snorkeling, fishing, and boating when the waters were crystal clear and the reefs pristine. Following his graduation from the US Naval Academy, a career as a Navy carrier pilot and an environmental systems engineer allowed for travel and diving experiences around the world, but very few places could compare with the reefs he grew up with.

Upon returning to South Florida in 2002, Lou was dismayed and shocked at the conditions and continuing destruction of our reef systems. After retiring, he became a member of the Florida Oceanographic Society's (FOS) Reef Research Dive Team as well as volunteer on FOS's oyster restoration program. Lou is a certified Florida Master Naturalist, House of Refuge volunteer speaker, member of the Jupiter Drift Divers and a volunteer for S.H.I.P. He continues to look for significant opportunities to help with research and create greater awareness among our political decision makers in order to find ways to minimize the destruction and maximize the restoration of our reefs.



### Lt. Ruth Sadowitz – Federal Government, South

## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Scott Sheckman – Environmental NGO, South

As the founder and owner of iSheck Consulting, Scott Sheckman is a non-profit development professional and public relations consultant for small to medium sized organizations, as well as a multi-media artist. He recently transplanted to Hallandale Beach after 20 years of living and working in North and South California. As an active Scuba diver and lover of all things nature and artistic, Scott has served as a development & communication consultant for a variety of conservation and arts organizations including Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, Sea Shepherd, Reef Check, Center for Resource Solutions, Ocean Defenders Alliance, Classical Revolution, Healthy Oceans Coalition, Sierra Club, Blue Water Initiative, City of Hallandale Beach, and more. Prior to focusing on philanthropy and civil service, Scott worked for over a decade in the entertainment industry.



### Lee Shepherd – Private Business, North

A Palm Beach County native, Lee is very concerned about the changes he has seen to our reefs, estuaries and lagoons. With this in mind, he created the Intracoastal Eco-systems (IES) and Happy Habitats corporation for the sole purpose of helping to clean our waters and helping to bring back a broad spectrum of wildlife and marine life. He has worked closely with multiple agencies and organizations in Palm Beach County including: Environmental Resources Management, Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative, Artificial Reef and Estuarine Enhancement Committee and the West Palm Beach Fishing Club. Lee received his first patent in October 2013 for an artificial mangrove system, to be used in conjunction with his trademarked artificial reef modules to promote the natural restocking of inshore and offshore organisms through artificial means. His Goliath Grouper Hotels™ have been donated for use in several locations in Palm Beach County, including Peanut Island Snorkel Lagoon and the Boynton North Stepping Reef and are each full of diverse sea life and progressing as established reef systems. Lee is currently working in the private sector with personal Eco-systems at docks and sea walls in the Lake Worth Lagoon with multiple eco-systems deployed. His next project is in the Indian River Lagoon, promoting the propagation of oysters to aid the filtration of the water.



### Angela Smith – Environmental NGO, South

Angela Smith is a nonprofit outreach and fundraising specialist. She has spearheaded fundraising events for The Nature Conservancy, the Government of Antigua and Island Resources Foundation's Biodiversity Conservation Program. She currently works with Shark Savers, Bimini Biological Field Station - Sharklab, Sea Turtle Oversight Protection and South Florida Underwater Photography Society. As the Fundraising Event Organizer for Shark Savers, she was awarded the "Community Leader – Ocean Environment Award" from National Week of the Ocean for her work creating a South Florida presence for awareness of dwindling shark populations. Recently Angela founded Shark Team One a global conservation travel organization dedicated to outreach and education via ecotourism.

An experienced traveler and Scuba diver, Angela has witnessed the destruction of marine fauna around the world. She knows how crucial it is to conserve the Southeast Florida coral reef tract in order to preserve biodiversity, uphold Florida's local economy and tourism, and set an example for worldwide conservation of nearshore reefs.





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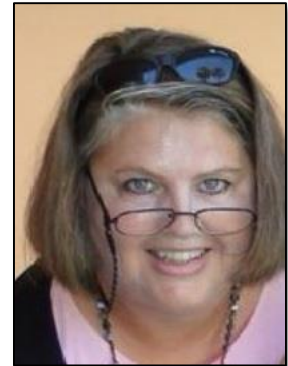
### Mason Smith – State Government, South

As a biologist for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Division of Marine Fisheries Management, Mason Smith's work primarily focuses on the analysis and interpretation of fisheries rulemaking, local fisheries issues, and public outreach. He received an MS in biology from the University of North Florida and a BS in biology from the University of Central Florida, Orlando.



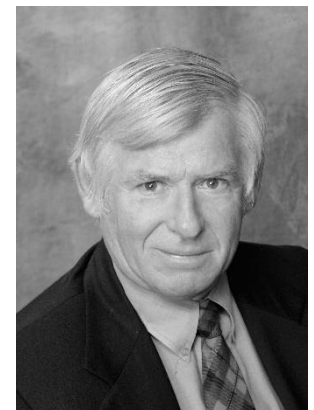
### Melodee Smith – Citizen at Large, South

Mel, representing citizens at large, is interested in finding ways to address the concerns/challenges expressed by coral reef stakeholders committed to supporting marine biodiversity and the health of the ecosystem. A graduate of an environmental college on the Great Lakes, trained in law (Lansing, Michigan) and theology, (Harvard), Mel enjoys her work as a scholar-practitioner while she mentors immigrant children and coaches soccer. Her doctoral education at Nova Southeastern University in Conflict Analysis and Resolution has contributed to her human rights work at the UN Human Refugee Agency in Geneva and her experience as a lawyer in south Florida for the past two decades. Mel is currently on a team at the Smithsonian Institution addressing sustainable spiny lobster fisheries in Honduras, and she is completing a Master of Science degree at NSU's Oceanographic Center. Mel participates in American Cancer Society fundraising events and chairs NSU's International Women's Day for the American Association of University Women.



### Alex Sommers – Private Business, South

Alex Sommers is a former manufacturer of automotive parts and a former professor of industrial engineering. He is currently a specialist in purchasing and supply chain management, and a vice president of the South Florida affiliate of the Institute for Supply Management. A recent project involved projected cost savings from using Port Miami and Port Everglades after expansion for Panamax container ships. His interest in reef protection comes from years of vacationing in the Bahamas, and from recognizing that there is little awareness of the need for reef protection on the part of purchasing and logistics managers as they make import-export decisions and choose shipping options. A graduate of Cornell and Rutgers, Sommers holds a doctorate from Purdue in industrial engineering and worked on projects for General Motors and Pratt and Whitney Aircraft.



## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Sara Thanner – County Government, South

Sara Thanner has a BS in marine biology with a minor in Diving Education from Barry University and a MS in marine biology from Nova Southeastern University. Working for Miami-Dade County's Environmental Department for 13 years, she has experience in a broad spectrum of projects including but not limited to water quality sampling, sea turtle nest monitoring, seagrass assessments, artificial reef deployments and biological monitoring, and natural monitoring and damage assessments.

Sara is currently an Environmental Resources Project Supervisor for the county coordinating the Mooring Buoy Program, the Artificial Reef Program, and any natural reef monitoring and assessment projects. She has over 1500 logged scientific research dives. Sara has been a part of the SEFCRI team since 2006.



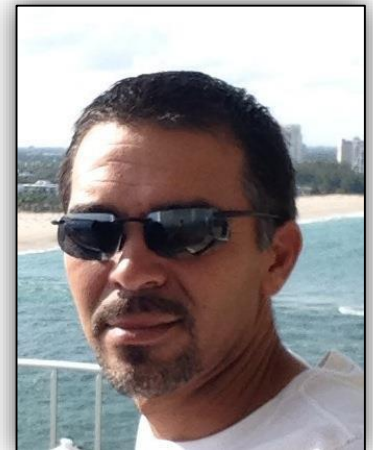
### Manuel Toledo – Fishing, South

Manuel Toledo has been a commercial lobster fisherman for 30 years. He has fished in Florida for 25 years and in the Bahamas for 5 years. He currently fishes in Miami from North Miami to Key Largo. Aside from lobster fishing he has fished sponge, fish, stone crab, and long lined.

He is also the business owner of Toledo Sales Inc., a family owned manufacture of commercial traps for over 30 years. They manufacture lobster and stone crab traps and sell essential equipment needed to for stone crab and lobster fishing.

He has also been a member of the "Spiny Lobster Advisory Board" were he helped revamp our lobster fishing regulations. He was a panel member for 1 year.

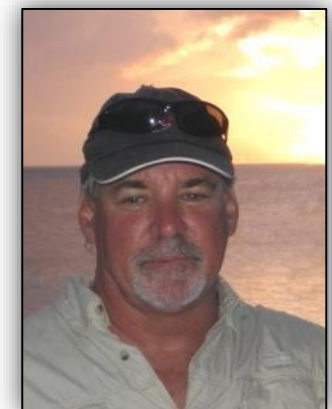
Manuel has a great passion for his profession and for the ocean. He hopes to be a knowledgeable contributor this work group.



### Jeff Torode – Diving, South

Captain Jeff Torode is President of South Florida Diving Headquarters, a diving and snorkeling charter boat operation serving South Florida since 1996. He has also been involved in, and a member of, many groups concerned with our reef resources. He has served as President of the Greater Ft. Lauderdale Dive Association, and was a Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative Navigator for the Fishing, Diving and Other Uses focus area before accepting the position of Vice Chair.

Captain Torode is also currently representing the dive industry on the Coastal Oceans Task Force which supports the efforts of the National Ocean Council. Captain Torode is committed to the protection and conservation of Florida's marine ecosystems, receiving accommodations from Ocean Watch Foundation and SEFCRI.



## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Don Vacin – Enforcement, South

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### Carman Vare – County Government, North

Carman Vare received a BS from the University of Rhode Island in marine resource management and a MA from Florida Atlantic University in coastal zone management. He has worked for Palm Beach County since 1983. During his first five years of service he was involved in water quality, mangrove protection and dredge and fill permitting. Since 1988, he was brought into the newly created Department of Environmental Resources Management as the artificial reef program coordinator. He has been the section head for marine, estuarine, and freshwater restoration since 1990. Carman has been involved in a variety of projects including the deployment of over 50 vessels and 200,000 tons of concrete and limestone boulders as artificial reefs as well as the restoration of approximately 20 estuarine and freshwater projects including mangrove, seagrass, marsh habitats.



### Stephanie Voris – Private Business, South

Stephanie is originally from Pennsylvania but has lived in south Florida for 22 years. She holds a BS in Biology and an MS in Marine Biology from Nova Southeastern University. Following her graduate studies, Stephanie began working in the environmental engineering field and has been involved with many projects throughout the state of Florida, including on the east coast from St. Lucie through Monroe counties, several counties on the west coast, as well as work in the Bahamas. Her focus involves seagrass surveys, coral surveys, freshwater wetland inspections and delineations, environmental resource permitting, and threatened and endangered species studies.

Having been in the development industry for 20 years in South Florida, she is extremely familiar with the intense upland pressure and sources of pollutants that ultimately reach the ocean and are affecting the reef and is looking forward to addressing these and many other issues through the Our Florida Reefs process.



### Tom Warnke - Watersports

Tom Warnke has been a student of Florida's coastal and ocean systems for more than 40 years. He was introduced to the ocean in 1956 when his father took him snorkeling in Ocean Ridge, Florida and he fell in love with the warm ocean. Since earning his degree at FAU Tom has invested thousands of hours to help protect Florida's reefs, beaches, estuaries and wetlands. He believes that one of the most important ways to protect our reefs is to protect our watershed, including the aquifer systems which flow directly to our reefs. Tom serves on the Palm Beach County Artificial Reef and Estuarine Enhancement Committee, works to restore the Lake Worth Lagoon, and consults with government agencies regarding coastal construction projects. He speaks to groups about subjects such as water conservation, wrack line protection, ocean-friendly landscaping, protecting reefs from damage caused by plastics and nitrogen, aquifer protection, public beach access and coastal erosion. Tom lives in Lake Worth. He enjoys photography and many saltwater sports. In 2015 he won the Eastern Surfing Championships in the Grand Legends age group.



## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Profiles

### Dana Wusinich-Mendez – Federal Government, North

Dana Wusinich-Mendez is the Atlantic and Caribbean Management Team Lead for NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program. Dana has been working with NOAA to support the efforts of coral reef resource managers in Florida, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and to build capacity for the effective management of marine protected areas in the Wider Caribbean region since 2002. She is a graduate of Duke University's Nicholas School of the Environment where she focused on marine protected area and cooperative coastal resource management efforts. Prior to obtaining her master's in environmental management at Duke, Dana worked for the RARE Center for Tropical Conservation and Amigo de Sian Ka'an with communities on the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System in southern Quintana Roo, Mexico to build capacity for the development and effective management of coral reef marine protected areas.



## Our Florida Reefs Community Working Group Member Alternates

Working Group	Alternate	Primary
North	Kelly Egan – State Government, North	Cindy Lott
	Donna Melzer – Environmental NGO, North	Greg Braun
	Erin McDevitt – State Government, North	Jeff Beal
	Pamela Hopkins – Environmental NGO, North	Vincent Encomio
	Jessica Garland – County Government, North	Kathy Fitzpatrick
	Mike Renda – Environmental NGO, North	Andrea Graves
	Nick Casper/Brittany Holbrook – Diving, North	Nikole Ordway
	Stan Mihalecz – Diving, North	Lou Romano
	Carmen Vare – County Government, North	Jena McNeal
	Jocelyn Karazsia – Federal Government, North	Dana Wusinich-Mendez
	Todd Rimmel – Watersports, North	Tom Warnke
South	Brian Strader - Enforcement, South	Donald Vacin
	Courtney Kiel – County Government, South	Ken Banks
	Stephanie Clark – Citizen at Large, South	Dan Clark
	Dr. Jose Lopez – Academic Institution, South	Dick Dodge
	Bill Carey – Environmental NGO, South	Jane Fawcett
	Braden Whitworth – Diving, South	Jim Mathie
	Arthur Mariano – Fishing, South	Kevin Muench
	Mike Beach – Diving, South	Nick Morrell
	Kristina May – State Government, South	Jennifer Peterson
	Roy Wasson – Citizen at Large, South	Melodee Smith
	Drew Martin – Environmental NGO, South	Scott Sheckman
	Bill Cole – Diving, South	Jeff Torode
	Jamie Monty – County Government, South	Sara Thanner
	U.S. Coast Guard	Lt. Ruth Sadowitz
	Private Business – South	Rebecca Johnson