Tier 1 Information:

1. Management Action

S-65: Nominate the SEFCRI region for consideration as a National Marine Sanctuary to engender protection and benefits, a legal forum, discussion, understanding and collaboration, and balance uses towards sustainable resources.

2. Intended Result (Output/Outcome)

   What is the end product/result of this management action?
   - The Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI) Region becomes a National Marine Sanctuary – Marine protected Area (NMS-MPA).

3. Duration of Activity

   Is this a discrete action or a recurring activity? Explain.
   - This action is discrete.

4. Justification

   What issue or problem will this management action address? Explain.
   - This RMA fixes the current piecemeal approach to management and protection by four different county’s jurisdictions.

5. Potential Pros

   What are the potential advantages associated with this management action?
   - It provides an overall framework for protection of the whole area, within which, specific management areas and zoning may be defined.

6. Potential Cons

   What are the potential disadvantages associated with this management action?
   - None.

7. Location

   County/Counties: Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, Other?
   - Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin counties would be included.

   Relevant Habitats: Coral reef, seagrass, watershed, etc.?
   - The relevant habitats are coral reefs, mangrove areas and seagrass beds.

   Specific Location: City, site name, coordinates, etc.?
   - N/A

8. Extent

   Area, number, etc.
   - The proposed National Marine Sanctuary – Marine Protected Area would be: South of latitude 29° 9.8’ N (St. Lucie Inlet) to the northern boundaries of Biscayne NP and the Florida Keys NMS, between the mean high water line and the 120’ contour.
   - Western Boundary = MHWL, Eastern Boundary = 120’ contour
   - The Northern boundary = 29° 12’ N to include the corals know to occur just north of St. Lucie Inlet (Bathtub Reef).
9. Is this action spatial in nature?
   • Yes.

Do you believe this management action could be informed by the Our Florida Reefs Marine Planner Decision Support Tool?
   If yes, you will proceed to the next section on Marine Planner Information.
   • Yes.

**Marine Planer Information:**
N/A

**Tier 2 Information:**

**WHY?**

1. Strategic Goals & Objectives to be Achieved
   Refer to the SEFCRI Coral Reef Management Goals and Objectives Reference Guide.
   • FL Priorities Goal D2: Obj 1.
   • Develop and implement conservation programs to increase the size, abundance and protection, as appropriate, of coral reef species (both fish and invertebrates), including targeted species critical to reef health and ecological function, such as, but not limited to, game species and organisms collected for aquaria.
   • Reduce benthic habitat impacts by implementing, among other actions, the potential use of no-take zones, no-anchor zones, no-motor zones, mooring buoy systems, education, etc.
   • SEFCRI LAS FDOU Issue 2 Goal Obj 6.
   • Develop an effective, balanced, and comprehensive management strategy for improved resource protection.

2. Current Status
   Is this activity currently underway, or are there planned actions related to this recommendation in southeast Florida? If so, what are they, and what is their status.
   • No, this is not currently being done.

3. Intended Benefits (Outcomes)
   What potential environmental benefits or positive impacts might this management action have?
   • The benefits would be increased protection for the reef via conservation measures to minimize harmful activities.
   • Other benefits include comprehensive management of coral reefs in the SEFCRI area, dedicated funds for education/outreach, enforcement, science, and management.

   What potential social/economic benefits or positive impacts might this management action have?
   • This RMA promotes economic benefits with minimal impacts to the environment; reduces fisheries impacts; zoning would provide protection for more sensitive areas; and provides a natural classroom for education and scientific research.
   • To the extent that large pelagic fish stocks increase as a result of management, recreational diving would be enhanced, commercial and recreational fishers might improve outside of the no-take areas, and the Gold Coast might regain its former rating among the top 10 sites worldwide, primarily for viewing large fishes. (See Top 100 Readers’ Choice Survey. 2008. Scuba Diving. Bonnier Corporation, Winter Park, Florida. http://www.scubadiving.com/travel/2008/01/top-100-readers-choice-survey, web accessed November 10, 2009).

   What is the likely duration of these benefits - short term or long-lasting? Explain.
   • Once the reef tract becomes a NMS-MPA, the benefits will be long-lasting.
4. **Indirect Costs (Outcomes)**

**What potential negative environmental impacts might this action have?**
- It is difficult to imagine any negative environmental impacts.

**What potential negative social/economic impacts might this action have?**
- It could affect commercial fishermen and fishing charter operators depending upon the level and scope of restrictions within the NMS-MPA.

**What is the likely duration of these negative impacts - short term or long-lasting? Explain.**
- Some negative impacts could be long lasting.

5. **Risk**

**What is the threat of adverse environmental, social, or economic effects arising from not implementing this action?**
- We continue to try and manage and protect southeast Florida reefs in the current piecemeal way with four counties all working independently and without coordinated action. There will be lost biodiversity and lost revenue for Florida as the reefs continue to degrade. There would be no ecological or socio-economic baseline established for future generations.

6. **Relevant Supporting Data**

**What existing science supports this recommendation? (Provide citations)**
- Following quote from http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/faqs/welcome.html, “The primary objective of a sanctuary is to protect its natural and cultural features while allowing people to use and enjoy the ocean in a sustainable way. Sanctuary waters provide a secure habitat for species close to extinction and protect historically significant shipwrecks and artifacts. Sanctuaries serve as natural classrooms and laboratories for schoolchildren and researchers alike to promote understanding and stewardship of our oceans. They often are cherished recreational spots for sport fishing and diving and support commercial industries such as tourism, fishing and kelp harvesting.”
- Presumably this info can be found here http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/char/resources.html.

7. **Information Gaps**

**What uncertainties or information gaps still exist?**
- It is uncertain how long the public consultation process will take once the SEFCRI region application for nomination is accepted.

**WHEN?**

8. **Anticipated Timeframe for Implementation**

**How long will this recommendation take to implement?**
- The schedule is somewhere between 2-10 years through application process and approval.
- The administrative process of an application needs the Florida governor to approve.

9. **Linkage to Other Proposed Management Actions**

**Is this activity linked to other proposed management recommendations?**
- No.

**If so, which ones, and how are they linked? (e.g., is this activity a necessary step for other management actions to be completed?)**
- This action can be considered as stand-alone. However as becoming an NMS will provide a management framework for the SEFCRI area many other actions may depend upon it.

**Does this activity conflict with other existing or proposed management actions?**
- No.
WHO?

10. Lead Agency or Organization for Implementation
   What agency or organization currently has/would have authority? Refer to the Agencies and Actions Reference Guide.
   • The SEFCRI Community Working Groups (CWG) could be the lead organization, see http://www.nominate.noaa.gov/ for details: “Community Builds a Nomination - Every nomination starts at the community level. A group of people who care passionately about protecting an area of our nation’s marine or Great Lakes waters comes together to develop a nomination. This consists of gathering key information about the special place they wish to nominate and developing broad community support for the nomination.” Ultimately NOAA, more specifically the Office of Marine Sanctuaries, is responsible for the establishment of a new sanctuary if it is created by an executive order of the President (see 8 above).

11. Other Agencies or Organizations
   Are there any other agencies or organizations that may also support implementation? Explain.
   • Martin, Palm Beach, Broward & Miami Dade counties should all be asked to support the nomination.
   • Florida DEP cannot be part of this process because they will be involved with NOAA to make the decision on whether or not the application should be accepted.
   • FDEP, FWC would play a role in this process.

12. Key Stakeholders
   Identify those stakeholders most greatly impacted by this management action, including those from whom you might expect a high level of support or opposition. Explain.
   • Fishing. Diving. Other reef users.

HOW?

13. Feasibility
   Is there appropriate political will to support this? Explain.
   • It is unknown if there would be political will to support this. We will have to poll all responsible and interested parties to establish this information.
   • We could refocus this activity on a request for an executive order from the President for a marine monument because at present the State is unlikely to support its nomination as a NMS.

   What are the potential technical challenges to implementing this action? Has it been done elsewhere?
   • Administrative technical challenges could occur.
   • Yes. The Florida Keys and 13 other National Marine sanctuaries in the USA.

14. Legislative Considerations
   Does the recommendation conflict with or actively support existing local, state, or federal laws or regulations? Explain.
   • Actions implemented under a NMS could complement ESA, Magnuson-Stevens Act, and other environmental laws.

15. Permitting Requirements
   Will any permits be required to implement this action? Explain.
   • Permitting requirements would depend on the management actions implemented under the NMS (e.g., installation of mooring buoys would require permitting).

16. Estimated Direct Costs
   Approximately how much will this action likely cost? (Consider one-time direct costs, annual costs, and staff time, including enforcement.)
• $0 - $50,000.
• Unless social media can be creatively and successfully employed by volunteers to generate a tsunami of public support, surely this underestimates the cost of a marketing campaign that would result in either the State support to NOAA, or a presidential executive order, for designation. For an example of the latter, see Oceana’s current effort to convince the president to declare a marine national monument for the deep-water coral communities off New England at [http://act.oceana.org/sign/obama_ne-marine-monuments_2015?source=mailing&t=4&akid=5912.781040.xzShNh](http://act.oceana.org/sign/obama_ne-marine-monuments_2015?source=mailing&t=4&akid=5912.781040.xzShNh).

Will costs associated with this activity be one-time or recurring?
• The initial cost for preparing the nomination should be close to zero; the nomination paper must be fewer than 25 pages to comply with the NOAA requirements. This could be prepared by SEFCRI CWG volunteers with help from the Technical Committee.

If recurring, approximately how long will staff time and annual costs be necessary to implement the management action?
• N/A

17. Enforcement

Does this require enforcement effort?
• Enforcement would be variable.

Provide an explanation if available.
• Variable, only when it becomes an NMS-MPA. Initially a PR campaign will be required to inform the public, and monitoring to measure compliance with regulations will be necessary. Only then may additional enforcement be required when specific measures are put in place for defined management areas or zones.
• Enforcement represents a follow-up cost that would occur subsequent to the successful completion of this management action.

18. Potential Funding Sources

Identify potential funding organizations/grant opportunities, etc.
• Probably not necessary for the nomination process.
• NMS's are funded through NOAA NOS and NMS's are able to able to respond to request for proposals that the federal government is eligible to apply for.
• Operation funding is subsequent to the successful completion of this management action.

19. Measurable Outcomes/Success Criteria/Milestones

How will the success of this recommendation be measured? How will you know when the intended result is achieved?
• NOAA will place the South East Florida Reef in an inventory of areas it could consider for potential designation as a national marine sanctuary. Eventually the South East Florida Reef will become the SEFNMS-MPA.

SEFCRI/TAC Targeted Questions:

1. **TAC - Is the recommendation likely to achieve the intended result? Explain.**
   **Tier 1 – #2 (Intended Result - Output/Outcome)**
   • Nomination is straightforward but going from there to establishment is not guaranteed.

2. **TAC - Is the recommendation sufficient to address the identified issue or problem? Explain.**
   **Tier 1 – #4 (Justification)**
   • No, If it moves from nomination to establishment it begins the process to address.
3. **TAC - Is the recommendation technically achievable from a science or management perspective? Explain.**

   *Tier 2 – #8 (Anticipated Timeframe for Implementation) and Tier 2 - #13 (Feasibility)*

   - The timeframe could be too long to reach establishment and would not want it to be the sole focus of improved management efforts in case it is unsuccessful.
   - Considerations include understanding how this structure works elsewhere and the potential to give up local control, etc. Team included these considerations in their feedback.
   - Has the FKNMS worked? Has the benthos been improved? This will increase bureaucracy and remove local control.
   - We question if the sewerage systems that are being emplaced in the Keys would be installed in the absence of the Sanctuary.

4. **SEFCRI Team, PPT & Other Advisors - Has this been done (by SEFCRI, other agencies or organizations in the SEFCRI region)? Explain.**

   *Tier 2 – #2 (Current Status)*

   - No.

5. **SEFCRI Team, PPT & Other Advisors - Is this recommendation a research or monitoring project? (Recommendations should be turn-dirt management actions, not the step you take before a management action). Explain.**

   - Not directly, but research and monitoring would be activities included in a NMS program.

6. **SEFCRI Team, PPT & Other Advisors - If either of the following applies to this management action, provide feedback on which information submitted by the Community Working Groups may be more appropriate, or if entries should be merged. Explain.**

   a. There are different viewpoints for an individual management action (i.e. two working group members provided separate information, as indicated by a ‘//’ marking between them).
   b. Information submitted for this and other draft management actions is sufficiently similar that they might be considered the same.

   - I am unaware of differing actions, however this action is sufficiently similar to 148.
   - Team: Combine with N-148.
   - FWC: Combine with N-148.

7. **SEFCRI Team, PPT & Other Advisors - Non-agency Question: Is the recommendation technically achievable from your stakeholder perspective? If not, do you have suggestions that would allow this to become technically achievable from your stakeholder perspective? Explain.**

   *Tier 1 - #5 (Potential Pros), Tier 1 - #6 (Potential Cons), Tier 2 - #3 (Intended Benefits), Tier 2 - #4 (Indirect Costs) and Tier 2 - #12 (Key Stakeholders)*

   - The timeframe could be too long to reach establishment and would not want it to be sole focus of improved management efforts in case it is unsuccessful.

8. **SEFCRI Team, PPT & Other Advisors - Agency Question: Is the recommendation technically achievable from a management perspective? If not, do you have suggestions that would allow this to become technically achievable from your agency's management perspective? Explain.**

   *Tier 2 – #10 (Lead Agency or Organization for Implementation) and Tier 2 - #11 (Other Agencies or Organizations)*

   - Yes, and this is my personal opinion.
   - FWC: General comments: See information for N-148:
     - FWC: Would need more specific information to support.
     - FWC: General comments - Designation of a National Marine Sanctuary in Florida would be a stakeholder initiative and involve application to NOAA for consideration, and NOAA would have to decide if the application met their criteria and wanted to pursue it. NOAA cannot designate sanctuaries in the State of Florida without FWC, Governor and Cabinet (BOT), and DEP approval. FWC would not lead such an
Comments from the Reviewers:

- This OFR recommendation falls within FWC jurisdiction/authority. An official FWC response is in the works.
- Consider how the FKNMS is "working" and if this region would benefit. Consider if local control would be sacrificed. Merge N-148 and S-65.
- This is a strategy that is not explicitly stated in an existing goal/objective, but could be a way to implement overall goals and objectives.
- There has been interest in nominating the SEFCRI area from COTF.
- NMS designation itself would not have negative impacts, however the management actions taken as a NMS would be TBD and it is difficult to speculate on what those would be beyond what has been experienced in the FKNMS (i.e., objections from recreational and commercial fishers).
- The NMS framework for managing resources is a tool in the toolbox that has resulted in sustainable management of natural resources in other areas. Not implementing this action would result in continued piecemeal approach to managing southeast Florida's coral reefs which may not be as effective.
- It would depend on the types of management strategies adopted by the NMS.
- There is a link to management recommendations on marine zoning, MPAs, outreach and education, and enforcement.
- By DEP policy, the CWGs as cannot as group nominate for NMS. It would have to come from individuals- not OFR.
- NGOs, divers, fishers - some subsets may support while others oppose.
- Challenges include competition with other nominated areas (e.g., there is not a NMS in the U.S. Caribbean). Opportunity would be that presumably it would be easier to extend the boundaries of the FKNMS as opposed to creating a new adjacent NMS.
- This estimate needs to be provided by NOAA NOS.
- Yes, enforcement is a component of every NMS.
- Again, this depends on the actions implemented under the NMS umbrella. The designation process itself could be a milestone and there are steps in the process (e.g., application completion) that could be milestones as well.

Questions from the Reviewers:

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<tr>
<th>Questions/Information Needs Highlighted by the Reviewers</th>
<th>Addressed by CWG:</th>
<th>Not Addressed by CWG Because:</th>
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<tr>
<td>World Heritage Site designation is usually reserved for places that are rich and marvelous – is this appropriate for this region?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>X This does not apply.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has the FKNMS worked? Has the benthos been improved? Increased bureaucracy and removes local control- must show that existing models work. The seawering projects would likely not have happened if not for the FKNMS, education including signage, increased ethics with dive community, and increased restoration on the reef.</td>
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<td>☐ This does not apply.</td>
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Questions from the CWGs back to the Reviewers:

- **March/April 2015 Updates**: Need to determine eastern/western boundary. (90m isobaths vs. 3 mile standard, exclusion zones, 110’ contour, artificial habitat, FKNMS uses 18m isobaths, etc...).
  
  **SEFCRI TAC**: Reefs around the 120 ft. contour have been mapped.

- **See discussion on synthesis document**

- Which boundary type would be most likely to be approved in a nomination process?
- Q1 above is in the wrong RMA, it refers to the RMA to make the SEFCRI region a UNESCO World heritage site and has been answered in RMA S-54.
- Q2. I would say yes and I believe most observers would also say yes in terms of protecting the reef in the Keys.
- T1 Section 8 extent should be corrected to 29° 12’ N for the northern boundary, this includes some coral just north of St. Lucie Inlet reported on the Marine Planner.

Additional information by SEFCRI Team and/or Technical Advisory Committee

SEFCRI TAC: Judy is POC.

**UPDATES FROM CWG MEETINGS SEPT 2015**

There is currently a big push for marine monuments on the coast. Crazy things happen in the fourth quarter of the presidency. Can declare state waters by executive order. It’s a possibility.

Benefits: very high

Cost:

Feasibility: currently low due to govt. There will be new government in two years’ time...could be different then. It would be 5-6 years to get this RMA into the system. Maybe more possible then. Opportunity is high.