Title:
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.

Background:
- This recommended management action relates to Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin counties and would include coral reefs, mangrove areas and seagrass bed habitats.
- This recommended management action is being put forth in order to fix the current piecemeal approach to management and protection by four different county’s jurisdictions.

Objective:
- The intended outcome of this action is designate the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI) Region as a National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) – Marine Protected Area (MPA).

Intended Benefits and/or Potential Adverse Effects:
- A NMS would identify the SEFCRI region as a special and unique area that should be managed in a holistic manner. Designation as a NMS would set in place a series of steps where an advisory council would be assembled, representing all user groups, and would meet to determine the optimal management strategies for the Sanctuary and decide if these management strategies should be applied to the entire region or require a more targeted place-based implementation. Designation in and of itself does not result in any predetermined action in any specific area.

Agencies/ Organizations:
- The lead agency for implementation of this recommended management action would be the SEFCRI Community Working Group (CWG). 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, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), more specifically the Office of Marine Sanctuaries, is responsible for the establishment of a new sanctuary unless it is created by an executive order of the President.
- Other potential agencies or organizations who could be involved include Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Martin counties, as well as Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, which would all be asked to support the nomination. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection cannot play a role here because they will be involved with NOAA to make the decision on whether or not the application should be accepted. The Sanctuary would be co-managed with the Sanctuary Council and the State of Florida.
- The key stakeholders for this recommended management action would be fishers, divers and other reef users.
- Actions implemented under a NMS could complement the Endangered Species Act, Magnuson-Stevens Act, and other environmental legislation.

Permitting/ Enforcement Requirements of RMA:
- Permitting requirements would depend on the recommended management actions implemented under the NMS (e.g., installation of mooring buoys would require permitting).
- Enforcement requirements for this recommended management action would be variable depending on NMS-MPA. Initially a public relations 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 recommended management action.

- A measurable way to show success with this recommended management action is that NOAA will place the southeast Florida reef in an inventory of areas it could consider for potential designation as a national marine sanctuary. Eventually the southeast Florida reef would become the Southeast Florida National Marine Sanctuary - Marine Protected Area.

**Cost:**

- The estimated direct cost of implementing this recommended management action is $0 - $50,000 if a social media campaign can be creatively and successfully employed by volunteers to generate a tsunami of public support.
- Without support, the cost of a marketing campaign that would result in either state support to NOAA, or a presidential executive order, for designation would be very costly. 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).
- Funding sources would not be necessary for the nomination, but if subsequent actions are taken, potential funding may be acquired through NMS, NOAA’s National Ocean Service. NMS are able to able to respond to requests for proposals that the federal government is eligible to apply for. Operational funding is subsequent to the successful completion of this recommended management action.

**Time Frame & Extent:**

- The anticipated timeframe for implementation of this recommended management action is between 2 - 10 years for application process and approval.

**Miscellaneous Info:**

- This recommended management action is not linked to any other proposed actions.
- It is uncertain how long the public consultation process will take once the SEFCRI region application for nomination is accepted.
- Supporting and relevant data include the following:

  - The following is a quote from the NOAA NMS website: [http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/faqs/welcome.html](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.”
- This effort is not currently ongoing.

**Goals/ Objectives to be achieved:**

Refer to the [SEFCRI Coral Reef Management Goals and Objectives Reference Guide](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/char/resources.html)

- FL Priorities Goal D2: Obj. 1.
- SEFCRI LAS FDOU Issue 2 Goal Obj. 6.
- 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.

**View the Entire RMA Document at:** [www.ourfloridareefs.org/RMAcomment](http://www.ourfloridareefs.org/RMAcomment)