

Our Florida Reefs
Community Working Group Meeting
Fern Forest Nature Center
April 6 & 7, 2016

Staff: Heidi Stiller, Ann Weaver, Francisco Pagan, Joanna Walczak, Meghan Balling, Lauren Waters, Ana Zangroniz, Daron Willison, David Cox, Mollie Sinnott, Kristi Kerrigan, Kelly Montenero

Attendees: Andrea Graves, Butch Olsen, Jena McNeal, Dana Wusinich-Mendez, Greg Braun, Jeff Beal, Kathy Fitzpatrick, David Anderson, Mike Brescher, Mitch Comiskey, Nikole Ordway, Jeff Radonski, Tom Warnke, Vincent Encomio, Michelle Miller, Jim Moir, Jessica Garland, Hannah Medd, Brett Fitzgerald, Art Sapp, Marie Maguire, Pamela Hopkins, Alex Sommers, Angela Smith, Dan Clark, Edwin Harp, Jane Fawcett, Jeff Torode, Jim Bohnsack, Jim Mathie, Ken Banks, Kevin Muench, Mason Smith, Melodee Smith, Nick Morrell, Scott Sheckman, Skip Dana, Sara Thanner, Thomas Archer, Stephanie Clark, Don Vacin, Joana Figueiredo, Steve English, Baret Barry, John Sprague, Brian Walker, Amanda Montgomery, Kurtis Gregg, Kellie Ralston, Chuck Collins, Matt Behm, Frank Gidus, Jim Wiborg, Gary Jennings, Jack Harari, George Brevard, Charles Butler, Krissy Wiborg, Melissa Recks, Kevin Claridge, James Byrne, Tom Campbell, Richard Rice, Andy Duke, Bill Grace.

~~Wednesday, April 6~~

9:00 – 9:20am

Welcome, Review of Agenda, and Introductions

- Francisco P: Good morning and welcome to another OFR CWG meeting. Thanks to FOFR for providing snacks. And thanks to all of you for being part of this process. And we will do everything that we can to help you during the day.
- Heidi S: First ill step through agenda so we all know what's coming – overview agenda. First we will wrap up the 59 RMAs that had relatively low comments. Then public comment- please sign in in the back, 3 minutes per person. If we have more than we can accommodate, we will adjust accordingly. Then we need to take some votes, one about if we need one more meeting, also if RMAs can be archived at this point. Because we didn't have a quorum at the end of last meeting we will need to revisit those point. Then we will discuss process options. We are going to hear from the agencies about how they might receive and handle recommendations. Then we will discuss the process to handle the RMAs with a high number of comments. Some have up to 500 comments. We will start to get into those this afternoon. For some, with 50 or fewer comments, each group will look at all of them. For those with over 400 we will split them and groups will review a subset of comments. We will start with N-59 and S-65, then other high comment RMAs. Tomorrow we will go back to working in the same pattern, working in small groups and then large group

conversations about those. For any changes we will do a vote, 75% in agreement to make changes. After morning break we will tackle N-146, we will first discuss process then dive in. there will be another hour for public comment. Then we will talk about what needs to be prioritized given the amount of time we have left in the process. We will talk first about group norms, these are combined from north and south groups. Go over group norms...If you are an alternate and your primary is here, it is fine to listen but please don't engage in the conversation. When we vote we will ask you to move to the back of the room so as not to confusing voting numbers. Last time we had people filming, if anyone wants to film we will ask them to introduce themselves and not record during breaks. Reminder, even though the official RMA comment period is over, public comment can be submitted at any time, online or in here. You all reviewed march meeting minutes, can we approve those?

- Jane F: please add Lisa Miceli to minutes
- Heidi S: okay we will do than and then they will be approved.
- Dan C: I've got a camera live recording, name is Dan Clark from cry of the water
- Heidi S: we will do a round of introductions now... thank you all, do all our alternates know if they are the primary for today, is anyone unclear.
- Jessica G: Kathy will be here at lunch so we will swap

9:20 – 9:40am

Recent or Upcoming Events

- Dan C: I asked the question last meeting does FWC have any plans to work on the Tortuga anchoring problem, now its 3 days instead of 2. Next month we have a couple days of air show and we see a lot of damage on the reef because of this. Tortuga is ironically supposed to be raising money to save the seas and they go and anchor on the reef. Also, Jeff made the newspaper with the wreck they are putting down. One of the RMAs we were trying to do was replace the old leaky infrastructure of sewer pipes. Then also Jeff's project of the wreck sink. The boat used to be the turd tug for the city of NY.
- Jeff B: let's rephrase it, we are taking something that was a polluter and making reef out of it.
- Joanna W: just to let you know, DEP coral program will be working on Tortuga and air show anchoring problems. Talk to Mollie about that.
- Jane F: lionfish removal day coming up, May 4. last year there were 15,000 removed. It's a great event. You can adopt a reef and keep it lionfish free. There will be info about how to safely remove etc.
- Jim Mathie: April 23 and 24th is the blue wild – at convention center, kayaking, paddleboarding, concentration of people who dive there. It's a lot of fun.
- Dan C: TAC meeting coming up SEFCRI advisory committee on the 27th and 28th of this month.
- Mike B: St Lucie River is now being monitored for weather and water conditions and Indian River Lagoon. Fauloboviz.com has all reporting sections. I'm doing it trying to get people to look at it and see the conditions of the estuaries coming in. great indicators of water quality. It's currently in Martin, hoping to continue south.

- Ann W: I'd like to thank those of you who participated in onboarding last week. Mason did a great presentation which is included. If you missed them you can still go online and watch the webinars.
- Scott S: April 16 Hallandale green fest at city hall free event. I'll be tabling for FOFR and then at Tortuga
- John S: Palm Beach county MIA will be doing an event called Paddlefest. It's the first that we have done about enjoying environment without motors. May 14.
- Francisco P: here is the table with all the feedback that we received organized by RMAs color coded for oppose and support. It includes letters and petitions that we received. You have copies of these at each small table today I encourage you to review them as you look at RMAs. You have seen it before but it's been made prettier and easier to understand.
- Jane F: I'd like to know how many new people we have for private business, fishing, diving, with a numbers count and which table they are sitting at.
- Heidi S: we have 8 new folks, 4 fishing, 2 private business, 1 diving
- Jane F: I think it's great that everyone is here but I feel like all the new people are at FDOU.
- Heidi S: For this first 35 minutes we will meet like this and then after we will count off and the groups will be random.
- Ann W: because we want to make sure that in your groups you have a broad variety of perspectives.

9:40 – 10:15am Finish Reviewing and Incorporating Feedback by Focus Area for RMAs with Relatively Low Numbers of Comments

10:15 – 10:30am Break

10:30 – 11:30am Public Comment

- Jim Mathie: South, diving person. Here to speak to remove and archive N-59, spearfishing on SCUBA. Spearfishing is the most selective form of harvesting. Also the science that brought about this RMA referenced a study in Guam about commercial spearfishing guys at night, and that's not relevant here. There is reference to that's the way it's done in a lot of foreign countries. That's okay, but if I said lets go jump off a bridge how many would come with me. Many of the foreign countries use this to regulate fisheries because they don't have FWC like we have. I didn't see a study that verified how this was going to help the reefs. Only having freediving spearfishermen doesn't help the reefs. We need to archive N-59 and put it to rest. It was the number 1 most commented on RMA.
- Chuck Collins: exec director of MIA. Thanks for all your hard work. Number 1 management actions must be based on science. You need to focus on coral reef protection. Stay away from fisheries management. You need to develop metrics and

quantify what are the biggest stressors so that efforts can be focused there. Biggest stressors intuitively are water quality, climate change, loss of habitat. Most of the big fish going away correlates with the loss of mangroves and other habitats. My recommendation is to focus on these areas and stay away from S-65, because NMS can be restrictive for quick action. S-54 MPAs should be reserved for the strictest protections, if it's not strictest it should not be called an MPA it should work with FWC or DEP to make regulations.

- Tom Campbell: retired and I do a lot of spearfishing on scuba, against N-59. A lot of retired guys go out with me. Previously I was president of coastal planning and engineering. We worked to prepare the maps that are being used with LIDAR surveys. Today I'd like to tell you what spearfishers do, we go out 3-4 time a week, we lobster primarily and have a spear gun, come back with maybe 2-3 fish per trip. Very selective only shoot large enough fish. While we are diving if we see any debris we pick it up on our way constantly grooming the reef and trying to protect the environment. Very contentious and selective if you ban spearfishing it would be a shame for me because I'd have to take up golf or something. I could start freediving but I'm worried about shallow water blackouts. I encourage you to shelve N-59 and any environmental advancement we can put it on the divers who help clean the reef.
- Gary Jennings: ASA manager of KFF program goal to make sure FL anglers have clean waters, abundant fisheries and access to both. These are goals we both share, with the exception of access it seems. We feel that FL already has a government entity in place that takes care of fisheries, FWC. OFR should focus on coral and leave fisheries management to the people with a proven record, FWC. OFR feels that our resources would be better managed by federal government for every article presented in favor of MPAs there is another that says they have no effect. It seems that OFR and the recreational fishing community disagree on. 2200 FL anglers spoke up and said they are opposed to NMS, MPAs, UNESCO status, and Coral gardens an area we can agree on is water quality, true core of FL problems. Sedimentation, nutrient pollution, anchor damage, loss of habitat, freshwater intrusion, and water quality is the elephant in the room, deserves to be the first priority. At COTF last week I was shocked that people said there is no water quality baseline for FL waters. That's where we should be starting from. This is OFRs chance to unite anglers against water quality issues to promote the need for good water quality monitoring and to improve upon much removal, and point source improvement. Following a NMS status UNSECO, coral gardens status will damage the economic engine of fisheries and the 80,000 jobs it supports. We urge you to archive the contentious issues that encroach on fisheries management so we can unite with recreational fishing industry and attack water quality issues.
- Frank Gidus: director of habitat and environmental restoration for CCA. The feedback slide that Francisco posted this morning, CCA was not accurately represented, CCA has 1355 members in the state of FL and that is who I am up here to represent. CCA supports healthy fisheries and habitat including our coral reefs. We have supported a number of spawning season area closures in the GOM and Atlantic. We have an active habitat restoration and artificial reefs placement program. CCAs mission is focused on scientific approaches to fisheries management so that present and future generations can enjoy the resource. Within

these parameters CCA supports angler access. CCA believes that several proposals overreaching including N-146. CCA does not support the establishment of MPAs unless they are scientifically backed, have stated goals, and are the last resort. MPAs should never be used as a first stage management tool. CCA asks that fisheries managers consider protecting spawning aggregations by limited time and area closures, if warranted. RMA S-54 seeks UNESCO recognition – we do not oppose recognition of our resources but we oppose any action that would restrict access or uses. Those decisions are best left to FWC. CCA opposes S-65 NMS FL reef tract – removing it from state and FWC management. This is unnecessary layer of federally managed bureaucracy. State has an excellent record of managing fisheries and resources. We ask that you archive the contentious issue and unite recreational fishing community behind water quality issues.

- Stephanie C: seeding time to Dan
- Dan C: I'm glad to see the fishing interest in the room, we could have used you throughout this process. One of my biggest issues has been the disease partially from bad water quality, climate change. I could have used you at the tables and voting with us when they chose to archive the one RMA that had to do with the diseases. I want to see that one brought back. I look at you now and say where were you? This is like a bunch of squirrel hunters in the woods arguing if they will be able to hunt next year while the woods are on fire. We need to address the losses of habitats. One of the big projects coming up is the port project. The other night we were on project baselines boat – they were showing a clip of a documentary showing the problems with the port of Miami dredge. Like without the woods you don't have the squirrels, and you can't just plant saplings and have squirrels tomorrow this is what they are planning over there they want to plant corals that they have had in a nursery. But it's not going to make up for the years of sedimentation that comes from these projects. It seems to be a conflict of interest between the people who represent the ports and the marine industries. Look at project water keeper stuff in the port of Miami. As yourself if the people who represent the ports have your best interest at heart. if you really care like you say you do about these habitats, you need to get involved in the process. There is something you can do, I've got a group I work with out of Washington. Port everglades has been put into the water bill and comes before committee this month. There are 5 representatives from that committee in Florida I have their names. Is there some place I can post this so that people can write to their congress people? What has happened in Miami can happen here – there will be long term impacts for years and hundreds of acres. Same thing will happen in port everglades if this goes through. They do cost benefit analysis to get the fed to approve this. They are projecting double digit increases in revenue every year. But what really happened this year is 7% decrease in port profits that's not at all what they projected. If we can get a new cost benefit done I believe that could kill the project all together. There are ways that you can send and write letters, if you really care about that habitat, you need to comment. Don't think we got everything we wanted out of this. That's how compromise is supposed to work but some of the things that I think are most important like the disease issues, we could have used you in the room. Only at the end when you thought you might lose your right, did you all show up. Write your

legislators, tell them what's going on. Francisco will you let us post this on the OFR site?

- Kevin C: let's talk after about the most appropriate way to put that out there to everyone.
- John Sprague: chair of governmental affairs MIA FL. Involved in COTF. Lived here fished all my life. Unfortunately our waters are not the same as they were when I was growing up, but one of my passions is to make sure that my children and grandchildren are able to use the resource. This group has spent a lot of time, mostly volunteer, in developing recommendations. When we get into S-65 NMS S-54 whatever, we believe that is an absolute violation of the public trust doctrine. FWC does an excellent job bag and size limits, spawning aggregations to protect the fisheries. The coral does need work, dirty water is one of our biggest problems and they don't want to look at it because it costs too much. Tallahassee messes with this and we give them money and it doesn't go in the right direction. Dirty water coming down does a ton of damage starting with the seagrasses and estuaries. I would hope when we get to sanctuary votes and all those issues, don't threaten all the hard work that you have done and lose credibility on those issues over things that I believe and my industry believes are contrary to how we should do things.
- Matt Brimm: employee of CCA FL and recreational angler. I want to commend this group for doing a great job shining light on so many issues that affect our fishery. One thing that does make me nervous is to shut down areas to fisheries. FWC does a great job of managing our fishery and I don't think we need to change it. If something does need to be done we need to look at spawn time closures before we close to fishermen.
- Kelly Ralston: FL fisheries policy director of ASA. Thank you for allowing us to be here and be a part of this process, we appreciate your interest in letting fishing interests be at the table. And to Dan's point, I don't know what happened to the fishermen before but we are here now and very interested in the process. One main topic is that we do share your concerns about water quality. We can agree on many of these issues that have really highlighted the lack of concentration on those water quality issues, and habitat loss. These are really important and we as an association are very concerned about and working on solutions. We encourage you to focus on those areas and leave fisheries management to FWC. FWC can step in and help handle some of the local fishing issues you may be concerned about and highlight solutions. Masons presentation showed that there are other options that haven't been tried here. MPAs and no take zones should only be implemented as a last resort when you have tried everything else and nothing has worked. We appreciate the work you have done on water quality and ask that you archive the contentious issues relating to fishing closures NMS and UNESCO.
- Brett Fitzgerald: Director of Snook and Gamefish Foundation, which is a conservation and science based fishing group work with state and fed agencies to properly manage our fisheries. We generally oppose the idea of transferring authorities from state to federal level. Nowhere in the country do recreational anglers contribute to any state level fisheries stock assessment data. FL is the only state where recreational anglers provide voluntary data to be used in stock assessments. There is an effort to expand that out because it allows us to communicate better with fishermen. We don't have a buddy system code most

fishermen prefer to go completely alone. It is difficult to engage this group and make them understand that sometimes there are issues that come up that we don't know. We have worked well with other groups in the past. For example when we successfully stopped a dredging project in Palm Beach County a few years ago. We could not have done what we did without the diving community where we stopped the burying of nearshore reef. That happened because recreational fishermen were involved. Denying access to a fishery when science supports it okay. But it has to be a last resort.

11:30 – 11:45am

Vote on Future Direction Questions from March

- Heidi S: process note – for those of you who are new I know this is a lot to absorb. And we are moving quickly because we are striving to get done. This was supposed to be the final meeting of the group, we will talk in a bit if we need to meet after June. I know things are moving fast, you may feel that things in small tables are moving too fast. We have tried to provide the background that you need but if you have questions about the process or history always feel free to ask any staff any questions you may have. So we will need to vote now so alternates whose primaries are present please move to the back. Voting members please move up. **There are currently 33 voting members.** Last time we discussed but did not have enough people to vote on extending through one more meeting. If we are really lucky and efficient we might be done with all but one RMA at this meeting. We will likely not get that far, then we will have to revisit our prioritization and move RMAs up or down, and we have to discuss roll out.
- Jane F: our mission was to make a prioritized list so we need to have them prioritized, so if we need to extend to do that, let's vote.
- Heidi S: if in favor of doing another 2 day meeting in June please stand. **27 vote yes so we will have one more meeting on June 1 and 2.** At the moment we are planning to be back here at this facility but it is not certain. Second question is if we can archive RMAs at this point.
- Jeff B: we worked on these recommendations for years. And we worked on everything, there was enough support for these RMAs to push them as far as they have. There is another layer this has to go through, through the agencies.
- Melodee S: I like the idea of having the option to archive because I want to work together to build unity with fishermen, we need to build a stronger coalition to get these goals accomplished.
- Sara T: how will archive voted be taken?
- Heidi H: archiving would be changing content so 75% of people in the room would have to vote to archive.
- Angela S: this isn't the time for archiving that was a while ago. If we archive something that brought out the fishing agencies, they will leave, and now we don't want them leaving.
- Jim B: based on public comment I think we should have the option to archive
- Butch O: comments means more data so I think we should be able to archive
- Mike B: I'm not for archiving, we have worked for too long to have things thrown out. I've worked FWC trying to do as much as possible to restrict violators. I have also

seen if you gave a man a fish and told him it was the last fish, he would catch it and eat it. I get reports of FWC catches on violators and they get a lot. Just like when we are fishing and we get a school we can't catch the whole school. We need to give them more force, as you go further south you'll see the violators are heavy. That's what started us on this, because we want more restrictions, we aren't saying we have the power to do it, we have the power to recommend it. And pass it on, this is where the people who want to fight it can go up the right channels. So I am against archiving anything I've done.

- Brett F: can someone clarify what archiving means in this situation. Is it killing it for good or changing it so that people are in support of.
- Heidi S: process note – over time we went from over 300 RMAs to the current 68. All the other have been “archived” still in the final report just not actionable.
- Alex S: the issue is subtle, we are seeing the results of lobbying and I think we have gone too far to allow that. I think what's being suggested, if there are some that are significantly unattractive to many of us then we should move them to a low priority level.
- Dan C: I want to say I agree with what's been said I'm against archiving. Some of these contentious RMAs have brought fishing interests to the table, FWC, marine sanctuary, I resent people from Tallahassee coming down here and saying that if we leave fisheries stuff in there then they will poison the well. Does anyone really believe that the Scott administration is going to get to working on water quality without these pushes from us? We are also hearing the same threats from MIA PBC. So if we leave this stuff in you aren't going to care about habitats anymore?
- Dana WM: I'm also against archiving. The idea was at public meetings that we were going to present the 68 RMAs we proposed, and then take that input and make prioritizations. So some RMAs may fall to the bottom of the list as a result of the comments but I think it should remain on the list that the group has drafted. I would rather reprioritize than archive.
- Jim Mathie: its human nature that I don't pay attention to anything until you stick me in the eye. I am glad the fishing industry is here, I am fortunate that I have worked for a living and now I have the ability to dive and enjoy life for the past nine year. If we don't allow archiving we are ignoring the thousands of comments we received from the public. Once we do that we can focus on the priority. We can archive things and go about our business, not that we forgot about them. I encourage that we have the ability to archive to support this process.
- Angela S: why are we talking about this, was there a vote to get this on the table?
- Heidi S: yes it was brought up at the last meeting.
- Jeff B: I think we are missing the point of what we are doing this for. The point is to benefit the ecosystem, if it doesn't benefit the ecosystem much then we should be able to do that, but it shouldn't be based on how many comments we got. The question is if we need a different type of management.
- Tom W: all of us have votes as members of the working group. We have devoted a lot of time to process, and I'm a process person. Now we will vote on wording changes to a lot of these recommendations. We have the ability to change the working on these, we could pull the plug on and RMA by changing the wording and still leave it on the table.

- Scott S: I am concerned that this is turned into some kind of a negotiation, I'm concerned with time allotment, and could each RMA be offered to be archived. This could take a considerable amount of time. I am leaning toward not allowing to archive at this point
- Jane F: I want to agree with mike he said it really well, we are tasked to prioritize a list, not the people who make the final decision. There are RMAs that I don't agree with and some that I wanted were archived. I am in favor of rewording if the fishing folks who brought some up in their public comment. So then fishing voices are being heard, and the mission statement says it. If we feel as a group and RMA should be at the bottom then it can be there but I want to stick to that mission. There would be a huge public process following these.
- Heidi S: okay let's vote, please raise your hands if you are in favor of allowing archiving of any RMAS at this point. 8 ppl, not enough to pass so archiving will not be allowed at this point.

11:45 – 12:30pm Focus Area Report Outs, Large Group Votes on Any Edits

- Ann W: So each Focus area has reviewed comments for all of your RMAs. We will do LBSP first. The group reviewed the RMAs that did not have lots of comments, and made recommendations depending on those comments. If changes to the title, they will vote, but if just changing verbiage in 2 pager, no need to vote on it.
- Dana WM: if there are no changes to the title, than changes to the body don't change the intent and that is why we aren't voting on it.
- Heidi S: if something comes up that you feel is a change to the intent to the RMA please flag that and we will discuss it.

Land Based Sources of Pollution – David C

- N-68: changing title language.
 - Ann W: in favor of accepting new language for N-68 – 30 in favor, so it will be changed.
- N-94: group decided to change title to "support and promote" because letter received implied this was already in place.
 - Dana WM: The representative who sent the letter in opposition attended our COTF and we asked for clarification. They said the certification is not for the golf course but for the superintendent themselves. So if they leave it goes with them. This was originally meant to effect golf courses that effect coral reef ecosystems and that is not happening
 - Tom W: we could say "create"
 - Mike B: this, when we started it, put the golf courses on the defensive, they started regulating themselves and they are using BMPs they have submitted their data to the commissioner. So just by getting this out here, we have gotten the ball rolling.
 - Ann W: if you support the change, please raise your hand. 31 support so it will be changed.
 - Mason S: just to be on the record that fishermen do highly self-regulate themselves.

- **S-25:** title change to make wording of RMA stronger. Some language struck because it was just a list of potential impacts of outfalls.
 - Jane F: I am uncomfortable with the word “pressure”. Maybe there is a better word? Maybe “encourage”
 - Dan C: i don’t have a problem with pressure. The other night at project baseline talking to someone with Miami-Dade people who said they have no intention of complying with the bill. Their plan is to put legislation up and not comply with bill. Be careful here, there is something under foot. Make them accountable for what they are going to do. I am okay with pressure.
 - Jim Mathie: define “pressure”, it sounds like we are trying to lobby them
 - Baret B: what if it started with “oppose” because it will go to the regulatory body anyways
 - Dana WM: I like Baret's idea, it is a recommended management action. I think you could start with the word “oppose”.
 - Ann W: all those in favor of starting with the word “oppose” raise your hand: 22 not enough.
 - Alex S: one thing to keep in mind is that elected officials and others in local governments are expected to be persuaded and lobbied. “Pressure” might be hard handed but maybe “convince”. This is an issue in Hollywood, many people in town who have power are in favor of this goal. To convince them this is a noble action is a good idea.
 - Pam H: one of the comments on this from the public that discourage was not powerful enough
 - Scott S: I think it should be “explore options to...”
 - Ann W: if you would like to see the RMA remain the way it was before public comment please raise your hand. Not enough. What about “strongly encourage”–
30 so it passes with “strongly encourage”
 - Greg B: if we go through all of these RMAs like this it will take a month. Can the procedure be that if the vote to change doesn’t pass, it must go directly back to the group to work on?
 - Heidi S: when it is a quick fix, it’s okay but I agree we don’t want to get stuck in wordsmithing.
 - Jim Mathie: the process was that small groups do their best to work on it and then it goes to all of us. And if it’s a quick fix that is great, if not we need to work on it.

Law Enforcement – Mollie S

- **N-7:** offer online exam – originally said under 16 required and over 16 optional. But under 16 people don’t need fishing license. So that removed

Education and Outreach – Kristi K

- **N-5:** added to encourage field trips and environmental interaction
- **N-14:** no changes
- **N-15:** added misc. info to consider partnering with local sports team and Miami’s celebrity population
- **N-18:** no changes

- **N-19:** no changes
- **N-21:** added “and visitors” to title. **All those in favor raise hands. 33 pass**
- **N-23:** no changes
- **N-41:** no changes
- **N-123:** no changes
- **S-52:** added to misc. info – allow students to make mascot
- **S-67:** no changes
- **S-75:** no changes
- **N-37:** deleted “and the phone application” because FWC doesn’t have a phone app and it was addressed in S-91. **Those in favor raise hand. Passes.**

Fishing, Diving, Boating, and Other Uses/ Restoration – Ana Z

- **N-137:** creating PSSA or ATBA designation for the SEFCRI region. Only change was to insert the word “sea” which seems to have been left out as a clerical area. There were some negative comments that were determined to be due to some misunderstandings.
 - Ken B: are these designations that exists or did we make them up?
 - Nick M: these are IMO designations that appear on charts
 - Ann W: All in favor of changing this please raise hands **33 it passes.**
- **N-64:** in response to comments the group changed the intent of the RMA to make this program voluntary and not mandatory.
 - Sara T: what were the comments that made them think it should be voluntary?
 - Butch O: FWC has already looked at this and the agency decided that there was no need for any action to be taken
 - Steve E: fishermen put in their own reef cleanup 10 years ago, educating fishermen how not to leave them down there and they do annual cleanups.
 - Butch O: last year we had 47 divers on Pecks Lake and 0 nets were found.
 - Dana WM: another part of the discussion is that the gear is really expensive and none of them want to lose it, so if having the ability to have state help retrieve gear could be and incentive.
 - Mike B: the concept was what was being done wasn’t effecting the reefs. The idea would be to identify who owned the net just like we do traps because their self-regulating wasn’t working
 - Jena M: since we had mason at the table and the study had already been done. So FWC won’t regulate it anyways.
 - Ann W: so raise your hand if you **accept the new verbiage. 27 so it passes**
- **S-8:** establishing coral reef gardens. Some of the confusion that came in via the comments was that coral reef gardens would be closed areas. That is not the case, these will be areas to cultivate coral to out plant and recreate natural reef habitat. So any wording that indicated restrictive activity will be removed and one bullet will be deleted because it is not
 - April P: so restrictive activity could mean no anchoring, did you consider that?
 - Ana Z: I think that any restrictive activity would be handled through N-146
 - Ken B: they are talking about nurseries when they say coral gardens

12:30 – 1:15pm

Lunch Break

1:15 – 1:45pm

Ways that RMAs Could Move Forward After the CWG Process is Complete

- Ann W: we have a procedural question. Skip Dana nominated John as his alternate, but Skip is a charter seat and John is not currently a charter boat captain. Is this okay?
- John S: I have owned charter boats and chartered them myself. I don't see everything that's happening here the difference between a recreational fish.
- Jeff T: I previously couldn't elect an alternate when I couldn't make it to a meeting, so if I can get that back?
- Dana WM: we previously haven't made these decisions so it's a little awkward.
- Mike B: I know guy's that have charter boats but I've never heard of a charter captain's license. I know both Skip and John so I say bring him in.
- Ann W: All in favor of adding john as alternate? 33 yes, so he is added to alternate seat.

1:45 – 2:00pm

Review Process Plan for High Comment RMAs

- Kevin C: I am FCO and Melissa Recks FWC marine fisheries division. We are here as advisors to help assist in OFRs final steps. So the question is once these recommendations are sent to agencies, how will this work out? DEP overview, we have 3 secretaries in the DEP. And a lot of these RMAs fit within these specific deputy secretary realms. As these RMAs are received they will trickle down to the appropriate contact. We assume there will be a printed form of the recommendations, suggest you schedule a briefing for FDEP leadership on RMAs. The agency/division where it falls will depend on the content of the RMA. There are also legal, funding and timeline components. If it was tossed to me as a division director head, I would look and see if there are any actions occurring within current programs – like the CRCP which already exists. Decide what types of things might be moved up the ladder because of the need of statutory changes etc. one thing that might help these things move along are SE FL coral reef management plans. Usually the time range for these are about 5 years. Maybe some of the RMAs we would want to include in a management plan.
- Melissa R: FWC structure because it's constitutional agency. We have two levels. The commission itself is the governing body, appointed by the governor, confirmed by the senate. That commission, those 7 members of the board have regulatory authority over fish and wildlife. FWC staff has agency leadership in divisions and offices some of which may be contacted in the case of these RMAs: marine fisheries management, habitat and species conservation, law enforcement, fish and wildlife research institute, permitting. In terms of delivering RMAs it would be best if it was printed and an in person briefing completed by FWC leadership. Then FWC has the ability to provide leadership direction or not. We would consider the following in the review process: are actions already ongoing or can be piggybacked? Is this under our authority or do we have expertise to lend to process? Evaluate feasibility and anticipated benefits? Is it consistent with agency

strategic plan and commission direction? So some RMAs don't require regulatory changes – if so and FWC wants to advance them they could provide technical expertise and maybe incorporate into activities or a work plan. These could happen at the staff level without commissioner approval. If they require regulatory actions, it will require commission approval, and be within the agency work plan which is approved annually by the commission. Staff would review recommendations and develop recommendations to give to the commissioners for review. FWC is always open to public input and there will be a variety of ways to get that like surveys, hearings, workshops, and direct contact between stakeholders and staff

- Ann W: so we will have more of a discussion in June for this but wanted to hear a general plan
- Nikole O: I know you all have a plan for how to move these forward, would we be able to figure out what is happening with these RMAs as they move up. We would like to know if something gets passed.
- Kevin C: I think we can talk with OFR staff about that.
- Melissa R: I think we can definitely commit to providing feedback after some set time period
- Greg B: maybe OFR staff could post a status report on the OFR website for each of the RMAs?
- Angela S: have any of the regulatory actions been accomplished already? So because these have already been work-shopped clearly, does that count in your system or would you have to go over all this again.
- Melissa R: yes, we do take our own process. We might not do as much outreach if we feel that this has been significantly publically vetted. It is obviously better to go to the commission with a completed package. It helps that FWC has been involved the whole time because we are already well educated on the issues, and we can tell that to the commission.
- Dana WM: I like Greg's idea of the website. Also this is an initiative of SEFRI and hopefully they will take some ownership on following up with the process. I think SEFCRI is a good mechanism for that ongoing communication.
- Scott S: thank you for coming, curious if these meetings that might take place, when and where would they take place
- Melissa R: the timeline weighs heavily on a number of things, if staff decide to take it up, if the commission reviews it. For marine fisheries issues it takes at least 6 months from landing on staff desk to get implemented and that's if everything goes very smoothly. Typically really 1-2 years.
- Nikole O: there are other agencies named in RMAs too, so what is the coordination there and where would the funding come from?
- Melissa R: we already work closely with other agencies and if there was a priority action we would certainly help. It is very fluid. And for funding, it depends a lot as well.
- Nikole O: so before tossing something aside would you consider going to outside sources for funding
- Melissa R: someone would have to own it, but most agencies have components to be able to try that.

- Jane F: I have a question, you said FWC looks over fish and wildlife, but not habitat, but one of the offices is called habitat
- Jeff B: legislatively speaking in terms of laws and rules, the ones that apply to FWC are about organisms, but also know without habitat we don't have organisms. So most of the habitat rules and laws fall under DEP. exception is corals because they are both organisms and habitats
- Angela S: I am concerned that some of these RMAs will get lost when nobody is standing behind it. But maybe SEFCRI is the one that stays with it. I think it needs some personality behind it to keep the ball rolling
- Kevin C: it is a big portion of the mission for CRCP that spun into all these things. For consideration these agencies will need some sort of management plan which gives us direction.
- Angela S: Well DEP has a vested interest in this right? Because this was your process from the beginning so you want to see these move forward?
- Jim Mathie: when we started this we were told that there is no management plan in these four counties. Is that still true?
- Kevin C: yes and this is up for discussion because of this
- Jim Mathie: on the habitat issue – you have an artificial reef program, but that's habitat.
- Melissa R: yes the artificial reef program is strong. We don't regulate them, we provide expertise and monitoring.
- Nick M: I have a question about the 7 commissioners, when we get a new governor do they get to appoint more?
- Melissa R: no they serve a 5 year term and after that they are eligible to be reappointed
- Dan C: question about habitat thing again, Tortuga music festival – we know there will be anchor damage, but FWC won't be there and DEP doesn't have boats. Here's a good example, you both say you do habitat, and corals yet nobody is going to do anything about that. I'm not clear whose responsibility that is? Can't we enforce the CRPA?
- Melissa R: I won't speak on behalf of Law enforcement leadership, and I can raise the concern to them. I don't know why certain decisions were made but I can advance your concerns
- Jeff B: with that air and sea show in the past it was a USCG special event. So we were able to get law enforcement and non-law enforcement vessels in the water and handouts to let them know where they should/shouldn't anchor.
- Andrea G: about COTF process, a lot of their recommendations were similar, wondering if these have been submitted, if you would look at them in coordination
- Ken B: COTF recommendations were completed and participating municipalities will be adopting recommendations or not.
- Melissa R: once we receive RMAs, complementary recommendations will be considered. It was my understanding that we weren't asked to act on those because they are specific to municipalities.
- Greg B: most of the RMAs came initially from one of us, so our individual sponsorship went away when it got consumed by the group. Maybe what we do is

consider asking one of us to be the continuing point of contact for each RMA, a volunteer stakeholder to keep on top of it.

- Jett T: it seems like we need more synergy in agencies, why can't we start thinking as an ecosystem instead of separate entities.
- John S: has there been any looking at if any of the recommendations from COTF overlap?
- Ken B: there definitely are overlaps
- Jane F: we got all your recommendations
- James B: we can look at them and see which ones are the same
- Tom W: each RMA might include a notation that this was also a recommendation by the COTF
- Ken B: true but the language is different so it is a grey area.

2:00 – 3:00pm

Small Groups: Review and Synthesize Comments and Flag Those Needing Large Group Discussion (N-59 and S-65)

- Heidi S: we only have 6 more RMAs left to look at, N-59, S-65, S-64, N-146, S-97, S-87. So we will do small group work followed by large group work. We will count off 1-5 so that you will be in a new group and so that stakeholders and new people will be distributed. In some cases there are not so many comments there, so everyone can look at all comments. But for N-59 and N-146 we will divide and conquer so at each table there you will have 100-ish comments. So in your small groups, do some synthesis, flagging comments where you think you will be able to make a change. Also flag things that are important but you can't figure out how to resolve it. When we return as large group we will ask groups to flag things and we will discuss them as a large group. Ann and I will capture those changes to the RMA but all those we will be doing votes. The advantage to doing small group work first, it is easier to come up with solutions in small groups. We hope to finish two this afternoon. First starting on N-59. Then S-65. If we get through that we might get started on the next two RMAs today. Tomorrow we will work on S-64 and N-146 but past that we will have to see how we do.

3:00 – 3:15pm

Break

3:15 – 4:25pm

Large Group: Discuss Flagged Comments and Proposed Changes, Identify Any Additional Proposed Changes, and Vote on Proposed Changes (N-59 and S-65)

- Ann W: so here's how we will report out – we will get facilitators of each table to report out on the general consensus of the table, then we will go around and show flagged comments by the groups.

- Ana Z: Group 1 – general themes – seems to be a lot of misinformation in the comments – questions raised about how often people get shot with spear guns. Worried about spearing vs fishing areas, comments about lack of science, opposing comments centered on the word “ban”. Maybe any wordsmithing needs to be done to explain not banning all spearing just on scuba. Hookah needs to be clarified. Some comments were opposed to overall ban but okay with some restrictions. Group proposals 1) clarify title to include increasing study, oversight, potential?? regulation of spearfishing on SCUBA 2) mention of age limitations or exemptions for older divers because they cannot free dive down to 80 ft. to make catch 3) possibly discuss in lieu of full ban to rework this to be specific to depleted, stressed, or highly targeted species being removed from the catch.
- Mollie S: Group 5 – generally there were 2 themes 1) idea that banning spearing was discriminatory against small user group 2) comments suggesting bag/size limits as alternative. Comments to read 1) restrict to commercial/start with bag limits 2) will eliminate my participation in sport completely 3) spearfishing and hook and line have comparable take ...
- Lauren: Group 3 1) recommendation could be modified to ban only in specific areas 2) reference idea of modifying recommendation changing bag/size limits for spear fishermen 3) could restrict type of spearfishing gear rather than overall ban. Comments to read #914 – section added to fishing license for spearing and lobstering on scuba pay extra fee, take extra test. and stronger penalties to existing laws. Group would like to see background info in 2 pager talk about how this is going to reduce impacts to the reefs.
- David: Group 4 – focused on limitations to the practice such as zonation, protection of spawning, bag limits, slot, season. Group came up with alternative title. “further regulate the practice of spearfishing by adding unique restrictions such as bag and size limits and slots.”
- Kristi: Group 2
 - Dana WM: we spent a lot of time reading through these. We had a conversation about the intent of this RMA and that the intent was to protect larger individuals of the reef fish species because they contribute greater to the population by producing more eggs. So we wanted to see if there is something we can do to get to that intent while keeping stakeholders happy. So we came up with alternative language
 - Jim Mathie: there were some strange comments that I cannot repeat but some were about smaller bag limits, increased minimum size, maximum size. The intent is to allow the larger fish to continue to spawn. “establish maximum size limits to complement existing regulations for grouper and snapper species and hogfish to increase numbers of the larger, more fecund individuals within the southeast Florida assemblage.”
 - Dana WM: we would also need to go through tier 1 -2 and remove spearfishing on scuba language.
- Jim B: I went through and analyzed comments from a fisheries perspective. The Good: used in many Caribbean countries, supported largely by anglers, protect fecund animals. The Bad: do nothing to protect corals, overwhelming opposition from diving community, this would be only RMA that removes an activity, spearfishing is a small fishery accounting for 8-10% of take. If protecting large fish is

what's important, then it should be protected by all gear types. Discriminates against older divers, will eliminate lionfish removals in these areas. The Ugly: all this will do is reallocate fish that would have been caught by spear fisherman to hook and line fishermen. In my opinion this RMA is a distraction from other important RMAs. Recommend that we make this a very low priority if we cannot archive.

- Jim Mathie: I would put hookah in same category as SCUBA although in the Bahamas if you're a local you can use hookah to harvest. SCUBA is very self-regulated and I mean by that that you need to a certification and get on a charter boat. As opposed to free divers they can do whatever they want to do. I think there is an avenue here that after we get through all this we will look at not regulating spearfishing but perhaps do something to help its safety through FWC, educate people appropriately. We can't shoot snook, tripletail, or billfish in the state of FL. I'm okay with additional restrictions if science indicates it's necessary. But issue if harvested fish, all harvesters not just spearfishers on scuba.
- Jeff T: we already do a gear restriction spearfishing maybe with underwater scooters. But I agree I don't think it should be banned.
- Mike B: I have been against SCUBA and spearfishing for almost 30 years, I had a marina tenant take his sons out spearfishing and one of his sons came back with a spear in his stomach. He did survive it, never went on his boat again, sold it. If he didn't have that spear gun, it ricocheted off of a rock. Ever since then I've been fighting against this.
- Nikole O: it's great if we want to talk about the safety issue but that doesn't have anything to do with what's going to help our reefs. We can tell stories about safety but the reefs are the issue.
- Mason S: there was a lot of comments and a lot of them you can see that a lot of opposition comes from fishermen who gave suggestions for a lot of things, not just outright don't regulate me. That leads to potential new titles, one thing mentioned recently is that it would allocate resources if it was banned. If it was changed to the bottom, size limits throughout the whole system, you would be impacting fish populations not just allocating resources.
- John S: ban is the real problem, we need to look at impacts and we do it with everything else, it is their sport. To stop an activity, I have a general problem with doing things like that. But the comments showed that everyone wanted more protection than we see now. This RMA just needs some agency massaging from safety, habitat, fisheries, issue standpoint. It clearly needs tweaking not to just be torn out.
- Tom W: I'm going to predict we will come to consensus here if we can work on this new wording. I'd like to see us move toward that
- Jim Moir: one comment was regarding an educational program that might be the vehicle to talk about why saving the large sizes of these species is the important issue. It would allow people to get more educated, allow for a slot size to be determined.
- Dana WM: in the title we proposed we did originally put a slot, but there already are minimums here so the proposal is to create complementary maximum sizes.
- Jeff T: I don't see another license or tag getting through the legislature because they are already paying for that. Whatever you do with slots would have to be unilateral.

- Brett F: the layers of science that goes into the development of the management structure that already includes scuba harvest. The mortality of fish from hook and line that die because of barotrauma. Sometimes a slot won't work. What seems like a more sensible thing is not to tell FWC how to do their job which they are trained to do but to give them support on to help refine the information such as a tag system that might allow them to collect the data and apply it to what they already have in place. Bypassing science without understanding what that group does.
- Kathy F: question, is the maximum size limit supposed to apply across the board?
- Dan C: I agree that they shouldn't pay an extra fee, one of the RMAs that kinda got sidelined, most states and places when you get a license they have to hand you the rules, this isn't the case in FL. I don't know if we can get that in there somewhere.
- Dana WM: regarding science and informing FWC as the primary manager of this. Until science has been very incomplete, and up until 4 years ago we had no idea what these fish assemblages looks like under the water, we were relying on fisheries dependent data.
- John S: I am a believer in user pay user benefits. It is hard to get hunting license fees through, I like the idea because most of us will pay to continue to support what we like to do. But Florida legislature right now it's not going to get anything through its tough.
- Ann W: so the group sounds like they want to work on the title now. proposals to change the title
- John S: instead of looking at spearfishing as an activity
- Kathy F: Danas group seems to be looking at fishing in general so I'd like to know if the room is interested in removing spearfishing all together
- Dana WM: yes we need to decide which route we want to go, keep spearfishing focus or just fishing. I can also see adding a bag limit to the second one.
- Mason S: this isn't combining the two but simplifying: instead of saying specific fish species just say "appropriate reef fish"
- Dana WM: we chose those certain fish specifically because those are the primarily focused-on fish.
- Joana F: it also opens for discussion what is a reef fish
- Mason S: true we have been working on barracuda recently because it doesn't have a size limit.
- Art S: Mason, are you trying to make it easier to pass these in your verbiage because they will bypass it because it is too broad?
- Mason S: by using the word appropriate you open the door to other species if necessary. Species by species would require a deeper discussion.
- Mike B: I think you are losing the entire concept of the RMA.
- Ann W: we have heard a lot of conversation about removing spearfishing as a focus
- Sara T: that wasn't the intent of the RMA, the intent was to protect larger fish, so the intent is the same
- Ann W: all in favor of new verbiage for **N-59 raise hands, 27 votes so it passes.**

- Ana Z: group identified that there was a lot of misunderstanding on the part of the commenters, what a NMS is, that it is synonymous with no-take, confusion in understanding that the state of FL would no longer have authority over own water.
- Mollie S: we can second those main themes – lots of people misperceived sanctuary as no take zones. Would like for it to include deep water reef systems as well.
- Lauren W: group noted that comments didn't lead to recommendation for modification just liked or didn't like. Also wanted other RMAs to be done before NMS designation. Seemed to be heartburn over idea of federal government coming into state water, maybe modification that it wouldn't be a NMS but area designated as national monument or aquatic preserve which is a state designation.
 - John S: ill add that this was more of an example as an area of concern, it would get all the new layers of regulation like an AP.
- David C: there were concerns about loss of state control and thought maybe a better idea would be aquatic preserve.
- Kristi K: concerned with wanted NMS to be “co-managed with state of FL”

4:30pm

Wrap Up Day 1

~~Thursday, April 7~~

9:00 – 9:10am

Welcome, Review of Agenda for Day 2

- Heidi S: good morning everyone, we did a really good job yesterday of getting through all of the RMAs we wanted to get through. First we will review the agenda for today. I have one more piece of data for you all to review, you will all have it handed out, this is a compilation of comments that came into the general comment page but some of them comment on specific RMAs so I'll show them to you, also 2 come from your state legislators. I would like to remind everyone to be respectful to each other and the commenters as we go through this.
- Ann W: we currently have **27 voters in the room**. Yesterday when we left off we had begun to discuss S-65. I'll recap, many comments had misinformation, there was concern about loss of state control. Proposal to designate an aquatic preserve and national monument. Also for NMS would be co-managed by the state, which was proposed added language to title.
- Nick M: I would oppose any change to the title of this RMA because when this was first proposed we discussed if a national park or state park or national monument be more appropriate. That discussion revealed that this was the most appropriate. It is not an accident that the FL keys are in much better state than here, because it is a NMS. When you become an NMS there is dedicated management focused on managing that resource.
- Ken B: can someone define what a state aquatic preserve really means?
- Kurtis G: Aquatic preserves are designated in Florida code, get additional water quality protections and what goes on, so construction, there is a resource protection designation.
- Kevin C: director of all aquatic preserves in state of Florida – yes it covers all those things, including oil and gas. Close partners with FWC but there is nothing in the statute that ties them. Management plans are designated for aquatic preserves.
- Art S: can we not agree that the reason why the keys are in better shape is the water quality issues?
- Steve E: I strongly oppose its NMS, state of FL should control and not federal government. If aquatic preserves gives it more water quality protection okay. But there are groups that manage fisheries already. If you designate a state of FL preserve it will have the same protection.
- Mason S: the reason why the original title is being changed is the reason why it has gotten so much negative comment. It does get into fisheries things. FKNMS is co-managed with state of FL, so DEP and FWC does still have fishing authority in state waters. Same with aquatic preserve, there is no change to the authority of fishing regulations. There are significant differences that make it tough to compare these reefs to the keys.
- Sara T: in Biscayne Bay it is an aquatic preserve and it doesn't seem to hinder development in any way. Dredging both offshore and inshore continued. So I don't think an aquatic preserve only would give enough protection
- Dana WM: part of the reason that water quality is less of an issue in the Keys is because of the NMS designation which allowed them to start monitoring and get

EPA funding. In terms of the zoning process leading to no take areas its possible, but the point is that there is no determination, there is a separate public process. There are NMSs that don't have any no take provisions. It is not a given that one goes with the other. These are apples and oranges. Our group needs to decide which designation we are recommending. If we don't decide we are just asking someone else to make the choice for us.

- Dan C: I agree with Dana completely with the water quality issue. EPA spent lots of money fixing infrastructure in the Keys. Another good example of why we need this is that the state may be managing fisheries but I am not at all happy with the way the state is managing the habitat and the corals. I think the NMS could help us deal with those water quality issues. Big sugar and big agriculture have a lot of sway because they can get their lobbyist in up in Tallahassee. Another example is the Tortuga thing, how they can't do anything about it. This is a small thing that the two state agencies can't do anything about it. I invite the feds in here I think we can use all the help we can get.
- Ken B: of the two designations, the one that involves FWC the most is the NMS not the aquatic preserve. They need to be involved. Of those two, we would have more management from FWC than the Aquatic preserve.
- Art S: I took it the other way, is he right? The water quality is the issue here, the reefs are in dire straits, it's the coral not the fisheries.
- Melissa R: FWC would likely retain management authority of fisheries in a NMS, however there is a much more extensive coordination process through the sanctuary and through an aquatic preserve we could continue business as usual.
- Kevin C: definition of aquatic preserve – maintain natural, scientific, and aesthetic.
- Steve E: the one thing that the entire room agrees upon is that water quality is the number one issue in the state is water quality. The Florida Keys water quality is much better because there are 100 times more people up here than down there. You're dumping all your water in the estuaries and blaming it on farmers in the middle of the state. You better prioritize water quality and not fisheries.
- Mason S: when you look at big picture, the biggest stresses out there have to do with water quality. If you didn't read the paper it was based on a process in the keys which I found very relevant. When you look at grand scheme of things, things that don't have a big impact, fishing is a small impact compared to the magnitude of freshwater delivery in the keys. You can regulate fisheries and you're going to impact people but it's not near the impact you will have if you regulate water quality, which will in turn help fisheries.
- Greg B: I would like to echo Sara's comments about the effectiveness of the Aquatic Preserve designation. The state has attempted to do a good job but what we see is the continued degradation. If you look at the IRL right now there are still fish, birds, manatees, sea turtles dying. The reality is the designation isn't enough and we need more.
- Jim Mathie: We live in paradise here, we can just go off shore a couple miles. That's a beauty and a bad thing. The more help we can get, the better it is. We are 5 miles off shore were on a gulf stream. My point is we need to emphasize the state of FL to be involved in this. The state is involved and invested, so make them part of this, we don't want any thought of them not being involved in it. 3 miles off shore you can get into federal waters with different fish etc.

- Mason S: It is a fair thing to say that comparing aquatic preserves that exist today there are fish kills. But it's important to think about how different an environment those are. You have to think of the keys being a tiny sliver of land with not many people on it. They don't have large lagoons, and canals pulsing freshwater out. Their bay system is a bay full of sea grass. It is really important to think about distinctions there.
- Art S: I'm worried about making it an NMS brings in more people to the conversation who have no interest in the resource. And more beaurocracy.
- Jena M: look at the state of our estuaries and water bodies today and remember that those areas have been defunded, none of it has been steady because we don't have the money or political will to keep those alive. They have just been sitting as boundaries. Yes they have a management plan but no staff to oversee it. We have been asking for the water quality forever and never gotten it. There are marine protected areas that don't have no take but they get the money to help with water quality nonetheless.
- Skip D: the first time I sat down with this group, everyone wrote down what they thought was the pecking order of importance, everyone wrote water quality and beach renourishment. And when you loop this in with no take zones or MPAs people see that as a way for the government to say no go.
- Jeff T: the Gulf Stream actually comes closest in West Palm Beach and hasn't helped those reef either. I was in St. Lucia, and they have amazing water quality and no fish because they fished it all out. Water quality is absolutely a huge issue and may be the biggest, but it doesn't mean it's the only. If we have the greatest amount of pressure here isn't that where we need the most protection. It makes sense for me.
- Jane F: we do have RMAs about LBSP and E&O, we have a very balanced group of 68 RMAs here. We've been here for two years, figuring out which RMAs pass a quality test and which will balance use and protection. I grew up here been diving for 40 years grew up in a fishing family. This isn't just about water quality it's about protecting the ecosystem.
- Dan C: even before there was OFR there was SEFCRI, we know a lot of things that can help the reef, but we don't have a management plan. They are useless with no way to implement them. We need some way to implement the strategies that we have come up with. The state doesn't seem anxious to do that, aquatic preserve doesn't seem to help. If you don't like the sanctuary process fine, but there will be a whole other process where you can raise hell.
- Jim B: we agree water quality is the number one issue. But we need to look at the ecosystem perspective. The goal of the study was to have simultaneous approaches to ecosystem management. If you try to take one at a time you will fail. All the species we talk about in the keys actually live here, the system is out of balance and we need to balance it.
- Ann W: so first vote 1) as it was written, or 2) co-managed with state of FL. How many abstaining from vote: 4 – we have 27 voters now. So if you are in favor of changing verbiage to adding co-management raise hands – 26 so co-managed with FL is added. So now if you want both options listed – Aquatic Preserve and NMS raise hands – 5 does not pass.

- Jeff T: when people were thinking that the state could do a better job than a NMS – I wonder if they knew all the stuff we just heard about how little Aquatic Preserve has done here if they would change their mind.
- Ann W: so now two votes 1) NMS co-managed 2) Aquatic Preserve. People who want just Aquatic Preserve 7 votes- no pass. **All in favor of NMS co-managed – 21 pass**
- Jane F: I'm happy to have some students in the room today and I wanted them to introduce themselves if possible.
- Amanda: recent graduate from NOVA MS marine bio my project was sedimentation effects on corals reefs. I am looking to work with research group as a diver. It's nice to see everyone here today.

9:10 – 10:00am Small Groups: Review and Synthesize Comments and Flag Those Needing Large Group Discussion (S-54)

10:00 – 10:15am Break

10:15 – 10:50am Large Group: Discuss Flagged Comments and Proposed Changes, Identify Any Additional Proposed Changes, and Vote on Proposed Changes (S-54)

- Ann W: so we will go over what you all found for S-54. A reminder that we voted yesterday not to archive, so if you vote not to change it will stick with old title.
- Ana Z: only one major takeaway, seems to be a lot of confusion in public and group as to what exactly a UNESCO designation would mean
- David C: echo Ana, speculation that it would lead to increased intervention and/or regulations from fed. Would the reef qualify and what would it entail?
- Mollie S: worried this would result in restrictions of access and usage
- Lauren W: seems to be a general misunderstanding of UNESCO.
- Kristi K: felt the same way, focused on the word protection – and there is no protection with UNESCO. Proposed edit to title.
- Ana Z: two comments for discussion points – does reef tract meet criteria, and significance of designation
- Kristi K: proposed title change – taking out “and protection”
- David C: title change – replace “apply” to “consider future application for” and after reefs “dependent on usage restrictions”
- Hannah M: as in they would consider the designation as long as there are no usage restrictions.
- Lauren W: suggested also take out “protection” and add “appreciation of the cultural significance”
- Dana WM: I would say ecological as well as cultural significance.
- Nick M: UNESCO stands for educational, scientific, and cultural organization. So that's all in the title.

- Dana WM: I don't like "consider future application" because it's like, who is considering?
- Nick M: when I worked on this RMA initially I would point out firstly it's for the entire reef tract from Dry Tortugas up. I spoke to Dan Kimble who is superintendent of everglades which is a UNESCO site. He said they only had positive results. I also discussed with the keys and dry Tortugas contacts and asked if they would be interested in supporting this and there was incredible willingness to go forward for all 3 of the concerned areas (FKNMS, BBNP, and SEFCRI region)
- Jeff T: what federal orgs would be doing that?
- Nick M: the application would have to be signed by the secretary of state. You have to have a management plan for the entire reef tract to apply for UNESCO.
- Andrea G: it seems like we aren't ready for this because we don't have a management plan
- Nick M: we can progress the management plan and the application for UNESCO at the same time. The confusion about what UNESCO is or does is caused by them not learning what it is online. Incidentally the US was one of the first signatories and was important in the establishment of UNESCO as an org.
- Dana WM: I would like to change "FL coral reefs" to add "ecosystem"
- Ann W: is anyone abstaining from vote – 3 abstentions, so we have 28 voters. If you want to remove the words "and protection raise hands" 24 counts so it is removed. So now adding the "appreciation and ecological cultural significance... etc" 26 so it is added. So if you want to have it say consider future application, raise hand. 6, so it will say "apply"
- Vincent: can we add a management plan into the two pager.

10:50 – 12:30am

Large Group Process Issues: Review Prioritization, and Discuss How to Modify N-146

- Heidi S: we will do a refresher on the prioritization you have done so far and how you want to do prioritization review in June. How you want as a group to move things on that list. Ana will give us that refresher.
- Ana Z: first step to develop list of RMAs, the second step was to prioritize, the ultimate goal is to have the list of RMAs. The CWGs used TNCs prioritization model for this which included 3 factors, benefits, feasibility and cost. CWGs initially scored based on these criteria. Then the CWGs were able to see the relative combined ranking once they added all this together. As groups worked through ballots they each provided a score for the following criteria. For benefits this included – scope and scale, duration of outcome, leverage, timeframe, risk. Feasibility – considered lead entity, stakeholder support, and ease of implementation. For Cost you considered direct cost, and indirect costs. This is what one of these ballots looked like. Each CWG took a ballot home and mailed it in. the results you have in front of you are the culmination of ballots. Once we got the score, the benefits were binned into 4 bins based on benefits and then finding cost and feasibility under that umbrella because those are the realities that help guide prioritization. You can see as the benefits go up, it is easier for an RMA to receive a "priority 1". Remember that the RMAs are designated into a series of priority bins based on these matrices. When plugging all RMAs into this matrix, results initially look something

like this. This is binned by benefit. Today you will get a handout sorted by priority from highest to lowest. This gives you a basic sense of how the group initially ranked these RMAs. You will have the chance to move these RMAs up or down depending on your thoughts and feedback from the community.

- Dana WM: so this is different from what we saw in November when we had a big group discussion about organizing these. That list was organized by benefit and there were 4 benefits bins and we had a discussion on that, do we want the benefit to be driving the prioritization or have all 3 factors drive it. I remember having that conversation and going back to the mission. Yes we need to take cost and feasibility into account.
- Heidi S: the handout that you have in front of you today follow how it was going to be done if all benefits feasibility and cost. It is possible to present it just by benefit. But we went back to this because this was how it was first presented to you. So we need to have a conversation about what process you would like to use. What we would recommend is starting with this handout and allowing some moving of RMAs up and down. We have to have a conversation about how many you would like to move up and down. You can move it unlimitedly, but the danger there is that if everything moves up to priority one then you don't have a prioritized list
- Daron W: clarification – you said the prioritization didn't have benefits weighted, but this one does have benefits weighted. Like you saw if it's in a high benefits category it is really hard for it to be low priority. If you want to go back to just benefits that's possible it would just be basically scrapping the info about cost and feasibility.
- Dana WM: it's not scrapping it, it's just having benefits be the driver but with the reality check of having cost and feasibility be an informant for some of those moves. Here there are many things that are very high benefit falling in priority 3 and 4
- Joana F: so maybe this matrix needs to be changed so that that can't happen. So that cost and feasibility are in there.
- Daron W: we could change the matrices if that's what you guys wanted, this one was just taken directly from the TNCs model.
- Ann W: for purposes of prioritization, if we look at priority 1-4 and have the benefit score tell you where it goes within the priority box.
- Daron W: and that's how it's ranked currently on your sheets.
- Ann W: if we do it by benefit box, I would have an issue moving something from a low benefit to a high benefit based on the conversation in the room because that's not what the quantitative scores say.
- Dana WM: I think benefit should be the primary indicator of where it falls and cost and feasibility should be secondary informants of where it moves.
- Angela S: I agree with Dana, the problem with using tier 2/3 information especially cost, is a very subjective number. If we do it this way, N-71 and S-8 are ranked very high and would be priority one. This doesn't make sense to me.
- Brett F: my question is come June, what would the process be for moving these around. If we are looking at each one and vote on moving it up or down, then what is more important. If you are discussing each individually it might not be such an important point. If I have a better idea of how the voting process will happen I will be able to make more informed decisions

- Heidi S: the group has discussed that they would like to move things up or down and that 75% would have to agree to move it. We are just discussing now the starting point, whether it's this list or sorting it by benefit
- Tom: when we prioritized these we each sat alone and did this. I think that process should be one of the processes we consider in June. Based on the comments we received and with the inclusion of the new voters would give us a boarder base of input. The final determination should be based on the numbers not a conversation for each RMA.
- Heidi S: if we take that approach we will essentially be redoing the worksheets we do in the fall. If you did those in June you wouldn't see the results in June or talk about results.
- Jane F: just procedural, I appreciate that Daron writes the minutes and worked on the prioritization, I just want to make sure everything makes it into the minutes.
- Sara T: how did you define priority 14
- Daron W: it was in the matrices – for each RMA it goes to the priority bin and then feasibility and cost on the x and y axis
- Jeff T: I knew I should have stayed in school. It's clear that priority one isn't priority 1. It seems that cost and feasibility are weighted too high. With our mission statement benefit should be the number one category then break it from there.
- Mason S: I agree with going back through these again. Some of the RMAs that got a lot of comments significantly changed, especially N-59 which needs to be re-voted because the factors have changed. Maybe we need to re-vote on some that stand out and have a discussion about where they stand.
- Ken B: I agree with Dana benefits should come first, it doesn't pass the straight-face test. We can't estimate cost, SEFCRI coming up with cost were way off base, we can't come up with accurate numbers. It's important, but weighting in based on what we think is misleading
- Dana: process idea – desire to reprioritize in light of big changes and addressing the issue of June being the last meeting, could we do it as homework?
- Mason: can you remind us is cost just monetary?
- Daron W: one thing to keep in mind about this list and the way it turned out. This is just how the numbers played it out. And in talking with Karen who spearheaded this before she switched jobs – starting with this prioritization, understanding it doesn't "pass the straight-face test" and then actually using your expertise and understanding that if something does need to move up would be the way to mitigate those issues.
- Dan C: I'm with Jeff on this, all the water quality issues have fallen down to priority 3. Just because it might cost a lot, I got to question the matrix. Everybody is all about the water quality.
- Angela S: in the amount of time that it takes us to talk about it, we could just go by this sheet and move them around by relative benefits.
- Joana F: suggest change on matrices – everything very high benefit only priority one or two. If you change the matrices than the slope could be higher. It would still keep cost and feasibility but give a stronger effect of benefits.

- Sara T: I agree we need to prioritize benefits first. I would also like to suggest that we take out ongoing ones. Like FOFR is up here these are ongoing it is not a new initiative that needs to be implemented.
- Heidi S: there has been some interest in redoing the exercise for all 68 RMAs. There has also been interest in sorting them by benefit category like in the fall. And the third idea is we may want to move things up or down because they are ongoing
- Dana WM: to clarify – what I would propose as the approach would be organizing by benefit bin and then having a discussion based on feasibility and cost and maybe difference of opinion on benefit about moving things. But the starting place should be benefit.
- Dan C: water quality issues definitely need to be moved up. Years ago the CRTF liaison said he needed to know what we need, and not worry about the cost. What's going to be the biggest benefit to the reefs? Whatever matrix we are using didn't work because all those got moved down.
- Kathy F: I really like the suggestion of limiting how much they can move, like only up or down one bin. Have some impact from feasibility and cost but only move up or down one
- Jim M: wasn't that a model that we based everything on? We don't really want to manipulate the model do we? I have the old prioritization here, I am seeing that we do need to weigh the benefits as top priority. I agree with ken, none of us can figure out cost when we put all this together. Considering we have been through a public comment process and are digesting all that, we should go back to reprioritizing the batch of 68 based on the new changes we have.
- Heidi S: I will try to move us toward what we want to do moving forward. One question is if we want to make benefit the biggest thing, either by going back to this sorting of data, or changing the formulas behind the model so that if something gets a very high benefit, it has to fall in 1 or 2. The other big issue is whether we redo all of the ranking.
- Jeff T: I agree with Dana, benefit should be the number one thing. I am not in favor of going back and reworking these things unless we have a significant title change. We don't have enough time to go back and meaningfully do these ballots again
- Dana WM: in terms of the proposal to mess with the model, I think we also have to think about how to communicate this to the public for transparency purposes.
- Dan C: a good example I don't understand at all, promote CSO is in priority one. That's the problem.
- Heidi S: I think we know we don't like what we have so we need to figure out how to move forward.
- Daron W: this is scored by benefit, on the screen.
- Michelle: do you know how many title changes we did? We could move maybe 12 of them around with a vote today
- Heidi S: we won't move anything around today, this is process for June.
- Tom W: the process when we first marked these, it took an hour or 2 at the most. It was not time consuming, but I think we all agree that if we reprioritize the benefits category I think we can do both I don't think it's either or. All of us want to re-rank the water quality, we don't have to go piece by piece. If we all go back and redo prioritization we will take that into consideration

- Mason S: it sounds like everyone is on the same page on that we want benefits to be scored. I have to say I appreciate so much the people who are not paid to be here. There are a lot of new people and one thing throughout the process has been a lack of fishing representation. If we are going to consider new fishing input, we are going to have to vote on these over again
- Dan C: we can't just reprioritize we have to change the matrix, how we are weighing them or we will end up with the same thing we have before.
- Heidi S: will anyone abstain from process vote? None okay we have an additional 3 people so we have 31 voters. This is a process vote so we need 62%. I have heard a lot of people suggest that they want to go back to the way it was in November using benefit as an organizing principle. How many would like to go back to that?
- Art S: is it still possible to change relative benefits. I can't make that vote without knowing if we will be changing relative benefit at all.
- Heidi S: okay we can do that issue first. If we are going to as individuals go through and reassign benefits feasibility and cost like we did before.
- Jane F: I want to throw it out to the group that if an existing member didn't finish their ballot, do we allow those people to contribute a ballot. I would like to throw out an option instead of us all doing it again, that just the people who haven't turned in a ballot turn it in.
- Heidi S: option 1) everyone re-votes 2) only people who missed a vote can vote 3) stick with the numbers and move things around from what we have now.
- Mason: I like that idea for time saving but I think all the comments we got might change some people's perception of these categories.
- Jim Mathie: I think we should go through again and have everyone do all 68 again. Maybe more feasible over email.
- Jeff T: so you're telling me I could just save the two years and swoop in at the end and turn in a ballot?
- Butch O: I agree with Mason, we have new data and the responsible thing to do is look at it all again and redo it.
- Dana WM: one clarification is that this was a painstaking process to get prioritizations. And all answers were made with lots of supporting data. It is not a 15 minute exercise.
- Angela S: if we redo it again you will have to do I don't know how many more months of meetings to get all that information in. everyone would have to commit to 6 months.
- Kathy F: I'm not sure why we would re-rank feasibility and cost. My thought would be if we re-rank it would just be benefits. Feasibility and cost hasn't changed.
- Butch O: I don't think it would take us that long honestly because water quality seems like no brainers. The responsible thing to do with new data is to re-vote
- Joana F: the way I see it is that we should follow the way we originally had. We shouldn't do the whole thing again, maybe the new members can enter the new ballots.
- Kathy F: this does take a long time, it takes a really long time. It is really difficult to get all the information and if you go into it thinking it's a no brainer, then you're not using the two years of information that we developed

- Mason S: do you have the ballots from all of us? So could we get all those ballots back and if our personal votes haven't changed we.
- Daron W: it might be possible, but maybe not because we wanted to keep it double blind.
- Heidi S: we have 3 things to vote on: 1) any redoing of voting by everyone or new people 2) if there is re-voting if it's on everything or just on benefit 3) sort by benefit.
- Angela S: can we know what resources DEP has for OFR can they extend the process if necessary?
- Heidi S: there is a grant deadline for next June, but Ann and I will have this June be our last meeting.
- Mason: the purpose of the comments was to get information about these criteria. If there are legislators writing about feasibility, that absolutely changes feasibility.
- Dana WM: two ways to move forward, revote on all 68 RMAs, or allow them to be a part of the conversation now. Nobody is proposing not taking new member input it's just two different ways to do it.
- Jeff T: if something is very high benefit, it will never be easy, that's the way it is. Legislators will hate something because it is very costly. Benefit is the number one reason. To have all of us redo everything again is insane
- Andrea G: I am concerned if we all go back individually and redo this, we will be ranking things differently based on how we want them to come up. Then we might come up and won't still be the way we want. I like what Daron said about how this gives us something to go from and then we can work as a group.
- Ann W: we are planning on spending a good portion of June moving these around
- Andrea G: the only way we will get through this in June is if we don't re-vote
- Jeff R: I am new, but I don't think we need to do this again. I think we can work off the work that's already been done, it will take fine tuning.
- Steve E: I am a new member and I don't want to cause aggravation I understand where we are coming from. We know we want to re-rank them by priority. If there are some that will change with feasibility could we break them out and discuss them and just change those.
- Heidi S: Yes, in June we will discuss if things should move. That has been the plan all along we are just trying to figure out our starting point. Vote 3 options 1) no new ballots, use data we have 2) new people can fill out ballot and add to existing data 3) everyone re-votes – potentially if you had an old ballot you could get your number.
- Art S: so I still need to know if we can move things around with relative benefits.
- Heidi S: yes in June we will talk about it.
- Sara T: do we know who turned in ballots?
- Mason S: as a comment, mathematically, it is very different to include people into the matrix then have the possibility of subjectively moving things.
- Lauren W: the data was normalized, not every single person voted for every single one, so we normalized them if we add new people their data will be normalized in there too.
- Baret B: I am fine with not putting in a ballot as long as I can state my opinion and that can be done in June

- Dana WM: just to be clear I had proposed out the option of homework voting, but I think we should understand if that is a possibility before we vote. If it's not a possibility, and we have to do it in June, which means we can't finish the process in June, and we need new facilitators in June. Then those are big implications.
- Heidi: so question for staff – is it feasible to do this as homework, everyone would have to fill out ballot, return it.
- Francisco P: yes it is feasible
- Jeff T: in June we will be able to reprioritize anyways right? You will be able to do that anyways if you re-vote or not.
- Heidi S: now voting 1) no new ballots, use data we have 2) new people can fill out ballot and add to existing data 3) everyone re-votes – potentially if you had an old ballot you could get your number. Raise hands if okay with no new ballots and prioritization in June. 17 not enough, 2) 13 not enough 3) not enough.
- Nick M: the process is that if we don't vote to make a change then the status quo continues isn't that right?
- Heidi S: I think that is correct, we didn't have enough to make a change so we revert to what we had. I think I hear people wanting this to be ordered by benefit is that right? Vote for ranking benefit 24 agree so it passes.

N-146

- Heidi S: we will follow the same process as we have before where you will review comments and change. We are strongly suggesting that you only focus on comments that refer to N-146 in general. If you have new info about specific areas of interest, you can share that with DEP staff and they will make sure it is in supporting documentation. But we will not go back to trying to modify boundaries and work on specific areas of interest simply for time reasons.
- Butch O: so if at the table, we want to talk about specific areas of interest. We can't, we have gone through some but haven't been able to work on some.
- Heidi S: we will work on N-146, but won't go through the individual areas
- Jeff T: they were just suggested they weren't set in stone.
- Heidi S: when these all go to the agencies, if N-146 moves forward there will be a whole new process to do that. And whoever does that will want to be able to find the data.
- Dana WM: maybe what would help people is if we work on together what language would be submitted that explains what the areas are "areas of interest" and that each of them has support and opposition that will be submitted with the overall recommendation. But we aren't presenting a package of 22 zones, we are just recommending the MPA zoning framework. We need to discuss what language goes with those maps. I think this is probably language that would go into the worksheets somewhere, explaining that there were areas identified by the marine planner to explore this.
- Heidi S: so maybe a task for the small groups to explain the overall RMA. We are proposing that we do not go back and edit areas of interest.
- Mason S: the concept of them being important areas was one of the main things in the beginning and one thing that was cool was that the two groups highlighted similar areas so we know they are important. So the sticking point is once you get to those areas and their objectives, that is the sticking point. Maybe we can just change language similar to COTF "may include but is not limited to" etc. areas that might need protection. If there is

a way to do that in those sheets. Those maps will still be submitted in the report saying that we think this area should be no-take, that's the message that gets across

- Jane F: we need to discuss N-146 we shouldn't look at areas of interest, we are going to get bogged down and not finish it. The areas of interest can be just that, there needs to be wording and I nominate Dana and Mason to work on that.
- Kathy F: the areas of interest are obviously important and that language will be figured out and representatives will work on that. these are considerations, not set in stone
- Butch O: the issue is that we have one area that says to shut down 30 % of Pecks Lake and now there is new data and a report from FWC saying that it wasn't necessary to do so.
- Kathy F: that's exactly what we said we are not going to do. These are just specific areas of interest. There is no specific recommendation in those maps at all.
- Dan C: we just try to define them as areas of particular concern, just important spots.
- Heidi S: I think we are starting to get into too much content which we will discuss after lunch
- Dana WM: beyond looking at data in marine planner, fish, corals, socioeconomic, then drawing boxes, we did two things, we identified objectives that we hoped would be achieved, one of the objectives as 20-30% no take. Then in November we went one step further and identified management tools that could be used in these boxes. Some of the management tools were marine reserves etc. so this is where the confusion lies. So the question is what to do with that and how to include this information on the maps.
- Mason S: if there is some way to make clear that these aren't specifically designated areas and maybe that is as simple as doing a lot of that language in the overall title.
- Dana WM: it is clear we don't have time to go box by box, so we need to come up with a one size fits all solution.

12:30 – 1:05pm **Lunch Break**

1:05 – 1:15pm **Small Groups: Review and Synthesize Comments and Flag Those Needing Large Group Discussion (N-146)**

1:15 – 2:15pm **Public Comment**

- Jim Mathie: In reality the solution is a blending of both extremes- the guys that like to take the fish and the guys that like to hug the fish. I would like to thank you all for the changes to N-59. I think the changes will be received well. I think it's great that we have all come together to work together toward the solutions in the middle. In reality, the public would side somewhere in the middle as well. It's like a bell curve with both extremes representing a smaller part of the community as a whole.
- Brian Walker: taken directly from his letter - I am not an advocate for or against fisheries or the diving industry. I am a native Floridian who grew up here and a scientist that has been monitoring and studying the SE FL reefs for 15 years. I would like to point out that none of us were around before humans started impacted the SE FL reef system and

none of us really know what the system was like other than from anecdotal information. Because of this, we are all affected by the shifting baselines phenomenon. Shifting baselines happens due to slow changes through longer time periods that are not readily noticeable. Like how we begin to accept a larger waistline as we get older as the “normal” condition. We can lose track of how things used to be by accepting small changes over long periods of time. My baseline for the reef started in 1980 when I first went snorkeling on at Looe Key in Sea Camp. I remember lots of spiny urchins and live corals, but I don’t have a personal experience of what the reefs were like before then. Anecdotal information from historical records indicate the system was previously more pristine and housed a wide diversity of fishes of all age classes (sizes). This includes many large adult fishes. This can be seen in many fishermen’s catches from the early and mid-1900’s. This is why Florida became a Mecca for fishing. We presently have empirical data on the reef fish communities from a 3-year statistically sound study that shows that many of the popularly fished populations on the reef are severely lacking in large adults. These data indicate that fish are being removed from the system once they grow larger than the minimum legal size limits on a regular basis. What is not obvious is how that is affecting or has affected the reef and its inhabitants. We do know that a fully functioning ecosystem should comprise all levels of maturity for its inhabitants. And a fully functioning ecosystem is more resilient and resistant to change. Biding by the precautionary principle alone makes me want to keep at least some parts of the system as natural as possible to perhaps increase its resiliency to future, uncontrollable perturbations. I’ve heard many claims that the FWC are the experts and they should be left to manage the fishes, but I am not convinced their strategy is the most effective. In many cases FWC utilizes a reactive management strategy where changes are made in response to an event or a depletion. I point to the recent problems in Barracuda populations and the large fish kills in Indian River as prime examples. Furthermore this approach mostly focuses on single species management which does not account for the ecosystem as whole; a newer approach thought to attain higher conservation success. In this epoch of the Anthropocene, where more species are becoming extinct faster than ever before, I recommend incorporating marine protected areas including a network of marine reserves as part of a proactive management strategy to increase the ecological resilience of the communities so they can better cope with disturbances, especially in this time of rapid change.

- Kurtis Gregg: I am a contractor with NOAA fisheries service and SEFCRI TAC advisor. I’ve had thoughts and ideas as these move forward with the recommendation having to do with reef fish. These are the results of the first 3 years of RVC data. 3,320 fish counts at 824 sites. This table presents results of those 113 red grouper observed in 3 years, only 9 of legal size. 43 amberjack none of legal size, hogfish only 1/6th of legal size, 1700 grey triggerfish 16 of which were legal size. Comparison from Dry Tortugas, FKNMS and SEFCRI. It gets less and less as you go north, these species should run the whole reef tract. We’ve seen increased abundance after Tortugas ecological reserve. These graphs are part of a presentation I gave for onboarding last week I think only 2 people called in.
- Dan C: don’t paint me with a PETA paintbrush, don’t let my long hair cover up my red neck. I want to challenge everyone here to put down your spear gun for one dive, go to that reef you like the best. I challenge you to go there today and see what it looks like today. There is a hell of a difference in the last year. If you don’t dive, snorkel.

- a. Jim Mathie: you're right Dan I agree with you
 - b. Dan C: send info to your legislators, I got the mailing list and will send it out to everyone to combat the port everglades expansion. I also want to talk about that it's time to go forward with the sanctuary. TAC meeting coming up. If someone wants to come from fishing interest, one from each stakeholder group. This is our scientific advisory body. Barracuda, Kurtis said they only found 50 barracuda out there. Used to be on one wreck you would see 50 in one day. FWC is finally getting on that but it's a little too late.
- Chuck Collins: executive director of MIA PBC before that I was with drew Bartlett kicking off this process. Observations on process, yesterday a lot of people were asking about public input. If it goes to the necessary agencies they will have to do a whole other public process. Feds are good at some things and not so much at others. An example, ACOE and SFWMD agreed on cost sharing to recover the everglades. SFWMD bought hundreds of millions of dollars of land. ACOE unilaterally changed that and delayed restoration for 10-15 years. FLK improving water quality has nothing to do with FED that has to do with the county. Big sugar gets \$1000 an acre from the fed govt. I work closely with people who work on NMS who have come begging to me for funding. And sanctuaries don't regulate dredging. EPA regulates water quality.
- Joana F: assistant prof at NOVA – representing dick dodge, dean of college of natural science. I was formally in the group, while I am unable to be there today I remain interested in involved. My comments today are brief and in support of the working group and the RMAs. The tragedy of the commons can happen easily within a shared resource system. When individual users acting independently within their own self-interest end up depleting the resource. Commons means any shared and unregulated resource including atmosphere, ocean, fisheries, and coral reefs. We all know our reefs are under a lot of stressors. The good news is that the tragedy of the commons can be overcome by private ownership, government regulations, and users. The ray of hope is this CWG process, you the users are creating schemes of shared use to ameliorate degradation. I urge you to keep up your good work and especially include MPAs in the RMA toolbox. Our coral reef ecosystems are under many stressors and alleviating these stressors is critical, equally important is designating specific areas for a time out. Without this action there will be limited ability for regrowth etc. I thank you for your continued work developing RMAs designed to manage and sustain our precious coral reef ecosystem.
- Jack Harari: thank you for letting me address you today. I've made comments on lots of RMAs. I support and oppose some. But I'll talk about 2 today. The MPAS and the NOAA sanctuary designation. I believe that our reefs should remain under local control and complete closure should be a last resort. Less intrusive measures based on science should be put in place before this. I could support limited closure during spawning aggregations, similarly I would support reduction of bag limits, slot limits for species shown to be under stress. I think closing at a time when species are vulnerable would be acceptable if based on sound science. NOAA sanctuary designation would result in loss of control over our resources. FWC has an excellent record of resource management in the state of FL. I was interested in seeing the FKNMS, but it resulted in closed areas including large areas of the Dry Tortugas. While NOAA will state that they have only closed 3% of the areas but they took the most desirable areas. Most of the Dry Tortugas and FKNMS that they left us is sand bottom. The large northern area was also closed for public use. Before closure of this areas there should have been less draconian

measures taken. For these reasons I do not support the MPA framework or the sanctuary designation

- George Povoromo: staff writer for salt water sportsman magazine, host a national fishing show for NBC sport. I want to start off to say true recreational anglers are conservationist, we hate to see our habitat destroyed, we support sensible size and bag limits on species. Closures are unwarranted. There is no science to show they will be a success. we have regulations in place that have been successful like the snook and grouper closures, where we put sensible size and bag limits on them. If we need to tighten things up to bring back mutton snapper. Instead of closing it down have a closed season for spawning. Or limited entry, control that through catch and release like we do with black groupers and groupers out of season. Our recreational fisheries shouldn't be restricted. If we close these areas our economy will be ruined. We are the fishing capital of the world in SFL. We have systems in place to make our fish population stay in sustainable numbers of fish and catch. Do not close these zones down to fishing, let people catch a release. Maybe it's time to make circle hooks mandatory for catch and release. I fish these waters since I was a young kid, there's no need to close these areas down.
- Charles Butler: lived here since 1970, I am an attorney and have been involved in many environmental projects. I fish and drift dive. That purportedly gets in the way of fishermen. The most dangerous thing in the water for a diver is fishing line. The fact that this is done on a week day is unfair in nature. I make my own schedule but a lot of people can't be here and speak. These closures are not the answer to the problem. What is our biggest problem? Water quality. What effects water quality, Lake O discharge, beach renourishment, loss of habitat, fertilizer, sewage, pollution, etc. I've been diving down here for a long time and I remember going to Looe key and there were tons of corals, you used to see clouds of baitfish and they aren't there anymore. Why are there no more fish, because there aren't baitfish anymore? I've got another page sweetheart. The movie the right stuff. Who put artificial reefs out there, fishers and divers?
- Kelly Ralston: seeding time to Gary Jennings –
- Gary Jennings: ASA and manager of KFF program – thanks to all of you for your time and for your efforts to protect FL coral reefs. But there has been mission creep. At this meeting it was said it's about time fishing interests got in the room. OFR was created to protect coral reefs not manage fisheries. As soon as we became aware of mission creep we attended. It's difficult to attend because of our jobs. Many people in this room are paid to attend whether DEP, FWC, educational institutions, or the many NGOs. Each group named is advancing their agenda. We want to protect reefs to and have access. Procedurally it seems that public opposition has been ignored. 3071 people stated that they were against MPAs 160 for it. 2840 against NMS 22 were for it. 2817 against UNESCO status, 16 for it. 2810 against coral gardens, 30 were for it. CCA Florida which represents 13,000 conservationist anglers were also against these RMAs. Ignoring these people shows that OFR is based on agenda, not on science, not on public comment as the OFR charter states. To go on record, fishing is well regulated, fishermen are conservationists. Every fisherman has a license. Fishermen in the state of FL provide 40 million dollars a year in license fees and special taxes. FWC has a law enforcement division that is well represented here, and that's what they do. Anglers and hunters are the leaders in conservation. We want sustainable fisheries and you can see examples of fishermen asking for and getting lower bag limits. Organizations like CCA, BHT, ASA,

SGA, are examples of recreational fishermen working in Florida to make sure that there is sustainable fishing. It has been said that MPAs or NMS status doesn't mean no take but if you read N-146 it says clearly that the goal of SEFCRI and OFR is 20-30% no take and that means no fishing. Studies of MPA no take effectiveness have shown mixed results and no benefit to corals. We urge you to consider these results. Closures should be the last tool, not the first. Anglers know this and also know that other options haven't been explored. To me it is shocking that water quality issues are not priority 1. There is no baseline established for reef water quality. Focus on that and leave fisheries management to FWC. Work with the existing tools available to address your concerns and don't add another layer of bureaucracy. You can plan on us attending in June, and our partners too.

- Charles Butler: I'll take the rest of his time. I would like someone to explain to me why water quality isn't the biggest issue, the long spine urchins have disappeared and they are some of the organisms that keep the reef clean of algae. The lack of health and small fish on the reef is what the issue is. It's not about fishermen destroying the reef in the general scheme of things if you spear or kill a fish you aren't killing the reefs. The bigger things are sewage and pesticides and fertilizers etc.
- Jena McNeal and Scott Sheckman: CWG member from the start, president and cofounder of FOFR, than you all for coming today, hope you enjoy the snacks. We are celebrating our one year anniversary this month. The northern group came up with the idea. It's great to see a lot of new faces, and new voices. I feel like there is new spirit and energy in the room. FOFR is nonprofit dedicated CSO for the SEFCRI areas. We have a program coming up that is important called bleach watch. We want to train about 50 divers to do better recognition of bleaching events. As well as rapid response for things we can't foresee
 - a. Jena M: our priority for fundraising money from the CRCP and our priorities are always water quality. People in the back are expressing that they want water quality to be the top priority, the only reason it's not up there is because it's expensive. If you were here earlier you would have seen one of our priorities was funding for water quality, it is a huge price tag. Which is why we are here.
 - b. Scott S: yes and every bit helps even if it's just a dollar or two here today. Thanks
- Jim Wiborg: I sell center console fishing boats for a living, family business since 1926. I dive and fish. Our problem is water outfall. We don't see the juvenile fish, we don't see them because of goliath grouper. It would hurt my business if we close it. I employ 33 people. I don't want to see my business hurt because of you guys closing down the reef.

2:15 – 2:45pm

Large Group: Discuss Flagged Comments and Proposed Changes, Identify Any Additional Proposed Changes, and Vote on Proposed Changes (N-146)

- Ana Z: group identified a lot of misperceptions, a lot of commenters thought the entire reef would be shut down. Many suggested size and bag limits instead. Lot of concerns about negative economic impacts. Many not familiar with scope and range of RMAs.

- David C: identified misconceptions regarding what is an MPA, comments directed at no take areas. Several comments pro mooring buoys or no anchor areas. Some comments regarding back reef habitats.
- Kristi K: echo what has been said. Clear that there is a polarization with comments – some concern with fisheries, management concerns, wondering if this will improve the condition of reefs.
- Lauren W: many about needing more research showing this is needed. Saw comments about water quality being the biggest issue. Many comments about OFR should not try to manage fisheries. That no take raises red flags
- Mollie S: a couple themes – lots referencing 20-30% goal. Theme of sustainability as a goal. People saying don't mess with what's working but the group felt that this clearly isn't working. Goal is to protect the quality of coral reef ecosystems. And supporting sustainability isn't an attack on rights to fish. People think that everything is fine already when many people think that is not the case.
- Jim B: I looked at all the comments. And added up the numbers – 38% supported reserves 62% opposed.
- Jim Mathie: I'm wondering why we didn't have the pie charts this time, I want to see those.
- Mollie S: comment from group - "cannot hope to protect an ecosystem by protecting small parts of it. I have been diving for years and seeing tons of reduction in fisheries. There is no science basis in this."
- Jim Mathie: is there a way that we can take out and resolve the fishery issue and from there incorporate whatever language we need to add into the MPA.
- Kristi K: comment from group - "I like that there is a compromise for reef protection..." "I like the idea of areas being no take for the future the residents of SE FL deserve to see big fish". Idea to replace "no take" with "no entry"
- Mason S: I would like to clarify that Jims numbers did not include the petitions and the letters
- Angela S: I want to point out that we were not allowed to go out and solicit any letters or petitions but somehow fishing was allowed to do that. I'd like the room to know that.
- Ana Z: question from group - is the title listing all tools that would definitely be used or are these simply a few suggestions? Question about the SEFCRI region vs the OFR region? Clarify N-146 applying to simply the shapes, specific areas and not the entire area of reef.
- Steve E: I suggested a title recommendation, I think it will alleviate a lot of conflict – it is my understanding that all of the actions are recommendations, with that in mind, let's make this a recommendation. Let's put "may or may not include" if we are going to make a reserve, nobody will be able to go in that reserve period. And then we will see how many people want to make a reserve strictly for themselves.
- Jeff T: why don't we make it catch and release
- Steve E: doesn't the consumer have a right to the fish in those reserves.
- David C: add "might include" because no take is off-putting and not representative of the objective.
- Angela S: we need to vote as a table what goes in there

- Kelly M: SEFCRI region instead of OFR region in the title, consider inserting into title that N-146 applies to spatial diagrams within the SEFCRI region (not entire 105 miles of reef)
- Ana Z: also removing no-take from the title, not the intent but title.

2:45 – 3:10pm

Additional Future Direction Questions

- Francisco P: there was a question on the floor about what will happen if you decide to move forward. You have the full support of the CRCP and we will go with you as far as you want to go. However, grant money for this comes with an expiration date, which is June 30th 2017. At that time we will no longer have the resources to continue supporting this process.
- Joanna W: we know you don't want to go that far, but we do have the financial resources to go until January, latest, knowing how things go. However, we won't have our NOAA facilitators after this June. So if you can wrap up the decisions you feel strongly about by this next meeting, we won't have Ann and Heidi anymore. So we are looking at not having any facilitators, or bringing in a completely brand new set of facilitators who don't know you and the process. And getting them up to speed would be hard. We strongly suggest to prioritize what you have to get done because the logistical restraints of moving beyond June are really tough.
- Sara T: don't you need some of those funds for staff to write up report.
- Kathy F: isn't another option to leave in the report that no consensus was reached.
- Dana WM: I think it is hard for anyone to be able to react to this without knowing what's on our plate for June.
- Heidi S: we have to finish N-146, reprioritize, and talk about roll out.
- Joanna W: do you want to do a quick gut check vote?
- Jane F: I don't think we will need to have a RMA show that there wasn't consensus, if there are no changes, then the original form goes forward.
- Jim Mathie: if there is funding available, we can go until January so let's go with that. we will see what we need in June
- Joanna W: technically DEP staff can be facilitators, but we try not to so that we can stay neutral. Also these are sunshine'd meetings so if we go past June the meeting would really need to be in august to give enough time for the FAR.

3:10 – 3:25pm

Break

3:25 - 3:55pm

Large Group: Discuss Flagged Comments and Proposed Changes, Identify Any Additional Proposed Changes, and Vote on Proposed Changes (N-146)

- Ann W: we want to put up title options and then we will discuss and then if we have time we will move onto the lobster comments. We will keep the long list until June and then we will look at the list of title and try to synthesize common themes. I want to make sure that we have on the board statements that we've developed.

- Ana Z: we came up with a new title taking in comments, still addresses overall goal and objective and transparent about potential means to get there. “Establish and implement a marine protected area zoning framework for areas of special interest within the SEFCRI 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”
- Mollie S: add “for 20-30% of the SEFCRI region” and “marine ecological reserves,
- Lauren W: add “appropriate agencies should” add “scientifically supported, ecosystem based” “no-take (as a last resort)”
- Steve E: “no entry” instead of no take
- Kathy F: reference to OFR region vs SEFCRI region. We drew a box that included a little more than the SEFCRI region. **The box that we all drew and agreed to is the OFR area of interest.**
- Sara T: we should keep it as OFR region if we want to protect the blue heron bridge area, and extending out to
- Steve E: I want to put everyone on an equal playing field, I have a problem with catch and release because that eliminates the consumer section.
- Dan C: instead of putting no take can we put no- or limited – take. There was a discussion that if they are chasing different species, we aren’t going to make these rules the agencies are.
- Joana F: id like an explanation of marine ecological reserves
- Jim B: marine ecological reserve is the accepted language in the scientific community. It could mean no take or no entry
- Sara T: the one with the last resort comment – I hear that a lot and I want a definition of what that means because I think we are there.
- Mason S: it means until other things have been tried and failed. If you saw my webinar I talked about a lot of different tools that can be used.
- Jim B: the last resort to FWC is when they close the fishery which is currently underway with conch, goliath grouper, etc.
- Baret B: we are getting too far into the weeds. We left the no take option to be transparent but we realize the fact that it is not this group's job to make that choice.
- Jeff B: to that point, if something is embedded within the objective, what does that mean in this process? One of the examples mentions the 20-30 % no take. It's either in the title or the objectives, can someone explain to me the difference
- Kathy F: I would say the objectives are the drivers for an agency to take action. The agency who gets this will have the background of what this discussion was.
- Angela S: the tier 1 and 2s were written on how these were originally written. Changing it now doesn't even match the back documents.
- Jeff T: just because you support this doesn't mean you don't support something else. You may not like this, but to wordsmith the whole thing, you're not going to like the whole thing no matter what we do
- Heidi S: we will give it a shot for voting. How many people are voting on this? **28 voters.** We have 9 options here.
- Art S: I believe we are being science-d a little bit – by definition the marine reserve is a no take area.

- Angela S: some of the re-writes of this could be from people who aren't here. Some of these are calling out specific areas to protect. And we said we didn't want to do this because there are so many diverse areas.
- Ann W: **N-146 title change options**
 - 1) "may or may not" – **14 votes, did not pass**
 - 2) "might/may" – **16, did not pass**
 - 3) "catch and release" – **2 did not pass**
 - 4) new language – **21 passed**
 - 5) "for 20-30% of OFR region" – **12 did not pass**
 - 6) "appropriate agencies" – **10 did not pass**
 - 7) "appropriate agencies, scientifically supported" – **10 did not pass**
 - 8) "no entry" – **9 did not pass**
 - 9) "no take or limited take" - **14 did not pass**
 - 10) vote the one that passed or the original one – if you prefer original raise your hand **12 – it doesn't pass**

Raffle Winners:

- Hannah M, Jena M, Steve E, Andrea G

3:55 - 4:10pm

Small Groups: Review and Synthesize Comments and Flag Those Needing Large Group Discussion (S-97)

4:10 – 4:20pm

Wrap Up

- Heidi S: Recap - June 1st and 2nd report out of S-97, large group discussion and vote on changes. Parrotfish RMA vote- report out FWC comments. Prioritization review- "benefits" piece, moving things within bins. Roll out and next steps. Thank you for your work. Please fill out half page evaluation. We will be back to Fern Forest June 1st and 2nd.