

Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI)

Summary of Public Review Meeting Proceedings and Public Comments

February 12, 2007 – Ann Kolb Nature Center, Hollywood, FL
February 13, 2007 – Loggerhead Marine Life Center, Juno Beach, FL

1 March 2007

Introduction

On February 12th and 13th, 2007 the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) conducted public review meetings for the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI) in two different locations in South Florida. These meetings were designed to meet the following objectives:

- Review the process that has been used for preparing Local Action Strategies (LAS) for southeast Florida coral reefs
- Present the current draft of LAS, focusing on completed activities and proposed year three (funded in 2006-2007) projects
- Receive feedback from stakeholders on accomplishments and proposed funded projects

The public meetings were held on two consecutive nights in two different locations in the SEFCRI region, of southeast Florida which encompasses Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Martin Counties, and the Florida reef tract extending from the northern boundary of Biscayne National Park in Miami-Dade County to the St. Lucie Inlet in Martin County. The dates and locations for the meetings were: February 12, 2007 – Ann Kolb Nature Center, 751 Sheridan Street, Hollywood and February 13, 2007 – Loggerhead Marine Life Center, 14200 US Hwy. 1, Juno Beach.

Each meeting followed a similar format and flow:

- Official welcome and introduction to meeting
- Focus Area Presentations: Short presentations by each of four focus teams to provide an overview of the issues and highlights of progress
- Public Comment and Stakeholder Feedback: Opportunity for public to provide written and verbal feedback directly to the focus teams by visiting kiosks that were staffed by members of the focus teams
- Focus Team Reports: Focus teams provide a verbal summary of the comments they received at their kiosk
- Public Comment: Participants who wanted to make a verbal public statement were asked to sign a speakers' list. An opportunity for those participants that signed the speakers' list to make public statement to the full assembly was given at the end of each evening. Only written comments are included in this meeting summary.

The workshops were designed to encourage meaningful dialogue between the public and the focus teams on specific issues as well as providing a forum for general comments and observations.

Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI)

These public review meetings were organized and conducted by the FDEP Coral Reef Conservation Program and its partners in the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI).

SEFCRI seeks to identify key threats to the coral reef resources of southeast Florida and priority actions needed to reduce threats. It does this through a locally developed and driven roadmap for collaborative and cooperative action among federal, state, local and non-governmental partners. The Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative Team (SEFCRI Team) first gathered to develop LAS targeting southeast Florida's reefs in May 2003 and completed Florida's LAS in December 2004. Numerous stakeholders were and continue to be involved in developing southeast Florida's LAS through a facilitated process including public review and input. The current LAS has 140 projects targeting four focus areas, including:

- Land-based sources of pollution
- Fishing, diving, and other uses
- Awareness and appreciation
- Maritime industry and coastal construction **impacts**

The LAS was developed with guidance from the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force and in tandem with local action strategies in Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. It is linked to the goals and objectives of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force's National Action Plan.

The vision of the SEFCRI Team is to develop an effective strategy to preserve and protect southeast Florida's coral reefs and associated reef resources, emphasizing balance between resource use and protection, in cooperation with all interested parties.

The FDEP Coral Reef Conservation Program was established in May 2004 to:

- Complete development of, and plan, direct and coordinate the implementation of Florida's Local Action Strategy – the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative.
- Develop and support the state's efforts through Florida's membership on the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force
- Promote and coordinate research, monitoring, partnerships, and stakeholder participation for the protection of southeast Florida's reefs.

This Document

This document includes written comments received at the workshops and by email/postal mail during the comment period. It also includes a summary of the reports made by the focus teams at the end of the kiosk period. This summary is not meant to be a detailed description of the proceedings, but a record of the major themes and comments received. Only written comments were included in this meeting summary.

Summary of comments:

Below is an overall summary of the comments received by SEFCRI during the public meeting process:

- Overall, both public meetings endorsed the focus and approach being applied by SEFCRI. The public recognized that more work remains and emphasized the need to move from planning and research to delivering impactful projects that will affect the health of the reef system in both the short and long term. The SEFCRI Team noted that its' mandate is to build a road map that guides project implementation. Beyond research, planning and outreach, the primary mandate for implementing LAS project recommendations rests with SEFCRI's local, state and federal partners, resource users, and other local community members and stakeholders.
- Each focus team noted that a number of participants would like to be more actively engaged in SEFCRI projects and offered to volunteer or connect SEFCRI Team members with other user groups that share a common goal with SEFCRI. During the coming months, individuals who volunteered their time or services will be contacted by SEFCRI Project Coordinators.
- Although progress is being made, participants noted that more work needs to be done. Participants emphasized that the rate of reef degradation is quickening and immediate, large-scale action is necessary. SEFCRI Project Coordinators reminded the audiences that Local Action Strategies are bounded by available funding, as well as role and agency placement. Its purpose is to press for action both by government and non-government agencies, through consensus building and facilitative support. It does not have the ability to affect permits, rule making and development decisions directly.
- Land-based sources of pollution were noted as a critical concern that required additional and immediate emphasis. Participants noted that SEFCRI has brought the issue to the forefront and must continue to press for mitigation of impacts associated with land-based sources of pollution.
- Participants noted their continued concern over such issues such as dredging, beach re-nourishment, anchoring and the burden/value of protected areas. These comments reconfirm that SEFCRI's LAS focus is properly targeted.
- Participants lauded the awareness and appreciation activities, especially the work that has been done training teachers within the SEFCRI region. Participants noted the strong marketing program should be followed by clear and direct actions to conserve the coral reef ecosystem in the project area.
- The majority of comments received were from individuals that offered to volunteer their time to assist with SEFCRI activities. This, the SEFCRI Team believes, is a strong statement about the importance of the work being undertaken and demonstrates continued support from key stakeholder groups.

Written comments received at the SEFCRI public meetings:

Outreach would benefit from the use of a flagship/charismatic representative species, perhaps Hawksbill Sea Turtles. In general, the public does not identify with corals or sponges, they do identify with familiar species that have broad appeal. Sea Turtles have a large audience – coral reefs need a larger audience.

Larry Wood, Marinelife Center of Juno Beach.
Received on February 12, 2007 – Ann Kolb Nature Center.

RESPONSE:

The SEFCRI Awareness & Appreciation Team has incorporated this suggestion into SEFCRI presentations that are given to local school groups and at community events. We recognize how the public relates to flagship species such as sea turtles, dolphins, manatees and have begun using more images of the hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), the coral reef turtle, in our coral reef education. We received a very positive response at five outreach presentations in March as a result of incorporating more information and photos about hawksbill sea turtles and other species that make southeast Florida's reefs their home.

Enforcement of existing laws continues to be a major issue. The bad eggs are a small minority of the user groups, however they have a major impact on the fisheries and coral. A major issue is that a majority of the enforcement agencies are involved in homeland security issues and enforcement of the laws has moved to the back of the bus.

Michael Olgod, Greater Ft Lauderdale Divers Association.
Received on February 12, 2007 – Ann Kolb Nature Center.

RESPONSE:

SEFCRI Fishing, Diving & Other Uses (FDOU) Projects 6, 7, 2, 5 are focused on improving enforcement and compliance with marine regulations. The first project (6), will center on identifying the most commonly incurred infractions so a threat assessment based upon the most recurrent violations to coral reef resources can be evaluated. Contingent upon the results of FDOU 6, solutions will be provided to law enforcement agencies to streamline their enforcement focus (project 7) and a citizen based reporting hotline for violations will be created (projects 2 and 5).

Congratulations on awareness for their work and commitment from local teachers. Great action project.

Frank Schmidt, local captain and scuba instructor, Lighthouse Point Saltwater Sports.
Received on February 12, 2007 – Ann Kolb Nature Center.

Move buoys off reef structure at least 50 feet.

Frank Schmidt, local captain and scuba instructor, Lighthouse Point Saltwater Sports.
Received on February 12, 2007 – Ann Kolb Nature Center.

RESPONSE:

The goal of Fishing, Diving & Other Uses (FDOU) Project 33 is to determine vessel use patterns on southeast Florida reefs and identify those reef areas receiving the greatest level of anchoring pressure. Spatial and temporal data will be collected on the use patterns of vessels operating within the four county SEFCRI region (Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin counties). The results of this study will be used by SEFCRI, local resource managers, and the public to help identify reef areas that receive extensive use, may experience use conflicts, and may be suitable for a mooring system or other management tools. FDOU Project 33, in combination with results from other FDOU projects, will help to minimize the unintentional impacts to southeast Florida's reefs caused by recreational and commercial fishing, diving, and boating activities.).

Beach re-nourishment, I believe, falls under the topic of coastal construction. Has there been any study conducted which looks at the effect beach re-nourishment, primarily the transplanting of non-indigenous sand, has on the health of near shore reefs. Some important points of this are: the turbidity issues associated with dredged and deposited sand and the migration of sand over native reefs immediately following re-nourishment activities (i.e., storm events). How can we bring these issues up for consideration on the LAS list?

Michael Laas, Surfrider Foundation.
Received on February 12, 2007 – Ann Kolb Nature Center.

RESPONSE:

SEFCRI Maritime Industry & Coastal Construction Impacts (MICCI) Project 6, "*Develop Best Management Practices for Construction, Dredge and Fill, and Other Activities Near Coral Reefs*", is aimed at minimizing impacts to coral reefs, such as increased turbidity and sedimentation from dredge and fill activities. MICCI Project 7, "*Develop a Comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment, Preparation, and Evaluation Guide for Coastal Construction Activities that Affect Reef and Coastal Resources in Southeast Florida*", is intended to be a comprehensive document that contains essential references, past project lessons learned, and a holistic view of resource issues, for project planners, reviewers and permittees to use in the evaluation of coastal construction projects in southeast Florida.

Written comments received by email:

I will not be able to attend either upcoming SEFCRI meeting, but wish to submit comments and questions to be considered at the meeting, read, aloud if possible, and filed on public record: There is no longer any question about the impacts of global warming. Coral reef habitat is one of the most widely recognized and referenced direct results of human induced climate change. The leading greenhouse gas, CO₂, is still unregulated. One direct documented example of CO₂'s impact is in the reduction of alkalinity in the ocean, which is impeding corals ability to secrete calcium carbonate skeleton.

Why are State and Federal agencies are continuing to permit projects that will have incredible contributions to CO₂ emissions (among other known pollutants)? Here in South Florida, home to some of the last few living coral reef in the country, there are two large power plants in the permitting process totaling more than 24 MILLION TONS of CARBON DIOXIDE a year. The proposed coal plant in Glades County will cause 16 million and the so-called 'clean' gas plant in Loxahatchee will offer another 8-12 million tons. Our generation is making a decision to climate the last coral reefs off Florida's coast by raising the temperature of the planet for our over-use of electricity. My primary question: Will SEFCRI take a stand to confront global warming? If so, let's start in our own 'backyard'--the Everglades. I am hopeful that the answer is yes, and if so, I propose a few more questions:

Can SEFCRI, specifically the DEP and FWC, take a position on a few specific and urgent efforts of local Palm Beach residents?

- 1) Request that the new Governor revisit the December 19th 2006 decision to certify the West County Energy Center due to its undiscussed impact on global warming, among other concerns which have not been adequately addressed.
- 2) Request that the air quality classification of the A.R.M Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge be moved from CLASS II to CLASS I under the Clean Air Act to increase the ability for to limit heavy industrial use around the waters which eventually make their way out to the reefs. This, by default, will also limit greenhouse gas emissions.

Finally, to all involved in the SEFCRI, please commit to also following and challenging FPL's coal-fired Glades Power Park. Clean, sustainable energy and unprecedented innovations in energy conservation must be the only acceptable options in this crisis facing sensitive coral reef habitat.

On another topic, our Environmental Coalition also opposes the practice of dredge and fill 'beach renourishment' and coastal sewage for its negative impacts on reefs. Thank you for your work and courage.

Panagitoi Tsolkas

PBCEC

Received by email: Mon 2/12/2007 11:35 AM

RESPONSE:

It is widely recognized that global climate change will affect coral reefs around the planet.

Florida's new governor, Charlie Christ, has voiced strong support for addressing global climate change issues within Florida. He also affirmed that the state of Florida's attitude on global climate change will be different than in previous years.

SEFCRI is a Local Action Strategy developed to address locally-based threats, therefore, the focus of its projects have not directly targeted global-threats such as climate change. However, through the SEFCRI Awareness & Appreciation Focus Area, we are incorporating information about all threats to southeast Florida's reefs in our outreach and education efforts. For example, we included articles about the proposed Glades Power Park in Glades County in the spring 2007 SEFCRI update, which will be distributed to over 1,300 stakeholders within the SEFCRI region.

SEFCRI Maritime Industry & Coastal Construction Impacts Project 6, "*Develop Best Management Practices for Construction, Dredge and Fill, and Other Activities Near Coral Reefs*", is aimed at minimizing impacts to coral reefs, such as increased turbidity and sedimentation from dredge and fill "beach renourishment" activities.

Sustainable users: The meeting at Anne Kolb last night conflicted with my work schedule, however many fishermen, and SCUBA boat owner-operators already have a no-anchor policy for near-shore activities, even if on an "honor system" basis. The use of a sea, or drift anchor(s) has been my choice of covering ocean bottom for some time. MJAYK50.

Received by email: Tue 2/13/2007 10:26 AM

RESPONSE:

This is certainly great news and we applaud those individual efforts but, unfortunately, it does not account for all reef users across the SEFCRI region. Many reef activities require anchoring, especially when multiple uses of the reef occur in concentrated areas. Damage to reefs is caused directly from anchor deployment or when anchors drag into reefs due to strong currents or ocean swells. In both cases, anchor impacts can cause severe injuries or mortality to reef organisms. Anchor damage can be avoided or reduced with the installation of mooring systems, the designation of anchorage and "no anchoring" areas, and by increasing education and awareness of threats posed by careless anchoring. SEFCRI Fishing, Diving & Other Uses (FDOU) Project 33 is determining vessel use patterns on southeast Florida reefs and identifying those reef areas receiving the greatest level of anchoring pressure. The results of this study will be used by SEFCRI, local resource managers, and the public to help identify reef areas that receive extensive use, may experience use conflicts, and may be suitable for a mooring system or other management tools. In addition, FDOU Project 38 will include workshops, trainings, and seminars to help promote environmentally friendly practices to improve diver and fisher ethics.

In these short comments I very briefly focus on what is already known about the extent and causes of reef degradation in Southeast Florida, and what needs to be done to clean up the water to protect the little that is left. I also analyze all current SEFCRI Project Reports according to the degree to which they take action to solve the major known threats to coral reefs, or merely talk about them. No funding is going towards actual solutions, while much is being spent to "find out if there is a problem", decades after this was well known.

LONG TERM DECLINE OF SOUTH FLORIDA REEFS

More than 50 years ago, my father got a young man named Jerry Greenberg started on photographing the reefs of South Florida. Greenberg wanted to know what he could do to protect the reefs from the degradation that was already clearly visible, and my father showed him how to document the changes photographically. Greenberg's amazing photographs tell the entire story, far more eloquently than any study that could be done now possibly could, showing a marvelous world of which almost no trace now remains. The only argument among those who knew what these reefs were like then is whether they are "only" 95% or 99% gone, and whether beach dredge-filling, sewage, global warming, or new diseases killed the most corals.

All the nearshore reefs of Southeast Florida were buried and killed by dredge-fill dumping of sand on the beaches, except for the only segment that was never done, from Port Everglades to Lauderdale by the Sea. But this sole surviving stretch, with the best reefs left in North America, not only STILL has no protected status or management plan, it has been selected for destruction by a dredging project that has been approved by every single county, state, and federal agency with jurisdiction over it. SEFCRI and USCRTF have repeatedly refused to act on public requests to support designation of protected status for this reef or call for its protection from dredging.

CLEANING UP WATER QUALITY TO SAFE LEVELS

The SEFCRI public awareness campaigns have clearly identified that most Floridians regard dirty water as their number one coastal concern. Because SEFCRI/USCRTF has refused to support the application of ecologically sound water quality standards designed to protect coral reefs from algae overgrowth, or to support cleaning up the sewage outflows that are causing algae and bacterial slime blooms all over the remaining reefs of South Florida (instead funding "research" to find out if sewage actually has any impacts elsewhere!), it has been left to a small but courageous non-profit group, Palm Beach Reef Rescue, to get the first of six major sewage outfalls closed. We call for immediate action to enforce the Clean Water Act and shut down the remaining five outfalls that continue to spew hundreds of millions of gallons of sewage a day onto the reefs.

We call not only for the sewage to stop being directly pumped into the coastal zone via ocean outfalls, but also a stop to the indirect flow of sewage into the sea via deep well injection and canals. And in particular we call on the responsible agencies to actually CLEAN UP the nutrients in the waste waters instead of simply dumping them someplace else.

It is now clear that there is no place where these wastes can be dumped without causing harm. The Everglades Restoration Plan calls for pumping surface waters through the Everglades, but both the Everglades National Park and the Miccosukkee Indian Reservation will not accept them because of excessive nutrient pollution. Lake Okeechobee can no longer be used because waste pumping killed the fisheries there, and pumping it out the Caloosahatchee and Saint Lucie Rivers have triggered massive red tides on both coasts. Because there is no other place to put these polluted waters, they are now pumped into the ground or into the canals, where they are killing the coral reefs once they reach the sea.

We call on the public agencies responsible for protecting the health of coastal and inland waters and ecosystems to treat the sewage to a level that removes the excessive nutrients from the waters and recycles the waters and nutrients on land. Technologies to do exactly this are readily available, but we are just not using them. Moreover, these alternatives would require far less area and

expenditure, and produce valuable fuels and fertilizers while cleaning up both the reefs and the Everglades. Magnegas® Technology, invented by Dr. R. Santilli of Tarpon Springs, converts sewage into clean burning hydrogen fuel, and in combination with Powell Electro-coagulation® Technology, breaks down and precipitates all pollutants, producing sterile water suitable for aquifer recharge and solid fertilizer. Huge settling ponds and sludge dewatering fields are not needed, an important benefit in an overcrowded South Florida that will be subjected to increased flooding from sea level rise.

South Florida's dirty waters are no longer an issue that can be hidden or passed off to somebody else. We once again call on SEFCRI/USCRTF to ensure that all of its member agencies live up to their responsibilities and refuse to permit actions that violate the Clean Water Act and the Coral Protection Act. We ask them to directly solve the problems by reducing and eliminating the known stresses that have already killed all but the last surviving Florida corals, and which threaten all the few that still remain, especially sewage and agricultural nutrients, dredging, global warming, and new diseases.

ANALYSIS OF SEFCRI PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

Ranking all the SEFCRI projects, we find them seriously wanting from both tactical and strategic viewpoints. This is because they focus on reinventing the wheel and symbolic steps rather than taking existing knowledge into account, and because they do not include genuine problem solving projects. Alternative approaches are urged to solve or reduce the critical factors known to be killing coral reefs and fisheries.

47 SEFCRI Project Summaries were provided at this Public Review Meeting to assess their progress towards improving SE Florida coral reefs. I have categorized all projects into five major categories according to the degree to which they address solving the major threats to Florida reefs:

- 25 (53.14%) are aimed to IDENTIFY potential problems
- 16 (34.04%) are aimed at PUBLIC RELATIONS OR EDUCATION
- 5 (10.64%) are RESEARCH that might be useful to identify future problems
- 1 (2.12%) is MONITORING of a known problem
- 0 (0.00%) SOLVE PROBLEMS by reducing known stresses or restoration

If we award a "problem solving" letter grade from for each of these categories, increasing in the order listed above, the mean grade for the entire SEFCRI Program would be a D- or an E.

The Projects are very poorly chosen if they are intended to actually solve the causes of the accelerating decline of South Florida's coral reefs. NONE of the projects take steps to reduce any of the known threats that are killing corals, or to restore the damage that has already been done. ONE monitors the flow of deep well injection wastes into the sea, the only known problem for which any direct monitoring is proposed. Direct enforcement of the Clean Water Act, establishment of ecologically sound water quality standards to protect coral reefs, shutting down the sewage outfalls, mapping the nutrient inputs to the reef, etc. are not on the list (these have all been repeatedly proposed in previous public comments to SEFCRI by a large variety of organizations and individuals, but SEFCRI has consistently failed to act on any of them). FIVE projects do research to try to develop indicators of stress in corals, which might be useful in the future to identify stressed corals.

OVER ONE THIRD of all SEFCRI funded projects are public relations and education steps, for example to prepare brochures to tell people that reefs are good so they should not hurt them. This is of course a good idea, but there is nothing new about any of the steps being taken, and repeated identical efforts in the past have failed to slow the destruction of the reefs. MORE THAN HALF of all SEFCRI projects are aimed at discussions to try to find out if there are problems in the reefs, whether the reefs are deteriorating, whether pollution might affect them, whether existing institutions are capable of saving corals broken up by ship groundings, etc.

The bulk of these projects amount to reinventing the wheel, spending large amounts of money to talk about whether or not there might be a problem, but never either asking those who personally know the long term changes in the reefs about what actually happened and what caused it, or to solve the many reef problems like dredging and sewage that are already long understood. This is a backward strategic approach that has resulted in ineffective tactics. By starting all over again to find out from fresh if there is a problem, as if we did not already long know this, effective action is prevented or delayed.

One year from now, The International Coral Reef Symposium will be held right here in Fort Lauderdale. Is the Coral Reef Task Force still planning to tell the thousands of coral reef researchers and managers from all over the world that we are still trying to find out if the reefs “might” have a problem? This is surely going to make all of those in charge of finding out look asleep at the switch! Or are we going to be in a position to show that we are already actively taking the steps we have long known we need to take to reduce the damage to reefs and restore the corals and fishes?

Once again we call on SEFCRI to take the lead in funding projects to directly reduce the stresses killing South Florida reefs, restoring degraded reefs, and to accept that the only valid criteria for success are the degree to which the corals and fish populations are significantly restored, not the amount of money spent to make it appear that something is actually being done.

Thomas J. Goreau, PhD
President, Global Coral Reef Alliance
Science Advisor, Cry of the Water
Received by email: Fri 2/16/2007 10:52 AM

RESPONSE:

SEFCRI supports the need for ecologically sound waters. The Land-based Sources of Pollution (LBSP) projects are designed to assist regulators in addressing the numerous factors impacting water quality in southeast Florida. SEFCRI Team members and Project Coordinators communicate regularly with local, regional, and national partners to promote actions that address LBSP and to foster improved coral reef protection.

The projects in the SEFCRI Local Action Strategy were identified and developed through a collaborative effort between the public, the scientific community and government agencies, which included extensive public review and comment. All projects selected were deemed to be high priority areas that need to be addressed by all parties who participated in or provided comment on the LAS.

The SEFCRI Team is comprised of representatives from numerous constituencies with a vested interest in the health of southeast Florida's reefs. It is neither the mandate of, nor within the authority of, the SEFCRI Team to directly affect permits, rule making and development decisions directly, though that is a desired outcome of the many LAS projects. The SEFCRI Team seeks to foster stewardship and improve coral reef resource protection by increasing awareness of issues and identifying gaps in information needed to inform management decisions and provide recommendations to regulatory agencies, user groups, and enforcing agencies to address issues which impact coral reefs.

I cannot attend the meeting, but I would like to make the following comments.

I believe that more should be done to stop pollution and over fishing on our reefs. Reefs are still degrading and we must take much more precautions to protect them. All sewage outfalls must be stopped. Deep well injection of pollutants is also a possible cause of pollution to reefs and should be stopped. Lawn wastes products, particularly fertilizers should be prevented from draining into our oceans. We need to educate the public on the overuse of lawn care products and reduce agricultural waste which causes damage to reefs.

Roads should not be built in coastal areas like the keys where removal of Mangroves causes pollution to enter the ocean and impact reefs.

Sand Dredging and Beach Projects should be held to a minimum because they harm our reefs and cause damage through turbidity and dredging.

Fishing and boating should not be permitted on top of reefs in vulnerable areas. No fishing areas should be set up in some areas to restore fish stocks.

Drew Martin, Conservation Chair, Loxahatchee Group, Sierra Club, Florida Chapter
Received by email: Mon 2/12/2007 4:51 PM

RESPONSE:

SEFCRI Maritime Industry and Coastal Construction Impacts (MICCI) Project 6, "*Develop Best Management Practices for Construction, Dredge and Fill, and Other Activities Near Coral Reefs*", is aimed at minimizing impacts to coral reefs, such as increased turbidity and sedimentation from dredge and fill activities. MICCI Project 7, "*Develop a Comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment, Preparation, and Evaluation Guide for Coastal Construction Activities that Affect Reef and Coastal Resources in Southeast Florida*", is intended to be a comprehensive document that contains essential references, past project lessons learned, and a holistic view of resource issues, for project planners, reviewers and permittees to use in the evaluation of coastal construction projects in southeast Florida.

SEFCRI Awareness and Appreciation projects 4 (portable exhibits), 5 (website), 10 (public service announcements), 17 (short educational video for hotels), 19 (brochures), 23 (outreach at community events), and 37 (teacher training workshops) address the use of fertilizers, recycling and the importance of household chemical collection sites.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Southeast District Office is working to address pollution impacts from sewage outfalls. Your contact information has been forwarded on to the Southeast District Office. SEFCRI Land-based Sources of Pollution (LBSP) Project 27 has also been initiated to quantify the amount and flow rate (flux) of pollution transported by groundwater to coastal waters. LBSP Project 28 seeks to determine the flux of pollutants exiting offshore wastewater outfall pipes and net flux to reef communities.

The cumulative goal of SEFCRI Fishing, Diving & Other Uses (FDOU) projects is to develop a management plan that balances user needs while preserving and protecting the biodiversity, quality, cultural heritage, and socioeconomic value of southeast Florida coral reefs. Several FDOU projects (18 and 20) specifically target fishing and the associated negative impacts associated with overfishing. What the best management solutions are to prevent overfishing on southeast Florida reefs will be based upon the results of these studies and provided to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Requests for follow-up:

- Mail teacher CDs to:
 - Nancy Cohen
 - Sandy Wood
 - Eric Myers
 - Stephen Guilder
 - Carmelo Dueslere

- Changes to database:
 - Add Cry of the Water to stakeholder mailing list using second email address

- Teacher workshop – contact Carmelo Dueslere to attend

- Offer to Volunteer:
 - Carlos Caro
 - Surfrider volunteers to help distribute table tents to Miami Beach hotels. Michael Lass, South Florida Chapter of Surfrider.
 - If you need volunteers – please let me know. I have several friends that are teachers and would love to help educate their students on coral reef systems, etc. Lureen Ferrett, local diver

- Request for contact:
 - Could you speak at one of our monthly meetings the last Wednesday of each month?
Frank Schmidt, local captain and scuba instructor, Lighthouse Point Saltwater Sports
 - I saw the notice for the meeting, but unfortunately, I will not be able to attend. I looked over the information on the website, and I wanted to know if there was any information on the reefs in Juno Beach?
Sarah Stover, reporter with Hometown News, a community paper and I write for the North Palm Beach, Juno Beach. Singer Island edition.
Received by email: Tue 2/13/2007 5:00 PM
 - I'm interested in finding out about whom I may contact to find out more about the SEFCRI. I'm a Ph.D. student in the Geography Dept at FSU and I'm interested in the reef systems around Miami. I've tried finding out who I may talk to from the website, however information about actual people involved is apparently not available. Thanks and looking forward to hearing from you.
Barbie Bischof
Received by email: Mon 2/19/2007 12:49 PM
 - I would like to sign up as a stakeholder and receive updates as well for SFCRI.
Thank you!
Jillian Lottes, Office of Intergovernmental Programs, Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection
Received by email: Fri 2/16/2007 11:06 AM

- I read with great interest the recent story on the failed tire reefs in Florida. Sometimes, even our best intentions do not work out for the best. Innovative Ecology provides the

answer to the growing tire problem, and turns a pollution problem into 100% recycled material that also provide a small step to reduce our dependence on oil. Attached is a pamphlet (on file) briefly describing the process that converts these waste tires into usable raw materials again? We would be happy to talk with anyone interested in pursuing the issue of turning this bad press of the failed tires reefs into a positive story on a successful recycling project.

Jim Molloy, Innovative Ecology Inc.

Received by email: Wed 2/21/2007 1:12 PM

RESPONSE: Thank you for offering your assistance in this matter. Your information has been forwarded on to the appropriate party who is handling this situation.