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Cry of the Water
&
Global Coral Reef
Alliance

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A PETITION FOR DESIGNATING NEARSHORE

FT. LAUDERDALE

LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA

AND

POMPANO BEACH

OUTSTANDING FLORIDA WATERS

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Cover Photo: Hawksbill Sea Turtle in reef nearshore to Lauderdale-By-The-Sea
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PETITION FOR OUTSTANDING FLORIDA WATERS DESIGNATION

Cry of the Water and Global Coral Reef Alliance requests that the Environmental Regulation Commission initiate rule-making to amend Chapter 17-3.041(4)(i), FAC to designate the near shore and coral reef habitat, North of Port Everglades and South of Hillsboro Inlet East of mean high tide out to a depth of 100 feet of water in the Atlantic Ocean, Outstanding Florida Waters. This designation is being sought in order to increase the level of water quality protection being afforded to these waters so that the current marine life, ecological integrity, recreational and fish values and of this system can be maintained. The coral reef habitat has ecologically significant value in that they support endangered and threatened marine, coral and animal communities. The recreational significance of this near shore community is recognized as being exceptional for many actives including swimming, boating, fishing, beach and boat diving.

These significant resources are currently threatened by increased pressure from land-based sources of pollution and erosion, over-development, global warming, and lack of best management practices (BMP) for sustainable beaches and reefs. We believe the proposed rule change would provide additional protection to this marine ecosystem of outstanding ecological and recreational significance. The environmental, social and economic benefits of designating this area as an Outstanding Florida Water outweigh the very low social and economic costs. Therefore, we respectfully petition the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation and the Florida Environmental Regulation Commission to initiate rule making to designate the Coral Reef Habitat in Ft. Lauderdale/ Lauderdale-By-The-Sea/ Pompano Beach as an Outstanding Florida Waters.

INTRODUCTION

The Ft. Lauderdale/Lauderdale-By-The-Sea/Pompano Beach near shore ecosystem community is a major recreational and environmental area in Southeast Florida. The three natural reef tracts that run parallel to the coastline and many artificial reefs in the area has made Broward County a top year-round travel destination. Broward County earns more income from aquatic activities than Palm Beach, Miami-Dade, or Monroe Counties according to a recent study on the socio-economic value of South Florida reefs (Johns et al. 2001). Unfortunately, during the last 30 years it has come under increased pressure from rapid coastal development, land-based sources of pollution, declines in fish stocks, loss of critical habitat and land-based sources of erosion including beach fill. These changes are threatening the sustainability of our beaches, fisheries and reefs.

The Ft. Lauderdale/Lauderdale-By-The-Sea near shore ecosystem is the only area in Broward County with native beach sand, not ever having a beach dredge and fill project conducted. In May of 2006 Staghorn coral (*Acropora cervicornis*) and Elkhorn coral (*Acropora palmata*) received federal protection under the Endangered Species Act. Broward County is the northern limit for Elkhorn coral and in 2008 the County was designated as Critical Habitat for both Acropora species. Just off shore of this area is the single largest thicket of threatened Staghorn coral (*Acropora cervicornis)* in the continental United States and several colonies of threatened Elkhorn coral (*Acropora palmata*). New recruits of Elkhorn coral have been discovered in this area as well.

This document was originally planned for the Ft. Lauderdale and Lauderdale-By-The-Sea segment of Broward County. Stakeholder diving and fishing groups north of Lauderdale-By-The-Sea requested that the boundaries for this area be extended to include the Pompano Beach area. The habitat features in the area between Port Everglades Inlet and Hillsboro Inlet exhibit similar physical and biological features along the three reef tracts in the County. The Outstanding Florida Waters borders must be large enough to preserve the functionality of the ecosystem while protecting the water quality.

The Ft. Lauderdale/Lauderdale-By-The-Sea/Pompano Beach nearshore area is an important foraging area and access to the beach for sea turtles (cover photo), manatees (Figure 1) and other endangered and threatened species.

Figure 1. Manatees courting in nearshore waters at Lauderdale-by-the-Sea. Photo © Marc Furth.

Cry of the Water, the Global Coral Reef Alliance, Broward residents and other parties interested in preserving this ecologically valuable ecosystem have joined in submitting this petition and supporting documentation in an effort to protect its water quality. Designating this section of coral habitat as special waters under the Outstanding Florida Water Act would afford additional protection and it would considerably increase its recognition as an essential recreational and ecological area. Our coastal resources are under extreme competition by urban development, loss of important habitat, water quality degradation, and other human activities. Sustainability of our costal ecosystems through voluntary and mandated marine use decisions should be made a priority. The marine ecosystem throughout Broward County would benefit from an offshore Outstanding Florida Waters specialized designation by increasing awareness and improve coastal stewardship.

The materials presented with this petition are divided into sections that provide more detailed information and data on the proposed area.

PROPOSED OUTSTANDING FLORIDA WATERS BOUNDARY

The Proposed Boundary for Outstanding Florida Waters includes all areas between Port Everglades Inlet north to Hillsboro Inlet and from the high tide mark east to a depth of 100 feet (Figure 2). Area is located in Broward County, on the Southeast Coast of Florida.

Figure 2. Aerial photographs showing Proposed Ft. Lauderdale/ Lauderdale-By-The-Sea/ Pompano Beach Outstanding Florida Waters designation boundaries.

ECONOMICS

A 2001 socioeconomic study of the reefs in Southeast Florida (Johns, Leeworthy, Bell and Bonn, p ES-5-6) found that reef-related expenditures generated on annual $2.1 billion in sales in Broward County, resulting in $1.1 billion in income to Broward County residents. Ranked as a top dive destination in North America by Scuba Diving magazine, the reefs of Broward County attract diving and fishing enthusiasts from all over the world. Lauderdale-by-the-Sea is considered the shore diving capital of Florida, with beautiful coral formations easily accessed just off its beaches.

AREA HISTORY

EARLY DOCUMENTATION

Early documentation of the coral reef habitat is lacking for much of the Southeast Florida area. Research on reefs was entirely focused in the Keys. Past residents and visitors to the area moved on without knowing that the resources they encountered would be just remnant in years to come. Few had the capabilities to photograph the underwater world in the 1950's or knew that their statements would become a valuable resource. But they do exist; from his trip to Ft. Lauderdale with his class in 1955, Dave Raney remembers snorkeling off the beach on beautiful reefs. But it's the photo he saved from his 1957 dive to the pier at Lauderdale-by-the-Sea that documented the field of now Threatened Elkhorn coral (Figure 3).

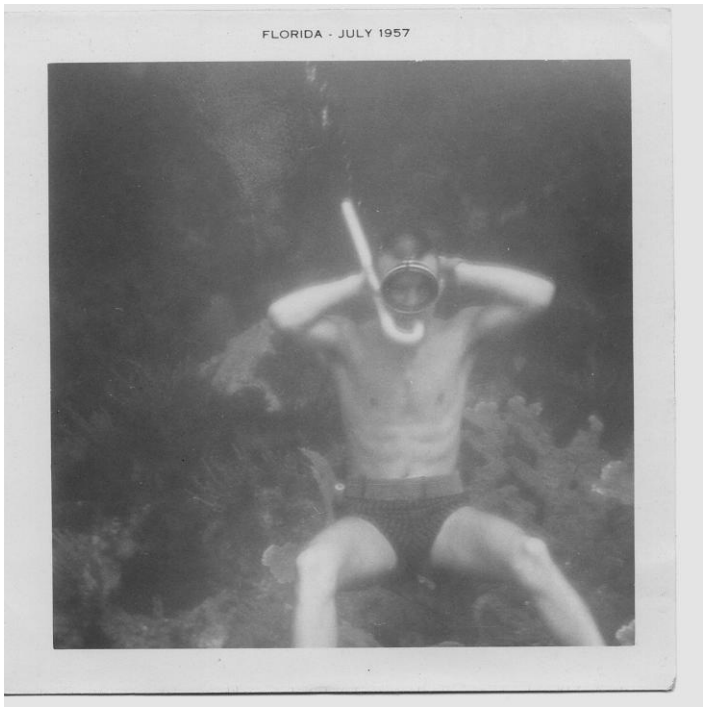

Figure 3. Photo from 1957 depicting a large thriving colony of Elkhorn coral off of Lauderdale-by-the-Sea.

Donald P. DeSylva, in his 1963 book Systematics and Life History of the Great Barracuda, University of Miami Press, pointed out that "some reefs in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale area that were formerly flourishing have been since (1950) affected adversely by siltation and probably by pollution". It is important to note that his observations of decline in these reefs precedes the massive beach fill projects that affected almost all of SE Florida beaches (except for the stretch for which OFW status is sought in this petition) since the mid 1960s. In all those other locations local divers watched the nearshore and offshore reefs killed and buried by mud and sand from eroded beach fill materials.

CORAL REEF DOCUMENTATION

Cry of the Water first documented the high percentage coral cover and Staghorn coral (*Acropora cervicornis)* area on the nearshore ledge off Ft. Lauderdale in 1999 during an effort to save the reef from a destructive Broward dredge and fill project. At that time it was believed by coral reef researchers and by county, state, and federal agencies that there were no significant coral reefs in the area. A joint report entitled Reef Protection in Broward County, Florida, by Cry of the Water and the Global Coral Reef Alliance (Goreau and Clark, 2001) described the threats to this valuable resource and proposed management plans.

The 2001 video tape entitled Broward Nearshore Hardbottom Threatened by Dredging, was created as the first video record for documentation of the rich marine resources in the Ft. Lauderdale nearshore habitat. DVD copies are available of the original video tape from Cry of the Water at reefteam2@yahoo.com.

Although we reported high coral cover in the entire proposed Outstanding Florida Waters area, only a section of the reef was highlighted in the EIS Figure 5 (Refer to Exhibits). This area also contained the Ft. Lauderdale thicket of Staghorn (Figure 4) along with Staghorn colonies throughout the area, and ancient large corals (Figure 5). Apparently the scientific community now agrees that this is a special area in Broward County because several monitoring and experimental stations have since been set up at these locations.

The Southeast Florida Coral Reef Evaluation and Monitoring Project (SECREMP) is only one of several projects in this Outstanding Florida Waters proposed boundary. Although SECREMP monitoring has been ongoing for 7 years it is stated in the reports that the permanent transect design may not provide all the data appropriate for monitoring the condition of a large *A. cervicornis* (Staghorn) patch. Highlighting the gaps in monitoring this unique habitat may bring about positive changes that will insure that monitoring protocol is changed to record the significant changes to the staghorn field.

Figure 4. Staghorn coral thicket on nearshore reef off of Ft. Lauderdale. Photo © Karen Lane.

Figure 5. Ancient boulder coral within proposed Outstanding Florida Waters boundaries.

ARTIFICIAL REEFS

Broward County has an extensive artificial reef program (Table 1). The reefs, which are designed to create a new stable substrate, are made from a variety of material. These materials are deployed into various depths of the Atlantic Ocean offshore where they quickly become habitat for a variety of marine life.

Many permitted artificial reefs are located with the boundaries of this Outstanding Florida Waters application. These artificial reefs have different purposes such as fishing, diving, disposal sites, education, mitigation and fish habitats.

Osborn Reef off Ft. Lauderdale in 50 feet of water was constructed with concrete jacks. This artificial reef was expanded in 1972 utilizing old and discarded tires, the project ultimately failed and the "reef" has come to be considered an environmental disaster doing more harm than good to the adjacent reefs. In 2007 cleanup efforts began when the US military took on the tire-reef removal project. Though only removing a small fraction of the tire debris, this clean up exercise provides a training environment for their diving and recovery personnel. The Navy removed more tires when they return in the summer of 2009.

Table 1. Artificial Reefs found within the proposed Outstanding Florida Waters boundaries.

Wreck	Description	Depth	Date Deployed
Monomy	82 ft	60 ft	1970
Osborn Reef	Concrete and Tires	65 ft	1970's
House Boat		95 ft	1974
DNR Barge Pieces	debris	70 ft	1982
Fuel Tanks	Service station	73 ft	1983
Mercedes	190 ft freighter	97 ft	1985
Jay Scutti	Tug boat	64 ft	1886
Hog Heaven	Barge, pipe, reef lighthouse	70 ft	1986
Pride	95 ft Sailboat	70 ft	1987
Moonshot	45 ft Sailboat	70 ft	1989
Dog Pile	Limestone boulders	65 ft	UNK
Bruce Mueller	45 ft Chris Craft	45 ft	1996
Corkey M		65 ft	1997
Mercy Jesus	90 ft freighter	70 ft	1998
SS Memphis	Reef ball mitigation	40 ft	2001
Nuestra Senora de Caplano	Replica Spanish galleon shipwreck site	15 ft	2002

ANGLIN'S FISHING PIER

Anglin's fishing pier was initially built in 1941 (Figure 6) by the city's founding father and first mayor. It has been rebuilt three times since. Today, it extends 800 feet into the Atlantic Ocean and is near a coral reef approximately halfway out acknowledged as the closest reef to the shoreline in the continental United States.

Figure 6. Anglin's Fishing Pier grand opening in 1942, constructed during 1941.

PORT EVERGLADES

Originally known as Lake Mabel, Port Everglades was officially established as a deep water harbor in 1927. In 1925 Young began harbor development, at one point having 35 lumberjacks brought in from Vermont to clear a mangrove jungle.

At that time Fort Lauderdale had fewer than 3,000 residents and all of Broward County had a population less than 30,000. In 1932 the first major expansion started at the port clearing and filling land to crate open storage space. Firms were approached requiring large areas to store materials such as petroleum products, lumber, cement and scrape metal.

In the 1940s military operations were stationed at the port. Military training missions were conducted over our section of reef. This proposed area still contains dummy ammunitions that were used during target practice just off the coast.

The 1960s saw the addition of the Florida Power and Light power plant. Manatees are attracted to the FPL plant for its warm water discharge.

The 1970s and 1980s brought more expansion development and modernization (cranes) to the port. The 1990s saw a boom in container traffic making Port Everglades one of the nation's top container ports, with accessory oil pollution and ship groundings.

PORT EVERGLADES ANCHORAGE

Port Everglade's former anchorage area did not adequately project our fragile marine resources. Because of the many ship grounding in this area since the 1990's Broward County has become known as the "ship grounding capital of the United States".

On March 6, 2008 the Coast Guard announced the newly established Port Everglades commercial vessel anchorage area off Ft. Lauderdale. The new anchorage area (Figure 7) eliminates the section of the anchorage closest to the coral reef. Expanding the anchorage to deeper waters father away from the reef and limiting the time a vessel may remain in the anchorage were other changes that were initiated to protect our valuable reef resources.

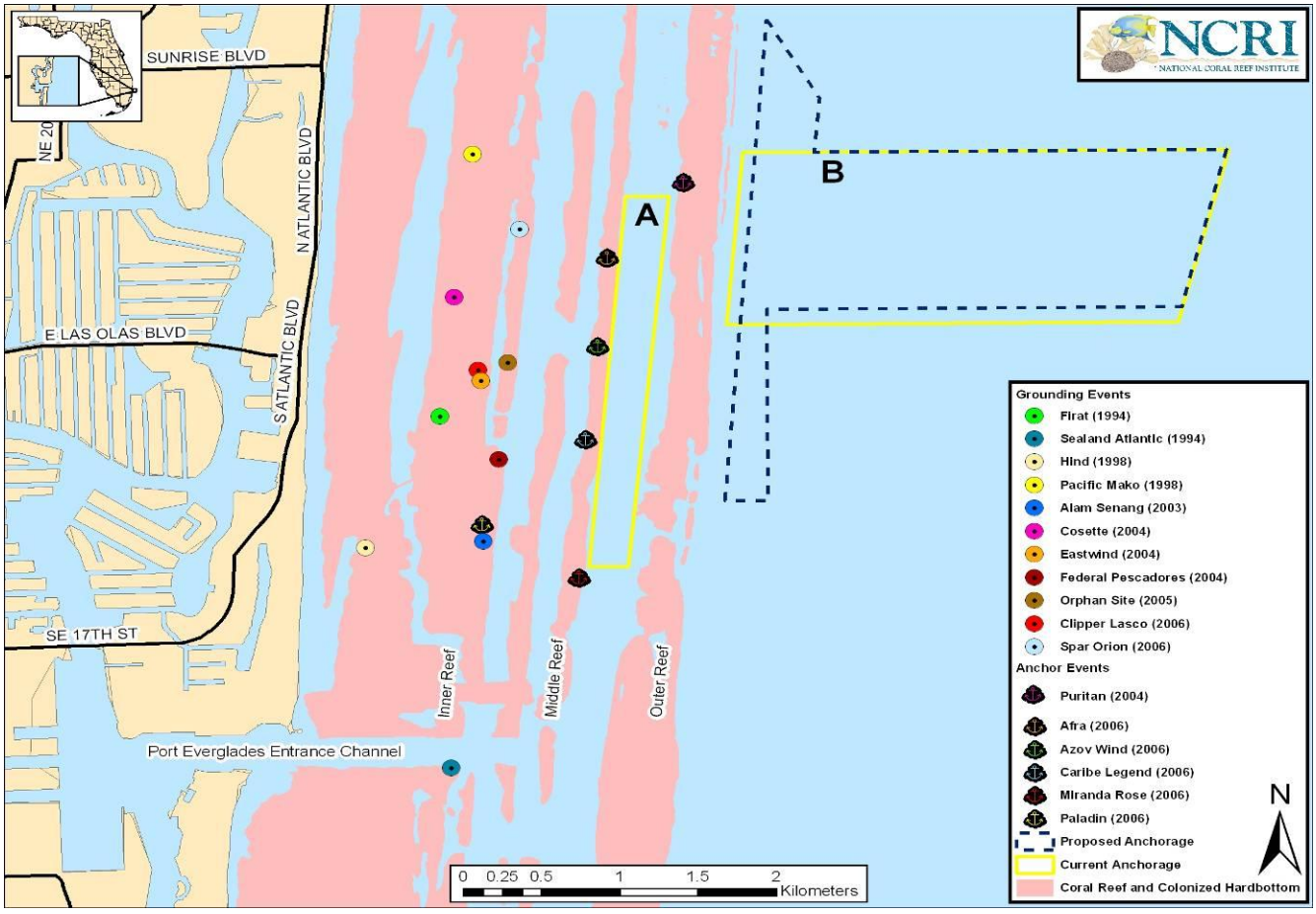

Figure 7. Map of Anchorage Area and ship groundings near Port Everglades.

POMPANO BEACH

Figure 8. Artificial reef in Pompano waters.

The Pompano Beach reach between Lauderdale-By-The-Sea pier and Hillsboro inlet was included in this Outstanding Florida Waters petition at the request of diving and fishing groups in this area. These stakeholder groups concerned with preserving their present water quality and the effect it has on the coral reef system urged Cry of the Water to include this area.

The three reef tracts in Broward County exhibit similar biological and physical features. By enlarging the area to include Pompano Beach, water quality protection will be enhanced in this entire coastal cell between inlets. Water quality protection must take an ecosystem wide approach and the area protected must be large enough to ensure that sections within the entire coastal cell do not degrade each other. Including the entire cell will benefit the needs of the receiving water body while planning ecosystem management strategies.

Many of Broward County's artificial reef projects (Figure 8) are located within or just outside of this proposed area. The wreck of the SS Copenhagen (Figure 9), an Archeological Preserve for the State of Florida is north of the Lauderdale-By-The-Sea pier and would not have been included without this additional area. The inner reef line included the Pompano Drop Off which covers over 25 mooring buoys including the Nursery and the Copenhagen. The predominant ledge faces to the east and as it slopes to the west you find a field of Staghorn coral growing along the leeward side.

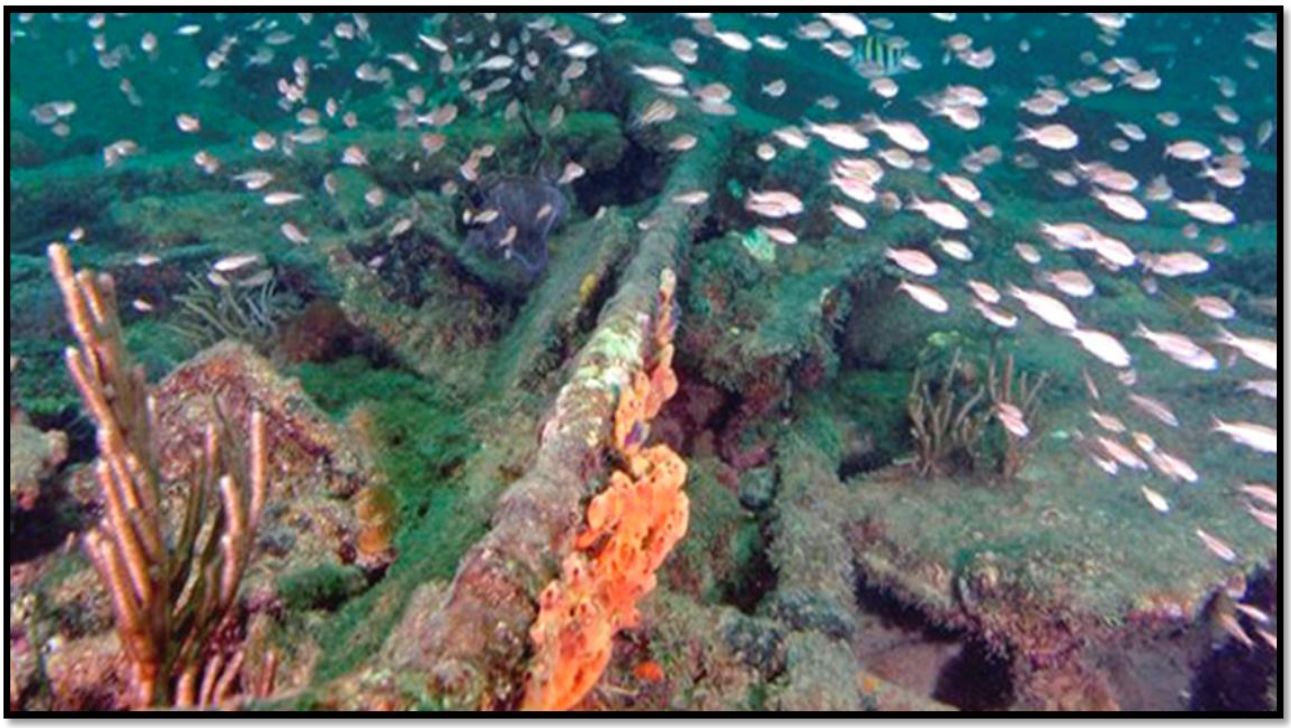

Figure 9. SS Copenhagen artificial reef providing valuable habitat off of Pompano Beach.

Touchdown reef is a shallow reef teaming with marine life. The reef top is around 30-33' and drops to 40' to the west and 45'to the east Large sections of the reef protrude perpendicular to the west.

The third reef line (Figure 10) in Pompano is home to diverse species of fish and soft and hard corals. Exceptional dive sites include Pompano 3rd Reef. A continuation of the outer reef, 3rd reef is very nice with cliffs that provide good cover for marine life. Coral, basket sponges, whips and fans are common and the scenery is excellent.

As with our original plans for the boundaries for Outstanding Florida Waters, there is over whelming stakeholder support from both divers and fishers to include Pompano Beach reef tract. In addition the Pompano Beach Tourism Development Council and the Pompano Beach Chamber of Commerce will endorse their support.

Figure 10. Mark's Ledge off of Pompano.

COASTAL DEVELOPMENT

Coastal and inland development progressed in the same manner as the Port with the loss of coastal mangroves and salt water marshes. These coastal resources helped filter the water and act as a fish nursery. As the barrier island was developed, more of the mangroves were removed leading to more storm water runoff and the loss of essential fish habitat up and down the coast. As the canals were dug along the coast we lost many of the tidal marshes that were part of the estuary. As digging of cannels progressed west we lost more of the fresh water marshes. These canals were dug first for agriculture and then urban development. This produced more storm water runoff and lessens the filtering effects that used to be present in the natural watershed. With the expansive development of a major port and airport, Broward County has become a major destination for tourism. Today's highly developed coast is a major stressor for the nearshore environment.

GEOLOGY

The area is composed of a series of parallel fossil coral reef ridges with sparse coral growth (except for the innermost First Reef ridge which has by far the highest coral cover) separated by fossil limestone hardbottom with sand patches over deeper areas. The fossil reef ridges formed when sea level stabilized at its present level, after the end of the last Ice Age. These fossil reefs are mostly composed of Elkhorn coral (*Acropora palmata)* and largely date before 7 thousand years ago according to studies by (Lighty, Macintyre, and Stuckenrath, 1978). They formed at a time when the Gulf Stream was stronger than today, and the waters warmer than they are now, allowing coral reefs to extend well northward of their current limits. When the Gulf Stream weakened the waters cooled and the reef died back. Now, with global warming, the reef is again extending northward, but in the past it did not have sewage, oil pollution, anchors, ship groundings, and erosion affecting it.

WATER QUALITY

Water quality standards are the acceptable limits for materials found in water and are defined in regulations. State of Florida water quality criteria are contained in Chapter 62-302 Florida Administrative Code. Rule 62-302.530 includes standards for Class III marine waters. Water quality standards are based on conditions that may result in a change in the quantity or health of the organisms that live in the water.

Corals require the cleanest water quality of any coastal ecosystem, and suffer rapidly if it deteriorates. One crucial aspect of water quality is the concentration of nutrients in the water. Coral reefs have evolved in the lowest nutrient environment in the world, the tropical ocean, where plants often consume all available nitrogen and phosphorus. Increases in nutrients above the near zero level are probably beneficial to corals, but it takes only very small increases for the net effect to turn negative. This is not because high nutrients harm corals directly, but because corals are quickly overgrown by much faster growing algae which need higher nutrient levels than coral. Only very little excess nutrients are needed to turn healthy coral reefs into fields of

algae which smother and kill corals. This phenomenon is called eutrophication. Coral reefs become eutrophic at the lowest level of nutrients than any aquatic ecosystem, nutrient levels which would be regarded as very low in any other marine or freshwater habitat would kill coral reefs. It is essential that appropriate water quality standards by applied in coral reef ecosystems if they are to be protected against eutrophication. It is generally agreed that coral reefs become eutrophic if available nitrogen exceeds 0.14 parts per million and if available phosphorus exceeds 0.003 parts per million (Bell 1992; Lapointe et al. 1993). These water standards should be adopted as the water quality standards in all reef areas. Major sources of excessive nutrients include sewage, agricultural runoff, urban runoff and fertilizers cause degradation of the ecosystem.

Water quality in the Ft. Lauderdale/Lauderdale-by-the-Sea/Pompano Beach area can be protected with the designation of the area as "Outstanding Florida Waters" (OFW) by the State of Florida. Regulations would ensure that pollutant discharges would not degrade the water quality to below the levels needed for healthy coral reefs. The declaration of OFW status for the waters off Ft. Lauderdale and Lauderdale-by-the-Sea will not solve the problem of pollution or set acceptable limits of pollution into the eco-system; however, it will work towards the elimination of direct surface water discharges of pollutants.

There is very little water monitoring conducted within our proposed bounders to document the off shore water quality. Destructive algae blooms (Figure 11), spread of diseases, green water events and coral bleaching are clear bioindications that our ocean is in trouble.

Figure 11. Cyano bacteria (*Lyngbia sp.*) bloom off of Pompano Beach. Photo © Karen Lane.

WATER QUALITY ISSUES

Stormwater Runoff

Stormwater Runoff is the transporting of pollutants into surface water when rain water accumulates on land and runs off. Nationally this is a major source of pollutants to surface waters. Runoff from roads ways, parking lots, pool decks and other land based sources can contain road oils, nitrogen, phosphorus, and other pollutants. The amount of urban growth along the coast has left little pervious ground to absorb the excess water from our South Florida rains. Lauderdale-By-The-Sea, with the help of Broward County, has re-engineered the public portals (beach access) to increase stormwater runoff (Figure 12) across the beach, thereby causing local erosion and land-based sources of erosion to the existing beach (Figure 13).

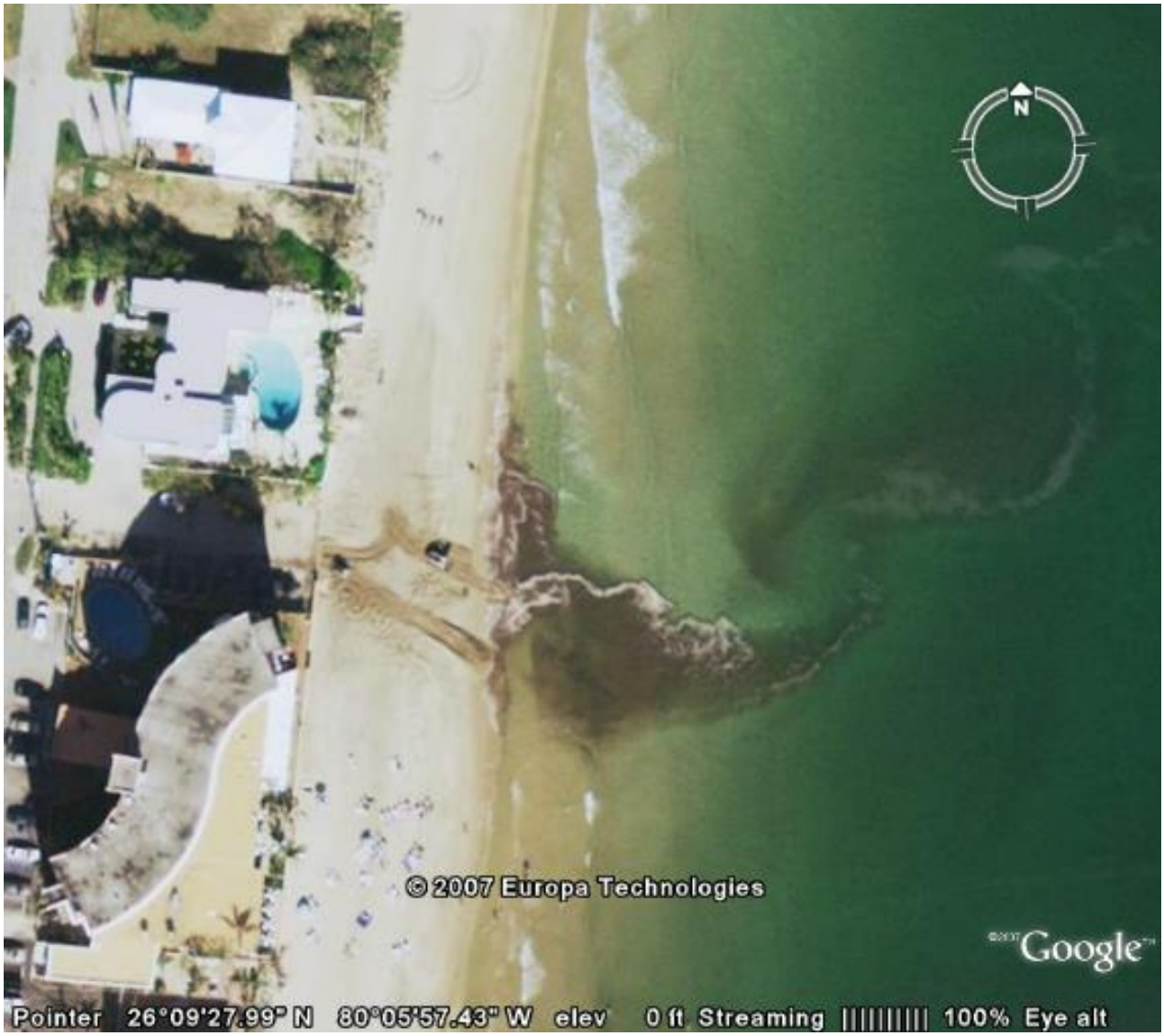

Figure 12. Stormwater runoff in Fort Lauderdale.

Figure 13. Local and land-based erosion caused by stormwater runoff at Fort Lauderdale.

Wastewater Discharges

Wastewater discharges from ocean sewage discharge pipes in Hollywood and Pompano Beach would not be affected by the designation of OFW. The Florida House and Senate unanimously approved legislation to end ocean sewage dumping. Wastewater must meet the higher standard of Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT) by 2018 and achieve at least 60% reuse of the effluent by 2025. New or expanded ocean outfalls will not be allowed and use of the pipes will be prohibited after the 2025 date.

Other Water Quality Issues

The nutrient problems affecting the Ft. Lauderdale/Lauderdale-By-The-Sea/Pompano Beach areas can be attributed to many factors within the larger South Florida Watershed. Discharges from the Agricultural area into Conservation Areas and out Port Everglades and Hillsboro Inlets are just two of the factors.

Nutrient loading of the waters of Broward County come from many other sources, such as oceanic upwelling, groundwater upwelling, and atmospheric depositions. These nutrient loads have not been quantified. However, that does not diminish the importance of focusing on their nutrient loads and their effects on water quality and ecological resources. Healthy coral communities dependent on low nutrient environments, localized sources of nutrients can have immediate negative impacts that can result in cascading effects throughout the ecosystem.

Outstanding Florida Waters designation alone cannot address all nutrients problems. Best Management Practices can be implemented to reduce the impact to the local surface waters. The South Florida Coral Reef Initiative's (SEFCRI), Land Based Sources of Pollution (LBSP) Project 21, is reviewing practices that generate pollution and will be providing recommendations to reduce land based sources of pollution. This project is funded by a NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Grant awarded to the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP). Cry of the Water is a project team member and has been contributing to the project since its inception.

RECREATION

Recreational marine activities can be enjoyed year round in our tropical climate. This puts our resources under competition by multiple user groups. Accessed by shore or boat, our local community and tourists alike enjoy scuba diving, snorkeling, jet skiing, boating, parasailing, surfing, kite surfing, kayaking, swimming and recreational fishing. Outstanding Florida Waters designation will ensure that any activity in the area will not be adversely affecting the fishing, recreational values or marine productivity in the area. Fishing, diving and boating activities will not be affected or changed by an OFW designation.

FISHING LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA BEACH

Fishing, spearfishing and surf casting is not allowed on the public beach. Anglin's Fishing Pier is open 24 hours a day for fishing and sightseeing. Rod rentals and bait are available on the pier.

FISHING FT. LAUDERDALE BEACH

Fishing and surf casting is not allowed on the public beach between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.. Fishing and surf casting is not allowed between N.E. 18th Street and N.E. 23rd Street between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and holidays fishing is restricted to 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Florida license and fishing rules can be found at www.myFWC.com.

MARINE RESOURCES

The marine resources associated with Ft. Lauderdale/Lauderdale-by-the-Sea/Pompano Beach nearshore coral community are part a larger ecosystem of the Southeast Florida coral reefs. The recreational significance of the marine life is covered under Recreation. This section will describe some of the marine resources of the proposed Outstanding Florida Water and how OFW will work towards there protection. Although Critical Habitat has been designated for the *Acropora* species, additional rules will be in place to ensure that activities will not adversely affect the conservation of fish and wildlife, including endangered or threatened species (Table 2) or their habitats.

Table 2. Threatened and endangered species that are found within the Proposed OFW boundary.

Common name	**Genus and species**	**Status**	**Habitat designation**
Staghorn Coral	*Acropora cervicornis*	Threatened	Critical Habitat
Elkhorn Coral	*Acropora palmata*	Threatened	Critical Habitat
Pillar Coral	*Dendrogyra cylindrus*	Endangered (State)	
West Indian Manatee	*Trichechus manatus*	Endangered	
Green Sea Turtle	*Chelonia mydas*	Endangered	
Hawksbill Sea Turtle	*Eretmochelys imbricata*	Endangered	
Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle	*Lepidochelys kempii*	Endangered	
Leatherback Sea Turtle	*Dermochelys coriacea*	Endangered	
Loggerhead Sea Turtle	*Caretta caretta*	Threatened	
Smalltooth sawfish	*Pristis pectinata*	Endangered	
Queen Conch	*Strombus gigas*	Protected (State)	
Johnson Seagrass	*Halophila johnsonii*	Threatened	

One of the reasons that Ft. Lauderdale/Lauderdale-By-The-Sea/Pompano Beach coral habitat is so significant is that this marine wildlife experience can be enjoyed along with popular recreational activities with numerous available access. Awareness and education of this resource can be enhanced by declaring the area an Outstanding Florida Water.

SUPPORT FOR PETITION

LBTS Town Commission supports the petition for Outstanding Florida Waters designation and offered support to aid in the OFW designation. As with our original plans for the boundaries for Outstanding Florida Waters, there is overwhelming stakeholder support from both divers and fishers to include Pompano Beach reef tract. In addition the Pompano Beach Tourism Development Council and the Pompano Beach Chamber of Commerce will endorse their support.

The information and data found above are presented as support for the affirmation that the Ft. Lauderdale/Lauderdale-by-the-Sea/Pompano Beach near shore coral reef community has exceptional recreational and ecological significance within Southeast Florida and the State of Florida. Designating these waters as an Outstanding Florida Water would have no significant negative impact on growth and development in the area. Furthermore, the environmental, social and economic benefits of this designation far outweigh any potential costs. Support for the Ft Lauderdale/Lauderdale-By-The-Sea/Pompano Beach Nearshore Coral Reef Outstanding Florida Water Petition is broad based and includes County residents, legislators, local government, recreational users and interested parties.

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