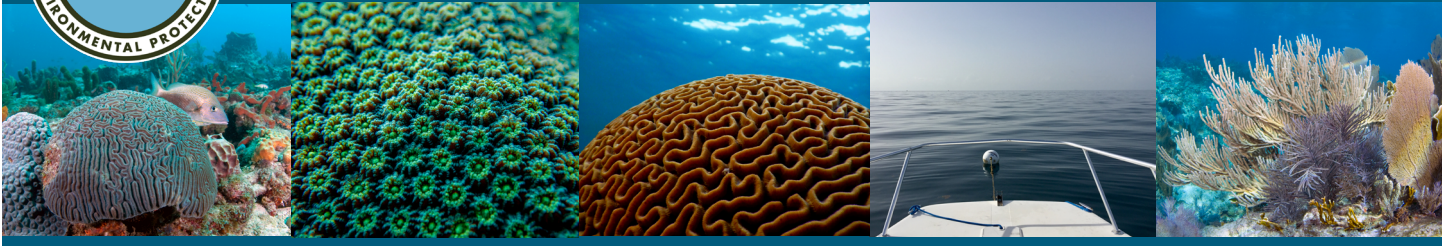




FLORIDA'S CORAL REEF PROTECTION ACT



Spanning almost 350 miles from the Dry Tortugas to the St. Lucie Inlet, Florida's Coral Reef is one of the greatest natural resources in the United States. Florida's Coral Reef provides habitat for marine species, protects South Florida's shorelines from storms, and sustains Florida's fisheries, tourism and recreation.

Threats to Coral Reef Health

- » Florida's Coral Reef is susceptible to a range of threats, including direct injuries caused by vessel grounding and anchoring on coral reefs.
- » Direct damage from large vessel groundings and anchor or cable drags can cause immediate and long-term injuries to coral reefs. Small vessels that anchor on corals cause widespread cumulative damages.
- » Vessel hulls, anchors, propellers and cables can fracture and crush coral reef framework and dislodge corals, sponges and other marine animals and plants.

How You Can Protect Reefs

- » Avoid anchoring on coral; use mooring buoys instead. Mooring buoys are located off the coasts of Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Martin counties. [Mooring buoy locations](#) can be found online.
- » When anchoring near reefs, anchor in the sand beyond the edge of the reef or in a sand patch. Make sure the anchor remains well secured in the sand.
- » Use the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Coral Reef Conservation Program map to find a sandy spot for anchoring. The free app uses GPS to show a vessel's current position and distinguishes between sand and reef. Scan the QR code to view the "Florida's Coral Reef Locator" map on your mobile device.
- » Report reef damage to the [Southeast Florida Action Network \(SEAFAN\)](#) online or call 866-770-7335.

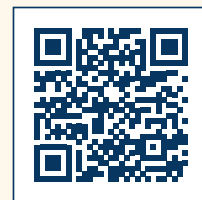
AT A GLANCE

- Florida's Coral Reef Protection Act (CRPA) was enacted in July 2009.
- The CRPA makes it illegal to anchor on or otherwise damage coral reefs in Florida.
- The CRPA authorizes DEP to pursue civil penalties and damages for coral reef impacts.

[View Florida's Coral Reef on Your Mobile Device](#)



[FloridaDEP.gov/
CoralReefLocator](http://FloridaDEP.gov/CoralReefLocator)



— continued —

Florida's Coral Reef Protection Act

In 2009, the Florida Legislature passed the Coral Reef Protection Act to increase protection of coral reef resources off the coasts of Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Martin counties.

Act Authorizations

- » CRPA authorizes DEP as the state's lead for coral reef resources and to protect reefs through assessment and recovery of damages resulting from vessel impacts.
- » The CRPA allows DEP to pursue enforcement against those who damage coral reefs.

Recovery of Penalties and Damages

Those who damage coral reefs may be subject to civil penalties and damages for coral reef impacts.

Civil Penalties for Damaged Areas

- Less than or equal to 1 square meter of coral reef damage: \$225 per square meter.
- More than 1 square meter and up to 10 square meters: \$450 per square meter.
- More than 10 square meters: \$1,500 per square meter.
- Civil penalties may increase for incidents occurring within a state park or aquatic preserve, repeat violations or other aggravating circumstances.

Assessed Damages

- Cost of replacing, restoring or acquiring the equivalent value of the injured coral reef, including the value of the lost use and ecological services.
- Cost of damage assessments.
- Cost of actions taken to minimize or prevent further injury to the coral reef.
- Cost of enforcement actions taken in response to coral reef damage, including court costs, attorney fees and expert witness fees.
- Cost of monitoring an injured, restored or replaced coral reef for at least 10 years, depending on the injury size.

Guidelines for Vessel Operators

- » Contact the [Southeast Florida Action Network \(SEAFAN\)](#) online or call 866-770-7335 within 24 hours if your vessel has run aground, struck or otherwise damaged a coral reef.
- » Remove the anchor or grounded vessel within 72 hours after the initial incident if it is safe to do so and with U.S. Coast Guard approval. Discuss removal plans with DEP and make sure removal does not further damage the reef.
- » Cooperation with DEP is essential for assessing damage and restoring the injured coral reef.

Learn More

[Coral Reef Conservation Program](#)

[Reef Injury Prevention and Response Program](#)

[Florida's Coral Reef](#)

[Florida Coral Reef Protection Act Statute](#)

[SEAFAN - The Southeast Florida Action Network](#)

Report reef damage online to [SEAFAN](#)
or call 866-770-7335

