

# THE *OUR FLORIDA REEFS* COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS



**OUR FLORIDA REEFS**  
YOUR VOICE, OUR FUTURE

The *OUR FLORIDA REEFS* community planning process brings together the community of local residents, reef users, business owners, visitors, and the broader public in Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin counties to discuss the future of coral reefs in this region. This process is hosted by the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI), a collaborative, local effort started in 2004 to understand and protect our coral reefs for the benefit of all. SEFCRI is coordinated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP).

Although the coral reefs of Florida are one connected system - starting offshore of the St. Lucie Inlet in Martin County and stretching over 350 miles down through the Florida Keys to the Dry Tortugas in Monroe County - they have not been managed that way. The *OUR FLORIDA REEFS* planning process is focusing on the offshore reefs from the northern border of Biscayne National Park in Miami-Dade County to the St. Lucie Inlet in Martin County. Currently, there is no comprehensive management plan for this northern one-third of Florida's reef system, extending 105 miles across the four-county region. These coral reefs are unique, extremely valuable, and highly threatened.

*OUR FLORIDA REEFS* is designed to increase public involvement in the future management of southeast Florida's coral reefs by seeking input from community members on the development of recommendations that can become part of a comprehensive management strategy to ensure healthy coral reefs in the future.

## Community Planning Process Steps

The *OUR FLORIDA REEFS* process begins with a series of meetings in June 2013 to introduce the process and southeast Florida coral reef information to the local community. Next, community representatives will be selected to form Community Working Groups, which will meet from October 2013 through 2014. Community Working Group members will represent a wide range of different

interests, each who have a stake in the wellbeing of our coral reef communities. The number of groups may vary; each group will consist of 20-25 members.

Using the best available science, these Community Working Groups will develop

### A COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS FOR SOUTHEAST FLORIDA'S CORAL REEFS

#### STEP 1 COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Learn more about our reefs. Share your ideas.

#### STEP 2 COMMUNITY WORKING GROUPS

Local representatives develop recommendations for reef management actions.

#### STEP 3 SHARE RECOMMENDATIONS

Community meetings to review draft recommendations. Tell us what you think!

#### STEP 4 REEF MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Final recommendations guide development of a reef management strategy for southeast Florida's coral reefs.



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management recommendations to balance use and protection of southeast Florida's coral reefs. Community Working Group members will share their recommendations at a series of community meetings tentatively scheduled for spring 2015. Finally, appropriate agencies will work to approve and implement the community-based recommendations, which will guide development of the management strategy for southeast Florida's coral reefs. The earliest any community-recommended management actions would take effect would be 2016.

Interested community members can visit the website, [www.OurFloridaReefs.org](http://www.OurFloridaReefs.org), to learn more about how to apply for a Community Working Group. Observers are invited to attend all Community Working Group meetings, and will have the opportunity to provide feedback throughout the process to their respective Working Group representative.

## Interested in participating?

Interested community members have several options to participate in the *OUR FLORIDA REEFS* process. You can apply to serve on one of the Community Working Groups, attend Community Working Group meetings as an observer, attend the larger community meetings that will be held in June 2013 and again in 2015, join the *OUR FLORIDA REEFS* online community, or become a Reef Champion and help your club or community group stay updated on the *OUR FLORIDA REEFS* planning process.

### GET INVOLVED

We invite you to speak up for your reef. Open to everyone, the *Our Florida Reefs* community planning process offers many ways to participate. Join the discussion today for the future of southeast Florida's coral reefs.



#### Join Us at Our Next Community Meeting!

*OUR FLORIDA REEFS* is hosting a series of meetings throughout southeast Florida during the month of June.

[Click here for an upcoming meeting in your area.](#)



#### Join the Online Community

**Become part of the community** to receive news updates and to share your ideas.



#### Become a Reef Champion

Inform your club or community group as a member of the **Reef Champion Network**.



For more information and to provide your input on the future of southeast Florida's reefs, please visit: [www.OurFloridaReefs.org](http://www.OurFloridaReefs.org)



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