

FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
Water Quality Protection Program Steering Committee Meeting

November 13, 2024

9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Marathon City Hall, 9805 Overseas Highway, Marathon, FL 33050

The meeting will also be broadcast in real time for listening only:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8642474098290592087>; Webinar ID: 725-527-731

Meeting Purpose: Convene the Water Quality Protection Program (WQPP) Steering Committee to review the status of Florida Keys water quality projects and complementary efforts, and discuss timely issues and future actions related to water quality priorities.

Objectives:

- Learn about the status and results of ongoing monitoring and research projects implemented by the Water Quality Protection Program and partners.
- Review the status of local efforts to improve water quality.
- Provide an open forum for information sharing and discussion on complementary efforts and emerging topics of relevance to the Water Quality Protection Program.

Meeting Materials:

- Minutes from July 30, 2024 WQPP Steering Committee meeting
- USACE Small Project Program brochure

Agenda

- 9:00 AM** **I. Welcome and Opening Remarks**
- Call to Order and Opening Remarks, *Wade Lehmann, EPA/ Kim Shugar, DEP*
 - Steering Committee Member Introductions
 - Housekeeping
 - Review and Adopt Agenda
 - *Steering Committee Vote*
 - Approve Minutes from November 29, 2023
 - *Steering Committee Vote*
- 9:25 AM** **II. WQPP Communications Subcommittee, Genevieve Schave, DEP**
(10 min) Update on the Communications Subcommittee status and next steps.
- *Steering Committee Q&A and Discussion (15 min)*
- 9:50 AM** **III. Water Quality Monitoring Program, Dr. Henry Briceño, FIU**
(30 min) Update on the latest data from the long-term FKNMS water quality monitoring program.
- *Steering Committee Q&A/Discussion (10 min)*

- 10:30 AM** **Break** (15 minutes)
- 10:45 AM** **IV. Seagrass Monitoring Program, Dr. Johannes Krause, FIU**
(30 min) Update on the latest data from the long-term FKNMS seagrass monitoring program.
- *Steering Committee Q&A/Discussion* (10 min)
- 11:25 AM** **V. Coral Reef Evaluation and Monitoring Program, Rob Ruzicka, FWC**
(30 min) Update on the latest data from the long-term FKNMS coral reef evaluation and monitoring program.
- *Steering Committee Q&A/Discussion* (10 min)
- 12:05 PM** **Lunch** (1 hour 25 minutes)
- 1:30 PM** **VI. Special Study Project Update: Trends in Florida Keys Water Quality and linkages to Synechococcus and Sargassum Blooms, Dr. Brian Barnes, USF**
(20 min) Overview of an EPA-funded special study that is using satellite to monitor and predict sargassum, algal blooms and flows from Southwest Florida and the Everglades into Florida Bay and FKNMS.
- *Steering Committee Q&A/Discussion* (10 min)
- 2:00 PM** **VII. Special Study Project Update: Monitoring Water Quality in the Florida Keys Halo Zone, Dr. Chris Sinigalliano, NOAA**
(20 min) Overview of an EPA-funded special study to evaluate land-based sources of pollution in the Florida Keys Halo zone.
- *Steering Committee Q&A/Discussion* (10 min)
- 2:30 PM** **VIII. Curry Hammock Tidal Restoration Project, Dr. Nicholas Parr, DEP**
(5 min) Update on the status of the tidal restoration project and a potential funding source for the construction phase.
- *Steering Committee Q&A/Discussion* (10 min)
 - *Potential Steering Committee Action Item*
- 2:45 PM** **Break** (15 minutes)
- 3:00 PM** **IX. Florida Keys Reasonable Assurance Document Update, Ken Weaver, DEP**
(20 min) Overview of the Florida Keys Reasonable Assurance Document, the latest nearshore water quality monitoring results, and next steps for assessing compliance with water quality standards.
- *Steering Committee Q&A/Discussion* (10 min)

- 3:30 PM** **X. USACE Small Projects Division Updates: Water Quality Improvement Program and Other Capabilities**, *Richard Butler, USACE SAJ Small Project Program Manager*
(40 min) Overview of opportunities for the Small Projects Division to support local needs, and updates on planning and next steps for the Water Quality Improvement Program.
- *Steering Committee Q&A/Discussion* (10 min)
- 4:20 PM** **XI. Public Comment** (15 minutes)
- 4:35 PM** **XII. Steering Committee Member Updates**
(20 min) Members of the Steering Committee provide updates on recent activities or emerging topics of relevance to the Water Quality Protection Program.
- 4:55 PM** **Wrap-Up and Review Action Items**
- 5:00 PM** **Adjourn**

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