

Sutton, Kaitlyn

From: coonit@aol.com
Sent: Monday, November 4, 2019 3:51 PM
To: Sutton, Kaitlyn; Weaver, Kenneth
Subject: Triennial Review

Greetings,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DRAFT Implementation of the Turbidity Criterion for the Protection of Coral Reef Resources.

We are very pleased with the effort to adopt science-based standards to protect our Florida coral reef ecosystem, whereby supporting the proposed more protective standard. We are grateful that the FL DEP recognizes that the previous turbidity standards did not protect the sensitive reef & seagrass systems in the manner truly necessary.

We now know that in the recent few years there have been back-to-back coral bleachings as well as a devastating coral disease - this combined with the dredging of the Port of Miami along with the upcoming Port Everglades project have and will put the reefs in crisis. An urgent crisis. Also known is that the dredging at Port Miami affected over TWENTY FIVE km of coral reef and very likely killed of 560,000 corals, the result of UNCONTROLLED sedimentation.

We are crushed, so terribly distraught and somewhat angry by what we consider to be criminal behavior from virtually all quarters. Most people know very well that without a healthy ecosystem - a healthy nature - the human impact on the planet will be an existential monstrosity that may be comparable to the event that eliminated the dinosaurs. We are currently in a human-created climate crisis. We must NOT further contribute to the heating of the planet with the behaviors that have resulted in this very very disturbing, insidious crisis.

In addition to being the keepers of the fragile balance of nature, providing shelter, food & breeding sites for fish (recreational & commercial), and providing coastal barriers from storms, the clear waters of coral reefs bring billions of dollars and tens of thousands of jobs to S Florida.

We know what we know because we make a point to read, read, read and research as much as is available on the ocean (and nature in general!). We are not scientists, therefore below I have included recommendations from Miami Waterkeeper scientists. PLEASE read and implement as much as possible to the plan to dredge and hopefully not destroy another reef system.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.
Leigh Emerson Smith & family

- For pre-project baseline range establishment, we recommend that at least a year of pre-project samples are collected.
- We recommend that the establishment of baseline levels are undertaken with the same type of sediment as will be/is produced during dredging.
- For during-project baseline samples, a system must be implemented to ensure that baseline samples are taken in water that is entirely unaffected by the plume.
- Protocols for locating the appropriate place for a compliance sample should be addressed to ensure that projects remain protective.
- Further, we recommend that alternative monitoring methods be adopted if dredging during night time is being undertaken.
- We therefore also recommend that acidification, eutrophication, contaminant, and pathogen testing also be performed on samples taken during dredging, as these may impact the relative lethality of the sediment released near sensitive environments.
- We therefore recommend also including turbidity monitoring at the sea floor in the standards, as that is where the coral resources are located.
- We recommend that specific qualifications are required for turbidity monitors, both pre- and during-project.
- We also recommend that third-party oversight of turbidity monitoring be implemented and/or improved – possibly also through drones/satellite methodology
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