

3 March 2015

Dear Mayor and Commissioners

This evening you will be considering a resolution supported by the Key West Chamber of Commerce concerning expansion of No Take zones.

I am concerned that the language of the City's Resolution is incorrect. **There is not an area of the FKNMS that is off limit or prohibits scuba diving except the Eastern Sambo Research Zone in the Key West area**, which all parties agreed to under the development of the original management plan. In certain SPA's such as Sand Key trolling is allowed for fishing. The various SPA's and protected zones account for less than 2.5% of the total Sanctuary.

I have been involved with the process since 1986. At that time, I testified before Congress on the need to protect the resources of the Florida Keys. I served on the Advisory Council from 1990 for over 25 years. The process has always taken into consideration the effect that management strategies have on the various user groups. Federal Law requires that an economic impact study be completed prior to implementation of rules.

I am the President of the Keys Association of Dive Operators. The recreational dive industry in Monroe County exceeds \$52,000,000.00 per year and divers spend over \$450,000,000.00 each year supporting more than 7,500 jobs. At our last meeting in February; the Chamber of Commerce resolution was discussed. The membership vote was unanimous in support of the FKNMS management review process. This management review is a long and tedious process ensuring input from all parties.

I encourage you not to endorse the resolution as written, but allow the process to work.

Respectfully

Bob Holston
President
Keys Association of Dive Operators