

# Key West Water Quality Improvement Plan

## Progress Update January 2025

### **Background:**

One of the goals of the Key West Forward Strategic Plan is to improve the cleanliness of our near shore waters. To that end, the then Sustainability Coordinator convened a working group of water quality experts from five entities (Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, University of Florida / Monroe County Extension Service, Monroe County Marine Resources and College of the Florida Keys). The Team reviewed related priorities and goals across 3 Plans and 8 Programs and helped the City identify our final priorities, resulting in the Key West Water Quality Improvement Plan (KW-WQIP)

The KW-WQIP contains 11 Goals, and 38 actions ranked by benefit, effort, cost and ultimate effectiveness on nearshore water quality. The draft plan was presented to City Commission on August 16, 2003, and the Year 1 implementation plan budget was presented during a Commission Budget Workshop on July 16 2024. The FY25 budget included \$127,125 for Water Quality Monitoring, \$100,000 for Coral Reef Restoration, and 125,000 for KW-WQIP implementation (25K in supplies, 75L in professional services).

### **FY25 Implementation:**

The operational planning effort added Mote Marine and Reef Relief to the Team and prioritized a list of year 1 actions, summarized below:

### **Staff led:**

NEW Summarize all Key West water quality monitoring by agency, data gathered, frequency and purpose.

NEW Partner with ACOE to explore feasibility of environmental dredging justification study.

#1) Find funding for Wastewater Pipe Infrastructure:

- Identify & apply to potential grants over the next year
  - ✓ Apply for EPA grant for \$750K for Study Phase
  - ✓ Prioritize for ACOE Water Quality funding

#2) Support Stock Island shallow injection well study:

- Stay abreast of City of Marathon shallow injection well updates
- Encourage similar research in south Stock Island waters.

#3) Upgrading Stormwater Fee Tiers to current best management practices

- Identify funds (internal and grants) to fulfil task order quote

#4) Better trash cans near ocean

- Partner with Monroe County in identifying bulk buy of new cans.

#5) Upload marina/landfill data to public database

- Continue partnership with FDEP to upload historical data

#8) Create Keyswide team to create CEC gameplan:

- Convene Sanctuary Water Quality Protection Program and Technical Advisory Committee to weigh in on which CEC's we should be most concerned with.

#9) Work with FDEP to ensure all new WQ data can be utilized in the State public database

### **Procure Assistance:**

NEW Increase e.Coli testing at Public Beaches

- ✓ Post links to FDOH testing results at beaches
- Coordinate team to determine sources of eColi.
- Supplement FDOH testing to enable weekly testing.

- #7) Increase Clean Marina Certifications (required in Comp Plan)
  - Work with local marinas to become FDEP Clean Marina Certified.
- #17) Increase Marine Pump Out services
  - #15) Update Pump out language
    - Convene mtg with County & other partners
- #11) Create & Implement Outreach Plan
- #13) Collaborate with Sanctuary WQPP Educational Committee
  - #6) Fertilizer Campaign:
    - Research Best management practices
  - #10) Rainbarrel Campaign:
    - Schedule Rainbarrel workshops
- #16) Support Conch Republic Marine Army
- #19) Encourage citizens to report dumping
- #20) Share current research
- #12) Create summary reports from recent marina/outfall/landfill raw data
- #14) Identify other potential WQ Policy languages
  - Research Best Management Practices

This list does not include other related actions routinely performed by staff, such as:

- Attend Sanctuary Advisory Committee and Sanctuary WQPP meetings
- Create Annual report
- Continue Monitoring Partnership with College of the Florida Keys
- Annually review emerging CEC research
- Stay abreast of direct potable water efforts.
- Study feasibility of direct potable water use from the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Stay abreast of Turkey Point plume
- Stay abreast of Florida Keys and South Florida Ecosystem Connectivity Team recommendations

# **Procurement Plan:**

## **Water Quality Monitoring**

COST            Increase e.Coli testing at Public Beaches  
                 Supplement FDOH testing to enable weekly testing.

## **Coral Reef Restoration**

\$100,000       Continue restoring coral  
                 Annual RFP

## **Water Quality Improvement Plan - Implementation**

\$75K   #3       Support Utilities in upgrading Stormwater Fee Tiers to current best management practices  
                 General Services Agreement w Raftelis

COST #5       Upload marina/landfill data to public database  
         #12)       Create summary reports from recent marina/outfall/landfill raw data

COST #7)       Increase Clean Marina Certifications (required in Comp Plan)  
         #17)       Increase Marine Pump Out services  
         #15)       Collaborate w County to Update Pump out language

COST #11)      Create & Implement Outreach Plan  
         #13)      Collaborate with Sanctuary WQPP Educational Committee  
                 #6)      Fertilizer Campaign:  
                         • Research Best management practices  
                 #10)     Rainbarrel Campaign:  
                         • Schedule Rainbarrel workshops  
         #16)      Support Conch Republic Marine Army  
         #19)      Encourage citizens to report dumping  
         #20)      Share current research

COST #14)      Identify other potential WQ Policy languages (Research Best Management Practices)