



VIII. Communications Subcommittee

Photo: Shawn Verne

Communications Subcommittee



Communications Subcommittee



Monroe County - Kristen Livengood.



Environmental Protection Agency - Elizbeth Smith.



Florida Sea Grant - Shelly Krueger.



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission - Kristene Parson.



Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – Julie Cheon.



Lower Keys Guides Association - Allison Delashmit.



Eco Legacy Solution - Sandy Walters.

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Nature Conservancy – Chirs Berg



Florida Department of Health – Dr. Carla Fry



Florida Department of Environmental Protection - Sajida X Malik



Monroe County Tourist Development Council – Jonelle Modys

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Objectives:

- **Disseminate information** about water quality efforts, including WQPP meetings, funding opportunities, and successes via the Report to Congress.
- **Educate the community** about water quality issues, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of various organizations.
- **Advise the WQPP** on communications needs.
- **Support public awareness** and engagement with WQPP via website updates and meeting notices.

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Achievements

- **New WQPP Website**

The screenshot displays the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary website. The header includes the sanctuary's logo and name, along with a search bar. Below the header, a navigation menu lists 'Program', 'Monitoring', 'Research', 'Resources', and 'Get Involved'. The 'Get Involved' section features a large photograph of a community meeting. Below the photo, the 'Overview' section explains the importance of public input and action in addressing water quality issues. It lists several reports and actions, including 'Report wastewater leaks to the local wastewater authority' and 'Report malfunctioning stormwater management systems to the local government'. A 'Public Engagement' section highlights recent special studies and reports, such as 'Impact of Wastewater Injection on the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary' and 'The fate of wastewater-derived nitrate in the subsurface of the Florida Keys'. At the bottom, three boxes provide a snapshot of sanctuary science: 'Water Quality Monitoring' (a network of 340 fixed sampling sites), 'Seagrass Monitoring' (an unparalleled assessment of seagrass communities), and 'Coral Reef Monitoring' (Coral Reef Evaluation and Monitoring Project).

FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Search

Program Monitoring Research Resources Get Involved

Contact Us

Get Involved

Overview

Public input and action is essential to addressing water quality issues because it ensures that community needs, concerns, and local knowledge are part of the decision-making process. Residents are often the first to notice changes in their waterways, such as unusual odors, pollution, or declining fish populations, making their observations valuable for early detection and long-term solutions.

Report wastewater leaks to the local wastewater authority

- [City of Key West Wastewater Treatment](#)
- [Key Biscayne Utilities \(Coral Gables\)](#)
- [Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority](#)
- [City of Marathon](#)
- [Office of Islamorada](#)
- [Key Largo Wastewater Treatment District](#)

Report malfunctioning stormwater management systems to the local government:

- [City of Key West](#)
- [City of Marathon](#)
- [Monroe County](#)

Mobile and shoreside vessel pump-out services in the Florida Keys:

- [Monroe County Vessel Pump-Out Services](#)

Public Engagement

Recent special studies & reports released

- [Impact of Wastewater Injection on the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary](#)
- [The fate of wastewater-derived nitrate in the subsurface of the Florida Keys: Key Colony Beach, Florida, 2003](#)
- [The Efficiency of Phosphate Removal via Shallow Wastewater Injection into a Saline Carbonate Aquifer, 2024](#)
- [Contaminants of Emerging Concern](#)
- [An examination of the risk of pharmaceuticals in South Florida: extent and pathways of exposure in a valuable recreational fishery, bonefish](#)

Looking for an easy-to-understand snapshot of sanctuary science?

These informative one- and two-page summaries provide a great introduction to long-term research projects in the sanctuary, offering an overview of the threats to the marine environment.

Water Quality Monitoring	Seagrass Monitoring	Coral Reef Monitoring
A network of 340 fixed sampling sites overlapping political boundaries	An unparalleled assessment of the status and trends of seagrass communities in the Florida Keys	Coral Reef Evaluation and Monitoring Project

committees.

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Achievements

- **New WQPP Website**
https://gis.myfwc.com/fknms_wqpp/steering.htm
- **Congressional Report Communications Plan**



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Report to Congress Communications Plan Highlights:

- Key and Supporting Messages
- WQPP Background
- Major Components of the Report
- Potential Red Flags
- Target Audiences
- Spokespeople
- Supporting Materials
- FAQs





Anticipated Questions — Communications Plan

- Q:** How is water quality defined?
- Q:** How is water quality measured in the Florida Keys?
- Q:** Under what authority does the WQPP operate?
- Q:** What has been the chief priority of the WQPP?
- Q:** How has water quality improved as a result of the upgrades to the wastewater treatment system?



Anticipated Questions — Communications Plan

- Q: What recommendations accompany this report?
- Q: When was the last bi-annual Congressional report submitted?
- Q: Why did it take so long to follow up?
- Q: What's next?
- Q: How do I connect with the WQPP about other water quality issues, and what will the WQPP do about it?

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Communications Plan Discussion Questions:

1. Would the Steering Committee like to review and provide feedback on key points?
2. Any volunteers to serve as spokespeople or subject matter experts?
 - Name: Topic (*general WQPP, canal restoration, wastewater improvements, research funding, etc.*)
3. What other FAQs should we prepare?

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On the Horizon:

- Communications Sub-Committee sunset: June 2026.
- Guidance will be requested at the next Steering Committee meeting.

