

FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
Water Quality Protection Program Steering Committee
March 2026 Research Symposium

March 5, 2026
9:00 AM – 4:45 PM

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

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

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8269399917893969759>; Webinar ID 920-246-763

Meeting Purpose: Share outcomes and management recommendations from research projects and special studies of relevance to Florida Keys and south Florida water quality and marine resources.

Agenda

- 9:00 AM** **I. Welcome and Introduction (10 min)**
- Call to Order, *Wade Lehmann, EPA / Lawrence Glenn, DEP*
 - Housekeeping
- 9:10 AM** **II. Development of a Sponge Restoration Strategy for Florida Bay: Integrating Ecological Research into Adaptive Management (45 min),** *William Sharp, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute*
- 9:55 AM** **III. [Virtual] A Land-based Sponge Nursery to Restore Habitats and Improve Water Quality in Florida Bay (30 min),** *Dr. Andia Chaves Fonnegra, Florida Atlantic University*
- 10:25 AM** **IV. Florida Keys Water Watch Sponge Restoration Aquaculture (30 min),** *Shelly Krueger, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Monroe County*
- 10:55 AM** **Break (15 min)**
- 11:10 AM** **V. Modeling Water Quality and Phytoplankton Blooms in Florida Bay and the Florida Keys (30 min),** *Dr. Mingshun Jiang, Florida Atlantic University*
- 11:40 AM** **VI. Impacts of Caloosahatchee Discharge and Hurricane Ian on Southwest Florida Shelf Water Quality, Epibenthic Life, and Microbial Communities (30 min),** *Dr. James Douglass, Florida Gulf Coast University*
- 12:10 PM** **Lunch (90 min)**
- 1:40 PM** **VII. Modeling Biscayne Bay Circulation and Microplastic Fate and Transport: Applications for Improving Canal Conditions (30 min),** *Dr. Reinaldo Garcia, Hydronia LLC / Dr. Henry Briceño, Florida International University*

- 2:10 PM** **VIII. Linking Environmental, Ecological, Anthropogenic, and Host-Specific Drivers to Stony Coral Condition on Florida's Coral Reef (45 min)**, *Dr. Brian Walker, Nova Southeastern University*
- 2:55 PM** **Break (15 min)**
- 3:10 PM** **IX. Updates on the Hypothetical Linkages Between Toxigenic Benthic Dinoflagellates, Spinning Fish, and Sawfish Mortalities (60 min)**, *Dr. Michael Parsons, Florida Gulf Coast University / Dr. Alison Robertson, University of South Alabama*
- 4:10 PM** **X. Shallow Injection Well Research Update (30 min)**, *Dr. Rachel Housego, Pennsylvania State University*
- 4:40 PM** **Closing Remarks**
- 4:45PM** **Adjourn**