

Dr. Michael Parsons, College of Arts & Sciences

August 1, 2009 – July 31, 2013



With guidance from the United States Coral Reef Task Force, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission coordinated the formation of the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI). A team of marine resource professionals, scientists, non-governmental organizations and other interested stakeholders developed the SEFCRI local action strategy (LAS) in May 2003, targeting coral reefs from Miami-Dade County through Broward and Palm Beach into Martin County. Prior to the SEFCRI, there was no coordinated public education or management plan proposed for reefs located north of the Florida Keys. The SEFCRI is organized into four Focus Teams, each addressing one of the key threats to local reefs:

- a lack of public awareness and appreciation, resulting in the Awareness and Appreciation Team;
- impacts associated with fishing, diving and other uses, resulting in the Fishing, Diving and Other Uses Team;
- land-based sources of pollution and the Land-Based Sources of Pollution Team; and
- Maritime industry and coastal construction impacts and the Maritime Industry and Coastal Construction Impacts Team.

The SEFCRI LAS is a plan to address causes of coral degradation and provide a roadmap for successful conservation and management. The SEFCRI is intended to be a flexible, living process that evolves in response to the state of the coral reef ecosystem and the progress of implemented projects.

Under the management of the FDEP Coral Reef Conservation Program, the SEFCRI Team is identifying and implementing priority actions needed to reduce key threats to the coral reef resources of the SEFCRI geographical area. The services included in this project are:

1. To support the management needs of the CRCP;
2. To support the state of Florida's obligations as a member of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force and partner of the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program; and
3. To provide continuous support and technical assistance for LAS project research, development and implementation for the SEFCRI Land Based Sources of Pollution, Fishing, Diving & Other Uses, Awareness and Appreciation and Maritime Industry and Coastal Construction Impacts Focus Areas, as well as Reef Injury Prevention and Response.

Florida Gulf Coast University is responsible for the delivery of Awareness and Appreciation Project Coordination; Fishing, Diving and Other Uses Project Coordination; Land Based Sources of Pollution Project Coordination; and Reef Injury Prevention and Response Coordination.