Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary was established in 1990 to protect and preserve spectacular, unique, and nationally significant marine resources. Within the sanctuary is the world’s third largest barrier reef, extensive seagrass beds, mangrove-fringed islands, and more than 6,000 species of marine life. The sanctuary also protects pieces of our nation’s history such as shipwrecks and other archeological treasures.

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is part of the National Marine Sanctuary System, which is a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. National marine sanctuaries are managed for the conservation of their natural and cultural resources, while supporting sustainable recreation, tourism and compatible commercial activities. The network includes a system of 13 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments.

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Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Looking Ahead to FY17

- The sanctuary is developing a Blue Star Fishing Guide recognition program to promote education and stewardship practices in the charter fishing guide community.
- The sanctuary is collaborating on the removal of approximately 30 abandoned/derelict vessels and associated debris in the Marquesas Keys, thereby restoring shorelines and nearshore habitats.
- A Draft Environmental Impact Statement addressing potential zoning updates is in preparation with federal partners and consultation with state partners with anticipated completion in late 2017.

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