Lower Keys Guide Association Draft Zoning Recommendations for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Revised Restoration Blueprint

Provided by:
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In Collaboration With:

Lower Keys Guides Association
&
Bonefish & Tarpon Trust

LOWER KEYS GUIDES ASSOCIATION

Bonefish & Tarpon TRUST

Executive Summary

This document defines the Lower Keys Guides Association's (LKGA) recommendations for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) revised Restoration Blueprint. Bonefish & Tarpon Trust (BTT) met with the LKGA on September 6th 2022, to transcribe LKGA comments about the revised Restoration Blueprint. LKGA provided BTT with a four-page document explaining their support, recommendations, and/or modifications for each zone listed in this document. LKGA also provided BTT with zone expansions for East content Keys and Upper Harbor Key Wildlife Management Area, Marquesas Keys Wildlife Management Area, Barracuda Keys Wildlife Management Area, and Boca Grande Key, Ballast and Man Key Flats, and the Woman Key Wildlife Management Areas hand drawn on a map.

In the September 6th meeting, in addition to mapping LKGA drawn zone expansions, LKGA and BTT discussed mapping two optional alternative variations of the four drawn LKGA zone expansions. These alternatives include, using three-foot water depth contour lines in the areas near or within the LKGA drawn zone to create a zone expansion boundary, and modifying LKGA zone boundaries to create a polygon or boxed boundary. The latter boundary alternative would be a similar zone geometry that FKNMS uses. This document provides maps of the four LKGA recommended zone expansions and the two alternatives for each zone expansion. Last, we include a Lower Keys wide map to illustrate the comprehensive zoning recommendations LKGA supports.

East Content Keys and Upper Harbor Key Wildlife Management Area:

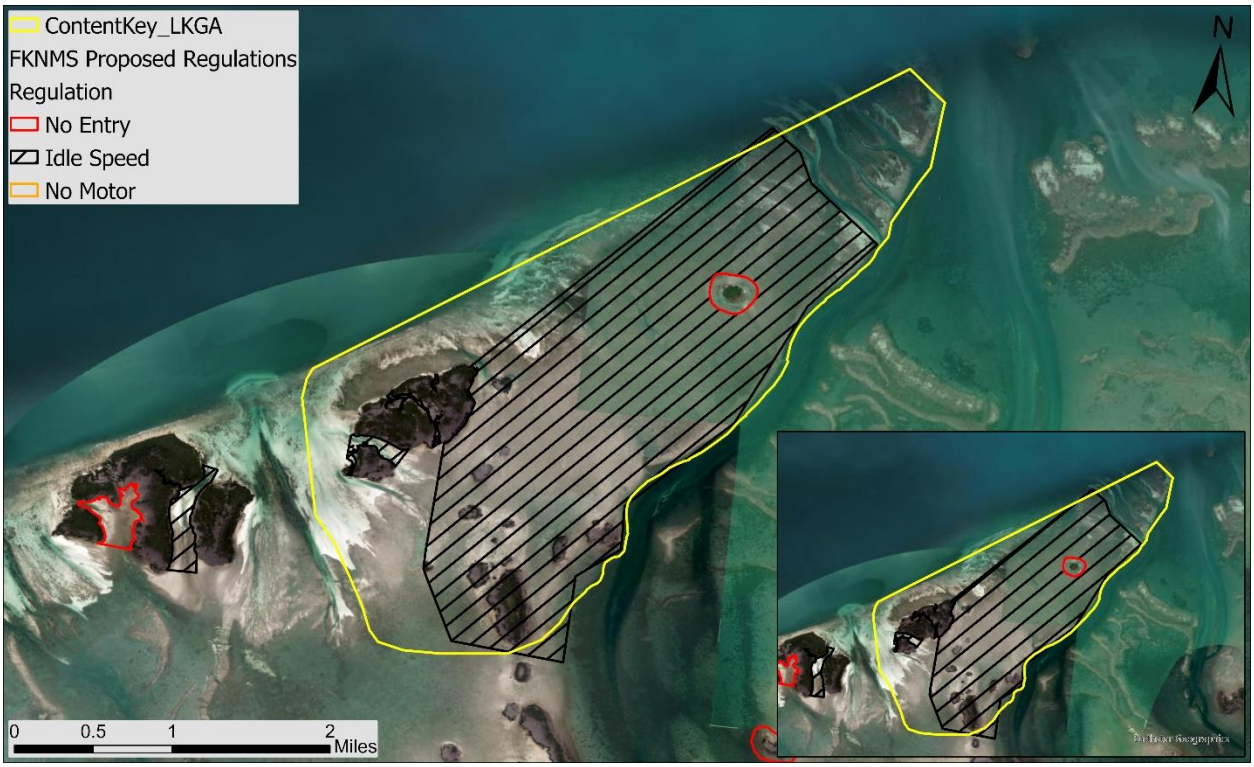
Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary proposed recommendation

Satellite image of Content Keys. Hash marked polygon shows the FKNMS proposed idle speed zone. Red polygons identify FKNMS proposed no entry zones.

East Content Keys and Upper Harbor Key Wildlife Management Area

Lower Keys Guides Association drawn recommendation

LKGA Goal: Modify proposed zoning for East Content to include shallow north boundary habitat, North reef tract to Content Passage.

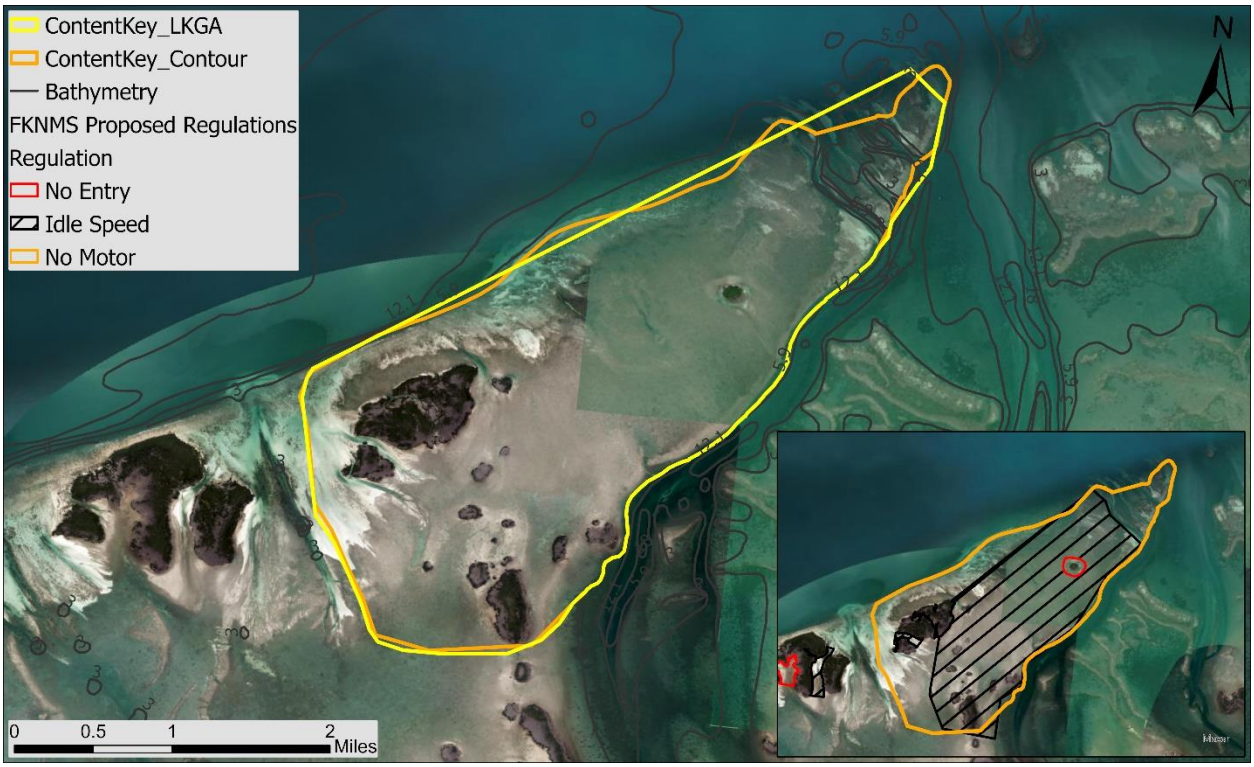


Map shows LKGA drawn idle speed zone recommendation (yellow polygon). The lower right insert shows the FKNMS proposed idle speed zone (**black hashed polygon**) and FKNMS proposed no entry zones (red polygons) with the LKGA drawn zone.

East Content Keys and Upper Harbor Key Wildlife Management Area

Alternative option #1: Modifying LKGA drawn recommendation based on depth contours.

LKGA Goal: Modify proposed zoning for East Content to include shallow north boundary habitat, North reef tract to Content Passage.

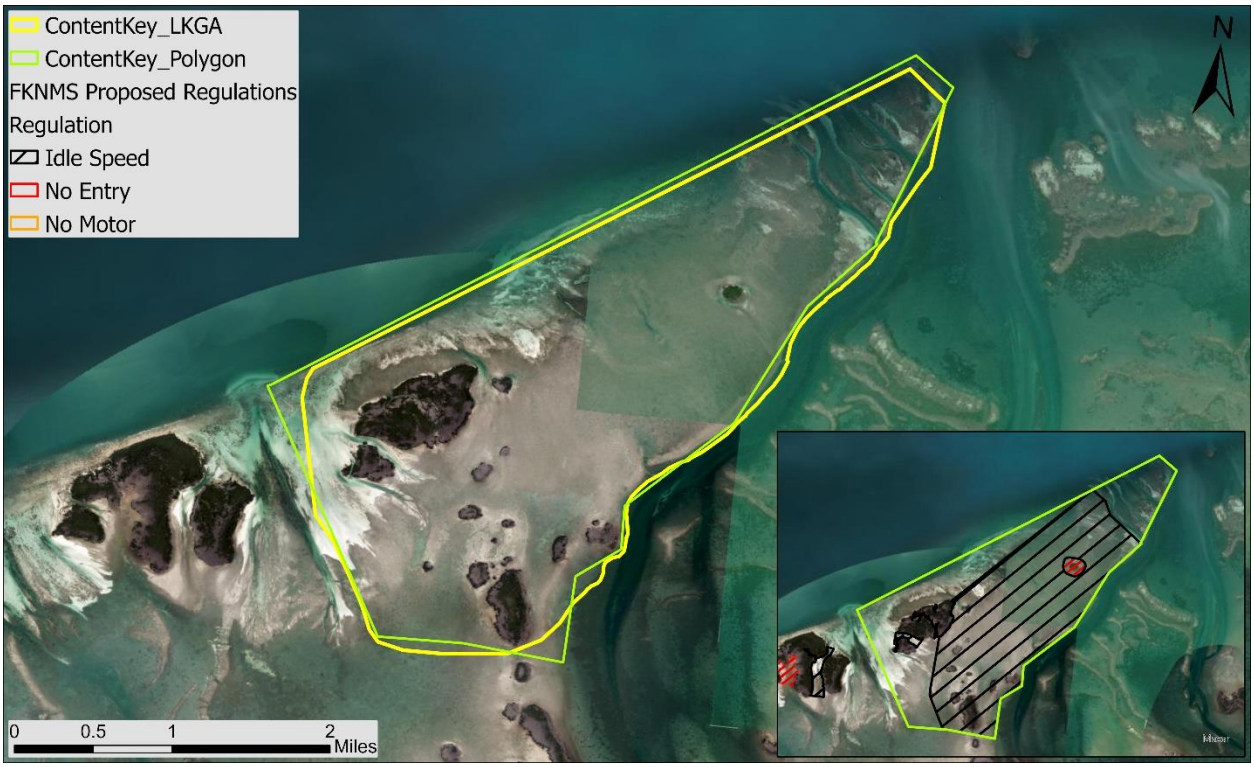


Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is designated by 3ft water depths at mean low tide (orange). Bottom right image shows the depth contour alternative zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

East Content Keys and Upper Harbor Key Wildlife Management Area

Alternative option #2: Modifying LKGA drawn recommendation with a polygon or boxed zone formation.

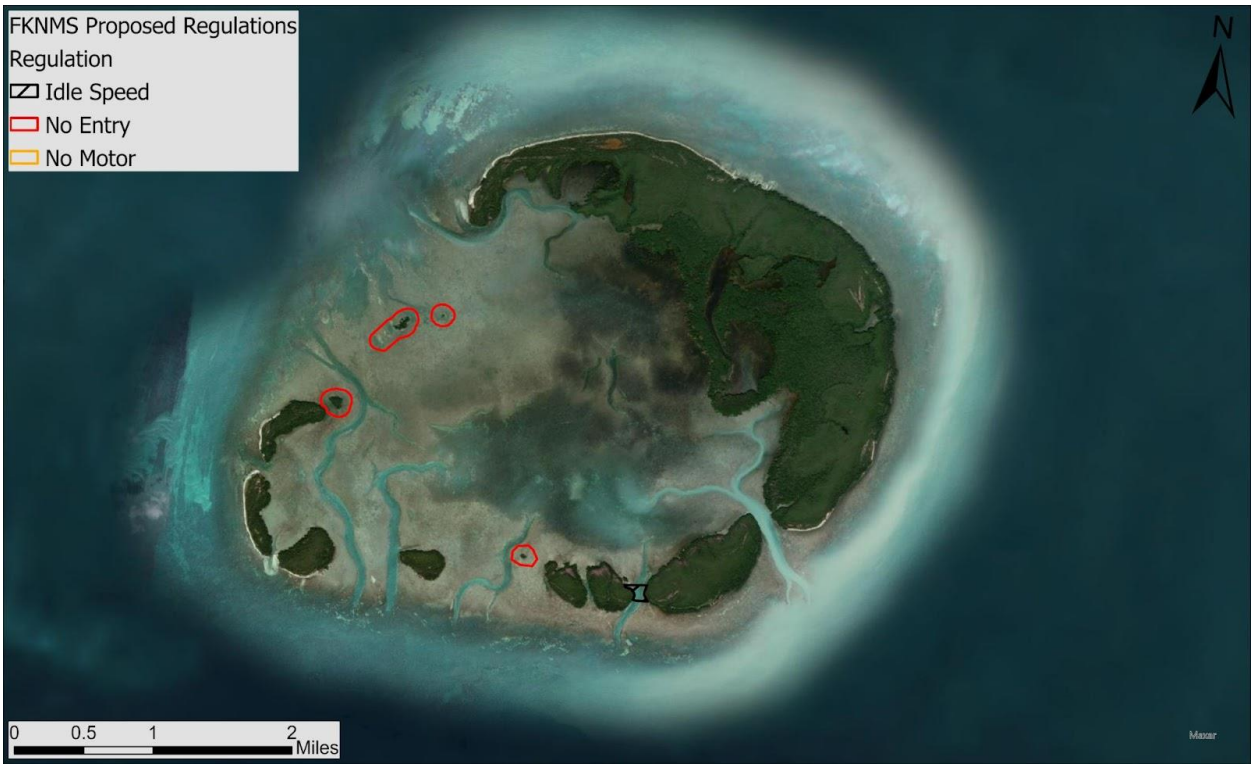
LKGA Goal: Modify proposed zoning for East Content to include shallow north boundary habitat, North reef tract to Content Passage.



Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is modified in a box shape (green). Bottom right image shows the alternative boxed zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

Marquesas Keys Wildlife Management Area

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary proposed recommendation

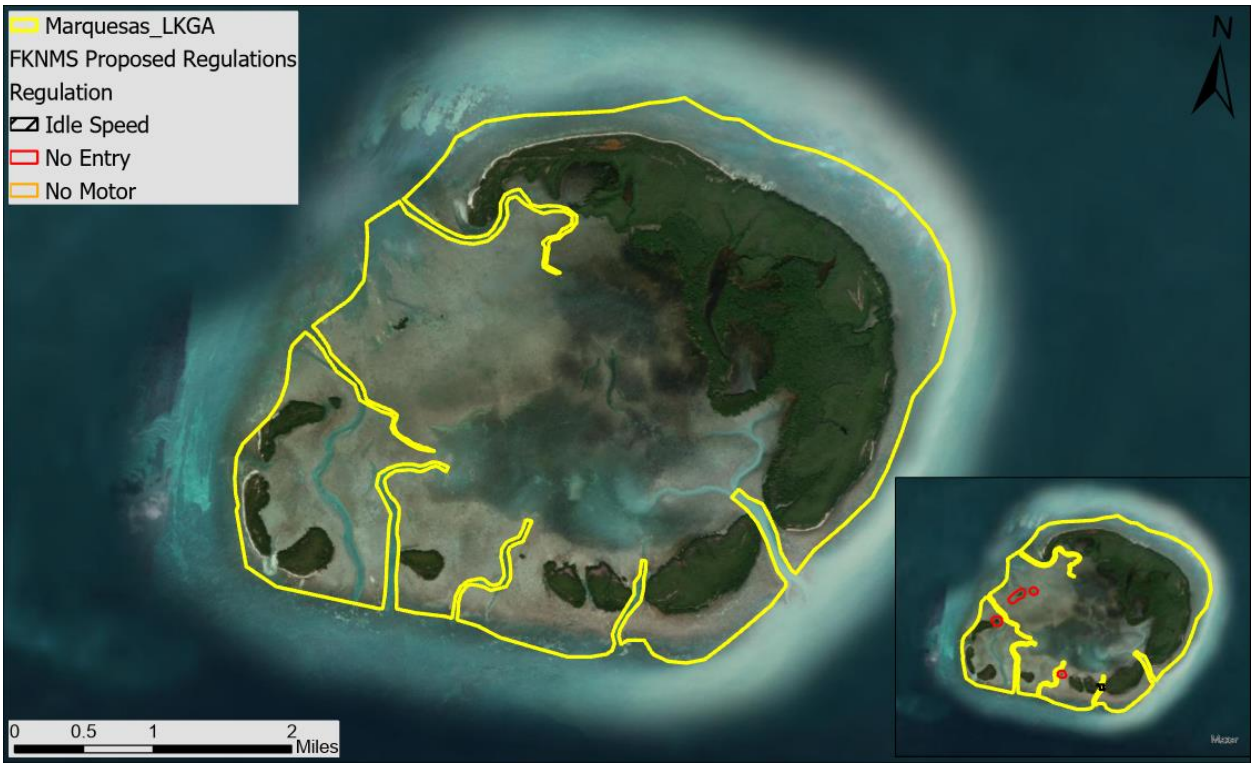


Map of FKNMS proposed zones in the Marquesas. Red polygons identify FKNMS proposed no entry zones.

Marquesas Keys Wildlife Management Area:

Lower Keys Guides Association drawn recommendation

LKGA Goal: Create a new zone that encompasses all the Marquesas atoll seaward to 3’ depth as idle speed zone.



Map shows LKGA drawn idle speed zone recommendation (yellow polygon). The lower right insert shows FKNMS proposed no entry zones (red polygons) with the LKGA drawn zone.

Marquesas Keys Wildlife Management Area:

Alternative option #1: Modifying LKGA drawn recommendation based on depth contours.

LKGA Goal: Create a new zone that encompasses all the Marquesas atoll seaward to 3’ depth as idle speed zone.

Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is designated by 3ft water depths at mean low tide (orange). Bottom right image shows the depth contour alternative zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

Marquesas Keys Wildlife Management Area:

Alternative option #2: Modifying LKGA drawn recommendation with a polygon or boxed zone formation.

LKGA Goal: Create a new zone that encompasses all the Marquesas atoll seaward to 3’ depth as idle speed zone.

Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is modified in a polygon or box shape (green). Bottom right image shows the alternative boxed zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

Marquesas Keys Wildlife Management Area:

Alternative option #3: New modification of the LKGA drawn recommendation with a polygon or boxed zone formation.

LKGA Goal: Create a new zone that encompasses all the Marquesas atoll seaward to 3’ – 6’ depth as idle speed zone. Includes Channels.

Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is modified in a polygon or box shape (purple) that extends out to 6ft in some areas. Alternative 3 does not include channels. Bottom right image shows the alternative boxed zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

Marquesas Keys Wildlife Management Area:

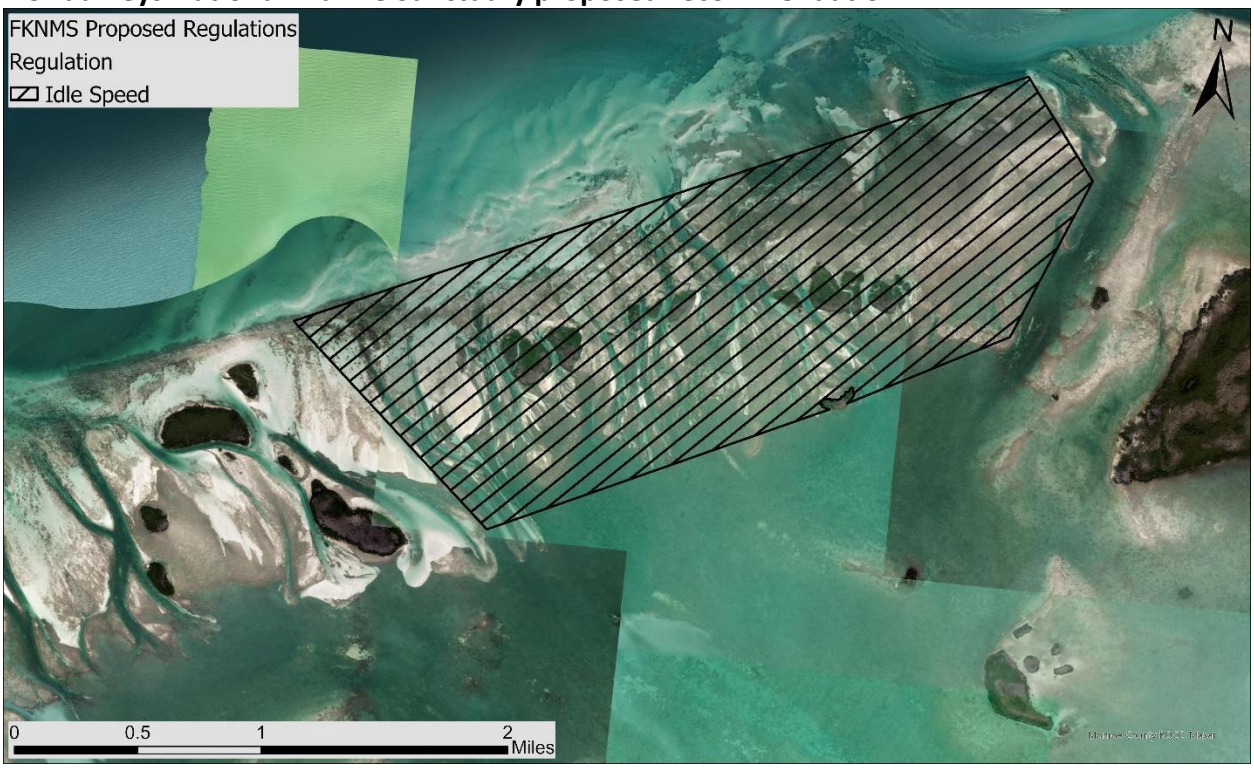
Alternative option #4: New modification of the LKGA drawn recommendation with a polygon or boxed zone formation.

LKGA Goal: Create a new zone that encompasses all the Marquesas atoll seaward to 3’ – 6’ depth as idle speed zone. Includes Channels.

Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is modified in a polygon or box shape (pink) that extends out to 6ft in some areas. Alternative 3 include channels. Bottom right image shows the alternative boxed zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

Barracuda Keys Wildlife Management Area

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary proposed recommendation

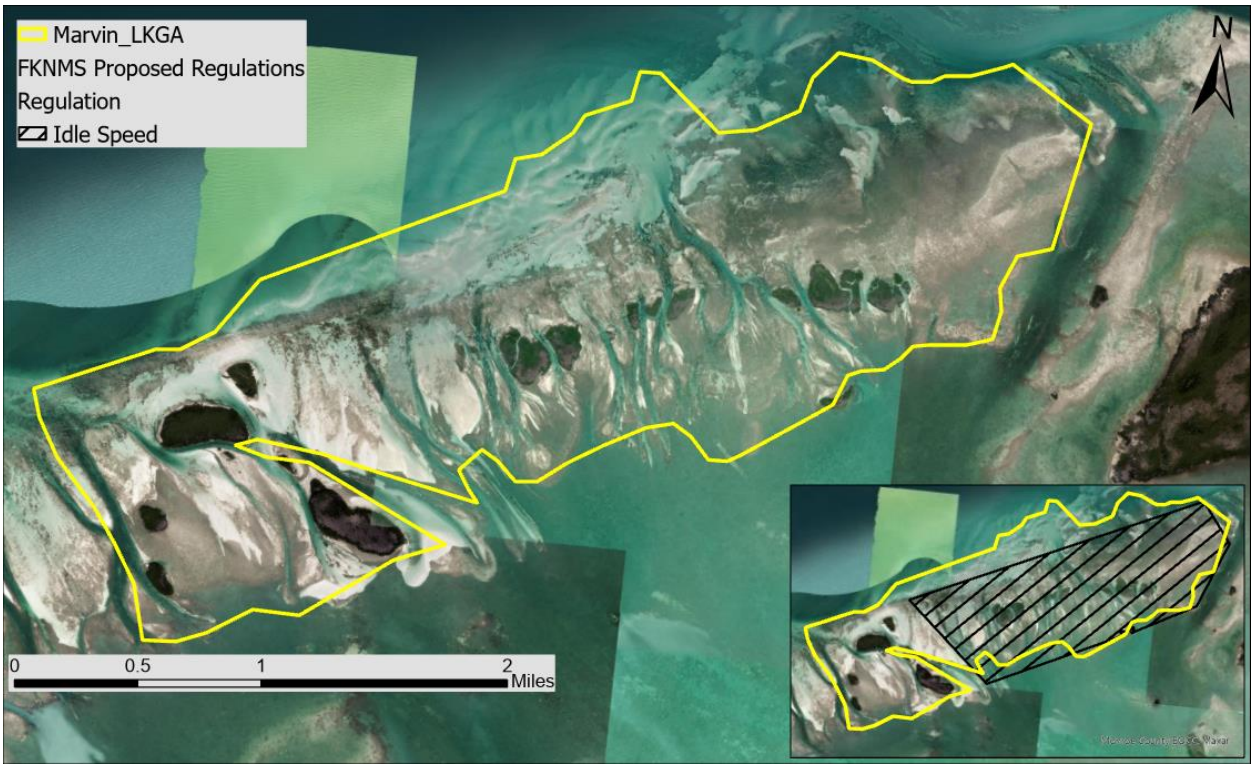


Satellite image of Marvin Keys and Barracuda Keys. **Hashed box** Shows the FKNMS proposed idle regulations.

Barracuda Keys Wildlife Management Area

Lower Keys Guides Association drawn recommendation

LKGA Goal: Recommend idle speed zone. Modify zone to encompass shallow habitat north and west to Marvin Key, while maintaining an access channel to Marvin Key.

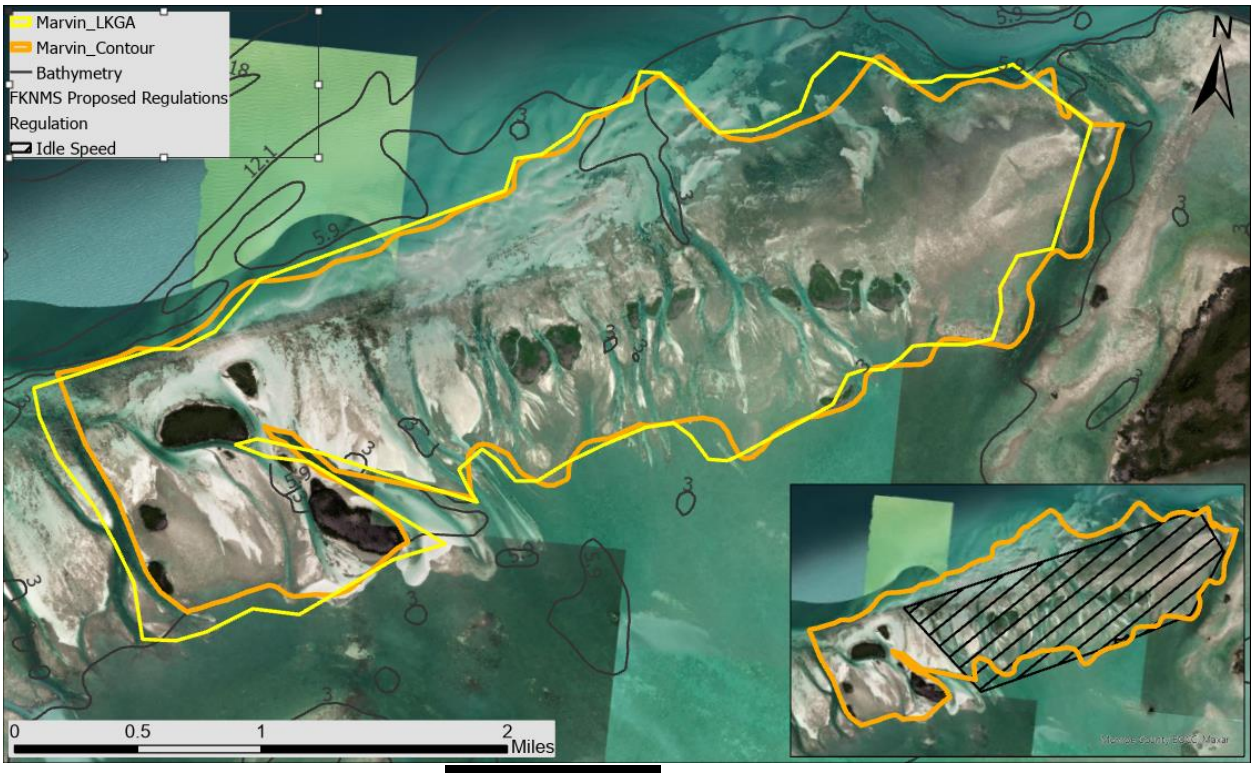


Map shows LKGA drawn idle speed zone recommendation (yellow polygon). The lower right insert shows the FKNMS proposed idle speed zone (**black hashed polygon**) and FKNMS proposed idle speed zone with the LKGA drawn zone.

Barracuda Keys Wildlife Management Area

Alternative option #1: Modifying LKGA drawn recommendation based on depth contours.

LKGA Goal: Recommend idle speed zone. Modify zone to encompass shallow habitat north and west to Marvin Key, while maintaining an access channel to Marvin Key.

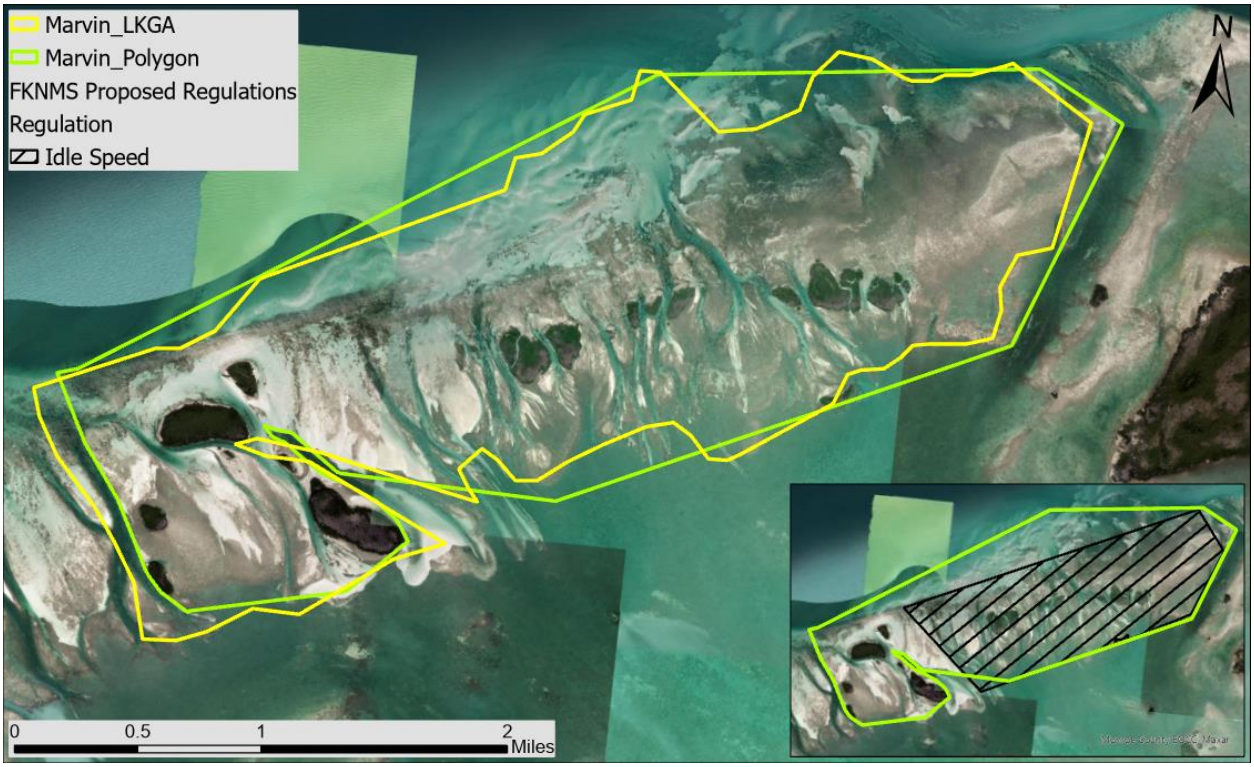


Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is designated by 3ft water depths at mean low tide (orange). Bottom right image shows the depth contour alternative zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

Barracuda Keys Wildlife Management Area

Alternative option #2: Modifying LKGA drawn recommendation with a boxed zone formation.

LKGA Goal: Recommend idle speed zone. Modify zone to encompass shallow habitat north and west to Marvin Key, while maintaining an access channel to Marvin Key.

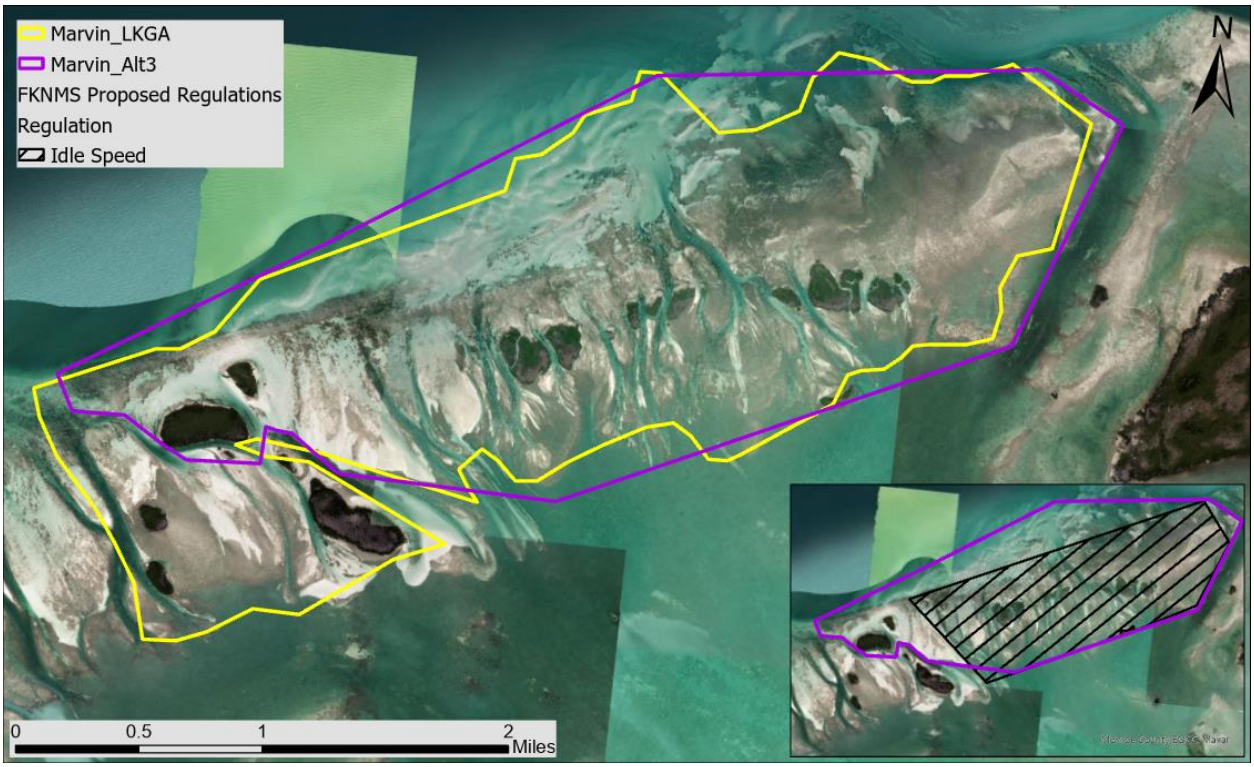


Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is modified in a box shape (**green**). Bottom right image shows the alternative boxed zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

Barracuda Keys Wildlife Management Area

Alternative option #3: Modification of LKGA drawn recommendation with a boxed zone formation.

LKGA Goal: Recommend idle speed zone. Modify zone to encompass shallow habitat north and west to Marvin Key, while maintaining an access channel to Marvin Key.



Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is modified in a box shape (purple). Bottom right image shows the alternative boxed zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

Boca Grande Key, Ballast and Man Key Flats, and the Woman Key Wildlife Management Areas

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary proposed recommendation

Satellite image of the Lakes Passage. **Hash marked polygon** shows the FKNMS proposed idle speed zone. Red polygons identify FKNMS proposed no entry zones, the **orange polygon** identifies a proposed no motor zone, and the red shaded polygon identifies a no anchor zone

Boca Grande Key, Ballast and Man Key Flats, and the Woman Key Wildlife Management Areas

Lower Keys Guides Association drawn recommendation

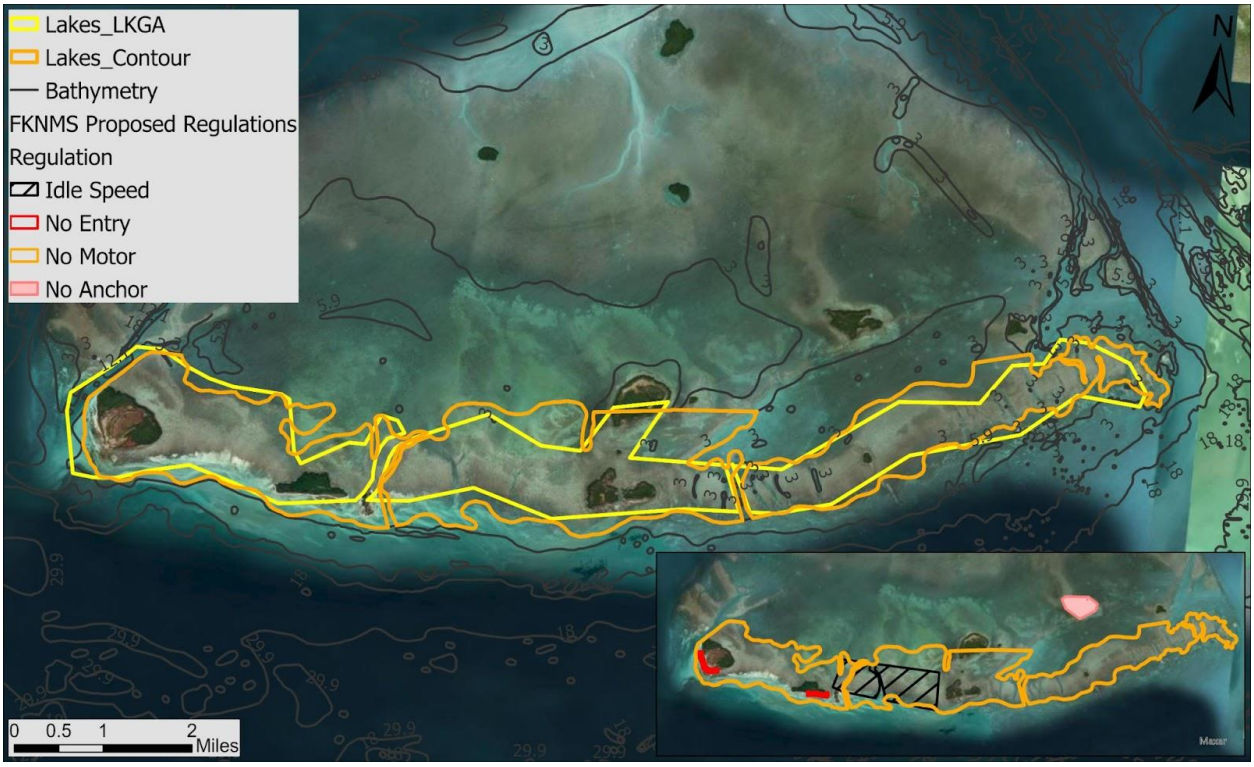
LKGA Goal: Extend proposed idle speed zone east and west to include Boca Grande, and the Tower Flats regions. Include appropriate access channels

Map shows LKGA drawn idle speed zone recommendation (yellow polygon). The lower right insert shows the FKNMS proposed idle speed zone (**black hashed polygon**), FKNMS proposed no entry zones (red polygons), and proposed no anchor zones (filled red polygons) with the LKGA drawn zone.

Boca Grande Key, Ballast and Man Key Flats, and the Woman Key Wildlife Management Areas

Alternative option #1: Modifying LKGA drawn recommendation based on depth contours.

LKGA Goal: Extend proposed idle speed zone east and west to include Boca Grande, and the Tower Flats regions. Include appropriate access channels



Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is designated by 3ft water depths at mean low tide (orange). Bottom right image shows the depth contour alternative zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

Boca Grande Key, Ballast and Man Key Flats, and the Woman Key Wildlife Management Areas

Alternative option #2: Modifying LKGA drawn recommendation with a boxed zone formation.

LKGA Goal: Extend proposed idle speed zone east and west to include Boca Grande, and the Tower Flats regions. Include appropriate access channels

Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is modified in a polygon or box shape (green). Bottom right image shows the alternative boxed zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

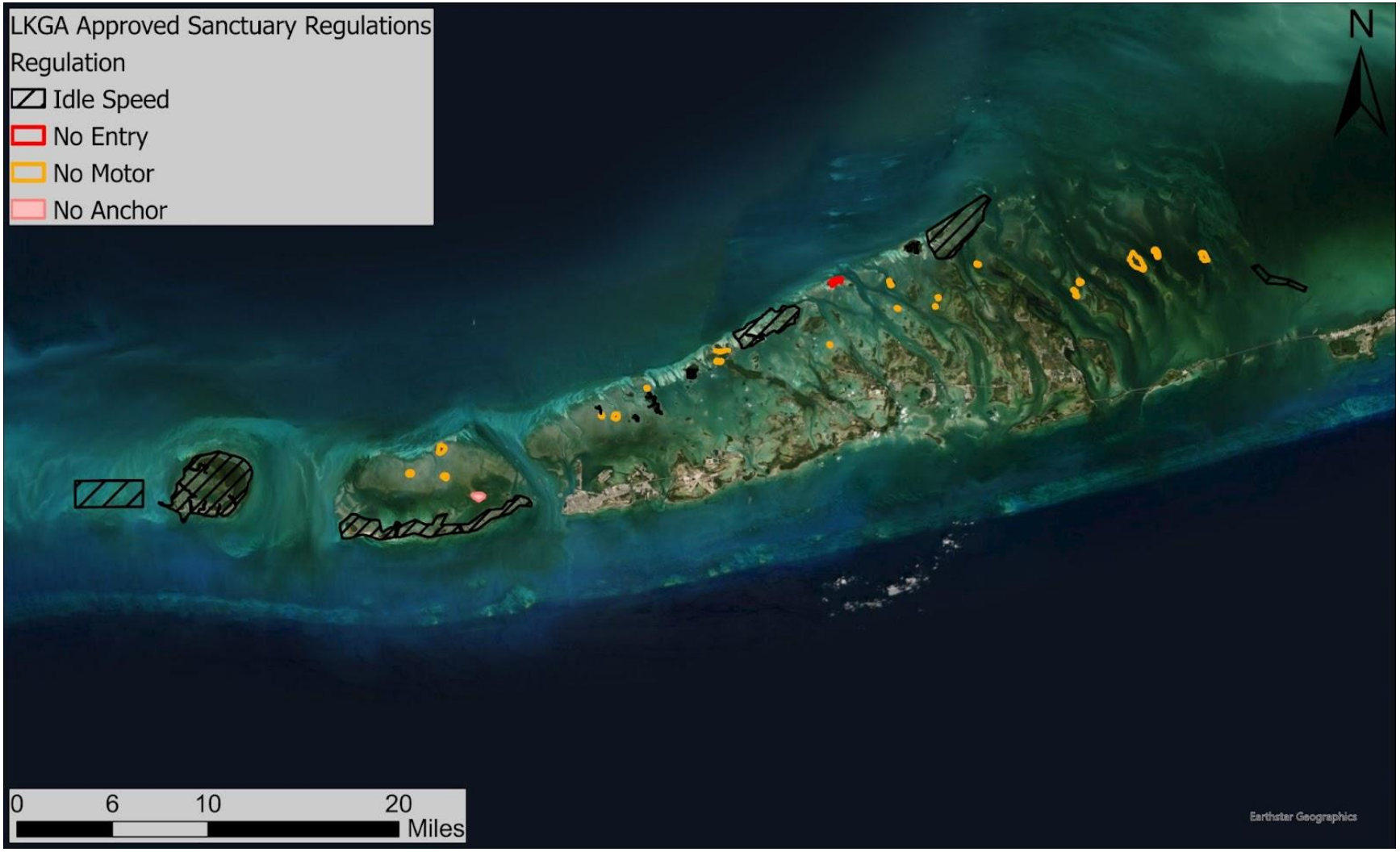
Boca Grande Key, Ballast and Man Key Flats, and the Woman Key Wildlife Management Areas

Alternative option #3: Modifying LKGA drawn recommendation with a boxed zone formation. Includes one channel.

LKGA Goal: Extend proposed idle speed zone east and west to include Boca Grande, and the Tower Flats regions. Include appropriate access channels

Map shows the LKGA drawn zone (yellow polygon), and an alternative boundary that is modified in a polygon or box shape (purple). This alternative includes one channel opposed to the two channels shown in Alternative 2. Bottom right image shows the alternative boxed zone compared to the FKNMS zone.

Map of all LKGA recommended marine zones



Map above provides an overview of the Lower Keys Guide Association's recommendations for zone modifications and approved zones for the FKNMS Restoration Blueprint. Overview includes the support for the following:

- Archer Key Wildlife Management Area
- Bay Keys Wildlife Management Area
- Big Mullet Key Wildlife Management Area
- Cayo Agua Keys Wildlife Management Area
- East Bahia Honda Key Wildlife Management Area
- Zone elimination at Little Crane Key
- Northeast Tarpon Belly Keys Wildlife Management
- Marquesas Keys Turtle Wildlife Management Area
- Mud Keys Wildlife Management Area
- Red Bay Bank Wildlife Management Area
- Sawyer Key Wildlife Management Area
- West Bahia Honda Key Wildlife Management Area

Overview includes the recommendation of the following No Entry Zones to be modified to No Motor Zones:

- Cottrell Key Wildlife Management Area
- East Harbor Key Wildlife Management Area
- Happy Jack Key Wildlife Management Area
- Horseshoe Keys Wildlife Management Area
- Howe Key Mangrove Wildlife Management Area
- Little Mullet Key Wildlife Management Area
- Little Pine Key Mangrove Wildlife Management Area
- Snipe Keys Wildlife Management Area
- Torch Key Mangroves Wildlife Management Area
- Water Key Mangroves Wildlife Management Area

Overview includes the following modifications:

- Recommendation of an Idle Speed Zone on the western side of the Crane Key Wildlife Management Area and a No Motor Zone on the remaining portions.
- Recommendation of a zone expansion of the East Content Keys and Upper Harbor Keys Flats Wildlife Management Area to encompass the northern shallow water habitat as an Idle Speed Zone. See Figure 1 (e).
- Recommendation of a zone expansion of the Marquesas Keys Wildlife Management Area to encompass all of the Marquesas atoll seaward to 3' depth as an Idle Speed Zone. See Figure 2 (e).

- Recommendation of an Idle Speed zone for the Barracuda Keys Wildlife Management Area and zone expansion to encompass the tidal flat south of Marvin Key WMA and the shallow water habitat to the north. See Figure 3 (e).
- Recommendation of a zone expansion of the Ballast and Man Key Flats Wildlife Management Area, the Boca Grande Key Wildlife Management Area, and the Woman Key Wildlife Management Area to span from Boca Grande Key Wildlife Management Area to west of Crawfish Key following a 3' depth threshold as an Idle Speed Zone. The zone would encompass the northern tip of Man Key Island, the Eastern tip of Woman Key and the southern tip of Barracouta Key, not including two channels for regular use. See Figure 4 (e).

More information required for the following zones:

- Eastern Dry Rocks Sanctuary Preservation Area (No opinion)
- Eastern Sambo Conservation Area (No opinion)
- Great White Heron National Wildlife Refuge (Questions)
- Key West National Wildlife Refuge (Questions)
- Lower Harbor Keys Wildlife Management Area (LKGA suggest to "extend idle speed boundaries to encompass channel at northern range of the zone and seagrass habitat surrounding proposed no access island" but provided no drawing or further explanation of the zone)
- Pelican Shoal Wildlife Management Area (No opinion)
- Rock Key Sanctuary Preservation Area (Cannot find)
- Sand Key Nursery Restoration Area (No opinion)
- Sand Key Sanctuary Preservation Area (No opinion)
- West Content Keys Wildlife Management Area (LKGA suggests to "expand boundary westward" but provided no drawing or further explanation of the zone)
- Western Dry Rocks Wildlife Management Area (No opinion)
- Western Sambo Conservation Area (No opinion)