

Snapper Grouper Committee Meeting (Attachment 1) Oculina Outreach Update

This overview provides highlights of recent outreach activities associated with the Oculina Bank Experimental Closed Area as well as the HAPC and deepwater corals.

New Film Available - *Fragile Forests of the Deep* by George Sibley

Gale Force Films Productions and independent film maker George Sibley recently released a documentary film about the Oculina Bank. George accompanied researchers on the R/V *Liberty Star* during a research and monitoring cruise to the Oculina Bank and uses his experiences on the cruise to highlight the importance of the deepwater corals, research and monitoring efforts, management, and the importance of law enforcement in protecting the area. The DVD film 30 minute film includes interviews with researcher John Reed, Senior Scientist with Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, Dr. Grant Gilmore and his work with acoustical monitoring, and Special Agent Richard Chesler with NOAA OLE.

Funded in part by a grant from NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program, the DVD is currently available through the CRCP office. Council staff will assist with distribution as time allows. **Note:** Copies of the DVD will be available for Council members at the December meeting. Below is a copy of the film's promotional information provided by George Sibley:

DOCUMENTARY FILM ABOUT OCULINA CORAL REEFS NOW AVAILABLE

The Oculina Banks are a series of deep water coral reefs 30 miles off the central Florida coast. Only discovered in 1975, there are no other reefs like them on earth. They lie about 300 feet below the ocean's surface, on the edge of the continental shelf, and provide essential habitat for large numbers of fish and invertebrates, including commercially important species like grouper, snapper, and rock shrimp. Now you can see for yourself what these fascinating communities are like in a new documentary film by George Sibley that was made possible in part by a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration through its Coral Reef Habitat Program. The half-hour film is available on a DVD which also includes Bonus Features where you can "Meet the Crew" of a recent Oculina research cruise and "Take a Dive" using a Remotely Operated Vehicle.

Continued Distribution of *Revealing the Deep* DVD

The response to publicity regarding the availability of the DVD *Revealing the Deep* in the Summer 2008 issue of the South Atlantic Update Newsletter has been positive, with over 30 individual requests for copies from mid-September through the end of October. Copies of the DVD have been requested by the International Game Fish Association for their E.K. Harry Library of Fishes at the IGFA Fishing Hall of Fame in Dania Beach (the DVD is also listed in their bi-monthly newsletter as a resource), the Marine Extension Program in Southwest Florida, Manatee County School District, an Environmental Educator with Simply Green Solutions, Inc., and the 100 Fathom Fishing Club in Orlando. While the majority of requests have been from Florida, copies have been requested from as far away as Ft. Collins, CO, Tucson, AZ, and South Pittsburg, TN.

Comments received regarding the DVD include:

"THANKS for the DVD!! FABULOUS!

I've been watching and showing the DVD you sent me on 'Revealing the Deep' using DVD players at home and at friend's homes. Every time I view it, I learn and understand things a little better."

Tom Murray, Pooler, GA

"Thank you again for sending the Revealing the Deep DVD, which I and several friends enjoyed. I gave my copy of the DVD to a friend so that he could share it with his friends. I would appreciate it if you would mail another copy of that DVD for me because I have other friends who are interested in better understanding deepwater ecosystems."

Dr. Richard Hammer, CSA International Inc, Jupiter, FL

"Please send me a copy of the HD version. I'm an avid fisherman (charter captain) and am very interested in this topic. My wife is an elementary school teacher here in Swansboro, NC and when I am finished watching it she will share it with her students as she is the Science lead for her school." Curtis A. Morris