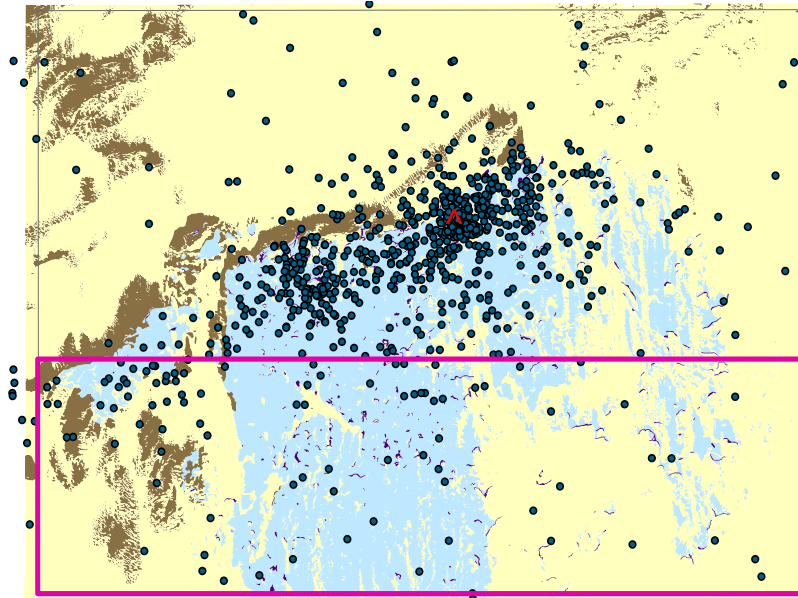


**GRAY'S REEF NMS
RESEARCH AREA CONCEPT – Update for
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
December 2008**

NOAA Gray's Reef NMS intends to consider the following for inclusion in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the research area concept:

1. Boundary option #6 (Southern Option) as the preferred boundary alternative.



2. Boundary options #1 (Optimal Scientific), #2 (Minimal User Displacement), #3 (Compromise) and "no action" as other alternatives to be considered and analyzed, but not preferred.
3. Boundary options #4 and #5 as alternatives considered but eliminated from further analysis due to insufficient ledge habitat.
4. Boundary Options #6, #1, #2, #3 would be considered and analyzed with the following terms of closure:
 - Prohibit all fishing at all times based on issues of enforceability and increased difficulty with voluntary compliance, and because of the potential impacts to the integrity of the research area;
 - Transit through the research area be allowed with no stopping; all fishing gear must be stowed and unavailable for use.
 - Recreational diving (two alternatives considered): a) recreational diving allowed only by permit and under the auspices of NOAA and/or GRNMS; and b) no recreational diving allowed.

- Boundaries be marked by line-of-sight buoys (approximately every 2 miles) around the research area; and that corner buoys also be deployed and maintained at the remaining unmarked corners of the full sanctuary.
5. A scientific advisory group would be established as a working group of the Sanctuary Advisory Council to counsel GRNMS on the types of studies to be conducted in the research area (e.g., manipulative experiments, long-term monitoring), to assist GRNMS in evaluating the suitability of proposals and requests to conduct scientific studies within the research area, and to help GRNMS develop performance criteria for long term evaluation of the benefits of the research area.
 6. The research area would not be conditioned by any limit on the number of years of closure, but would be evaluated or reviewed and may be subject to change each time the Gray's Reef NMS Management Plan is reviewed.
 7. GRNMS would, in addition to the 5-year management plan review, conduct an annual review of usage and performance criteria of the research area. A report of the findings would be made available to all interested parties.