

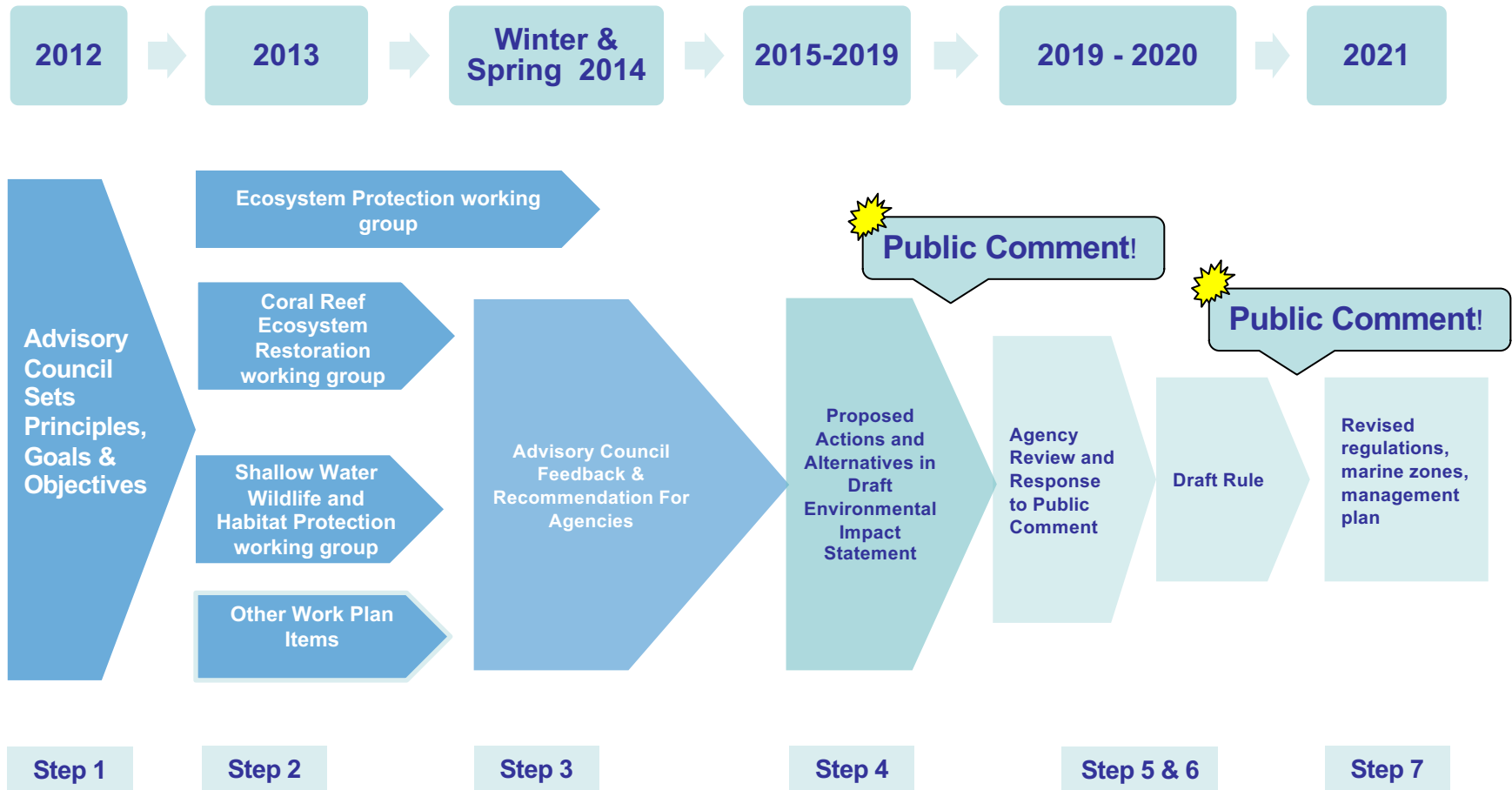


Restoration Blueprint

Regional Fishery Management Council Consultation

Public Engagement & Public Comment Summary

Marine Zoning & Regulatory Review Time-Line



The National Marine Sanctuaries Act – Procedures for Designation and Implementation

NMSA Section 304(a)(5) – Fishing Regulations

- * Provide appropriate Regional FMC opportunity to prepare draft regulations for fishing
 - * Council may draft regulations or determine regulations are not necessary
 - * Council action must fulfill NMSA purposes and policies and goals and objectives of designation
 - * Use national standards of Magnuson-Stevens Act as guidance
 - * If Council declines, determination is rejected or, fails to act in timely manner, Secretary shall prepare fishing regulations
 - * Cooperate with other fishery management authorities
-

Fishery Management Council and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Sessions

Date	Meeting Type	Engagement opportunity	Location
September 16	GMFMC Coral SSC, Coral AP, Shrimp AP	Presentation, Q&A, Discussion	Tampa, FL
October 2	GMFMC Reef Fish AP	Presentation, Q&A, Discussion	Tampa, FL
October 2	FWC Commission Meeting	Presentation, Q&A	Cape Canaveral, FL
October 10	SAFMC Snapper Grouper AP	Presentation, Q&A, Discussion	Webinar
October 21	GMFMC Meeting	Presentation, Q&A	Galveston, TX
October 22	SAFMC Ecosystem Habitat Protection AP	Presentation, Q&A, Discussion	St. Petersburg, FL
October 29	SAFMC Shrimp, Coral, Dolphin/Wahoo, and Mackerel/Cobia APs	Presentation, Q&A, Discussion	Webinar
November 13	Joint GMFMC & SAFMC Spiny Lobster AP	Presentation, Q&A, Discussion	Webinar
December 5	SAFMC Meeting	Presentation, Q&A	Wilmington, NC
December 12	FWC Commission Meeting	FWC staff presentation and discussion, Public Comment likely	Panama City
January 9	GMFMC Standing SSC	Presentation, Q&A	Webinar
January 27	GMFMC Meeting	Discussion/recommendation	New Orleans, LA
February 19-20	FWC Commission Meeting	Discussion/recommendation	Tallahassee, FL
March 2	SAFMC Meeting	Discussion/recommendation	Jekyll Island, GA

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

- Completed consultation at their January 30, 2020 meeting.
- Through council discussion and direction, council Chair will draft and submit a letter to include the range of issues discussed by the full council including:
 - Boundary proposal
 - Specific marine zone proposals in Gulf Council jurisdiction
 - Baitfishing proposal

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

- Discussion and direction expected at March 2 full council meeting

Public Comment Totals and Distribution

- Total Individual Comment Records Submitted: **997**
- Representing over **31,800** total comments due to sign-on comments and 1 record including several comments

Meeting & Date	Written	Oral
Key West – September 23	77	NA
Marathon – September 30	12	NA
Key Largo – October 7	13	NA
Miami – October 28	NA	2
Ft. Myers – November 4	1	6
Key West – October 15	13	50
Marathon – November 6	3	23
Islamorada – December 10	11	40
Mailed in	32	

Organizations Represented

- State and Federal Agency
- Local municipalities
- Homeowners Associations
- Fishing Organizations
- Diving Organizations
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Trade Organizations
- Scientists / Permit Holders
- Schools – Universities, Grade Schools, etc.
- Local & National Petitions / Sign-On Letters

General Comments

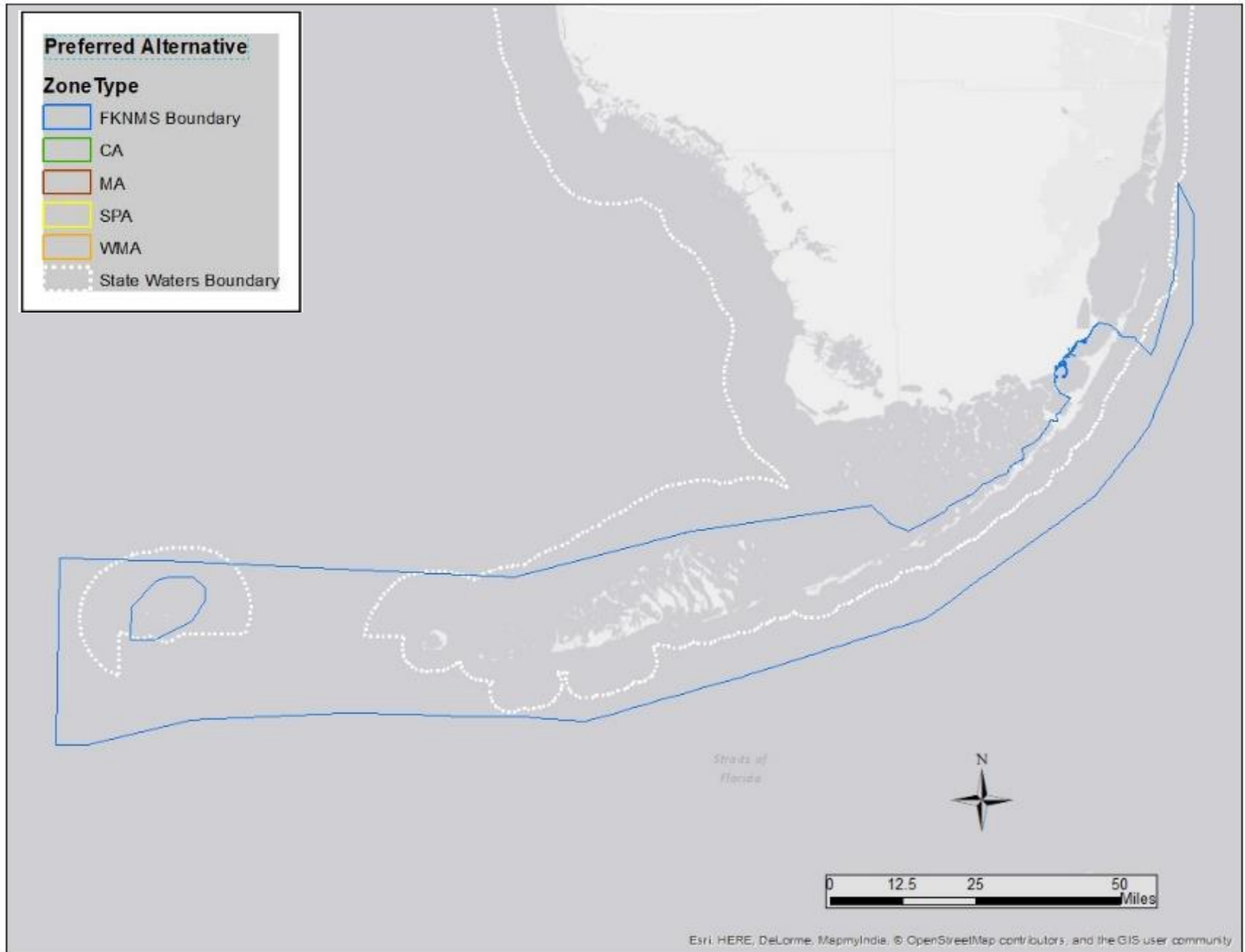
- **In Support –**

- Generally in support of the need to take action, note Alternative 3 or Alternative 4 at a minimum
- Recognize the need for additional action to protect and maintain the Florida Keys ecosystem
- If submitted general statement of support usually included support for boundary expansion to include Pulley Ridge

- **In Opposition –**

- Generally in opposition of any action (implied related to any additional spatial closures or restrictions)
- Generally also included statements related to the need to address water quality, education, and enforcement
- Some identified the FMCs and FWC and their role with regulating fishing activity

Sanctuary Boundary – Preferred Alternative



Boundary Proposal Comments

Few comments directly targeted at sanctuary boundary proposals; most were part of a more general comment

- **In Support –**

- Pulley Ridge: protect unique ecological features; possible resilient reefs; source populations for Florida Keys
- Area to Be Avoided: additional protections for deep reef area; possible historical resources in this proposed boundary expansion area
- Tortugas Region: additional protections for habitats, important area for various marine and avian species

- **In Opposition –**

- Pulley Ridge: already protected through GMFMC HAPC; sanctuary protections not justified; enforcement challenges
- Area to Be Avoided and Tortugas Region: not needed; overreach

Sanctuary-Wide Regulations

Relevant for SAFMC Consultation

- **Fish Feeding**

- General support for additional protections to align with state, public safety, animal behavior
- General opposition due to impact to business and economics
- General opposition due to public engagement and education opportunities

Marine Zone Regulation Comments

Relevant for SAFMC Consultation

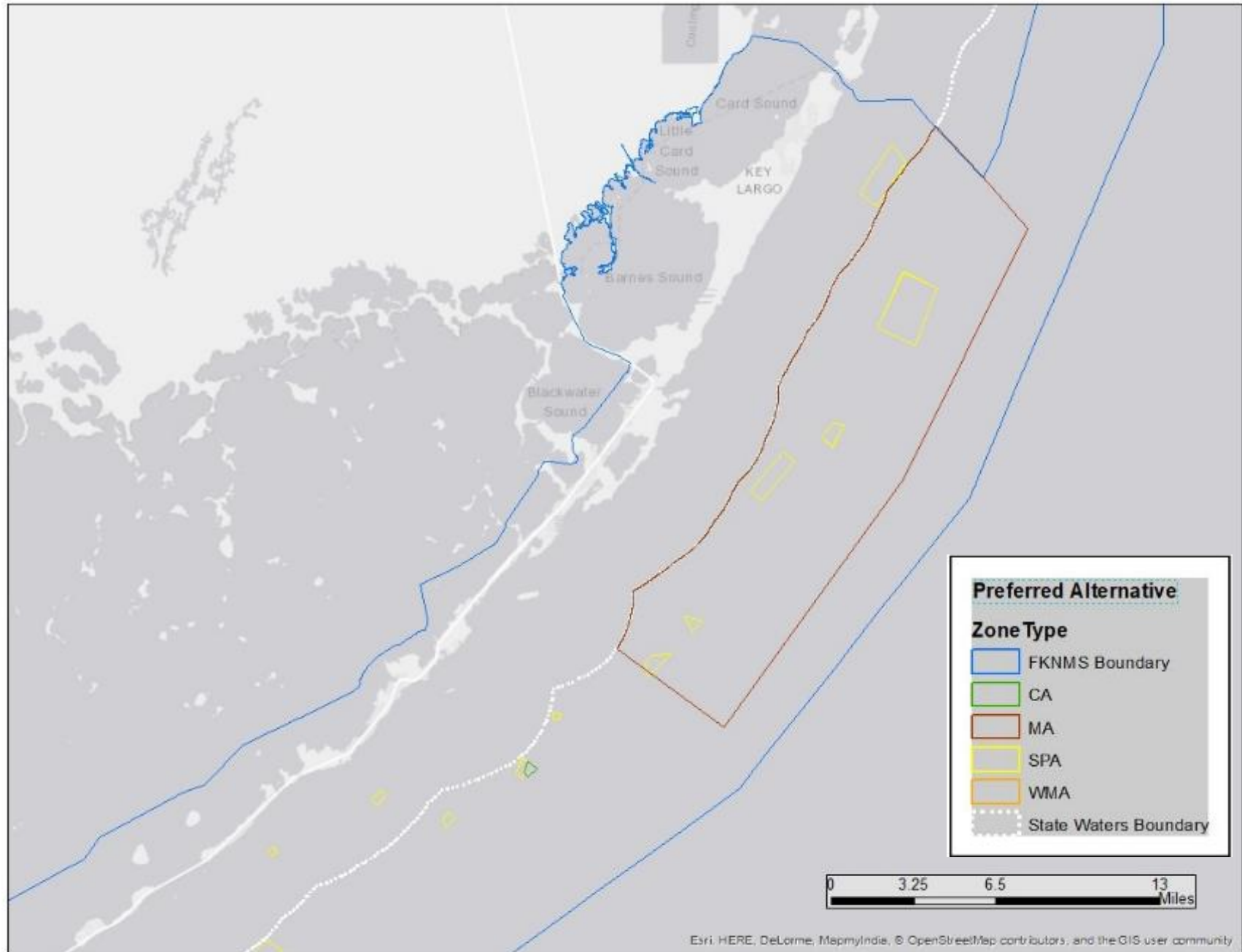
- **Eliminating Bait fishing permits in SPAs**
 - Not many comments specific to this issue however
 - Support for consistency of regulations and clarity for public
 - General opposition, particularly for Lampara fishery due to low number of permits, reporting requirement, and low impact to habitat
- **Eliminating Catch and Release by Trolling in 4 SPAs**
 - Not many comments specific to this issue however
 - Support for consistency of regulations and clarity for public
 - General opposition to loss of access

Marine Zones for SAFMC Consultation

Relevant for SAFMC Consultation

- **Sanctuary Preservation Areas**
 - Manage activities to separate conflicting use and protect habitats
 - Regulations: prohibit discharging, fishing, touching or anchoring on coral
- **Ecological Reserves/Conservation Areas & Special Use Areas**
 - Most protective zone type – protect range of habitats, facilitate research
 - Regulations: transit only (without a valid sanctuary permit)
- **Existing Management Areas**
 - In place when FKNMS was established (Key Largo, Looe Key, National Wildlife Refuges)
 - Regulations: vary per zone; fishing restrictions in Key Largo and Looe Key prohibit spearfishing, marine life collection, and certain fishing gear

Marine Zones – Preferred Alternative Upper Keys

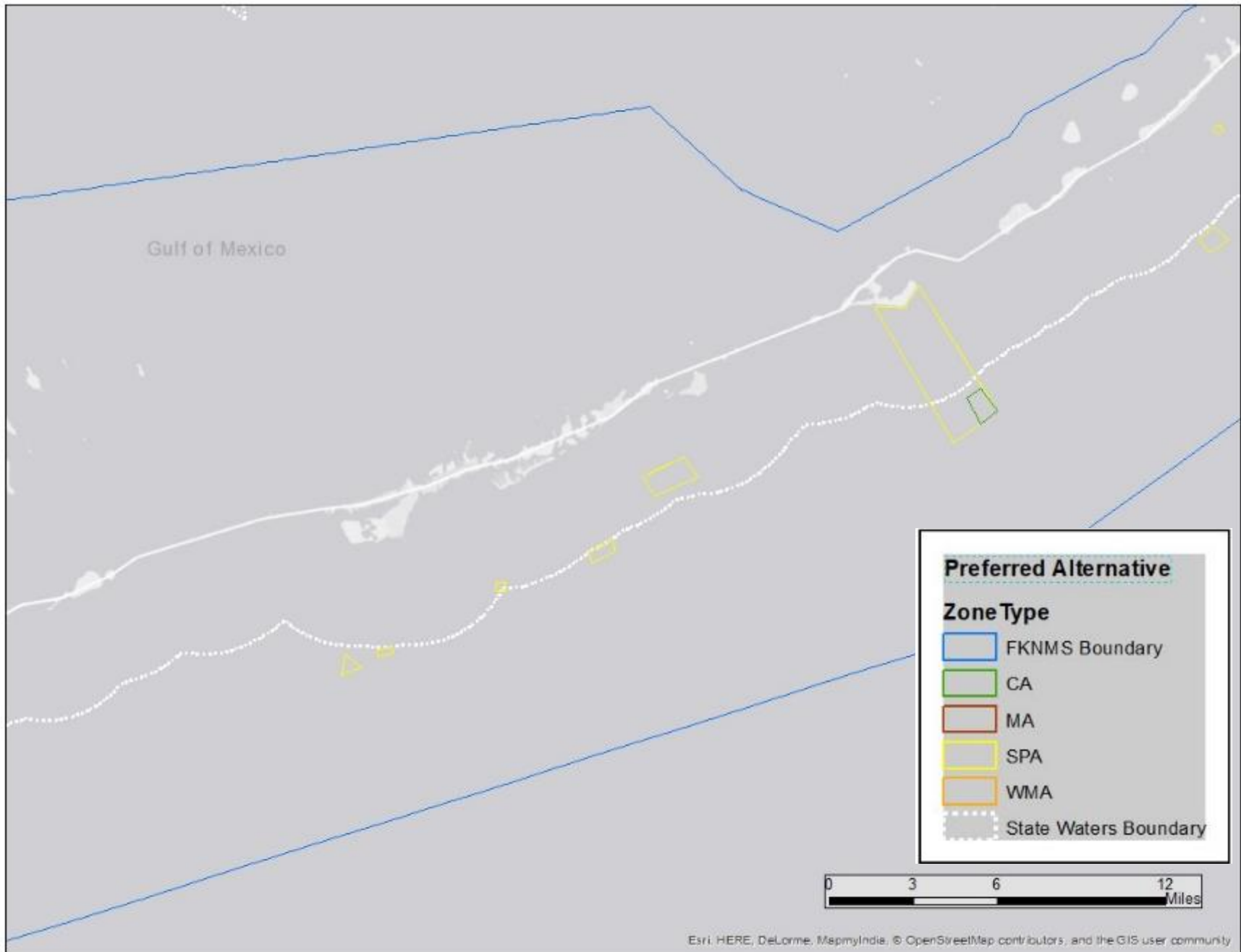


Marine Zone Comments – Upper Keys

Zones selected due to number of individual comments received and relevance for SAFMC Consultation

- **Carysfort**
 - Need to protect deep reefs, historic spawning aggregation site, and coral nursery and restoration sites
 - Mix of support and opposition for a large shoreline to deep reef protected area in this region at this location
- **Turtle Rocks** (state waters)
 - Support for protecting in-shore patch reefs for additional habitat protections, ESA coral, and demonstrated resilient reef areas
 - Support for and proposed expansion of the Turtle Rocks area to encompass a known historical resource site

Marine Zones – Preferred Alternative Middle Keys

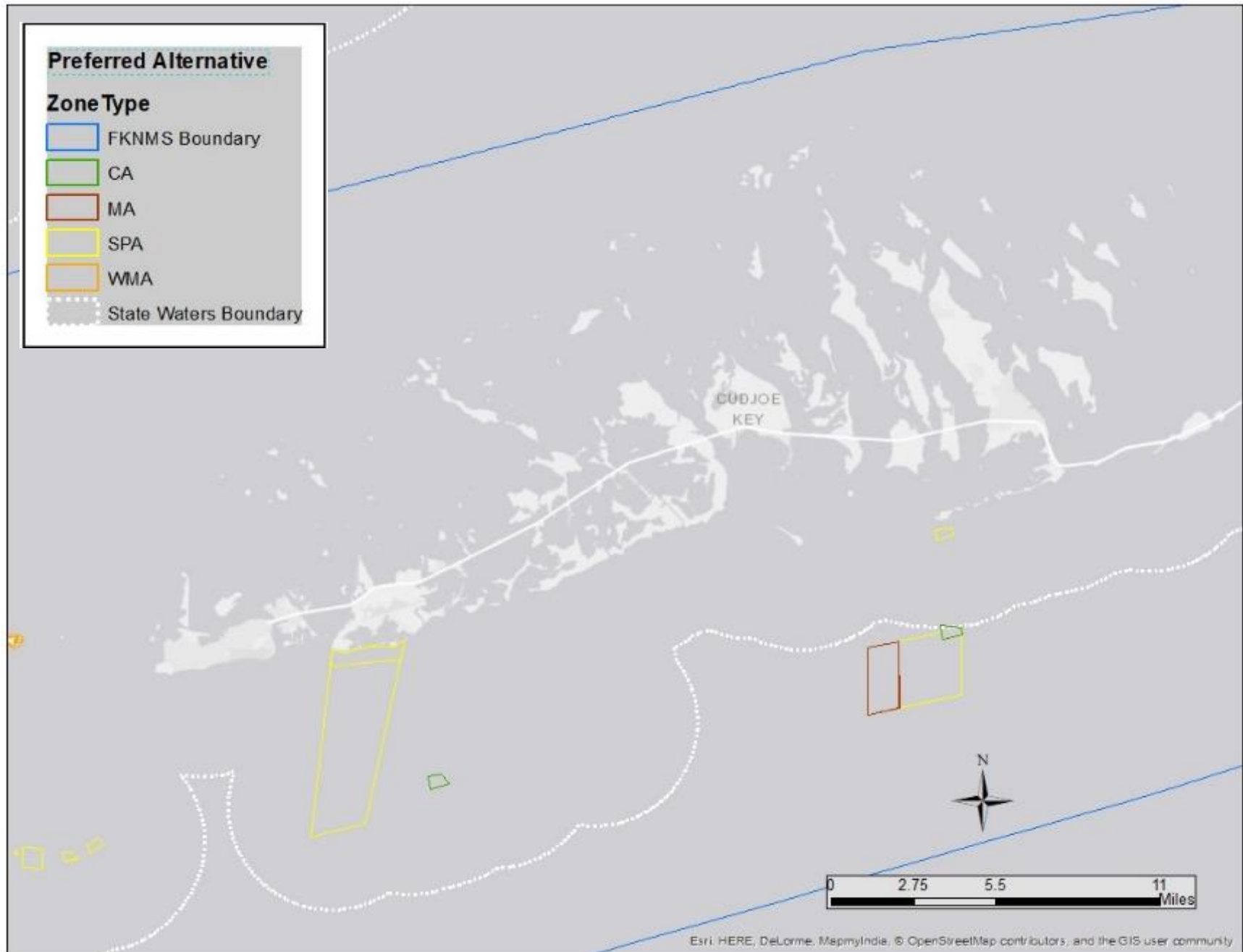


Marine Zone Comments – Middle Keys

Zones selected due to number of individual comments received and relevance for SAFMC Consultation

- **Turtle Shoals** (state waters)
 - Support for protecting in-shore patch reefs for additional habitat protections, ESA coral, and demonstrated resilient reef areas
- **Long Key Tennessee Reef**
 - General opposition to creating a shoreline to deep reef SPA at this site due to impacts to:
 - Loss to local access, use, and economic value/opportunity
 - Near shore use by flats fisherman; proposal for near shore catch and release area
 - Use of area by lobster fishermen
 - Mixed habitat that may not be highest quality for zoning
 - General support for the need to protect large contiguous habitats
 - Value of this site for habitats and species
 - Other areas in middle keys were proposed

Marine Zones – Preferred Alternative Lower Keys

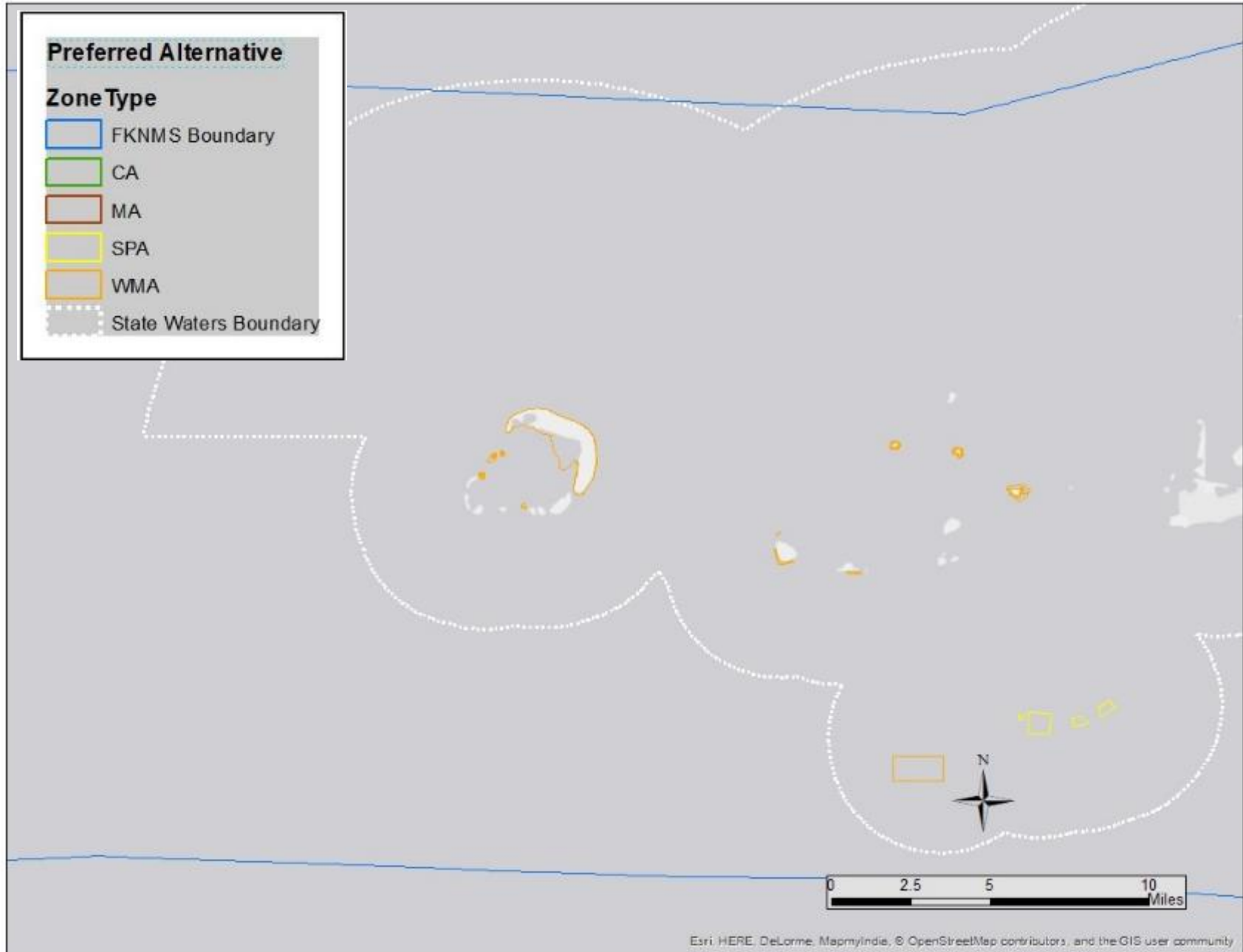


Marine Zone Comments – Lower Keys

Zones selected due to number of individual comments received and relevance for SAFMC Consultation

- **Western Sambo** (state waters)
 - General opposition to the near shore idle speed/no wake or no entry proposals – impact to local community and input that regulations would not achieve intended goal
 - Mixed support for expansion to include the deep reef portions

Marine Zones – Preferred Alternative Marquesas

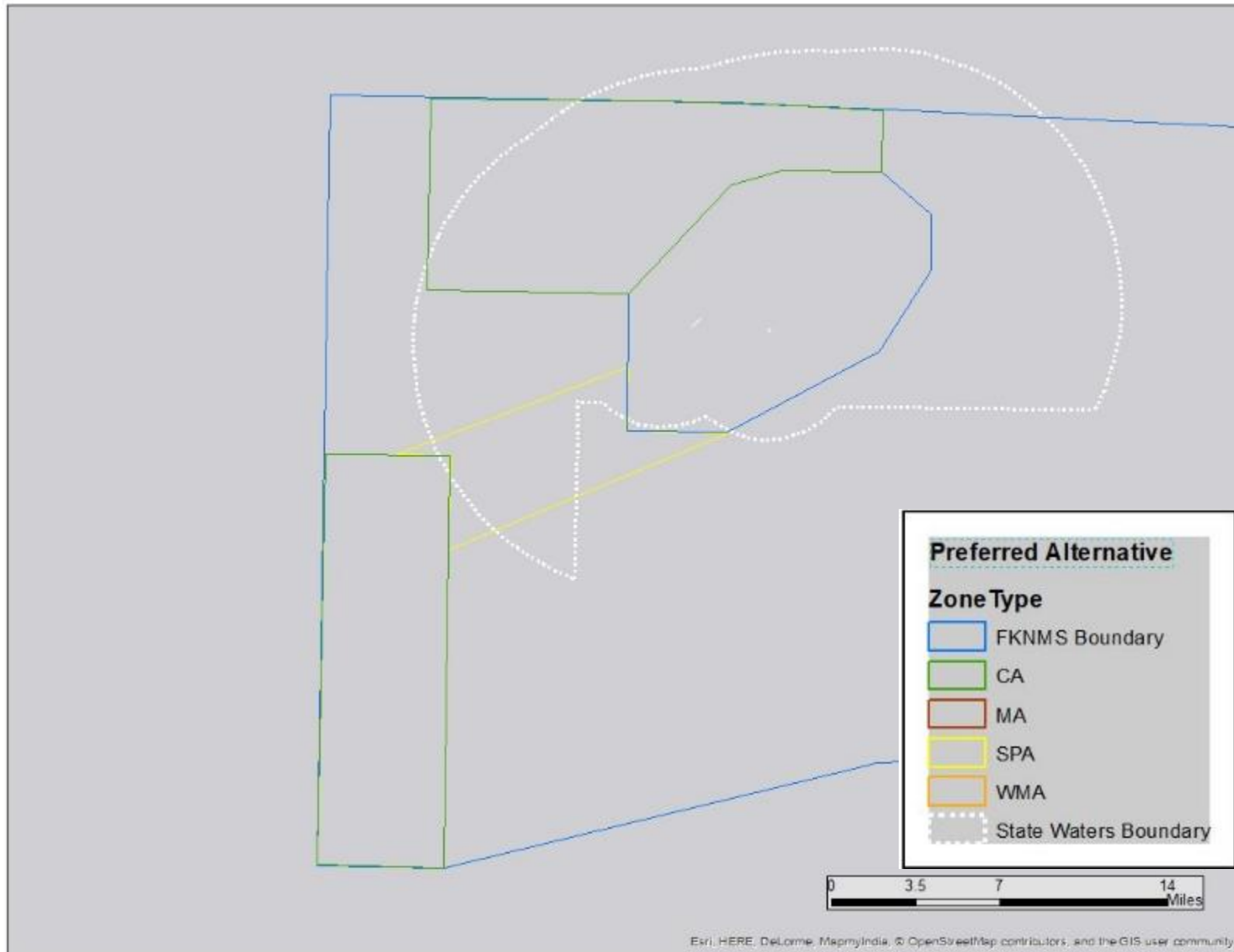


Marine Zones – Preferred Alternative Marquesas

- **Western Dry Rocks** (state waters)
 - General support of protecting fish spawning aggregation sites; particular support for protecting this site during the time period when Permit are spawning
 - General opposition due to impact to use and economy; recognize recent action taken by FWC to protect mutton snapper
 - General opposition to a trolling regulation – not well defined and would not achieve intended goal

Marine Zones – Preferred Alternative Tortugas

NOTE: only a small portion of this region is within SAFMC jurisdiction



Marine Zone Comments – Tortugas

Zones selected due to number of individual comments received

- **Tortugas Corridor**

- General opposition due to use of area for recreational and commercial fishing activity, including lobster fishing
- General opposition due to the lack of scientific justification
- General support for protecting fish spawning aggregations and related activities

Management Plan related Comments

- Channel Marking
- Mooring Buoys
- Enforcement
- Water Quality
- Education –
 - particularly related to boating and knowing the waters and regulations
- Restoration
- Artificial Reefs
- Climate Change

Other Issues Addressed in Comments

- User Fees
- Permits for Access
- Lobster Mini Season
- Climate Change



THANK YOU

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