



**NOAA**  
**FISHERIES**

# HCD South Atlantic and Caribbean Branch

SAFMC Habitat and Environmental Protection  
Advisory Panel Meeting

November 1, 2023

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# HCD South Atlantic and Caribbean Branch



## Fish Passage

- Fritz Rohde (Beaufort)
- Kevin Mack (Charleston)\*
- Vacant (vice Twyla Cheatwood)

## Coral Conservation

- Jocelyn Karazsia (West Palm Beach)
- Xaymara Serrano (West Palm Beach)
- Dinorah Chacin (St Croix)

## EFH Conservation

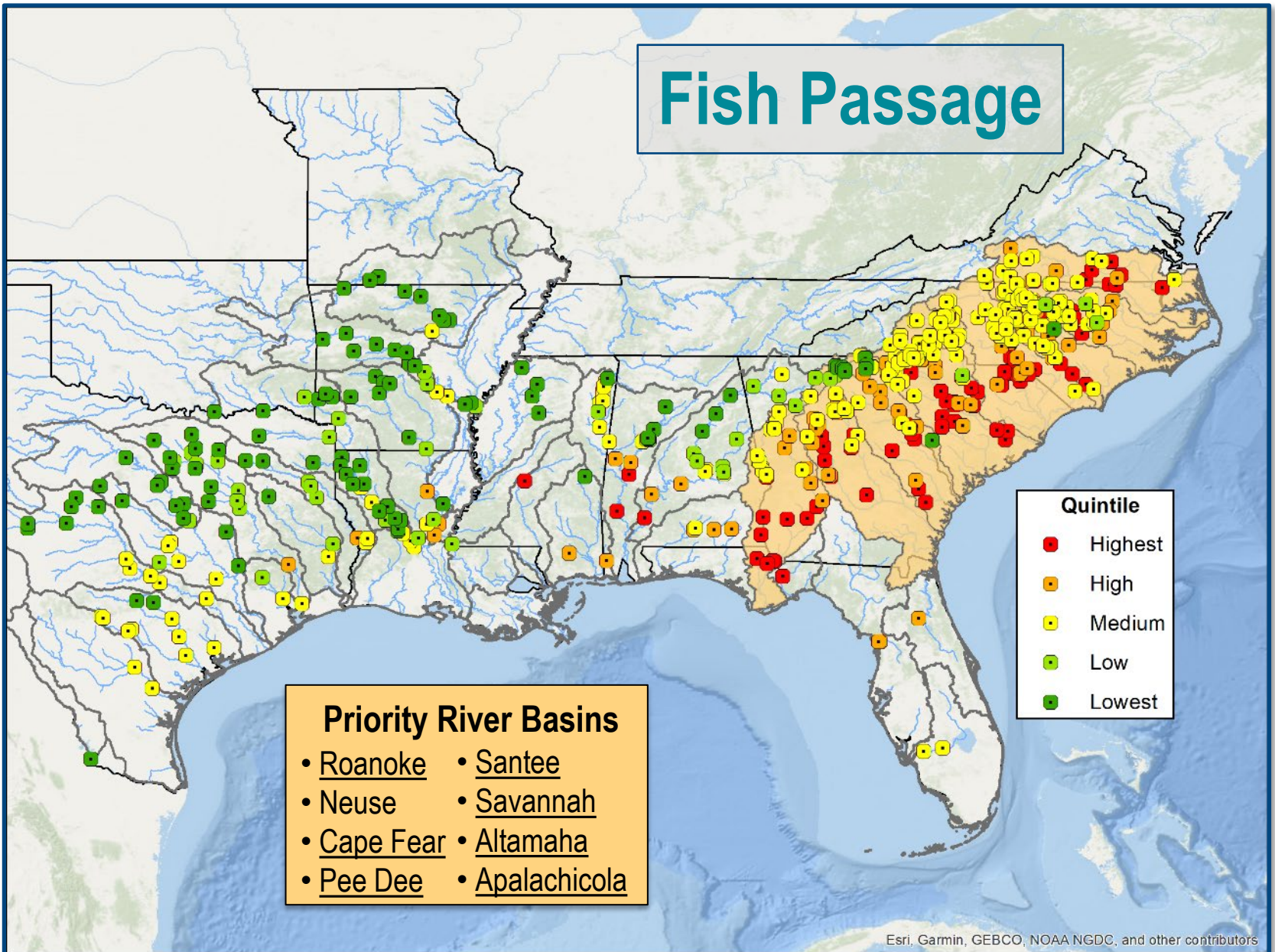
- Jordan Wolfe (Charleston) (vice Cindy Cooksey)
- Kurtis Gregg (West Palm Beach) (FDOT)
- Jose A. Rivera (Puerto Rico)
- (2) Vacant (Beaufort and St Augustine)
- (2) New Hire (Charleston) (BIL-Term)
- New Hire (Charleston) (IRA-Term)

## Branch Chief

- Pace Wilber (Charleston)

\* Contractor (ERT)

# Fish Passage



# Tracking Success ...

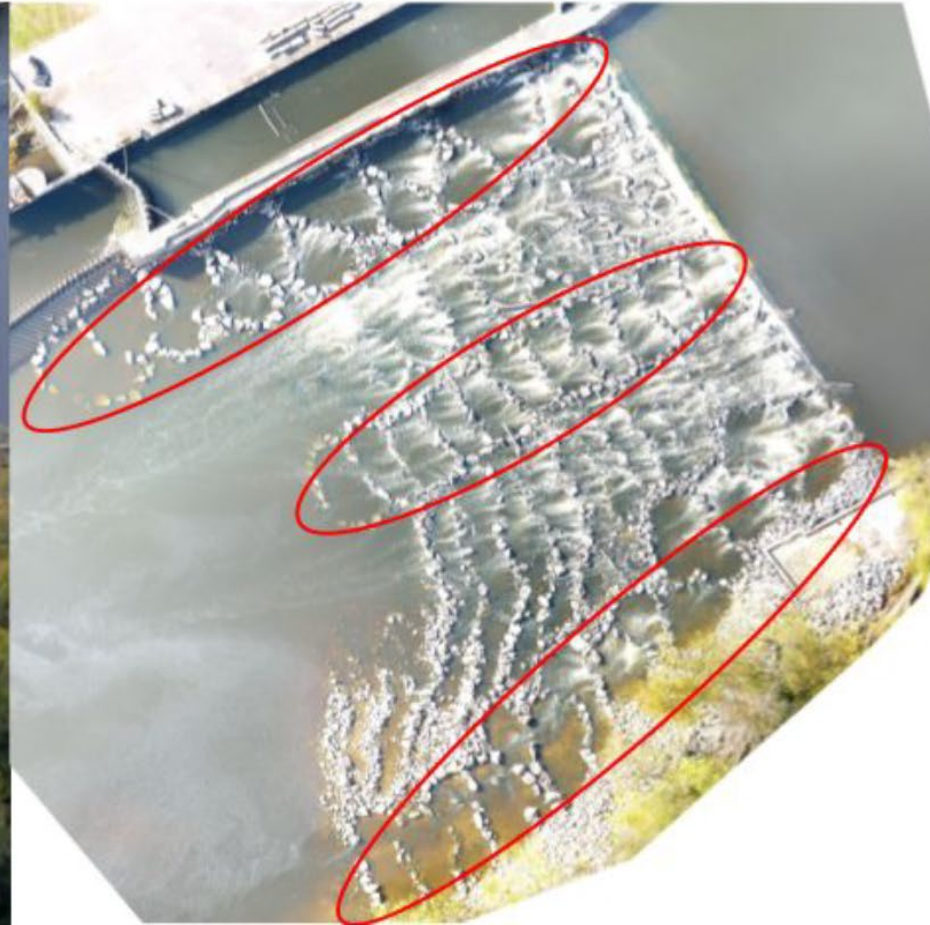
Priority River Basin (focal dam)	Basin Plan	Passage Prescribed	Passage In Place	Passage Optimized	Next Upstream
Roanoke (Roanoke Rapids Dam and Gaston Dam))	2016	2004	2009 (313 miles)	Ongoing	Kerr, Smith Mountain
Neuse (Milburnie Dam)	TBD	TBD	2018 (45 miles)	2018	Falls Lake
Cape Fear (Lock & Dam 1)	2013	2000*	2012 (131 miles)	(2021)	LD2, LD3
Yadkin-Pee Dee (Blewett Falls)	2006	2008	2022 (1004 miles)	TBD	Tillery
Santee (Pinopolis/St Stephen/Wilson)	2001 2017	2007 2020	1950s/1985 TBD	TBD/Ongoing/ TBD	Columbia, Parr, Wateree
Savannah (NSBLD)	2005	2012*	TBD	TBD	Augusta, Stevens Creek
Altamaha (East Juliette Dam)	2013	2002	TBD	TBD	Lloyd Shoals
Apalachicola (JWLD)	2012	2012**	(2012)	TBD	Flint River, Lake Blackshear

# Good News on Cape Fear Lock & Dam #1

**AERIAL VIEW OF THE NATURE-LIKE FISHWAY 2013**



**DRONE VIEW OF MODIFIED NATURE-LIKE FISHWAY 2021**

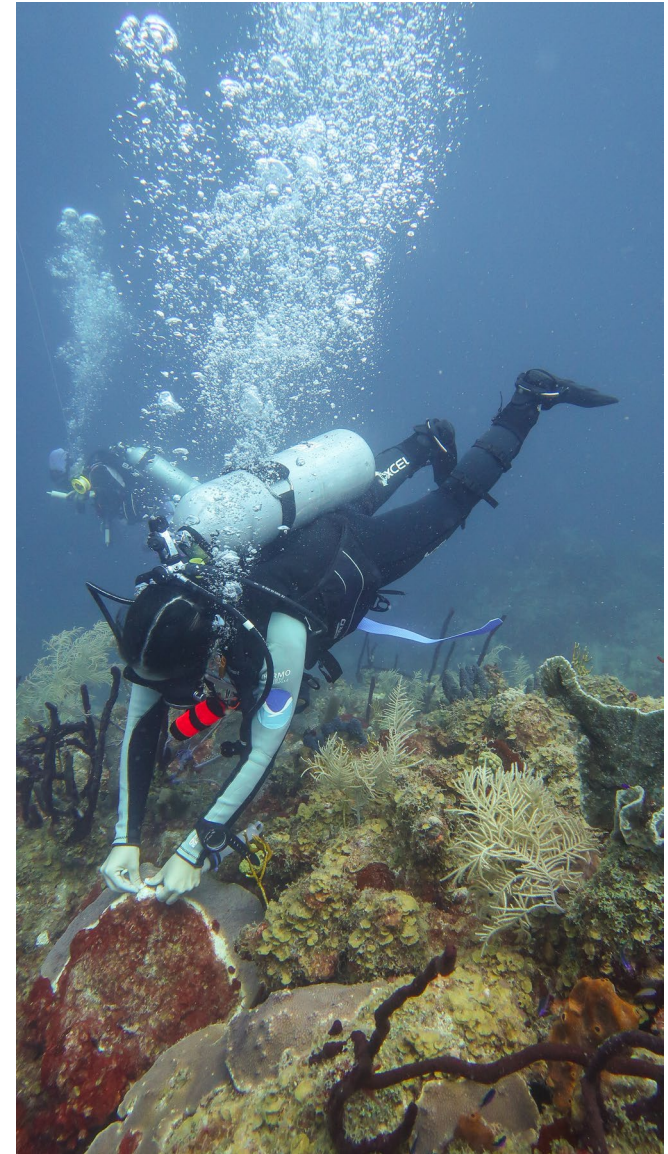


# Coral Conservation

- NOAA CRCP Fisheries Liaisons (USVI and FL)
- Assist enactment of Local Action Strategies
- Monitor and treat corals exhibiting SCTLD

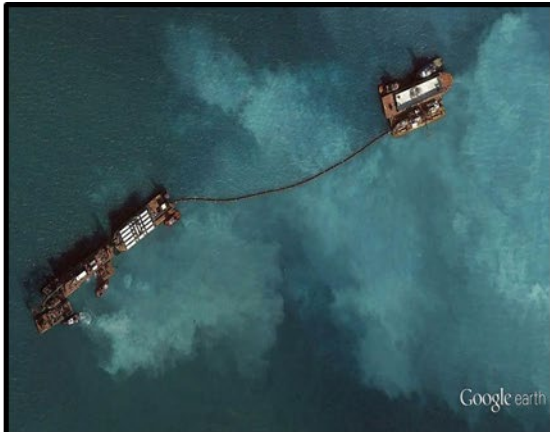


- Research to support coral conservation
  - Sediment accumulation on coral habitat at major ports (EPA and FDEP)
  - Herbivory and other factors affecting coral restoration success (SEFSC)
  - Sedimentation effects on wound healing (NCCOS)



Dr. Dinorah Chacin applies antibiotic paste to *Orbicella* colony infected with SCTLD.

# Coral Conservation

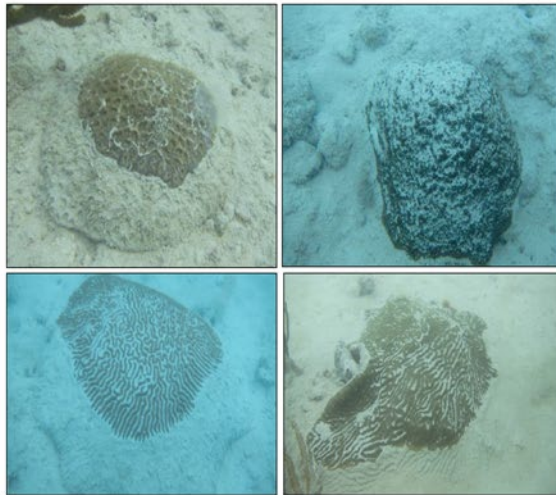


## Examination of Sedimentation Impacts to Coral Reef along the Port Miami Entrance Channel, December 2015 and April 2016

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service  
August 29, 2023

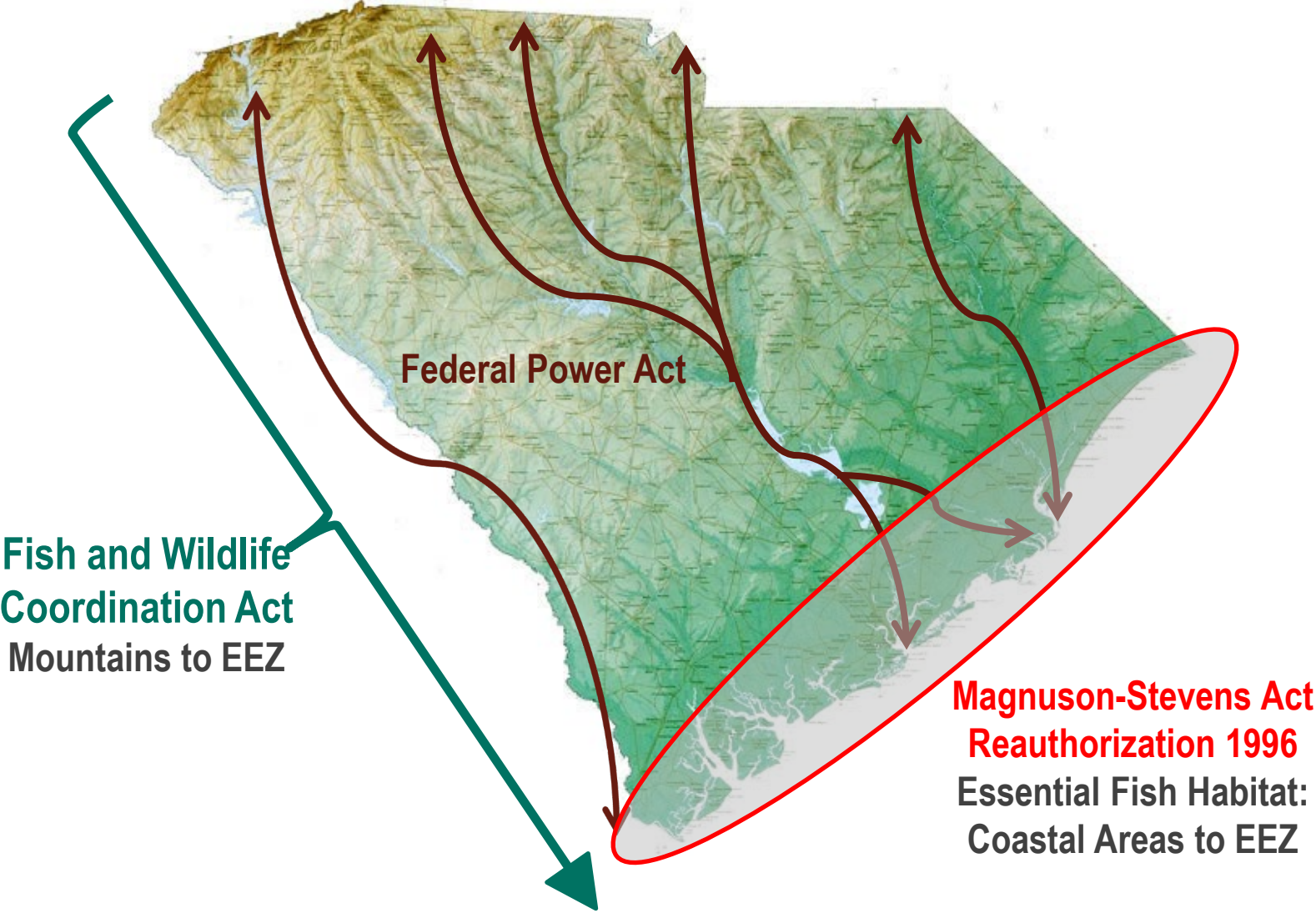
### Executive Summary

In December 2015 and April 2016, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) assessed potential damage from dredged sediments to coral reefs adjacent to the Port Miami Entrance Channel. This was an unprecedented evaluation based on concerns brought to us by various partner, regulatory, and action agencies and after reviewing satellite images depicting large sediment plumes over areas of coral reef. Based on our own observations of sediment damage to coral reefs, we were then afforded through NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program, the ability to take a closer look at the coral reef. The reefs examined are fishery habitats protected under the Endangered Species Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). The surveys focused on locations more distant from the channel than those specified by the State of Florida for assessing permit compliance during dredging. The work conducted during December 2015 examined the Inner Reef North of the channel (findings described in Miller et al. 2016 and NMFS 2016a), and the work completed during April 2016 included the Inner Reef south of the channel. The purpose of the surveys was to further our understanding of the spatial extent and severity of sediment-related impacts resulting from the dredging. The majority of locations examined were not included in previous quantitative assessments by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), its contractors, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), or other groups. Our surveys were limited to areas mapped as reef or hardbottom before the dredging began and focused on determining bottom cover, measuring sediment depth, and recording coral condition related to sediment stress after dredging ceased.



Source: (top) Google Earth Imagery from Port of Miami January 2014; (bottom) NOAA photos near Port of Miami November 2014

# Magnuson-Stevens Act and FWCA



**Fish and Wildlife  
Coordination Act**  
Mountains to EEZ

**Magnuson-Stevens Act  
Reauthorization 1996**  
Essential Fish Habitat:  
Coastal Areas to EEZ



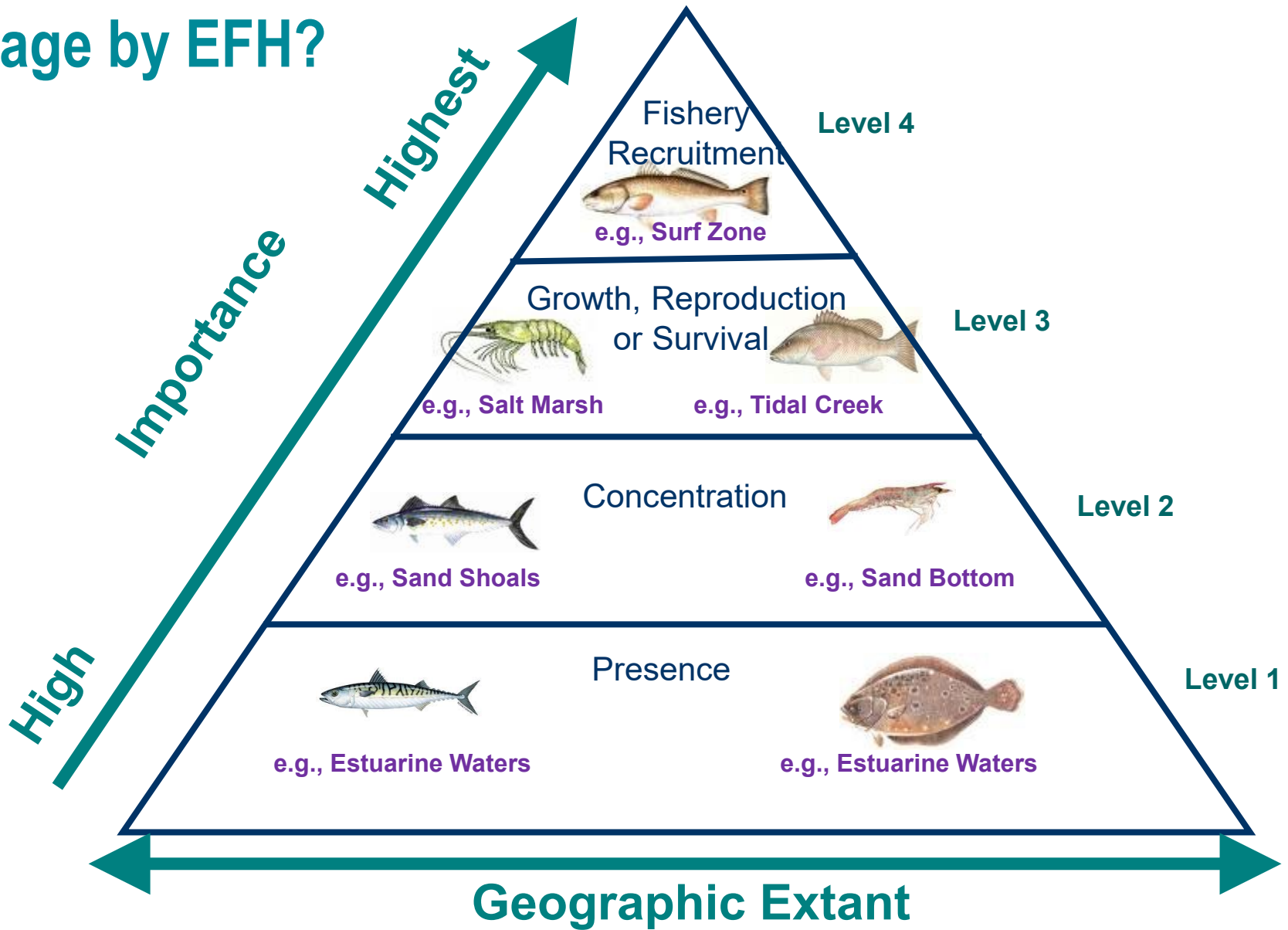
# Magnuson-Stevens Act: Essential Fish Habitat

-- Each Federal agency shall consult with the Secretary with respect to any action authorized, funded, or undertaken, or proposed to be authorized, funded, or undertaken, by such agency that may adversely affect any essential fish habitat identified under this Act. (MSA Section 305(b)(2))

-- If the Secretary receives information . . . that an action authorized, funded, or undertaken, or proposed to be authorized, funded, or undertaken . . . would adversely affect any essential fish habitat identified under this Act, the Secretary shall recommend . . . measures that can be taken . . . to conserve such habitat. (MSA Section 305(b)(4)(A))

-- Within 30 days after receiving a recommendation under subparagraph (A), a Federal agency shall provide a detailed response . . . The response shall include a description of measures proposed by the agency for avoiding, mitigating, or offsetting the impact of the activity on such habitat. In the case of a response that is inconsistent with the recommendations of the Secretary, the Federal agency shall explain its reasons for not following the recommendations. (MSA Section 305(b)(4)(B))

# Triage by EFH?



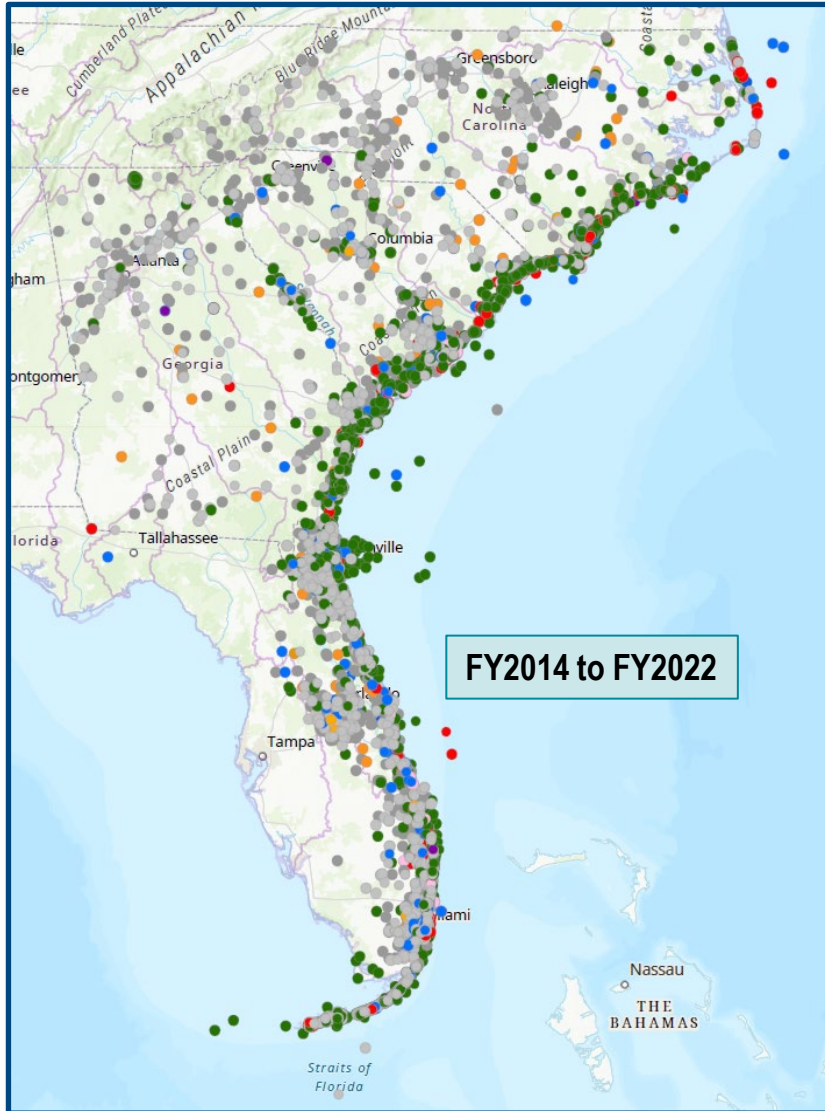
# EFH and FWCA Consultations

## Consultation Requests Received FY2014 to FY2022.

Depending on requesting agency, consultation requests are made via public notices (e.g., USACE) or letter (e.g., FHWA).

### HCD Response

- EFH CRs
- FWCA Recs
- No Objection
- Tech Assistance
- 10-day Response
- Not Reviewed

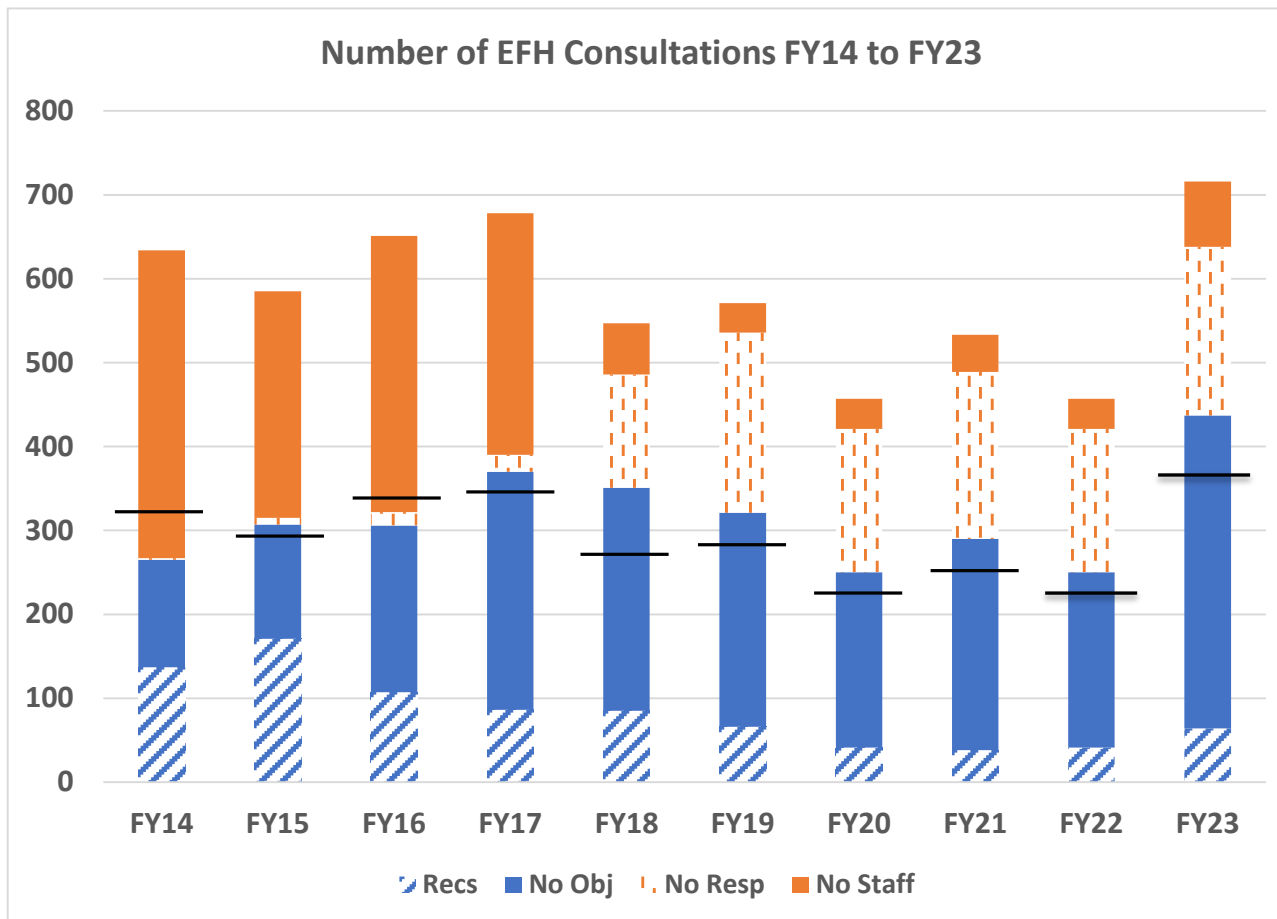


## EFH Consultations by State (Mean Annual Percent)

- FL 58%
- SC 18%
- GA 10%
- NC 10%
- PR/VI 4%



# EFH Consultations Conducted

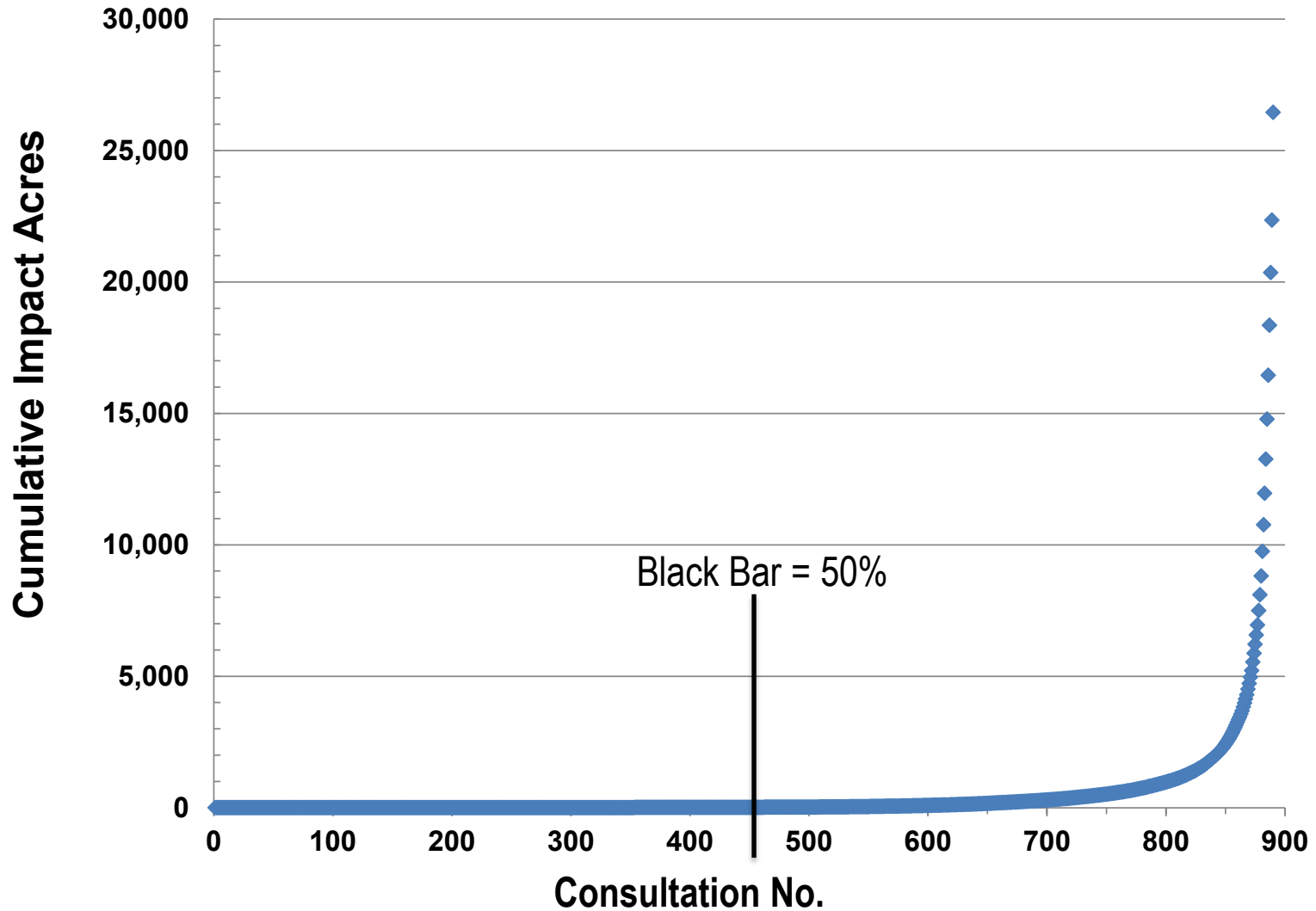


Not Reviewed

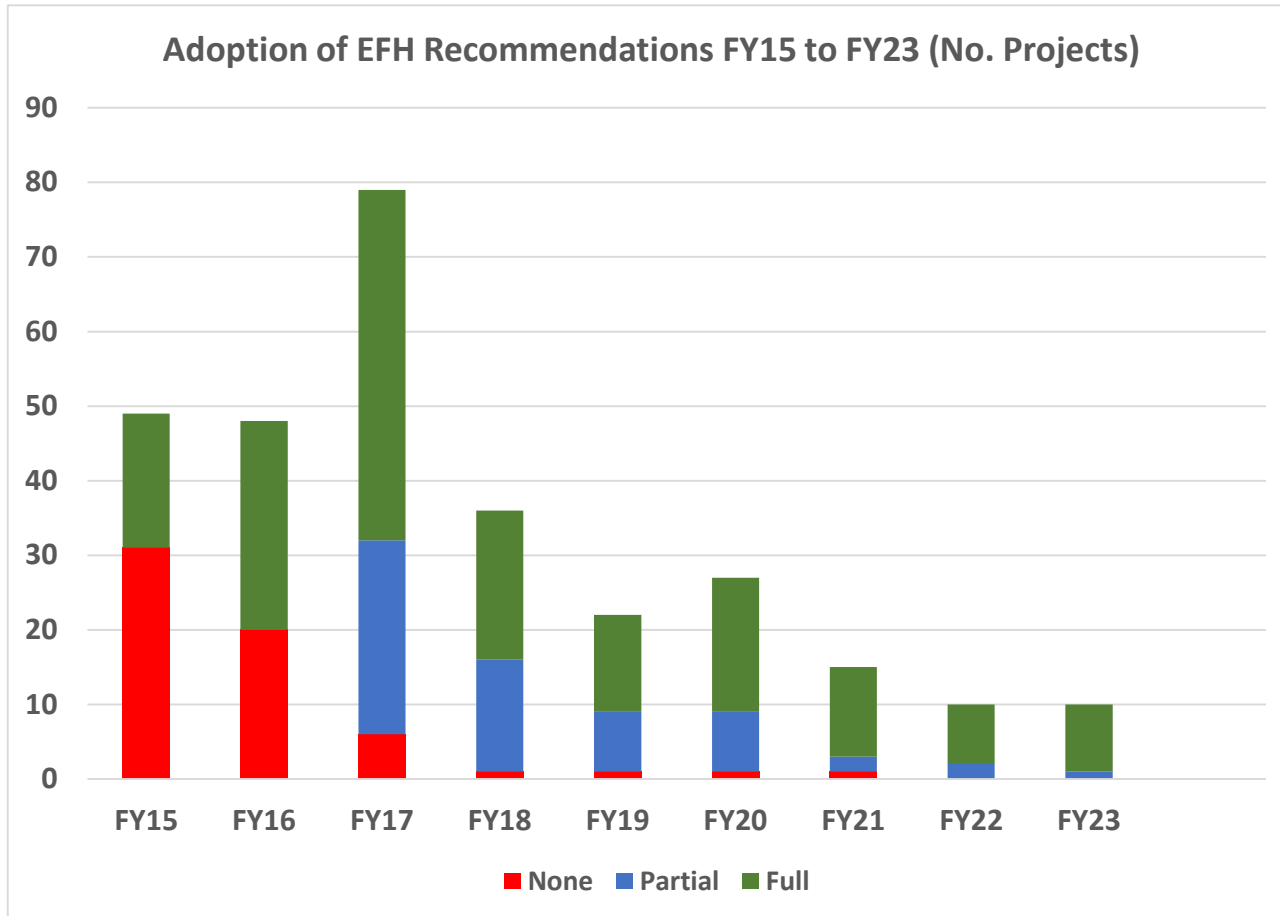
Reviewed

Black Bar = 50%

# Triage by Acres

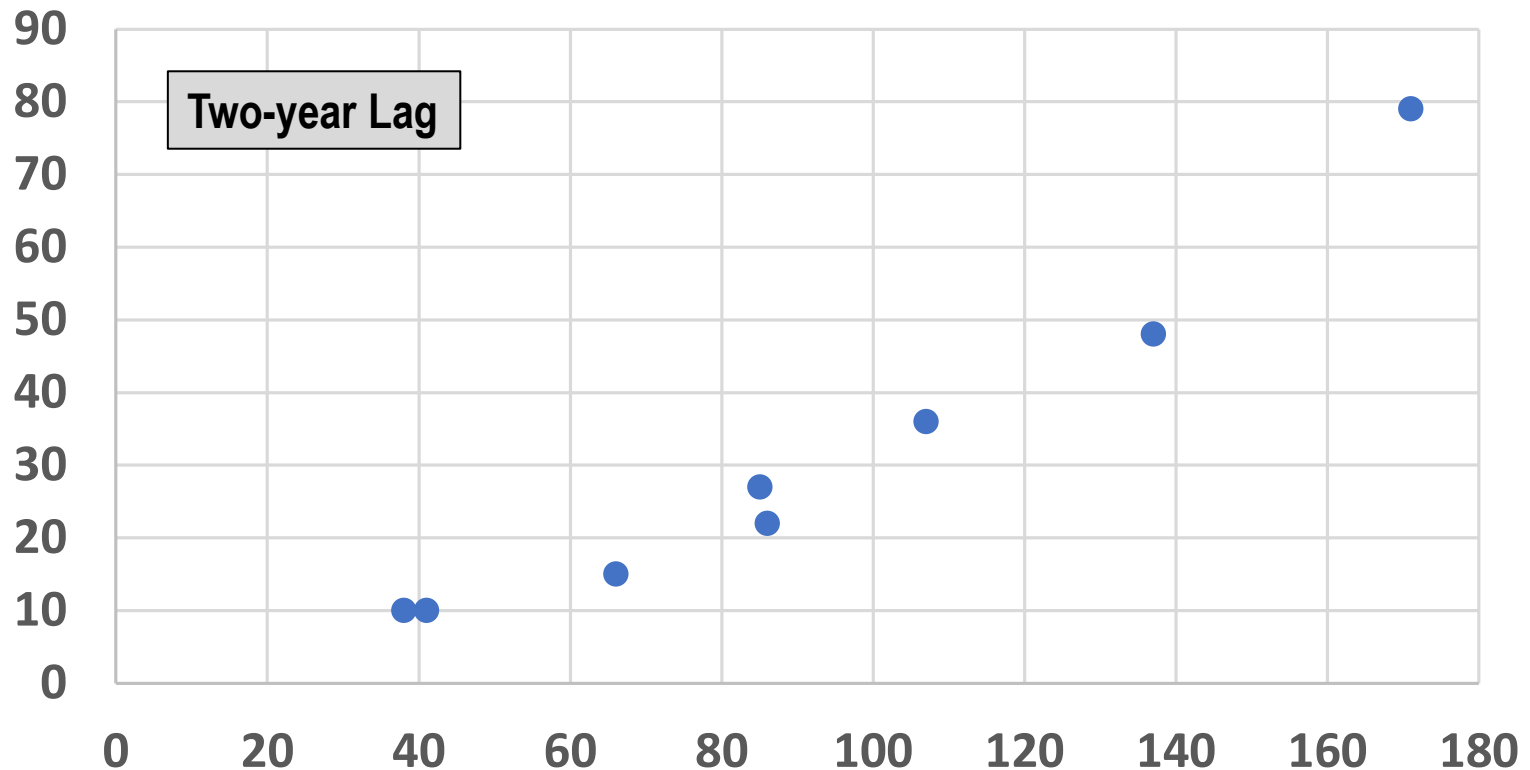


# EFH Consultation Success

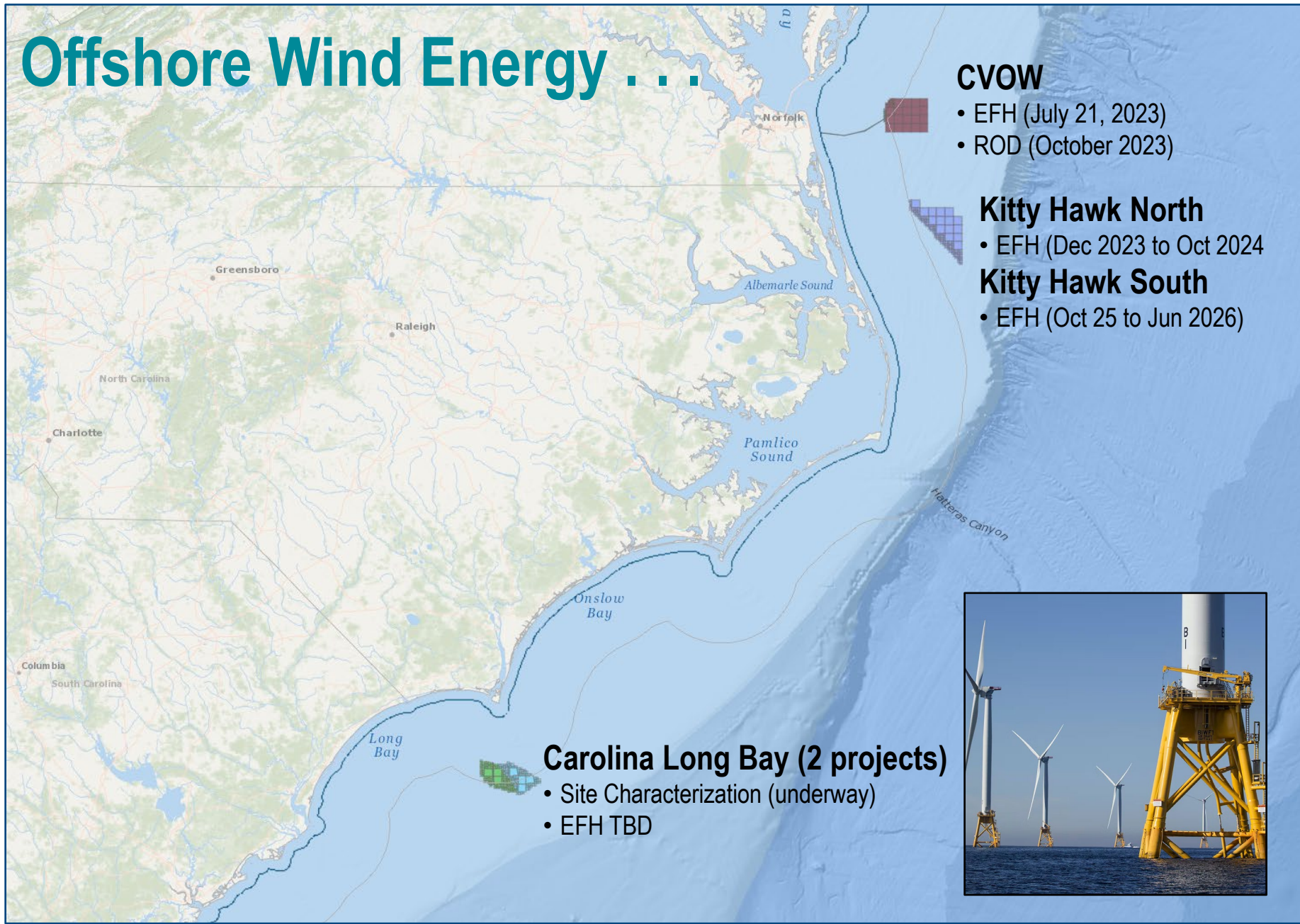


# EFH Consultation Success

Consultations: No. Issued versus No. Response



# Offshore Wind Energy . . .



## CVOW

- EFH (July 21, 2023)
- ROD (October 2023)

## Kitty Hawk North

- EFH (Dec 2023 to Oct 2024)

## Kitty Hawk South

- EFH (Oct 25 to Jun 2026)

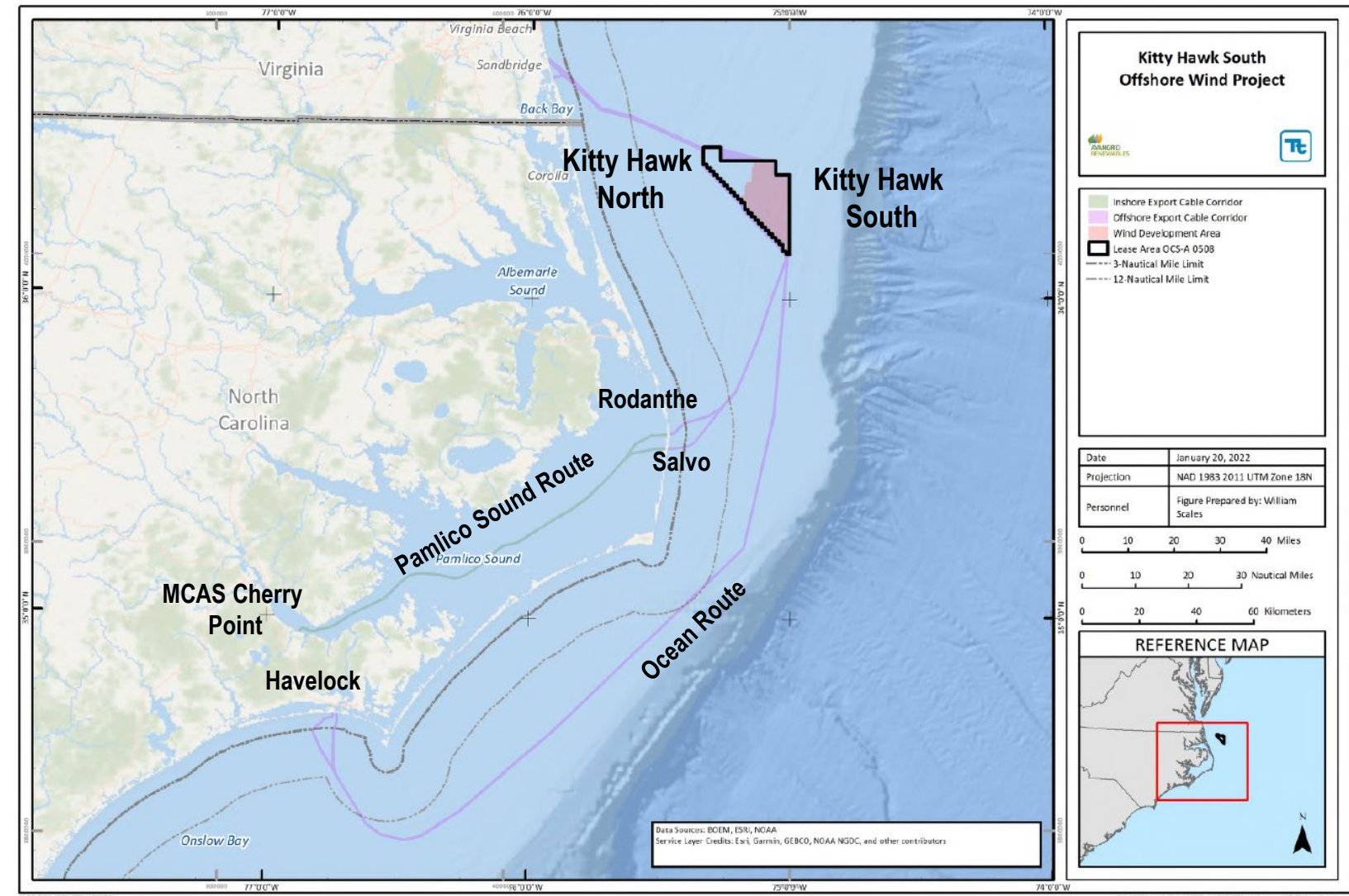
## Carolina Long Bay (2 projects)

- Site Characterization (underway)
- EFH TBD

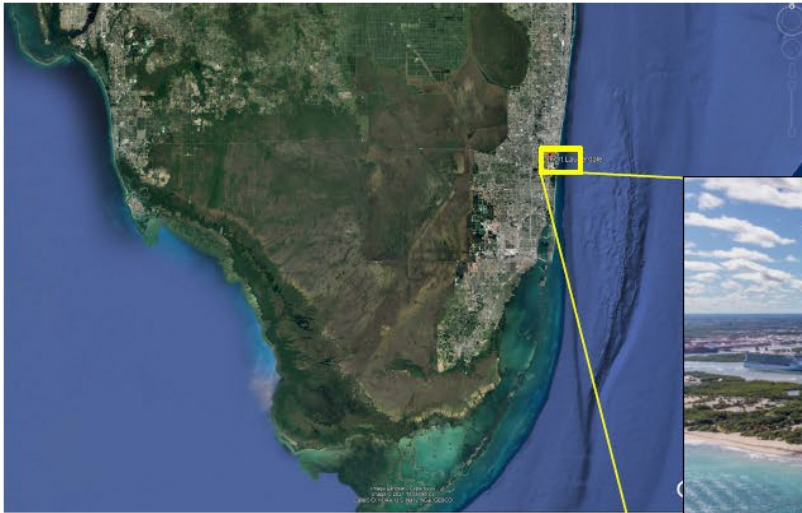




# Kitty Hawk South Export Cable Potential Routes

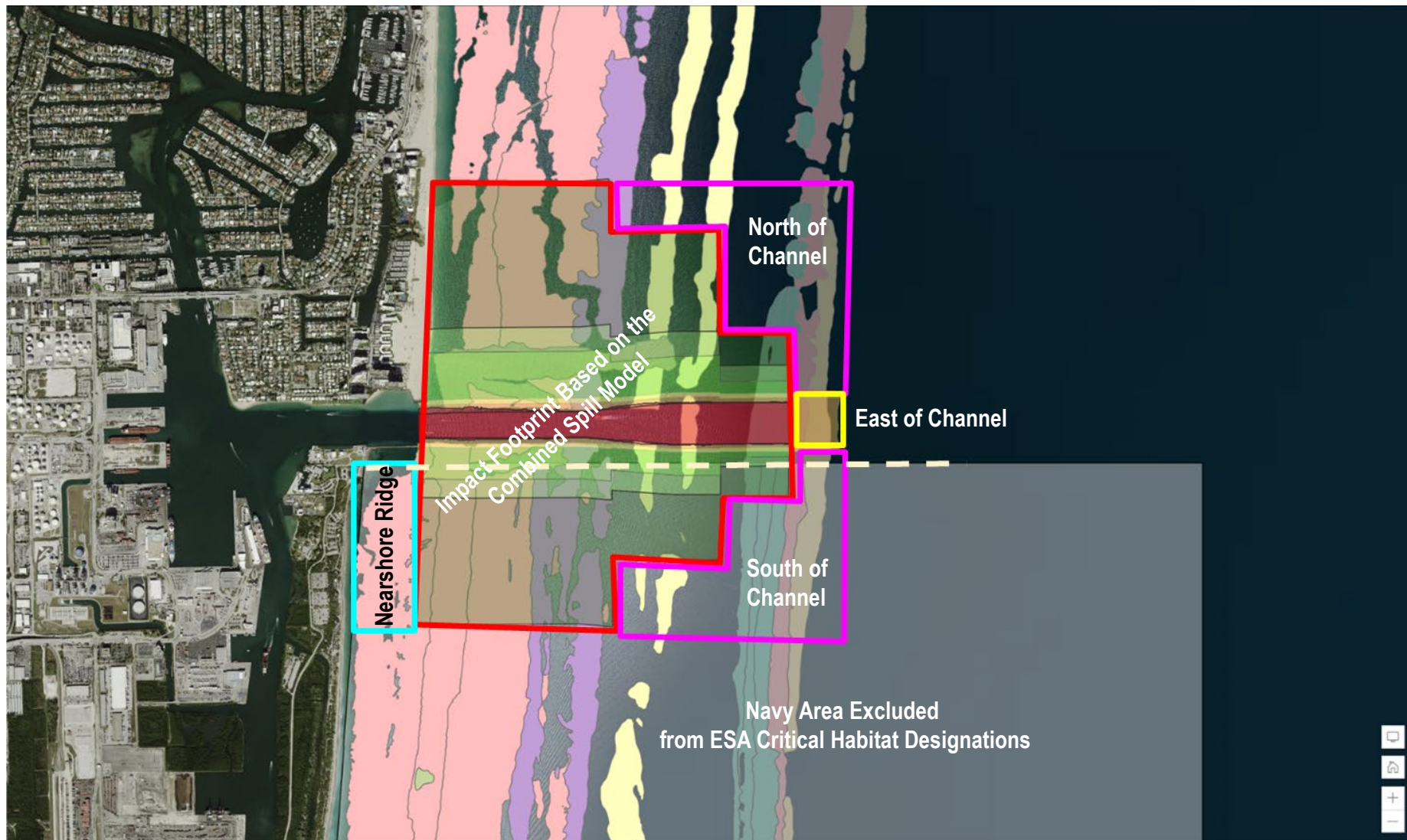


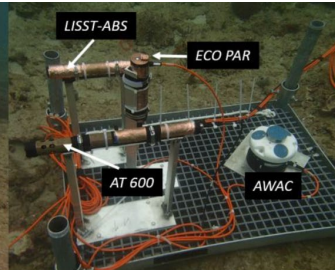
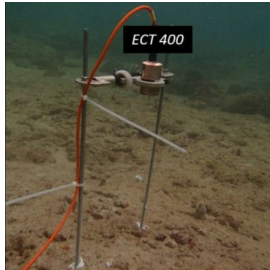
# PORT EVERGLADES DEEPENING PROJECT



Source: porteverglades.net

# Port Everglades Coral Impact Analysis

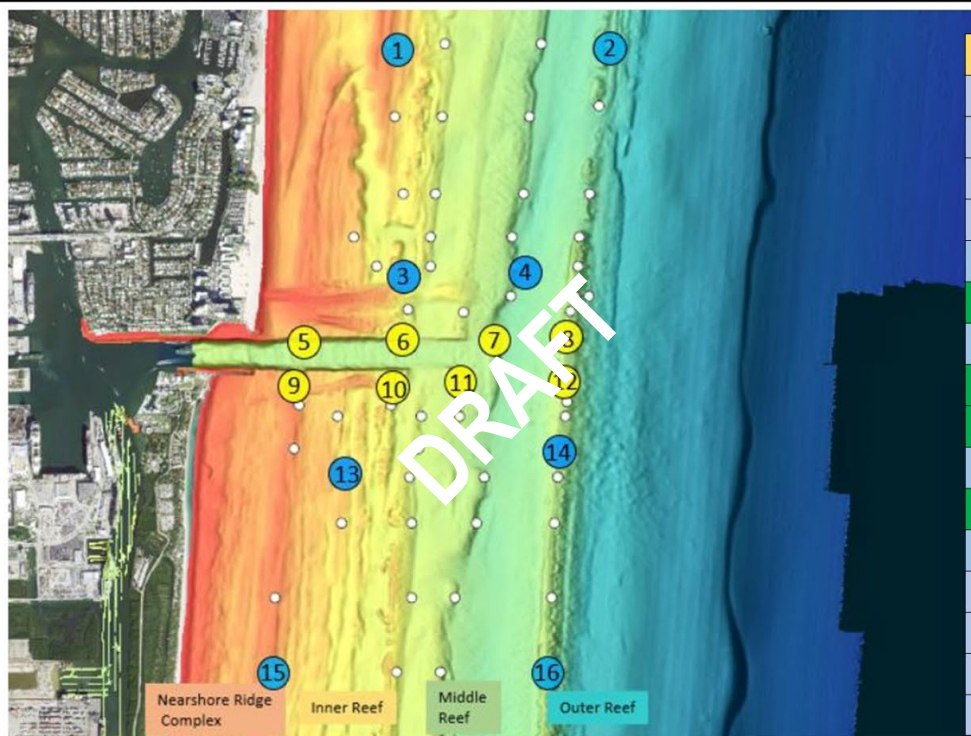




# Near real-time water quality & oceanographic data



BUILDING STRONG



Station	Capabilities
1	TST
2	TST
3	TST
4	TST
5	TST
6	TST, SSC, L, SD, C, W
7	TST
8	TST, SSC, L, SD, C, W
9	TST, SSC, L, SD, C, W
10	TST
11	TST, SSC, L, SD, C, W
12	TST
13	TST
14	TST
15	TST
16	TST

SSC = Acoustic Backscatter Sediment Sensor-Suspended Sediment Concentration-LIST ABS

TST = Turbidity/Salinity/Temperature, L = Light (PAR), SD = Sediment deposition, C = Currents (ADCP or tilt meter), W = Waves

Data collection methods

# EFH Reviews

- Focus is strongly on intertidal waters
- Number of projects receiving detailed reviews declining
  - May now be stable
- Large projects get the most attention
  - Wind
  - Infrastructure
  - Ports

