

Draft Area of Interest: Breakers Flower Garden and Mar-A-Lago/Bath & Tennis

Breakers Flower Garden –

Objectives:

- Provide increased protection for key reef-associated fish species and habitats upon which they depend for their entire life cycle.
- Protect 20-30% of coral reefs and each type of associated representative reef habitat in the southeast Florida region from extractive use (no-take).
- Seasonal protection for spawning aggregations.

Habitat Background:

- The Community Working Group identified this draft area of interest because it contains the most northern known extent of the threatened Staghorn Coral and it is the beginning of a different bioregion.
- The ecosystem changes significantly to the north of this draft area. This area provides good connectivity between other areas of interest to the North and South (Offshore Martin Deep Ridge and Lake Worth to Manalapan).
- It is reported that there are Grey and Lane Snapper populations there that, if protected, could provide good reproductive potential for the surrounding reefs.
- There have been reports of Gag Grouper spawning aggregations in the area.

Human Use Background:

- This area in general is popular for diving.
- The Community Working Group believe that fishing is not as intense here, however that spearfishing and lobstering does occur here.

Questions:

- The Community Working Group considered this draft area of interest along with the Mar-A-Lago/Bath & Tennis draft area of interest. They would like feedback on whether you think both/either areas are important for management consideration or if there is one that addresses the objectives better than the other, and why?

Mar-A-Lago / Bath & Tennis –

Objectives:

- Protect 20-30% of coral reefs and each type of associated representative reef habitat in the southeast Florida region from extractive use (no-take).
- Provide increased protection for key reef-associated fish species and habitats upon which they depend for their entire life cycle.
- Protect from coastal construction impacts.

Habitat Background:

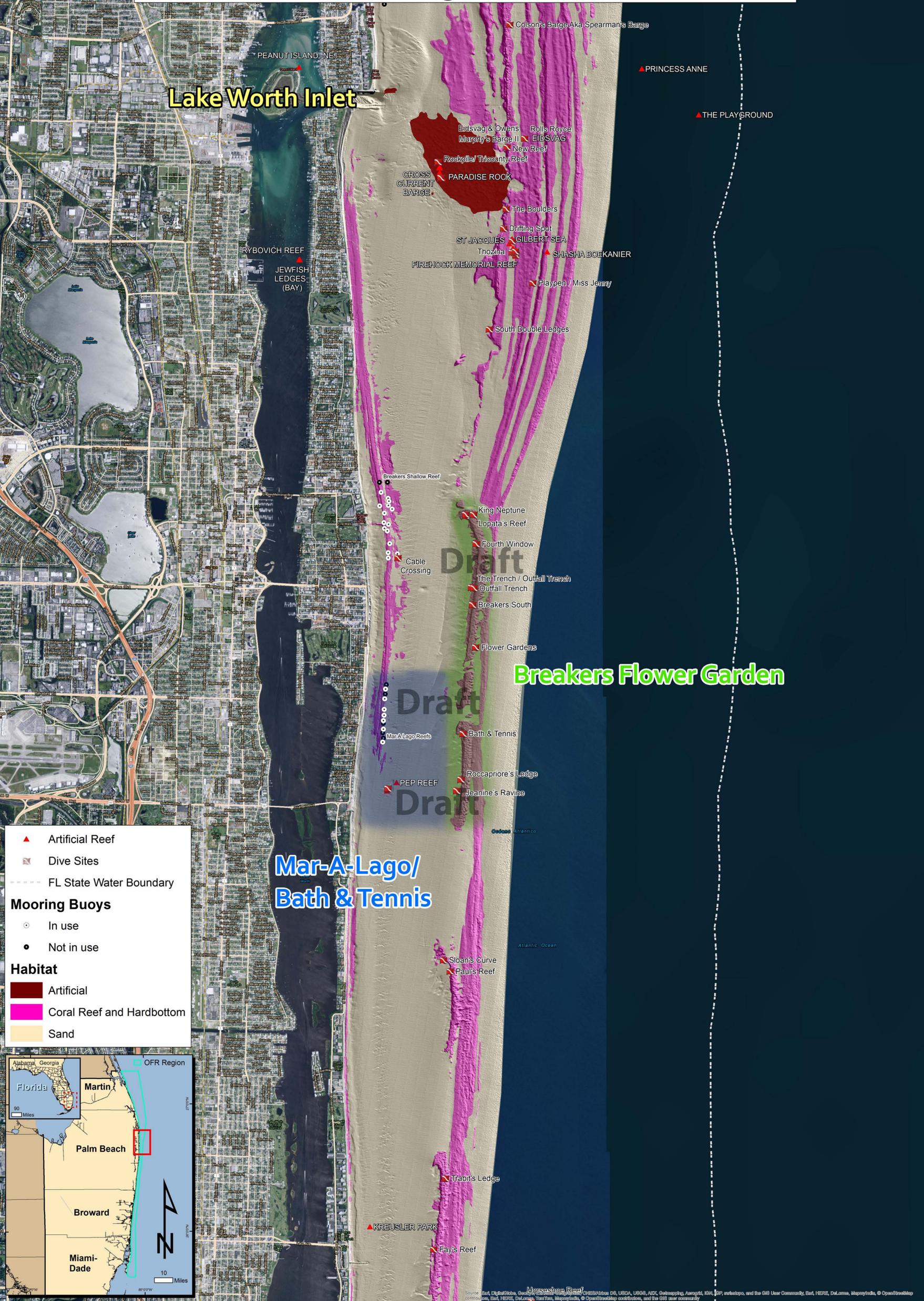
- The Community Working Group identified this draft area of interest because it contains the most northern known extent of the threatened Staghorn Coral and it is the beginning of a different bioregion.
- The ecosystem changes significantly to the North of this area and this area provides good connectivity between other areas of interest to the North and South, that is the Offshore Martin Deep Ridge Complex and the Lake Worth to Manalapan areas.
- It is reported that there are Grey and Lane Snapper populations there that, if protected, could provide good reproductive potential for the surrounding reefs.

Human Use Background:

- This area is general is popular for diving, taking this into consideration the Community Working Group specifically drew this area further to the south on this reef (south of Breakers and Flower Garden dive sites) in order to avoid impacting divers.
- This area is relatively far from inlets therefore may not have as many fishers that visit this area.
- Several beach renourishment projects associated with the Palm Beach Beach Management Agreement will be taking place on the beach.

Questions:

- The Community Working Group considered this draft area of interest along with the Breakers Flower Garden draft area of interest. They would like feedback on whether you think both/either areas are important for management consideration or if there is one that addresses the objectives better than the other, and why?



NOT A FINAL Our Florida Reefs product. This is intended for visualization purposes only and not for official planning purposes. The visual is a DRAFT area of interest which is one part of a DRAFT recommended management action to balance resource use and protection in southeast Florida. This DRAFT image is not a part of an official rule making process. Your use of this map is at your own risk. This map is not intended to be used for navigational purposes and is not intended to be relied upon in situations where precise location information is needed or where erroneous, inaccurate, or incomplete location data may lead to death, personal injury, property or environmental damage.

