



Greater Ft. Lauderdale Dive Association

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TO: USCRTF

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GFLDA is an organization of dive operators and dive shops throughout Broward County. We have been actively involved with SEFCRI since conception.

It is apparent from the last round of public meetings many of our members as well as the general public have become disenfranchised. Frustration is at a high level. The lack of stakeholder willingness to participate in project surveys should send a clear message, SEFCRI is not taken seriously.

When ever stakeholders at public meetings display frustration with the process and the fact that nothing concrete ever seems to get done, their criticisms are dismissed with the reminder that SEFCRI and the USCRTF can only make recommendations, they have no regulatory power. Essentially they are being told, don't blame us we are just here to study it to death and make recommendations. We can't actually do anything about the problem! It's no wonder there is a lack of interest in SEFCRI when the public is repeatedly told this. Even the opponents don't take it serious.

The public is tired of studies & projects that do nothing but eat up taxpayer money with no real results.

It's amazing that agency personnel sit in the same room together but refuse to share information with each other. Case in point, FWC has been conducting "The Future of Saltwater Fishing" advisory meetings since 2004, collecting fishery data and meeting with stakeholders and they never brought it up once in all the discussions. LBSOP group was never informed about some 30 industrial complexes that are permitted to dump waste water into waste treatment plants for dispersal into the outfall system. Certainly some agency personnel had to be aware of that minor detail.

All this makes many of us wonder if all this effort and money will ever amount to anything. From the lack of any other game in town we will continue to support SEFCRI's efforts, but we sincerely hope that in the near future some steps be taken to apply pressure to the agencies that do have regulatory authority to take action. We can't wait 5 more years.

Sincerely

William J. Torode
Pres. GFLDA