



FLORIDA KEYS STEWARDSHIP ACT and the LAND ACQUISITION TRUST FUND

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC VALUE OF THE FLORIDA KEYS STEWARDSHIP ACT

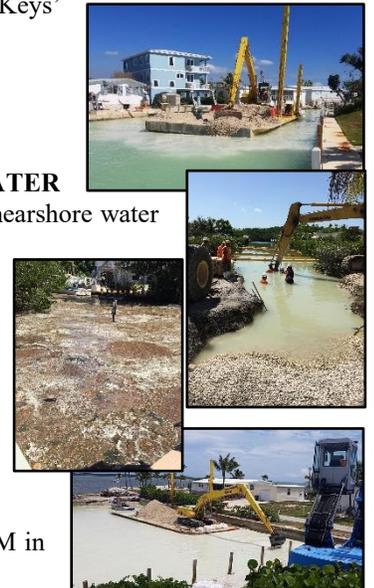
*The Florida Keys Stewardship Act (FKSA), the only **SPECIAL ACT** of its kind, was passed by the Florida State Legislature and signed into law in 2016, in recognition of the unique and fragile natural resources of the Florida Keys including the coral reef, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, and the Florida Bay, a critical part of the Everglades.*

- ❖ **FKSA AUTHORIZES \$25M** annually to the Florida Keys' to assist with the implementation of projects to meet environmental goals of the State's designation of the Florida Keys as an **AREA OF CRITICAL STATE CONCERN (ACSC)**.
- ❖ FKSA merits inclusion in the State's **LAND ACQUISITION TRUST FUND (LATF)**.
- ❖ **2023 Governor's Budget:** Include recommendation to fully fund FKSA from LATF.
- ❖ **2023 Legislation: SB 54/HB 135** directs \$20M in FKSA funding from LATF.
- ❖ The Florida Keys are a premier tourist destination, with world-class recreational and commercial fishing industries, and is home to one of the foremost naval training facilities in the nation (NASKW). The Florida Keys' natural environment is also highly valuable economic asset for the State:
 - ✓ **\$5.7B** in gross sales (FDOR, Office of Tax Research/Office of EDR, 2021)
 - ✓ **\$258M** in sales tax revenue for the State (FDOR, Office of Tax Research/Office/EDR, 2021)



WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

- ❖ FKSA authorizes **\$20M** a year for water quality projects to preserve and protect the Florida Keys' **UNIQUE AND FRAGILE MARINE ECOSYSTEM** resources, which include:
 - Only living coral reef system in the continental United States
 - The largest seagrass bed in the western hemisphere
 - 6,000 species of fish and plants; 50 species identified as endangered or threatened.
- ❖ With the **NEAR COMPLETION OF MANDATED CENTRALIZED WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS**, the Keys local governments can now focus on another threat to our nearshore water quality, our canals.
- ❖ The Water Quality Protection Program of the National Marine Sanctuary identifies impaired water quality in residential canals as a priority for corrective action. The Keys have 300+ canals that do not meet the State's water quality standards and are a source of nutrients and pollutants to nearshore waters.
- ❖ **RESTORATION OF IMPAIRED CANALS IS FORMAL REQUIREMENT OF OUR ACSC WORK PLAN WITH STATE.** With Rule 28-20.140 FAC, the Florida Administration Commission amended the County Comprehensive Plan to include a 10-year Canal Restoration Implementation Program.
- ❖ Local Contribution to date: \$7M in local County funds, \$20M in local RESTORE Act funds, \$32M in federal funding (for debris and sediment removal in 225 canals after Hurricane Irma).



LAND ACQUISITION

- ❖ FKSA also authorizes **\$5M** annual set-aside in Florida Forever to acquire land in the Florida Keys for conservation, protection of natural resources and critical habitat for threatened and endangered species.
- ❖ In Monroe County with limited development permits, land acquisition is also property right protection. Development in the Florida Keys is restricted by State regulations; the State caps the total number of building permits in the Keys in order that we can meet the mandated 24-hr evacuation clearance time. Land acquisition mitigates future takings claims by moving vacant, developable parcels to public ownership.
- ❖ Local Contribution to date: Since 2017, **\$22.3M** expended in local County funds (and **\$5.4M** expended in State Florida Forever funds.)



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