

Sanctuary Advisory Council News

From the last FGBNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council's (SAC) November 7th meeting:

There was a presentation on Shrimping in the Gulf:

- TEDs have resulted in a 94% reduction in turtle deaths.
- TEDs have resulted in about a 6% shrimp loss (cost of using the Turtle Excluder Device).
- TEDs have also reduced the by-catch of some sharks and red snapper.
- The by-catch of red snapper was also discussed:
 - The count by fish does not accurately portray the positive effect of TEDs on this fish.
 - No mature, reproductive red snapper are being caught. Only small, inch size fish. This is an insignificant number at a stage when they suffer the most mortality in nature.
 - The argument was that recreational fisherman rather than shrimpers is where the greatest effect on this fish is occurring.

New find at the East Flower Garden Banks:

At about 150 feet a large area of Crustose Coralline Algae has been found, *Caustophytum* sp. nov - This is a new species to science.

FGBNMS Expansion:

- Presently in the regulatory process (simultaneously with the following) - Currently under review by the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Executive Order 12866 – “Regulatory Planning and Review”, BOEM Analysis (effect on energy resources), and other agencies.
- Steps left in order:
 - Notice of Proposed Rule Making
 - 60-day Public Comment Period
 - Review/analysis of comments and new information from the Public Comment Period.
 - Publish Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)
 - Publish Final Rule

Open Ocean Restoration Plan:

○ This involves a second major source of funding and work from the Deep-Water Horizon (BP) oil spill.

○ This involves the deep-water areas directly in the plumes of the spill.

○ The FGBNMS may get involved in various projects and aspects because of:

- Their research capabilities and expertise
- Their location as the closest governmental agency with management expertise applicable to these areas.
- Their research ship – the Manta