

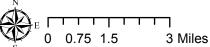
## Channel Key Bank Conservation Area, Gulfside Banks Channel Key Bank WMA, Gulfside Banks Old Sweat Bank WMA, Gulfside Banks Jewfish Bush Banks WMA

Channel Key Banks CA protects large, contiguous, interconnected, shallow seagrass and hard-bottom habitats that support diverse sponge assemblages, queen conch, reticulated sea star, and coral populations. Habitats connect juvenile fish populations with their offshore reef-associated cohorts. An underrepresented habitat type within FKNMS that separates Florida Bay waters from the open ocean, but is very shallow in places and protection will reduce the occurrence of prop scarring and other boat induced injuries.

The Gulfside Banks WMA protect seagrass and hardbottom bank habitat type that support many juvenile fish species prior to their movement to the coral reef. This habitat type is not currently well represented in the existing FKNMS marine zones. The banks and associated channels are difficult to locate, are susceptible to boat groundings, and the majority of the banks have light prop scarring.

This map contains proposed marine zone alternatives for public comment. Proposed marine zone alternatives do not reflect agency decision at this time.

For more details about the proposed alternatives and zone descriptions, including associated regulations, see Section 3.3 and 3.4 of this DEIS.



Middle Keys Region

