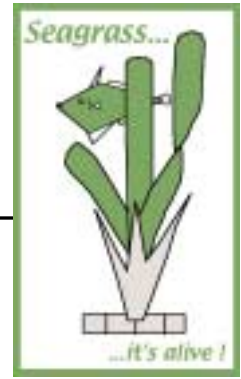


Seagrass

FACT SHEET



- ❖ "The Seagrass community of south Florida is the largest seagrass meadow in the world and has helped create the world class fishing of the Florida Keys." (J. Fourqurean, WQPP, 1999)
- ❖ Seagrasses stabilize the bottom sediments and help to absorb excess nutrients from land run-off. Damaging Seagrass beds leads to continually resuspended bottom sediments and nutrients that further damage the quality of our waters.
- ❖ Our Seagrass community supports hundreds of species of fish at various stages of their lives. Without healthy Seagrass beds, these fish populations are compromised -- as is commercial and recreational fishing, our coral reefs, and our wading birds.
- ❖ In 2007 alone, Seagrass communities in the State of Florida supported an estimated harvest of roughly \$71.4 million for stone crab, spiny lobster, yellowtail snapper, gray snapper, shrimp, and blue crab! (FFWCC, Annual Landings, 2007)
- ❖ In Florida there are over 173,000 acres with light, moderate, and severe propeller scarring. Scarred seagrasses were observed in all areas of the state, mostly in shallow coastal waters less than six feet deep. (Sargent, et. al 1995)
- ❖ Damaging Seagrass with your boat's propeller will fragment the grass bed and severely restrict the movement of marine wildlife in needed habitat. This can create barren areas where fish and others once flourished.
- ❖ A moment's carelessness can quickly impair this precious resource -- a propeller scar cut into Seagrass today can be around in seven years or longer!
- ❖ Running aground costs millions of dollars each year to boaters in towing fees, propeller replacement, engine repair, and legal fines.
- ❖ The shallow waters of Florida pose a particular challenge - even to the most experienced boaters.....

STUDY YOUR CHARTS.

READ THE WATERS.

KNOW YOUR DEPTH AND DRAFT.

Losing our Seagrass means more than a few blades of grass.