



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

ESA SURVEY PROTOCOL –MEETING NOTES
TELECONFERENCE TO DISCUSS SAND LINE INTERCEPT DATA
NOVEMBER 9, 2017
3:30 TO 4:30 pm EST



ATTENDEES:

Mark Lamb, NMFS Kelly Logan, NMFS Jennifer Moore, NMFS Pace Wilber, NMFS Jocelyn Karassia, NMFS David Anderton, Port	Erik Neugaard, Port Matt Harold, Port Jason Spinning, Corps Lacy Pfaff, Corps Marie Burns, EcoLogix Group (facilitator)
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Meeting Goal: Resolution of how to fulfill the ESA Listed Coral Species Survey Study Plan product: “Total acres of hardbottom habitat that were directly surveyed by this protocol”.

Taskers:

- Lacy and Erik will discuss the recommendation to resurvey the 20 sites with their respective decision makers. Goal is an answer by December 1st.
- Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 15th at 2 pm EST to understand how the percent hardbottom for each site was calculated based on the data sheets.
- Missing ESA data on FTP website: Erik will double-check the site.

Topics Discussed:

a. Current status of the 20 sites – Erik

The photographs for the 20 sites surveyed are not definitive in determining percentage of sand at each site.

b. NMFS concerns – Mark

General position has not changed. Best course of action is to complete the project the way it was intended to be completed. Consideration is being given within NMFS on what is the best way to go back out into the field to do the 20 sites. Probably best to go back out and redo the 20 locations. Understand conditions are different now but believe that from all the parties’ perspectives we are in the best position to move forward to undergo scientific scrutiny to do it the way it was intended to be under the survey protocol.

c. Discussion:

NMFS: Thoughts on why redoing all 20 sites is preferable.

- If only going back out to collect line intercept data, don’t know exactly where the diver will be relative to the original survey. No assurance that they are at the same site. How to explain overlap loss of data will be difficult. Not sure that information has value or answers questions that were intended to be answered by the protocol.

- Inclement weather is always a factor with long term surveying and it is difficult to predict what will happen during data collection, but it has to be dealt with even with the extreme Hurricane event. The total amount of hardbottom is important to calculate the endangered species density. It's important to ensure that you are surveying in the same spot.
- Port and Corps technical staff agree.

d. Decision – Recommendation by the technical team is to go back down and resurvey the 20 sites. As this denotes a cost increase, the Corps PM and Port staff will need to discuss the results of today's meeting with their decision makers before giving final approval. **Lacy and Erik will discuss with their respective decision makers. Goal is an answer by December 1st.**

e. Data Sheets:

- NMFS did a preliminary walk through of the data sheets. There is a question on how the percent of sand at each site is generated from the data sheets. NMFS would like more information on how this was accomplished since it is not obvious to them by looking at the data sheet comments.
- The goal should be that any scientist can pick up the data sheet and reproduce the conclusions which have their genesis in the data sheets.
- **Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 15th at 2 pm EST to answer the above question.** This will also help the group understand DCA's style of data collection which can also apply to the Recon data.

f. Missing ESA data on FTP website: Jocelyn pointed out that information is missing in some of the folders. **Erik will double-check the site.**