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Florida's Vital Blue Economy: A New Plan to Restore and Grow

Ft. Lauderdale, FL – The Florida Ocean Alliance announces the release of a new plan to restore and grow the state's Blue Economy, worth hundreds of billions of dollars in economic revenue and supporting millions of jobs. Through a grant from the Florida Legislature with input from a diverse array of private and public stakeholders and in conjunction with the Governor's office and state agencies, this plan offers a set of bold actions and roadmap toward economic recovery coupled with growth.

Florida's Blue Economy encompasses a diverse range of industry sectors that rely on and use the state's ocean and coastal resources including, but not limited to, tourism, recreation, commercial and recreational fisheries, ports, transportation, communications, aquaculture, and energy. Analysis of 2018 data suggests in Florida it is worth more than \$790 billion and provides enormous employment opportunities. However, amid a pandemic and due to declining water quality, damaged natural habitats, and the vulnerability of both human-built and natural infrastructure, Florida's Blue Economy is at risk.

Along with the Blue Economy, the newly released plan focuses on ocean and coastal resilience, human and natural infrastructure, and implementation, outreach, and funding. Particular attention is given to the need for bold actions that are transformational, emphasize innovation, include outreach and education, and are equitable for all communities and people.

Recommendations include high-priority actions such as the creation of a forward-thinking, innovative, statewide, public-private partnership under the Executive Office of the Governor similar to Space Florida, to bring together key representatives from the public sector and private industry so they can help to solve ocean and coastal issues. Other actions call for protecting coastal and marine habitats; replacement, upgrades, and new practices and designs to improve air and water quality; and provide better protection from the impacts of climate change and other local and global threats.

An executive summary and the full report are available at www.floridaoceanalliance.org.

The Florida Ocean Alliance is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, private-public partnership of private industry, trade, academic and environmental organizations promoting awareness and understanding of the ocean's importance to the economy and environment of Florida.

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