



**Florida
Ocean
Alliance**



2017



Florida Ocean Perspective



<http://www.floridaoceanalliance.org/>



Florida Ocean Alliance Board of Directors

*Representing Public, Private &
Independent Sectors of Florida's Ocean
and Coastal Community*



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Richard Snow

President/CEO, The International SeaKeepers Society

Megan Stolen

Research Scientist, Hubbs-Sea World Research Institute

Strategic Recommendations for 2017

Strengthening Florida's economy and making Florida a global economic leader in ocean and coastal conservation, research, and innovative technology development

Recommendation 1:

Assess Florida's potential for economic growth in job creation, technology development, natural resource enhancement, and strategic ocean and coastal development through support and funding to the Florida Ocean Alliance.

Return on Investment Value – The last Florida Ocean Alliance assessment was completed in 2013 and relied on 2009-2011 economic data. A new assessment will capture important economic valuation and trends for Florida's ocean and coastal industries and natural resource assets. The assessment will explore economic growth potential for Florida with a vision to position Florida as a national leader in responsible ocean and coastal economic development, conservation, scientific research, and technology innovation. The final report, including strategic recommendations and an executive summary, will be distributed to the Governor's Office, Florida Legislature, Visit Florida, CareerSource Florida Inc., Enterprise Florida Inc., and to the public through the Alliance website (<http://www.floridaoceanalliance.org/>)

Need: \$300,000 to conduct a detailed and updated coastal economic analysis with strategic recommendations.

Recommendation 2:

Reduce user conflicts, identify innovative partnerships, and help cultivate a brand for excellence that will diversify and grow the state's ocean and coastal industries and jobs, thereby establishing a prosperous and growing future for Florida's economy.

Return on Investment Value – The State of Florida is in a historic position to develop a strategic plan for its unique and multi-billion dollar ocean and coastal economy that integrates economic growth with efficient use and conservation of natural resources. A comprehensive statewide planning effort would establish a vision and path for Florida's ocean and coastal future, help decrease stakeholder use conflicts, build innovative partnerships (e.g. coupled space and ocean research and technology development), and help cultivate a brand for excellence. This will diversify and grow Florida's ocean and coastal industries and jobs, which have an estimated value of over \$538B annually (FOA, 2013) and are a major driver of Florida's economy.

Need: Water and land legacy funds directed at restoration of estuaries and nearshore coastal waters and establishment of a public-private partnership between the Florida Ocean Alliance and state agencies to develop a proposal and cost estimate to prepare and deliver a comprehensive and strategic ocean and coastal plan for the State of Florida. This proposal and budget will be presented to the Governor and Florida Legislature in late 2017 for implementation consideration and funding during the 2018 Florida Legislative Session.

Why Florida Ocean Alliance?

The Florida Ocean Alliance is Florida's leading non-partisan, science-driven, private-public sector partnership. We are focused on innovative thinking, planning and implementation actions to protect and restore Florida's ocean & coastal assets, while at the same time promoting responsible economic growth, diversification and job creation within Florida's ocean & coastal industry clusters. The Florida Ocean Alliance has been serving Florida as a public-private independent leadership alliance since 2000.



Priority Ocean & Coastal Issues for 2017

These high priority ocean & coastal issues influence the state's economy through direct and indirect impacts to Florida's natural resources, job creation and job retention, corporate relocations and growth and quality of life.

- **Coastal Community Hazard Preparedness.** People, businesses and communities on Florida's coasts are at risk from real-time hazards (hurricanes, storm surge, flooding, coastal erosion) and future hazards (sea level rise and climate change). Coastal communities need tools, approaches, and technologies to assess their level of risk from contemporary and future hazards. They need effective strategies to reduce their level of impact and increase their resilience when they experience hazards, as well as to minimize the economic impact on coastal properties and coastal businesses.
Policy Focus 2017— This is a pre-eminent issue for attention by the State of Florida, given that nearly 80% of the state's gross domestic product is at risk and associated with low-lying coastal counties where most of our residents live and work.
- **Water quality and nutrient impairments.** Poor water quality and excess nutrient runoff cause harmful algal and cyanobacteria blooms, loss of fisheries, impact tourism and pose potential health threats to both humans and wildlife.
Policy Focus 2017 – Caloosahatchee River, St. Lucie Estuary, Indian River Lagoon, Biscayne Bay. Unnatural variations in freshwater flows and discharges threaten coastal ecosystem productivity, fisheries, aquaculture industry, tourism, and agriculture. Innovative approaches and new technologies are needed to address these statewide crises.
Policy Focus 2017 – Apalachicola shellfish industry crisis, Lake Okeechobee water discharges, Indian River Lagoon, and St. Johns River.
- **Coastal intelligence** to address global and local threats (including climate change, sea level rise and storm surge and flooding events).
Policy Focus 2017 — Two key tools are critically needed:
 1. Florida Coastal and Ocean Observing System (FL COOS) to establish a comprehensive and fully integrated network using latest technology sensors to track, monitor, and predict ocean and coastal conditions and trends for industry, natural resource managers, public safety, tourism, and homeland security, and
 2. Marine spatial planning as a tool for growing Florida's ocean economy and preventing conflicts between stakeholders.



Vision

Position Florida as a global leader in responsible ocean and coastal economic development, conservation, education, and technology development.

Mission

The Florida Ocean Alliance is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to bringing together the private sector, academia, and nonprofit research organizations in Florida to protect and enhance Florida's coastal and ocean resources for continued social and economic benefits.

What We Do

- Serve as a clearinghouse for information on key ocean and coastal issues facing the state in both the public and private sectors.
- Monitor and publicize actions related to the oceans and coasts.
- Assist private and public sector stakeholders to develop community consensus and common-sense solutions to complex coastal and ocean challenges.
- Promote Florida as a global center of excellence in ocean & coastal conservation, research, technology development and economic development.

How We Do It

- Outreach and educational activities for the public and policy makers.
- Conferences and workshops to identify problems and develop consensus solutions.
- Economic studies and issue papers on ocean and coastal policies, challenges and opportunities.
- Provide expert, multi-industry sector testimony to national or state agencies and commissions concerned with ocean or coastal policy

Request More Information

Contact: Lenore Alpert, Executive Director
lalpert@floridaoceanalliance.org

Past Initiatives of the Florida Ocean Alliance

- Sponsor of Florida's Oceans Day at the Capitol in Tallahassee, FL (Held annually since 2001).
- The Next Step in Ocean Management for Florida (2009).
- Florida's Journey Towards Marine Spatial Planning (2010).
- Oceans of Opportunity: Managing Future Uses of Florida's Ocean Spaces (2011).
- Oceans Generate Jobs for Florida's Economy: The Case for Ocean Management in Florida (2011).
- FOA Filing of Comments on the National Ocean Policy Draft Implementation Plan to the National Oceans Council, Washington DC (2012).
- Florida's Oceans and Coasts: An Economic Cluster Analysis (2013).
- Healthy Oceans Generate Jobs for Florida's Economy (2013).
- Florida Ocean Alliance Annual Perspective on Florida's Oceans and Coast: A Dispatch to the Florida Governor and Legislature (Inaugural dispatch 2014)

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January 6, 2017

The Honorable Rick Scott, Governor of Florida
Members of the Florida Legislature
Florida Capitol, 400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Scott and Members of the Florida Legislature:

The Florida Ocean Alliance is pleased to present you with our annual Ocean and Coastal Perspective 2017. In this dispatch, we share two strategic and economically important recommendations and requests. We offer these as high-priority action issues for consideration by the Governor and Legislature in 2017.

The Florida Ocean Alliance believes strongly that these two recommendations for 2017 Legislative consideration will position Florida as a national leader in ocean and coastal innovation and planning. More importantly, these recommendations create a statewide framework to assist Florida's elected leaders in addressing high priority ocean and coastal issues, grow and sustain Florida's ocean and coastal economy, respond to potential industry-natural resources conflicts, and prioritize annual Legislative funding for projects from a variety of revenue sources.

The Florida Ocean Alliance Board respectfully requests that you consider the Alliance and our member organizations as a valuable resource for information. We represent a diverse nonpartisan leadership partnership dedicated to positioning Florida as a global leader in responsible ocean and coastal economic development, conservation, education, and technology development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steven M. Cernak".

Steven M. Cernak, Chair