

What is the status of the new mooring field pilot studies?

As defined in Florida statute 327.4105, the goals of the pilot program are to encourage the establishment of additional public mooring fields and to test policies that promote public access, enhance navigational safety, protect maritime infrastructure and the environment, and deter improperly stored, abandoned, or derelict vessels. The timeline for the mooring field pilot program is as follows:

- February 2011 - At its regularly scheduled February meeting, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission FWC approved three sites: Monroe County; City of St. Petersburg; City of Sarasota/ Bradenton
- March 2011 - Florida Boating Advisory Council has recommended St. Augustine and Martin County/ Stuart as the East Coast pilot study sites. However, the FWC has the final word on which two east coast sites will be selected, with Miami/Dinner Key remaining a possibility.
- April 2011 - FWC may select the final sites for the pilot project or defer action until its June meeting.
- Before July 1, 2011, FWC will choose two locations on the east coast.

Can anchoring be limited close to these new moorings?

Yes. The five areas selected for participation may “regulate by ordinance the anchoring of vessels, other than live-aboard vessels as defined in s. 327.02, outside of a mooring field.” Nevertheless the ordinance can only be created if “4) The commission shall (b) Coordinate the review of any proposed ordinance with the department; The United States Coast Guard; the Florida Inland Navigation District or West Coast Inland Navigation District, as appropriate; and **associations or other organizations representing vessel owners or operators.**” From F.S. 327.4105 (4) (b)

It is our expectation that these ordinances will be drafted as early as summer 2011.

How can I get involved?

Once the five areas are selected and ordinances drafted it is expected that public meetings will be held in late summer or early fall 2011 to receive community input. **This will be boaters’ only opportunity to influence how and where local anchoring regulations are structured.** BoatU.S. Florida members will be notified by email of these meetings. We encourage you to review the mooring field projects and their associated anchoring ordinances that might influence the areas where you boat and comment on them as they arise.

For the latest information visit:

<http://myfwc.com/boating/anchoring-mooring/>

It is important to note that the 2009 legislation that created these programs also placed an end to the pilot program on July 1st, 2014. All local ordinances enacted under this section “shall expire concurrently with the expiration of the pilot program and shall be inoperative and unenforceable thereafter” unless they are reenacted by the Legislature.

For updates on this topic please visit www.boatus.com/gov

This document has been reviewed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission however such review is not to be considered an endorsement.
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