

Minority Report: C-9 Johnson Bay North by Susan Snyder

Facts about C-9:

FWC identified this area as 1) a “Potential higher risk area, 2) a “Very high Fast Overlap”, and 3) a “High manatee density in warm season.” Specifically, the manatee density for this area was high (4.5 times the overall mean density) during the warm season and low during the cold season. Fast Overlap was very high (8.8 times the overall mean) during the warm season but low during the cold season.”

Seagrasses in this area form discontinuous beds. (1) Section 379.2431(2) F.S. (The Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act), 68C-22.001 Scope and Purpose lists conditions where restrictions are necessary to protect manatees or manatee habitats. The Act recognizes “the existence of features within the area that are essential to the survival of, or are known to attract, manatees, such as seagreases or other food sources...” (2)

Water outside the channel is very shallow.

Existing Zone: 30/SS zone pursuant to the existing FWC rule.

Minority Opinion: Option 2 is a better choice. This option would change all or part of the existing zone to a shore-to-shore Slow Speed Zone.

Rationale for Minority Opinion: Since water outside the channel is very shallow, manatees must use the channel to traverse this waterway. This places them in the same location as the boat traffic. A slow speed zone would better protect the manatees by giving both manatees and boat captains more time to react to prevent possible collisions. Further, if there are collisions, blunt force injuries to the manatees will be much less severe. Finally, slow speed will reduce turbidity, creating less stress on the seagrasses.

(1) [Preliminary Data Benthic Habitats map: The Journal of Wildlife Management 75 \(2\): 399-412; 2011;DOI: 10.1002/jwmg.41](#) “New Aerial Survey and Hierarchical Model to Estimate Manatee Abundance:
(2) [“Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission... Materials for Collier County LRRC, March 25, 2016,” Section 2, page 5, 68C-22.001 Scope and Purpose \(2\) \(a\) 1. c](#)