

Relationship Between Short-Term Uses of the Environment and Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

The proposed action would enhance the long-term productivity of the property, which has been largely vacant and unproductive for years. Redevelopment of this land would result in socioeconomic improvements to the community through productive use of valuable waterfront property.

The proposed reuse would also lead to long-term improvements in the community's aesthetic and recreational resources through development of parks and green space and construction of recreational facilities. Construction of the various commercial, residential, port-related, and recreational facilities would all be considered short-term uses of the environment. This short-term use of the environment would increase opportunities for recreation and aesthetic enjoyment of the view of Key West Harbor and the celebrated Key West sunsets, enhancing the appreciation of the environment and the quality of life for generations of Key West residents and visitors.

Waterborne transportation, water sports (e.g., fishing, diving), and recreational boating that would be provided by the reuse of the property would represent short-term uses of the environment. These uses would contribute to cumulative, long-term, adverse impacts to marine biological productivity through water quality degradation, physical destruction (i.e., propeller scarring or groundings on seagrass beds or coral reefs), and disturbance of wildlife nesting areas. However, ongoing monitoring of these types of cumulative impacts under the auspices of the FKNMS would enable sanctuary managers and regulators to determine when these impacts reach potential levels of significance and when actions would be required to prevent catastrophic effects on biological resources. This management mechanism prevents permanent long-term impacts to biological productivity by controlling these short-term uses of the environment.