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September 24, 2009

Greetings,

Professor Nick Shay of the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School for Marine and Atmospheric Sciences has asked that I write a letter reflecting what I had told him in a letter, namely the appreciation we have for accessing the Wellen Radar (WERA) data for our purposes. I am the Program Manager for NOAA's Integrated Coral Observing Network program, and our mission is basically twofold: to install instrumented arrays at the world's most important coral reef areas to amass long-term data sets, and to integrate and utilize those and other data for purposes of ecological forecasting ("ecoforecasts," or ecological models) for coral reef areas. The WERA data we acquire from Nick's WERA program have been absolutely essential in building the models we have instituted for modeling spawning and larval drift of the mustard coral in the Florida Keys. Our predictions were verified two years in a row as being essentially correct. The WERA data from Nick's lab are the only real-time display of ocean current patterns bordering that area and reach north above the Miami River—a tremendous achievement. Also, nobody has been able to integrate in near real-time surface current data from a WERA radar together with satellite and in situ data like we have, so I often tout Nick's cooperation and our fortune at being able to gather these data. If you would like to see more, please see our Web site at <http://ecoforecast.coral.noaa.gov> (Molasses Reef and Fowey Rocks).

In closing, I hope you will consider closely and favorably Professor Shay's proposed future work, as it has application directly applicable to the management of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, and hopefully for other Marine Protected Areas in the future. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information.

Sincerely yours,



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Integrated Coral Observing Network