

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

CBRM Database

Date:	September 30, 2014	Entry Number:	1331
Case Study Name:	Influence of conservation education dive briefings as a management tool on the timing and nature of recreational SCUBA diving impacts on coral reefs		
Authors:	Emma Camp and Douglas Fraser		
Document Type:	Paper in Scientific Journal		
Year:	2012		
Language:	English		
Document Location:	<i>Ocean and Coastal Management</i>		
Full Citation:	Camp, E. and D. Fraser. 2012. Influence of conservation education dive briefings as a management tool on the timing and nature of recreational SCUBA diving impacts on coral reefs. <i>Ocean and Coastal Management</i> , 61:30-37		
Region:	North America		
Country:	United States		
Ecosystem Type:	Coral reef, coastal marine		
Social Characteristics:	Ecotourism, community inside protected area		
Scale of Study:	Protected areas, state, regional		
Resource Type:	Tourism, ecotourism, wildlife, species conservation, habitat conservation		
Type of Initiative:	Research-driven project, environmental planning		
Community-Based Work:	Resource management, conservation, environmental assessment		
Keywords:	Coral, communities, tourism, ecotourism, resilience, SCUBA diving, damage		
Summary:	This study investigated the frequency and timing of physical impacts SCUBA divers have with the coral reefs in Key Largo, and whether these impacts are accidental or deliberate. Our study		

looks at the timing of diver interactions and how these can be managed. We also investigated the importance of diver conservation education and the value of conservational programmes in the Florida Keys as a user management tool.

We used a triangulated method of direct observation, questionnaires and dive briefing analysis. The study took place over a three-month period from June until August 2010 in the John Pennekamp State Park Key Largo, Florida. 97% of the divers observed (n = 83) physically interacted with the reef during their dive. Most contacts were accidental and were concentrated in the initial part of the dive. More in depth conservation education dive briefings significantly reduced the number of impacts divers made. Divers from the operator with conservation centred briefings impacted the reef significantly less with 0.16 +/- 0.08 (mean +/- SE) touches per minute compared with 0.37 +/- 0.06 (mean +/- SE) for the other charters. Our findings highlight the importance of conservational initiatives and improved conservational briefings on board dive charters. Gathering data on anthropogenic influences, like SCUBA divers, provides reef managers with vital information that can be used in reef management.