



# MISSION: ICONIC REEFS CHEECA ROCKS

Photo: NOAA

Cheeca Rocks is an isolated, in-shore patch reef habitat, partially protected as a sanctuary preservation area (SPA). The site is dominated by large populations of star corals and other boulder corals. Cheeca Rocks appears to be particularly resilient to coral bleaching, coral disease, and other stressors, and the reef has been used by sanctuary scientists and others to study the effects of climate change.

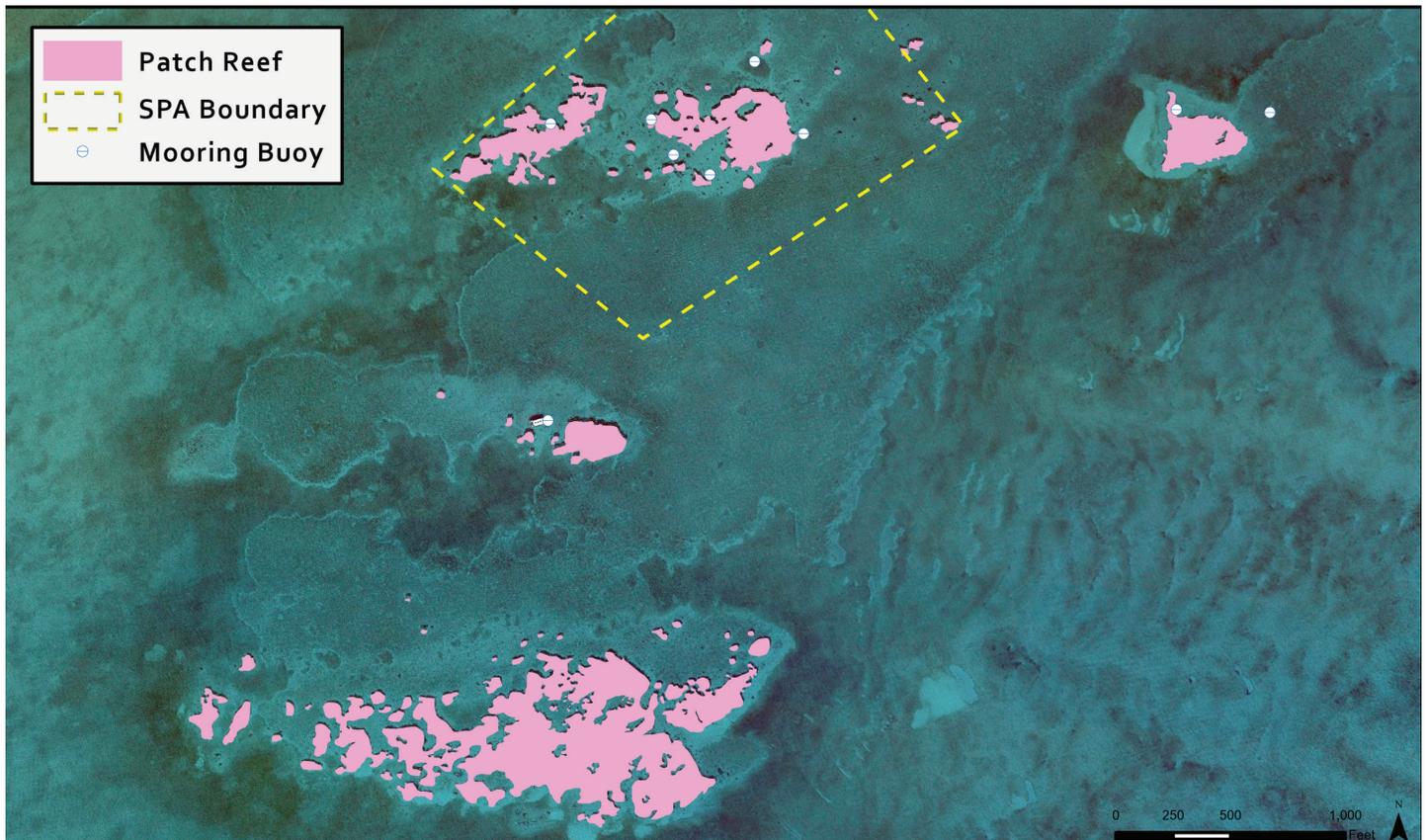
## Restoration Vision

**Mission: Iconic Reefs** is an unprecedented effort to restore seven ecologically and culturally significant coral reefs within Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Informed by years of research, successful trials, and expertise from scientists and restoration practitioners, this will result in resilient and regenerative coral reefs in the Florida Keys. Unlike other sites in the **Mission: Iconic Reefs**, Cheeca Rocks' restoration plan does not include staghorn and elkhorn corals. Instead, restoration work will focus on bringing back more star and brain corals to the patch reef, the only habitat zone identified for restoration work. Over 33,000 coral colonies will be outplanted at Cheeca Rocks. Regular site maintenance, performance monitoring, and adaptive management will be performed to ensure success.



Photo: NOAA





The map of Cheeca Rocks (above) depicts the reef habitat zones to be restored through **Mission: Iconic Reefs**. The map also depicts portions of the SPA boundary and locations of mooring buoys.

The table (top right) depicts the area to be restored, numbers of corals to be outplanted, and target total percent coral cover for Cheeca Rocks by Reef Zone and Phase.

The graph (bottom right) depicts the number of corals to be outplanted to Cheeca Rocks by species and phase. There is an emphasis on outplanting star, brain, and other boulder corals, typical of this patch reef habitat zone.

Zone	Area to be restored (m2)	Phase 1 Corals to be planted	Phase 2 Corals to be planted	Total coral cover (%)
Patch Reefs	12,414	12,209	21,783	9.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,414</b>	<b>12,209</b>	<b>21,783</b>	

