



Network News

SFCN data management is transitioning staff to laptops starting this month to enable teleworking and flexibility.

Kevin completed the Protocol Implementation Plan (PIP) for monitoring mangrove soil surface elevation tables (SET), which is now available in IRMA.

The vegetation map data manager position is being filled by **Michelle**. Congratulations Michelle!

Ana is the newest FIU ReMI intern at SFCN, working closely with **Kevin** on the SET vital sign. Last month they surveyed the SET benchmarks and installed new pressure sensors in shallow monitoring wells at the **BISC** sites to record tidal flooding.

Project Spotlight

Last month, **Mike, Lee, Erin** and **Nicole** from the marine team, supported by collaboration with Dry Tortugas National Park on the M/V Fort Jefferson, completed the 2016 **DRTO** Episodic Coral Disease Trip held September 15 - 22nd.

The objective of the trip was to perform a benthic community coral survey on Loggerhead Forrest, a 60' deep complex coral reef terrace, to follow up on the White Plague Disease Outbreak that was observed on the **DRTO** reefs in July 2016. They also collected data for a 3D photogrammetry reconstruction of a study site within Loggerhead Forest, in order to monitor the fate of individual coral colonies. Additionally, they collaborated with Dr. Erin Muller of Mote Marine Lab to collect water, mucus and core samples of healthy and diseased tissue from *Orbicella franksi* colonies.

The team was able to assess the disease outbreak near study sites on Bird Key, the north terrace reef (Santa's Village), and a terrace reef on Tortugas Bank (Sherwood Forrest). They are happy to report that they observed normal background levels of White Plague Disease on Sherwood Forest and Bird Key. However, elevated disease levels have persisted on the terrace reefs at Loggerhead and Santa's Village, with concentrated hot spots of disease and recent mortality common throughout both these reefs.

A special thank you to NPS Volunteer "Benjammin" D'Avanzo from Florida Keys Community College and **DRTO** Volunteer Michael "Mikey" who assisted with the surveys and sample collections.



Lee Richter conducting surveys at **Dry Tortugas National Park**. Photo by Ben D'Avanzo

Field Work Highlights

Completed in September

- The vegetation mapping team collected Training Point (TP) and Verification Point (VP) data in **EVER**
- The marine team conducted Reef Visual Census (RVC) surveys for fish in **BISC**, follow up coral reef monitoring in **DRTO**, and coral reef monitoring in **VIIS**
- Brooke, Craig P, Jennifer, and Lydia** collected data for the mangrove-marsh ecotone vital sign in **EVER**
- Kevin** and **Ana** collected data at surface elevation table (SET) sites along the **BISC** mangrove coast
- Raul, Brooke, and Mike Foguer** conducted pilot work for aquatic invertebrate monitoring in **BICY**

Upcoming in October

- Colonial nesting bird surveys in **BISC**
- Benthic and RVC surveys in **BISC**
- Mangrove marsh ecotone surveys



Biscayne National Park. Photo by Ana Rojas

Employee Spotlight



Mario Londono has been dedicated to the SFCN since May 2012 specializing in GIS/GPS data management. In those four years, Mario has served as a volunteer, SCA intern, and FIU ReMI. In between working for the SFCN, he also completed his Master's degree in the Earth and Environment Department at Florida International University.

A Florida native, Mario has always been drawn to **EVER, BISC**, and **BICY**, taking full advantage of the many activities they offer. He enjoys spending his free time assisting his friend with guided canoe trips through central Biscayne Bay, hiking the Florida Trail, snorkeling off the warm waters of the Florida Keys, and visiting natural freshwaters springs.

This month, the SFCN had to say goodbye to Mario as he moved on to further develop his career in the private sector. SFCN staff wish Mario the best in his new position!

For More Information

SFCN Home Page:

<https://science.nps.gov/im/units/sfcn/Index.cfm>

SFCN Reports & Publications:

<https://science.nps.gov/im/units/sfcn/publications.cfm?tab=0>

About the NPS Inventory & Monitoring Program:

<http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/index.cfm>