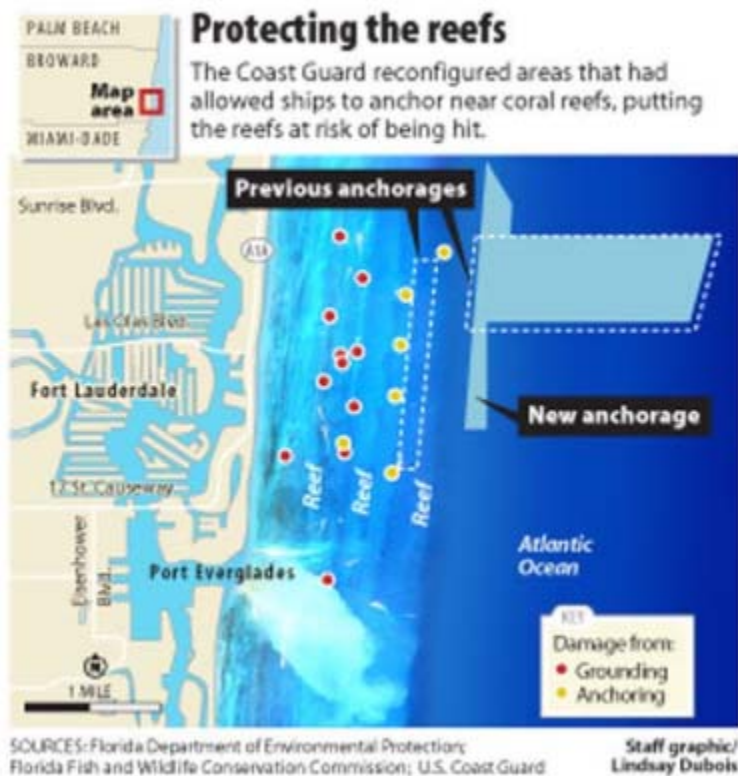


Anchorage near Lauderdale reefs put off limits

By David Flesher | Sun-Sentinel.com
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Hoping to eliminate a threat to coral reefs, the Coast Guard on Thursday announced the elimination of a ship anchorage off the Fort Lauderdale coast.

The anchorage, a long strip of open water, provided a place for ships to wait for instructions or a berth at Port Everglades.

About a dozen ships have grounded on the reefs since 1994, with several accidents destroying thousands of square feet of habitat for corals, sponges and fish.

The Coast Guard eliminated Anchorage A, the shallow-water anchorage closest to the reefs, which had been a source of most of the ship strikes.

It expanded Anchorage B, the deepwater anchorage that's considered far enough away to not constitute a threat to the reefs.

"The new anchorage configuration represents a giant step forward in attempting to solve ship anchor and grounding issues at the Port Everglades anchorage," said Richard Dodge, dean of Nova Southeastern University's oceanographic center.