Florida Ocean Alliance

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For Immediate Release
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2021 FLORIDA OCEANS DAY

TALLAHASSEE, FL – March 15, 2021 is now officially Florida Oceans Day. Upon a request from The Florida Ocean Alliance (FOA), Florida legislators issued Senate Resolution 1910 (Senator Gayle Harrell, R-Stuart) recognizing March 15th "Oceans Day" in Florida, "in recognition of the economic and environmental importance of Florida's ocean resources." The Legislature and FOA hope Florida's citizens, scientists, researchers, maritime industry representatives, non-profit representatives, and other stakeholders will join together to celebrate Florida Oceans Day. The purpose is to highlight the importance of healthy coasts and oceans to the state's economy and to promote sustainable water resources for all Floridians. Normal activities for Oceans Day at the Capitol sponsored by the Florida Ocean Alliance were suspended this year due to the COVID pandemic and the restrictions on Capitol buildings but will hopefully resume next year.

This year's Oceans Day theme, "Restoring and Growing Florida's Blue Economy," focuses on the state's economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and the contribution of the coastal and ocean industries and resources to the state's economic health. "Oceans Day 2021 addresses both legislative and public concerns over Florida's recent pandemic and the economic damage this crisis has caused," said Stan Payne, chair of the Florida Ocean Alliance and Director of Seaport and Airport in St. Lucie County. "We offer a pathway to recovery from these problems through the Blue Economy and critical maritime water-related industries, including tourism, seaports, and recreation industries." These were a key focus of FOA's recent report: "Securing Florida's Blue Economy: A Strategic Policy Plan for Florida's Oceans and Coasts" completed in 2020 and funded by the Florida Legislature. Over 75 percent of Florida's population resides in 35 coastal counties so the issues there are critical. An economic study accompanying the report concluded that more than a million jobs in Florida were directly or indirectly created by activities using ocean resources, with the total contribution of ocean industries to Florida's economy at $73.9 billion in 2018. Thirty-eight Florida industries were

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studied, including ocean tourism, ocean transportation, marine industries, ocean recreation, and living resources, and collectively create Florida's Ocean GDP. The executive summary and full report are available at www.floridaoceanalliance.org.

The Florida Ocean Alliance (www.floridaoceanalliance.org) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, private-public partnership of private industry, trade, academic and environmental organizations promoting awareness and understanding of the ocean's importance to the economy and environment of Florida.

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