About The Florida Keys Mosquito Control District

- Approximately 85 Employees Responsible for Monroe County, FL
- 120 Mile Long Island Chain
- Water, Water Everywhere!!
- Mosquito Borne Disease is an Imminent Threat
- 2010-2011 Dengue Outbreak in Key West = 100 confirmed cases
- 2020 Dengue Outbreak in Key Largo = 75 confirmed cases
About The FKMCD-Oxitec Mosquito Project

✓ Discussions Began in 2011!!!!
✓ Roller Coaster Ride
✓ Project Starts, Stops, Starts Again...
✓ Summer, 2020 = Federal, State, Local Approval
✓ May, 2021 = First Oxitec mosquitoes released on U.S Soil!
✓ Extremely Active, Passionate, Vocal Opposition
About The FKMCD-Oxitec Mosquito Project

- A county wide vote in 2016 passed easily
- Tourism DRIVEN local economy = Major Consideration
- Organized Opposition = continual negative public input!
- 2020-2021 = 2,313 Form e-mails of opposition
- Since April, 2021 = 300 phone calls of opposition
- Virtually none firmly grasp what is happening
What FKMCD PIO Would Like You to KNOW

- Oxitec has been and continues to be a GREAT partner
- Media interest has been Huge (national and international)
- Understand now that project will NEVER have 100% Support
- Understand now that it is NOT Personal
- Urban myths, misinformation are enemies
Recommendations from FKMCD PIO

✓ Understand the absurdity of ‘releasing more mosquitoes’
✓ Remember: Oxitec mosquitoes are male, males don’t BITE
✓ Oxitec mosquitoes are male, males don’t BITE!!!
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✓ Oxitec mosquitoes are male, males don’t BITE!!!
Recommendations from FKMCD PIO

- Make sure public knows it is being heard
- Do you need meetings, webinars, workshops?
- Meet with local elected to reduce ‘angst’
- Develop ‘Communications Plan’
- Establish primary communications method
- Dedicated website, Direct mail, social, newsletter?
Recommendations from FKMCD PIO

- GMM Stakeholders
  - Resident Homeowners
  - Resident Renters
  - Seasonal Residents/Snowbirds
  - Tourists - Frequent
  - Latino's (17% Population in 2000)
  - Local Elected
  - Local Government
  - Peer Groups/Science Community
  - Media
  - Other Ethnic

- Social Media
  - Update
  - Dedicated URL
  - TV Channels
  - Viva Media

- Direct Mail = Bill Inserts
  - Billboard
  - Public Speaking/Speaker Bureau
  - Print/Newsletter

- To do list
  1.
  2.
  3.
Recommendations from FKMCD PIO

✓ Get ready for the ‘unexpected’
✓ Remain consistent with what you call it
✓ GMM, GMO, GM Mosquitoes?
✓ Develop FAQ’s for staff & other agencies?
✓ Cultivate and grow local supporters
✓ Don’t forget the Kids!!!
✓ Keep the Faith!!
Recommendations from FKMCD PIO
THANK YOU!

Additional resources available at keysmosquitoproject.com