



FKMCD-Oxitec Mosquito Project

What You Need to Know

June 2021, Chad Huff, FKMCD PIO



OXITEC

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
- ✓ 2010-1011 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



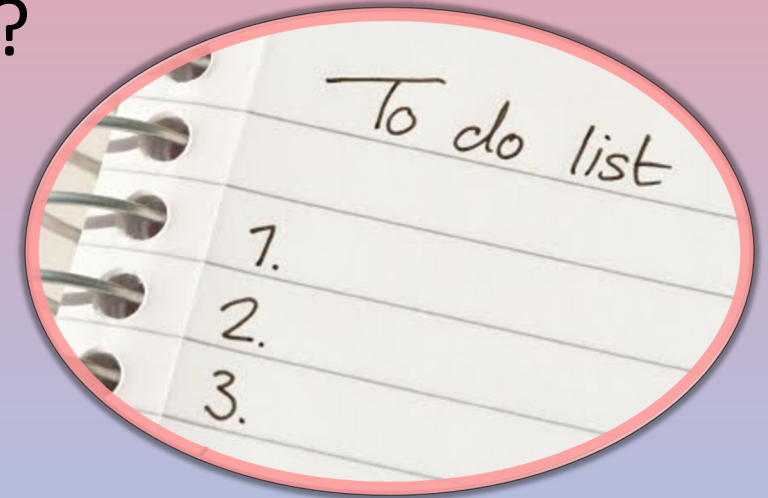
- ✓ Understand the absurdity of ‘releasing more mosquitoes’
- ✓ Remember: Oxitec mosquitoes are male, males don’t BITE
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Recommendations from FKMCD PIO



- ✓ 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



GMA Stakeholders

- Resident Homeowners
- Resident Renters
- Seasonal Residents / Snowbirds
- Tourists - frequent
- infrequent
- Latinos (17% Population in 2000)
- Local Elected
- Local Government
- Peer Groups / Science Community
- Media
- Other Ethnic? - Create?

Channels

- Subscribe Not a tick
- Local Radio
- Social Media → updated ticker
- WWW → Dedicated URL?
- Traditional Media
- Direct Mail = Bill Inserts
- Billboards → >40% Now actually get Paper Bills!!!
- H.A.R.? *
- Public speaking - speaker Bureau (monthly)
- Sign sign up for Newsletter
- Print / Newspaper - CIP schedule / know

Notes:

- VMS
- US1
- Phase 1
- Phase 2
- Tune to AM 1070 for info
- GIVE \$ to Mimi
- Need to fill this



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

