S tay at least 50 yards from dolphins

M ove away cautiously if dolphins show signs of disturbance

A lways put your engine in neutral when dolphins are near

R efrain from feeding, touching, or swimming- with wild dolphins

T each others to be Dolphin SMART

Dolphin SMART Mission

To promote responsible viewing of wild dolphins in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

The development and implementation of Dolphin SMART involves all stakeholders, including federal government agencies, non-governmental organizations, researchers, commercial businesses, and members of the public.

To learn more about becoming Dolphin SMART or for a current list of active Dolphin SMART participants, email:

contact@dolphinsmart.org

Or visit the Dolphin SMART Web site:

www.dolphinsmart.org

All photos taken under NOAA Fisheries Service permit.

Dolphin SMART is made possible through support from the following sponsors:

Dolphin Ecology Project

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce

National Marine Sanctuaries, Florida Keys

WDCS Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society

Promoting **Responsible Viewing** of Wild Dolphins

Why Practice Responsible Viewing?

Bottlenose dolphins are frequently seen in coastal waters of the Southeastern U.S. and can easily be viewed from shore or by boat. Watching them in their natural habitat can be an exhilarating experience. However, when we approach wild dolphins too closely, move too quickly, or make too much noise, we increase the risk of disrupting their natural behaviors, such as migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, and sheltering. Disruption of these natural behaviors is a form of harassment and against Federal law.

What is Dolphin SMART?

Dolphin SMART is a unique, voluntary recognition and education program offering participation incentives for commercial businesses conducting and booking wild dolphin viewing that voluntarily follow the "program criteria," and educate their customers about the importance of responsible viewing of wild dolphins. The program also includes an important research component that provides insight about wild dolphin populations in local areas and helps to monitor the effectiveness of the program.

Dolphin SMART Program Purpose:

- Minimize the potential of wild dolphin harassment caused by commercial viewing activities.
- Reduce people's expectations of wanting to closely interact with wild dolphins in a manner that may cause harassment.
- Eliminate advertising that creates expectations to engage in activities that may cause harassment.

A SMART Start! History of Dolphin SMART.....

A special area of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is home to a resident group of bottlenose dolphins. It is also where many businesses conduct dolphin tours in a limited geographic area. The heightened amount of human activity in this area may cause unnecessary stress to the local population by disrupting their natural behaviors.

This prompted conservation agencies, including NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program and National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, as well as local commercial operators and members of the public, to team up and develop a multifaceted program to promote responsible viewing of wild dolphins and recognize commercial businesses who participated. Before long the program called, Dolphin SMART, was off to a great start!

What it Means to be Dolphin SMART...

Dolphin SMART businesses provide an enhanced tour experience by offering customers:

- Detailed knowledge about the laws protecting wild bottlenose dolphins.
- Information on how to responsibly view wild dolphins and recognize signs of harassment.
- Fun and informative educational materials.
- Details about local dolphin populations and research.
- Up-to-date knowledge about wild dolphin conservation by attending continuing education workshops to enhance educational opportunities for themselves and their customers.

What it Takes to be Dolphin SMART...

All participants must voluntarily adhere to:

- **Program Criteria:** Legal requirements, policies, and guidelines, as well as best viewing and advertising practices to prevent harassment of wild dolphins.
- **Training and Education:** Participation in an initial training workshop and yearly online refresher training.
- **Evaluation for Participation and Recognition:** Initial evaluation to establish participation and receive program recognition. Annual evaluation to ensure active compliance with the program criteria and determine the program's effectiveness.

SMART-ly Recognized...

Upon successful completion of the training and evaluation, Dolphin SMART businesses receive materials identifying them as active Dolphin SMART participants, such as flags and decals featuring the Dolphin SMART logo and current calendar year.

Look Before You Book!

Only businesses with flags and decals featuring the current calendar year are considered active Dolphin SMART participants.

Get Off to a Great Start, Be Dolphin SMART!

By choosing to follow the Dolphin SMART criteria, businesses demonstrate their care and concern for dolphin conservation and responsible wildlife viewing.