Conditions: A harmful algal bloom has been identified from southern Pinellas to Lee counties. Beach impacts in southern Pinellas County are expected to be low through Monday. Impacts in Manatee, Charlotte, and Lee counties are expected to be patchy low to moderate through Monday. Impacts in Sarasota County are expected to be patchy moderate to high through Monday.

Analysis: Clouds in recent imagery have obscured the extent of the bloom in southwest Florida. Samples from Sarasota County taken on March 7 had several medium concentrations of Karenia brevis, and several high concentrations near Venice. Several samples in Lee County from March 7 had diatoms, and one sample had a low concentration of K. brevis at Captiva. Since March 4, FWRI verified eighteen manatee deaths from Manatee to Lee counties. Preliminary reports suggest that the cause of death is red tide toxin exposure. Fish kills and respiratory irritation were reported last week in Manatee and Sarasota counties. Slow southward transport of the bloom is expected. Eastward transport of the southern portion of the bloom is likely.

Bronder, Stolz
Chlorophyll concentration from satellite and forecast winds for March 11, 2005 12Z with cell concentration sampling data from March 4, 2005 shown as red squares (high), red triangles (medium), red diamonds (low b), red circles (low a), orange circles (very low b), yellow circles (very low a), green circles (present), and black "X" (not present).

Blooms shown in red (see p. 1 analysis and image for interpretation)