

BISCAYNE BAY REGIONAL RESTORATION COORDINATION TEAM

Meeting #22

May 1, 2003
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

SFWMD Miami Field Station
Miami, Florida

Report of Proceedings

WELCOME/AGENDA REVIEW

The meeting was opened by Humberto Alonso, Chair, who welcomed everyone to the meeting and then turned the meeting over to Janice Fleischer, Facilitator.

Members present:

Humberto Alonso, Jr., Chair, South Florida Water Management District
Daniel Apt, Department of Environmental Protection
Marisa Bluestone, FL Legislature from Miami-Dade County – Sen. Margolis
Rick Clark, Biscayne National Park
Marsha Colbert, Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve
Cindy Dwyer, Miami-Dade Planning and Zoning
Phil Everingham, Miami Marine Council
Cynthia Guerra, Tropical Audubon
Susan Markley, Miami-Dade DERM
M.J. Matthews, Catanese Center – Florida Atlantic University
Rafaela Monchek, South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force
Audrey Ordenes, Citizens for a Better South Florida
John Proni, NOAA/Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory
Don Pybas, Miami-Dade Coop-Extension
Keith Revell, At-Large Member
Mark Robson, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission
Natalie Schneider, South Florida Regional Planning Council
David Score, NOAA/Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Ms. Fleischer reviewed the Agenda and the Meeting Objectives (Exhibit A).

The Meeting Objectives were:

- To establish clarification points for the Chair to take to the Working Group.
- To review Team Core Values.
- To consider the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to Biscayne Bay.
- To develop and prioritize a list of issues related to each of the Team's adopted "themes".
- To create a Team Vision of the Bay.

Ms. Fleischer reviewed the Meeting Guidelines as revised pursuant to Team input at the April 11, 2003 meeting. (Exhibit B).

The Team adopted the Guidelines as revised; no further revisions were suggested.

Ms. Fleischer then reviewed the Consensus Rules (Exhibit C) that were adopted at the March 14, 2003 meeting. She clarified that if a consensus ranking is called on any item under discussion and there are a majority of members indicating concern by showing 1 or 2 fingers, the Team would then continue that discussion. In the event over 75% of Team members indicate approval with a show of 3 or more fingers, then discussion would be continued for a few additional minutes to help those with concerns (indicated with a show of 1 or 2 fingers) to resolve their issues. However, if full consensus could not be reached after a few more minutes, consensus would be declared under the Team rule of 75% of the majority and the discussion would move on.

Finally, Ms. Fleischer reminded the Team to turn in their evaluations at the end of the meeting.

REVIEW CLARIFICATION POINTS FOR WORKING GROUP

Ms. Fleischer handed out a list of clarification and ratification points (Exhibit D) that the Chair will be presenting to the Working Group next week. Ms. Fleischer asked Mr. Alonso to review these points with the Team.

The Team commented as follows:

- Add to list that the Team may create sub teams or groups.
- These sub groups would allow greater stakeholder interaction; members of sub teams could be stakeholders who are not members of the Team.

Ms. Fleischer opened the floor to public comment. There was none.

REVIEW TEAM CORE VALUES

Ms. Fleischer reviewed the five core values the Team adopted at the April 11, 2003 meeting and explained that these values will ultimately help the Team in defining its Mission. The Team core values are:

- Collaboration
- Knowledge
- Effectiveness
- Viability
- Balanced

SWOT – BBPI AND BEYOND

Ms. Fleischer explained the Team was currently working on both process and substance. She explained that the next step in getting to an Action Plan would be for the Team to identify the strengths (S), weaknesses (W), Opportunities (O) and threats (T) to Biscayne Bay. Each member of the Team was given several “post it” notes and asked to consider each element: SWOT. They were instructed to write one idea per post it and indicate what category it came under by putting an “S”, “W”, “O” or “T” in the upper corner of the post it. All post its would be gathered and put on boards under the proper category. The results of this exercise are indicated below:

SWOT EXERCISE: (shown in groupings made by Team members)

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>-Aesthetic value of the Bay -Natural beauty *** -Aesthetic and economic value -Agency participation and high level of interest and participation by a wide range of stakeholders -among the best boating bodies of water anywhere -Diversity of uses -Commercial fishing economic benefits -Variety of users ensures high level of interest -proximity to large population for year round use -synergy, the right stakeholders are identified **** -#1 natural resource in southeast (makes So. Florida what it is) -highly visible as critical resource (environmental and economic) -threatened and endangered organisms that use the bay -biodiversity in the Bay -biological resources (i.e. seagrasses, mangroves, manatees) -wildlife and fish habitat -Bay is a resilient natural resource -habitat for</p>	<p>-fragmented jurisdictions -tragedy of the commons -municipality politics and public good -inappropriate use of public lands (e.g. for private purpose or non water dependent uses) -lack of resources for enforcement -lack of community wide involvement in restoration -poor coastal management utilization of waterfront -lack of coordinated front, while the right stakeholders are identified, their seemingly going in many different directions -disjointed many informational pieces re: Bay but not effectively consolidated -prioritization, many issues requiring attention, must recognize they can't all be solved at once -focus -bureaucracy *** -not enough visible restoration efforts -lack of meaningful public concern for the</p>	<p>-interagency cooperation -pooling of resources for positive change -collaboration of management activities -coordination of Port improvement projects and restoration -enterprise, spirited enthusiasm by organized stakeholders to make a difference to bay vitality -involvement by municipalities -there seems to be an interest among some agencies to eliminate gaps, duplication and conflict re: bay policy -coordination of stormwater and flood protection improvements with restoration *** -tracking success through science (baseline data) available in many cases -combining knowledge to help with restoration and preservation -research potential -agreement on water quality standards for Bay *** -Blue Belt laws *** -Under appreciated economic resource *** -pro-active emergency preparation</p>	<p>-potential waste water reuse hydrating the Bay -potential charge in water inputs -wastewater reuse discharge to Bay -septic tanks in coastal communities -agricultural and industrial runoff and point/non-point pollution sources -pollution runoff -canal discharges into Bay -no established water quality standards *** -Turkey Point Nuclear power plant *** -the public lack of sufficient knowledge and awareness of the Bay -lack of scientific knowledge about the Bay and resources -reduced or cut off funding -limited funding and resources *** -defining restoration and reasonable use in ways that make them incompatible -overzealous regulatory efforts -perpetual degradation of regs intended to protect ecological resources *** -local land use</p>

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>endangered species</p> <p>-substantial portions of the southern Bay remain intact, and probably can serve as the basis of a restored ecosystem ***</p> <p>-Bill Sadowsky Critical Wildlife Area</p> <p>-Biscayne National Park</p> <p>-national park and aquatic preserve</p> <p>-Outstanding Florida Water</p> <p>-Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve</p> <p>-Sovereign Submerged Lands</p> <p>-other parks on the Bay</p> <p>-3 park service areas ***</p> <p>-inspiring</p> <p>-uniqueness</p> <p>-resilient, dynamic resource ***</p> <p>-water clarity in the Bay</p> <p>-Bay water quality ***</p> <p>-environmental education</p> <p>-Baynanza</p> <p>-Dr. Paul George, history trips ***</p> <p>-food source</p>	<p>Bay</p> <p>-no advocacy group</p> <p>-less visible compared to Everglades due to CERP especially the north Bay ***</p> <p>-water quality entering into the Bay via canals</p> <p>-receiving body for stormwater runoff</p> <p>-heavily impacted by urbanization</p> <p>-natural stressors ***</p> <p>-the Bay is ideal as "waterfront" in waterfront property</p> <p>-large percentage of Bay is a built system, restoration is not possible ***</p> <p>-access</p> <p>-lack of access</p> <p>-critical shortage of boat storage space/facilities</p> <p>-under utilized economic resource</p> <p>-non water dependent use along shoreline</p> <p>-private development limits public access and vies</p> <p>-armored areas (sea walls)</p> <p>-lack of adequate infrastructure for accessing the Bay</p>	<p>***</p> <p>-habitat restoration</p> <p>-CERP projects</p> <p>-environmental restoration ***</p> <p>-recreational opportunities including fishing, swimming, watersports</p> <p>-expand access-boat trips</p> <p>-ecotourism</p> <p>-create a Biscayne Bay Blueway with signage and education programs ***</p> <p>-more community involvement</p> <p>-better awareness of the resource</p> <p>Biscayne Bay is</p> <p>-ability to improve education and outreach regarding the Bay</p> <p>-expand environmental education</p> <p>-citizen interest in cleanup and restoration</p> <p>-better utilization of RSMAS and NOVA SE University and boaters to address needs</p> <p>-educational opportunities of the Bay</p> <p>-unifying thread in a diverse community</p> <p>-public education and outreach about Bay</p>	<p>-shoreline development</p> <p>-development of coastal wetlands and open land in South</p> <p>-stressors- population built environment</p> <p>-population increase and sea level rise</p> <p>-additional dredge and fill</p> <p>-westward sprawl</p> <p>-proximity of urban area and large population</p> <p>-power boats and jet skis</p> <p>-areas in the Bay that would be ideal for public access are being privatized</p> <p>-development of waterfront for non water dependent uses</p> <p>-infrastructure failures</p> <p>-high cost/highest and best use mentality of waterfront property</p> <p>-commercial activities that damage/harm biological resources</p> <p>-incompatible uses</p> <p>-over uses ***</p> <p>-manatee deaths</p> <p>-several endangered and threatened species</p> <p>-loss of wetlands due to development</p> <p>-habitat loss</p> <p>-unregulated commercial fishing threat to health of Bay</p> <p>-declining fish stocks, interagency approach needed</p>

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
			on whether the time has come to establish a marine reserve *** -Miami River Dredging Project -Port Expansion, dredging

The Team made the following comments on the SWOT exercise after all had reviewed the above:

1. Interagency cooperation can be both a weakness and an opportunity
2. Most threats are weaknesses as well
3. Strengths could be increased and become opportunities
4. Perceptions are different; some on Team see a strength where another would see the same item and think of it as a weakness or vice versa
5. Our project themes seem to be on target
6. “Aesthetics” doesn’t really fit under any of our themes, do we need another category?
7. Some strengths could be seen as “values” and would belong in a Vision Statement

ISSUE GENERATION – SMALL GROUP WORK

The Team was asked to consider the items generated in the SWOT exercise when completing its next assignment. Team members were asked to break into small groups to generate a list of issues related to each of the Team’s Project Themes. The guidelines for small group work were reviewed (Exhibit E). The Themes were:

1. Habitat Restoration
2. Access
3. Watershed Management
4. Land Acquisition
5. Environmental Education and Awareness
6. Science
7. Other major projects affecting Biscayne Bay.

Team members broke into small groups and began to work.

RESULTS OF SMALL GROUP WORK

Team members were asked to share the results of their small group work with the rest of the Team. As each small group reported out, Team members were asked to comment. What follows is the result of that discussion.

In general, the Team commented that more information in the form of presentations will be necessary. A field trip was also suggested.

Specific theme work:

I. THEME: Habitat Restoration

Team subgroup: Marsha Colbert, Humberto Alonso, Rick Clark

Issues:

1. Seagrass degradation
2. Corporate involvement in restoration initiatives
3. Vessel groundings
4. Regularly scheduled shoreline cleanups
5. Contaminant release related to dredge activities
6. Marine debris conflicts with turtle and shorebird nesting
7. Develop/update coordinated habitat restoration plan among agencies
8. Evaluate the potential for replanting mangroves in the north Bay

Related items:

Strength: Miami Dade County North Bay Island restoration

Strength: Baynanza and coastal cleanups

Opportunity: To increase public involvement

Team comments:

- Not enough awareness of how much is/has been done
- Need to get to the source of the debris, issue is how do we get to less debris in the Bay

II. THEME: Access

Team subgroup: Don Pybas, Phil Everingham, Natalie Schneider

1. Developer interests vs. the public good
2. Inventory of facilities for access and uses permitted at those points
3. Regulatory process not meeting demand
 - a. Lack of adequate infrastructure
 - b. Enforcement of existing regulations/creation of new
4. Identify and prioritize ideal/available parcels for acquisition for access
 - a. Ex.: Virginia Key Beach-underutilized
5. Visual access
6. Multi-user concerns
7. Coastal management
8. Access from land to water and water to land
9. Waterfront facilities for waterfront uses

Related items:

Presentations: Shoreline Development Committee

Biscayne Bay Access Plan

Team comments:

- Public use of public owned lands would be the appropriate use of public owned lands
- More use/less damage is the goal

III. THEME: Watershed Management

Team subgroup: Daniel Apt, Cindy Dwyer, Cynthia Guerra

1. Pollution
 - a. Stormwater runoff
 - b. Canal discharges
 - c. Agricultural runoff

- d. Septic tanks in coastal areas
- e. Pollution: point and nonpoint
- 2. CERP Projects
 - a. C-111
 - b. L-31
 - c. Potential wastewater reuse discharge (WRPP?)
 - d. Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands
 - e. Lake Belt
- 3. Land Use
 - a. South Dade Watershed Plan
 - b. Zoning
 - c. Sustainable development
 - d. Open space preservation
 - e. Preservation of agriculture
 - f. Shoreline development
- 4. Water treatment/quality
 - a. STAs
 - b. TMDLs
 - c. Water quality targets
 - d. Water quality standards
 - e. Water quality monitoring
 - f. Agriculture and urban Best Management Practices
 - g. Habitat restoration
- 5. Water quantity
 - a. Aquifer recharge
 - b. Additional water for Biscayne National Park and Everglades National Park
 - c. WCAs?
 - d. Minimum flows and levels
 - e. Flood control
 - f. Water supply

IV. THEME: Land Acquisition

Team subgroup: Keith Revell, Susan Markley, Rafaela Monchek

1. Impending development
2. Rising costs
3. Priorities-what to buy, when to buy it
4. Coordination-accidental interagency competition
5. Funding
6. Buying for what? (access, watershed, habitat?)
7. Landowners need information-will land be bought? When, how much?

Team comments:

- We need to know more about land acquisition, not just CERP related but from the view of landowner concerns
- What types of acquisition are possible? Fee simple, lease, transfer of development rights
- Should land acquisition be changed to Land Preservation

V. THEME: Environmental Education and Awareness

Team subgroup: MJ Matthews, Marisa Bluestone, Audrey Ordenes

1. Lack of consistent funding

2. More coordination within water management district (SFWMD) more emphasis on education
3. Lack of educational signage on Biscayne Bay
4. Lack of maps/charts/guides (accurate, recent and complete)
5. Many people to educate; disproportionate to funding for education
6. Restoration projects are not tied to educational messages
7. Lack of information to policy and decision makers
8. Not enough school programs (elementary level)
 - *inherent obstacles such as teacher attendance and field trip availability
9. Lack of media attention (public relations)
10. Lack of consumer interest- no urgency, apathy

Team comments:

- Relationship between education and a larger objective
- Need performance measures
- Miami Dade Environmental Education Group

VI. THEME: Science

Team subgroup: Mark Robson, John Proni, David Score

1. Synthesis of current data and on-going projects (link to other programs that relate to this program)
2. Bay specific harvest data -fish and invertebrates
 - commercial and recreational
3. Model integration-refinement
4. Data quality (for integration)
5. Mechanism for rapid response information gathering
6. Scientific monitoring program integration system wide
7. Peer review of performance measures and methods to detect change

VII. THEME: Other major projects affecting the Bay

Team subgroup: Keith Revell, Susan Markley, Rafaela Monchek

1. Port Expansion
2. Municipal plans
3. Miami River
4. Fisheries Management Plans
5. Cultural and historic resources
6. Enforcement
7. Watson Island
8. Virginia Key
9. CERP

ISSUE PRIORITIZATION

Based on the results of the small group work and plenary discussion, it was decided not to attempt to prioritize issues at this time. As the discussion had progressed, the fact that these themes were developed around project solicitation had become evident. Ms. Fleischer suggested that the Team should look at issues for all Team purposes before attempting to prioritize.

The Team took a break for Lunch.

OUR VISION OF THE BAY – VISIONING EXERCISE

Ms. Fleischer explained to the Team that their next step in moving toward their Action Plan was to draft a Vision for the Bay. She then reviewed the definition of a Vision:

VISION: AN IDEAL AND UNIQUE IMAGE OF THE FUTURE.

- Oriented toward the future
- Strong image of what the future will be like
- Must appear to be possible, not a pipe dream
- Unique

And its elements:

- ❖ Idealistic
- ❖ From the heart
- ❖ Authentic
- ❖ Extraordinary

And, finally, asked the Team to consider the following questions when developing their Vision:

It is 20 years from now, the Bay is functioning perfectly, just as you had hoped.

1. You are in a hot air balloon, what do you see?
2. What improvements have been made?
3. What are people saying about the area now?
4. What problems have been solved?
5. What specific outcomes have been achieved?
6. how are people behaving differently?

Ms. Fleischer read quotes from one of the Team's first meetings during which members indicated the desire for a developing a Vision of Biscayne Bay. She presented the Team with three draft Visions she had prepared as a starting point. The Team decided not to use the Facilitator's drafts, but chose to use a draft written by Mr. Alonso, Chair, as a starting point.

The Team proceeded with a lively and in depth discussion and "wordsmithing" exercise, at the end of which, a Vision was adopted:

"The Bay is ecologically restored. It is readily accessible to all members of our diverse community. It supports a variety of uses and economic activities that are environmentally sustainable. The Bay is managed to promote coordination and to resolve conflicts among competing objectives in order to achieve this vision".

The Team was congratulated for a job well done.

EVALUATIONS/NEXT STEPS

Ms. Fleischer reminded the Team to fill out their evaluation forms and asked if there were any other comments.

Cynthia Guerra, Team Member, and representative from Audubon, stated there will be a meeting sponsored by the Urban Environmental League and Tropical Audubon on "*Whose Land Is It, Anyway? A Community Conference on Smart Growth and Urban Planning*" on Friday, May 16th, 2003 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Miami Woman's Club. Also, the Port of Miami Public Hearing to discuss the recently released draft General Reevaluation Report and Environmental Impact Statement for the Miami Harbor (the Port) Navigation Project will be held on Tuesday May 6, 2003 at 6:30 pm. Ms. Guerra will email the information to Leah Bronson, Staff, for distribution.

Ms. Bronson announced that the next meeting will be at the Government Center in Downtown Miami on June 13th, 2003. More information will follow closer to the meeting date.

Humberto Alonso handed out a chart outlining all the projects being done by SFWMD in Miami-Dade County and stated this information was provided to the Legislative Delegation for Miami-Dade County. This information is to be updated quarterly.

Mr. Alonso thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.