

# **BISCAYNE BAY REGIONAL RESTORATION COORDINATION TEAM**

Meeting #23

June 13, 2003

9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Stephen P. Clark Government Center  
Miami, Florida

Report of Proceedings

## **WELCOME/AGENDA REVIEW/CHAIR'S REPORT**

Humberto Alonso, SFWMD, Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He reported on his presentation to the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force Working Group (WG) regarding this Team's efforts since hiring an outside facilitator and his tenure as Chair. (Exhibit A is a copy of Mr. Alonso's PowerPoint presentation to the WG) Mr. Alonso indicated that he felt the WG's response to his presentation was positive. He announced that he had just received a formal response to the Team's requests from the WG and would inform the Team of its contents at the next meeting. He then turned the meeting over to the Team's facilitator, Janice Fleischer.

Members present:

Humberto Alonso, Jr., Chair, South Florida Water Management District  
Daniel Apt, Department of Environmental Protection  
Marisa Bluestone, Florida Legislature from Miami-Dade County  
Fran Bohnsack, Miami River Marine Group  
Rick Clark, Biscayne National Park  
Marsha Colbert, Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve  
Marella Crane, Miami-Dade Coop. Extension  
Nancy Diersing, NOAA/FL Keys National Marine Sanctuary  
Cindy Dwyer, Miami-Dade Planning and Zoning  
Phil Everingham, Miami Marine Council  
Cynthia Guerra, Tropical Audubon  
John Hulsey, South Florida Regional Planning Council  
Susan Markley, Miami-Dade DERM  
Rafaela Monchek, South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force  
Audrey Ordenes, Citizens for a Better South Florida  
Patrick Pitts, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Commission  
Sue Ray, South Florida Water Management District  
Keith Revell, At-Large Member

Susan Teel, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

Ms. Fleischer directed Team members to their agenda packets. She reviewed the Agenda (Exhibit B) and the Team's Discussion Guidelines (Exhibit C). She announced that a new procedure of mailing meeting materials to absent Team members would be implemented from this meeting forward. This procedure would be used only if both the Designee and the Alternate were absent. It is expected that if either the Designee or Alternate attended the meeting, they will share the information gained at the meeting with each other and their constituent group or agency.

Prior to continuing on to the first exercise of the day, several members made the following observations and expressed concerns:

1. There is concern over lack of private enterprise attendance and participation on the Team.
2. If we were to change the time of the meetings, we might be better able to attract those individuals who represent the private sector.
3. Concern that Request for Proposal's (RFP) for previously approved projects are being posted without any notification to the Team. A process should be in place to let the Team know prior to the RFP going out.
4. At a minimum, the Scope of Work (SOW) on Projects should be given to the Team.
5. Use the website to post SOW on projects.
6. Thought that there was a process that required the District to bring RFP's to the Team prior to them going to the public.

**THE VISION-WHAT ARE OUR ISSUES? OR: "ISSUE GENERATION: THE SEQUEL"**

Ms. Fleischer reminded members that at the last meeting she had asked them to generate issues related to their Project Themes. The results of that exercise demonstrated that Team members were not really concentrating on "issues" and that the Project Themes were inadequate to really cover all issues that affect the Bay. Many items that appeared as a result of that exercise were project names or process comments rather than "issues". The result is a need for the Team to revisit issue generation. Ms. Fleischer showed a short presentation (Exhibit D), which demonstrated the process for developing an Action Plan. She asked the Team to define an Issue as: "A point or matter of discussion, debate, or dispute."

The Team must first consider all of its possible issues in order to determine if it has fully articulated its ultimate Goals.

Based on the definition given, Team members were asked to brainstorm all issues on post it notes (one idea per note). All notes were posted along a long wall in no particular order or grouping.

### **ISSUE CATEGORIZATION AND COORDINATION WITH VISION GOALS**

Separate flipchart sheets containing each of the titles of the Team's already identified Goals (taken from the Vision Statement) were provided. Team members were instructed to work collaboratively and place the post-its containing issues on the flipchart with the Goal that relates to that issue. If any issues appearing on a note did not seem to belong on any of the Goal sheets, the Team was told to leave those notes on the wall for further consideration.

The post its containing issues that were left remaining on the wall were grouped and identified as "Overarching Themes". They were as follows:

#### Funding:

- Lack of funding
- Legislature did not provide any money this year
- No consistent funding for Bay projects

#### Coordination:

- Lack of consistent coordination among agencies to implement multi-jurisdictional projects
- Jurisdictional fragmentation
- Lack of coordination with projects on Bay
- Coastal management
- Related planning projects
  - South Miami Dade Watershed Project ?
  - Water and Sewer Department facilities plan
  - South Florida Regional Planning Council- Watershed Study ?
- There is no unified/coordinating group or organization looking after the Bay's interest

#### Land use Conflicts:

- High rise construction along the shoreline
- Too much armoring of the coast; missed opportunities for redevelopment to recreate shoreline habitat
- Do condos with water views have to be smack on the water?
- Development around the Bay and reduction of natural upland areas

- Impact of development on coastal wetlands

Regulation and Enforcement:

- Regulations are too complicated
- Over regulation
- Lack of enforcement on the Bay
- Jurisdictional fragmentation
- Poor law enforcement of existing fishing regulations equals poor compliance
- Too much government involvement? (City, county, state, federal, etc.)
- Absence of marine patrol
- Not enough enforcement of regulations
- Enforcement of environmental laws on the Bay
- Regulatory framework

Education:

- Do we fully appreciate the Bay?
- Public perception
- Coordination of education about the Bay
- Lack of environmental education for teachers and students
- Lack of knowledge
- Education and outreach
- Lack of public awareness education
- The Bay is under-utilized aesthetic resource
- Lack of boaters education
- Lack of awareness
- Hands-on education access
- Lack of public knowledge (best practices)
- Not on elected officials radar
- There is little awareness of the Bay by most people
- Lack of interest
- Lack of public support of agency work

**FINALIZING GOALS AND VISION**

As the Team reviewed the results of this exercise and the new information generated, the Facilitator had the Team revisit the wording of their Vision to ensure it still reflected the issues, thoughts and needs of the Team. In so doing, the Team revised its Vision as follows:

*The Bay is ecologically restored. It is readily accessible to and appreciated by 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 with sufficient resources to achieve this vision.*

The Team then decided to change the name of the Goal: “Readily Accessible” to “Readily Accessible and Appreciated”. At this point, it was decided that all issues related to the overall “Education” theme should be placed under this Goal, although it was recognized that education, like funding, land use conflicts and coordination, would cut across all Goals.

### **ISSUE GROUPING WITHIN GOALS-SMALL GROUP WORK**

Team members were randomly assigned a number between 1 and 3 and were broken into three small groups. Each group worked on one Team Goal. Each group was instructed to review the issues that had been placed in that Goal and organize them into sub-groupings. Each subgroup was given a title.

The results of this activity are shown below:

#### ***Goal: Readily Accessible and Appreciated***

##### *Subgroup: Vessel Access*

Issues:

- Boating access to the Bay is difficult
- Shortage of dry stack ?
- Marina or boat storage space
- Cost of moorings anchorage
- Maximum capacity on Bay for storage
- Not enough access for recreational boats
- Need more space for recreational boats
- Boat ramp facilities
- Anchoring

##### *Subgroup: Vessel Traffic*

Issues:

- Need to have better understanding of boat traffic on Bay
- Poor signage/markers for boaters
- Numerous and increasing number of vessels grounding and causing damage to seagrass bed
- Recreational and commercial vessel traffic
- Lack of user-friendly kayak paddle trail

*Subgroup: Land-Use*

Issues:

- Land use conflicts
- Limits on upland development
- Use of public owned land for private purpose

*Subgroup: Signage*

Issues:

- Lack of signage indicating mariners entering Biscayne National Park
- Connection of Bay to Everglades
- Historical signage
- Interpretive signs

*Subgroup: Education & Awareness*

Issues:

- Do we fully appreciate the Bay?
- Public perception
- Coordination of education about the Bay
- Lack of environmental education for teachers and students
- Lack of knowledge
- Education and outreach
- Lack of public awareness education
- The Bay is under-utilized aesthetic resource
- Lack of boaters education
- Lack of awareness
- Hands-on education access
- Lack of public knowledge (best practices)
- Not on elected officials radar
- There is little awareness of the Bay by most people
- Lack of interest
- Lack of public support of agency work

*Subgroup: Public Access*

Issues:

- Public access and enjoyment
- National, state and local parks
- Availability of low-income access
- The Bay is difficult to get to
- Views of the Bay restricted
- Lack of public space along the coast
- Lack of water taxi service

*Subgroup: Miscellaneous*

Issues:

- Over population
- Hurricane preparation

**Goal: Ecological/Physical Restoration**

*Subgroup: Coordination*

Issues:

- Environmental restoration
- Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project (CERP)
- Coordination with Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands project
- Effects of CERP project on Bay
- Unknown results of Everglades restoration effort
- National, state, local parks
- There needs to be more private sector involvement with restoration

*Subgroup: Water Management (timing and flow)*

Issues:

- Timing and amount of freshwater flow into Southern Bay and how that affects biological communities
- Timing, quality and quantity of freshwater inputs
- Freshwater discharges to the Bay are a problem
- Quality of tributary waters
- Salinity fluctuations/changes
- CERP effects on water quantity

*Subgroup: User Impact*

Issues:

- Weekend congregations of people on sensitive shoal/flats areas
- Population, population, population
- User impacts from boating/fishing to seagrass and other ecological communities
- Boat damage to bottom

*Subgroup: Global Warming*

Issues:

- Impact of sea-level rise on Bay ecology

*Subgroup: Dredging*

Issues:

- Port of Miami: traffic, dredging, expansion
- Miami River: traffic, dredging
- Miami River dredging affecting Bay water quality

*Subgroup: Resources and Funding*

Issues:

- Resource management
- Funding of water quality monitoring
- Securing funding for restoration work is critical to maintain momentum
- Bay studies (economic/scientific)

*Subgroup: Water Quality*

Issues:

- Contaminated sediments in canals
- Reduce inputs of toxics and contaminants to the Bay
- Improve groundwater inputs to the Bay
- Agricultural/urban runoff
- Reduce nutrient loads to the Bay
- Affects of canal discharge on Bay health
- Lack of water quality standards
- Improve water quality in the Bay
- Affects of waste water reuse on ecology and health of the Bay
- Impacts from landfills
- User population
- Pollution: air, water, land
- Establish water quality targets for the Bay
- Possible use of wastewater reuse to hydrate wetlands (CERP, WRPP)
- Sewage contamination
- Poor understanding of ground water movement and influence to Bay water
- Run-off from land-based sources; non-permit source pollution
- Turbidity
- Baseline water quality – 1978

*Subgroup: Endangered/Loss of Species*

Issues:

- Water control structure related to manatee deaths
- Resentment of slow speed zones
- Resentment of manatees
- Boating-related manatee deaths



- Affects of recreational fishing on flora and fauna
- Loss of natural environment (flora and fauna)
- Crocodiles
- Manatee protection regulations
- Endangered and threatened species

*Subgroup: Coastal Development*

Issues:

- Affects of development on Bay health
- Land-use conflicts
- Coastal construction
- Too much armoring of seawalls

*Subgroup: Debris*

Issues:

- Marine debris
- Trash on shoreline
- Floatables or trash in the Bay
- There is no organized effort to continuously kept the Bay clean

*Subgroup: Habitat*

Issues:

- Seagrass degradation
- Destruction of bay bottom and corals
- Hurricane preparation
- Loss of marine habitat
- Exotics in mangroves; DOT causeway
- Affects of exotic fish on Bay fish communities
- Loss of habitat protection (seagrass and mangroves)
- Juvenile fish habitat destruction
- Industry versus habitat
- Improve conditions near shore for estuarine assemblages
- Junky artificial reefs

*Subgroup: Fishing Impact*

Issues:

- Over-fishing
- Fisheries conservation
- Fish species change (fewer, different)
- Commercial fishing
- Fishing impacts
- Commercial fishing practices (roller frame trawling)

- Affects of commercial fishing on flora and fauna
- Indications of fish stock declines; some species well below historical levels

*Subgroup: Vessel Pollution*

Issues:

- Cruise ship pollution
- Pollution from boats
- Clean marinas
- Potential for damaging anchorages if approved are too costly

***Goal: Support uses and economic activity (infrastructure and process)***

*Subgroup: Fishing*

Issues:

- Recreational Fishing
- Fishing impacts
- Commercial Fishing
- Hard-bottom communities
- Over fishing
- Commercial fishing practices

*Subgroup: Boating (uses)*

Issues:

- Drunken boaters
- Boating deaths
- Boating safety (accidents, human fatalities)
- Irresponsible boaters
- Recreational vessel traffic
- Commercial vessel traffic
- Boat maintenance

*Subgroup: Sustainable Uses*

Issues:

- National, state, local parks
- Green tourism
- Recreational uses

*Subgroup: Marine Industries (infrastructure)*

Issues:

- Lack of protection of marine industry from development
- P.O.M. projects with blasting and dredging

- Use of water-front land for non-water dependent activities
- Seaport expansion and dredging
- Clean marinas

*Subgroup: Historical/Cultural*

Issues:

- Historical resources of the Bay are not well known
- Loss of historic preservation
- Better emphasis/attention to bay cultural history (i.e. ship wrecks)

*Subgroup: Ecological Impacts*

Issues:

- Over population
- Are we loving the Bay to death?
- Popularity of Key Biscayne
- Pollution
- Junk tossed in water
- Agricultural/urban runoff
- Water quality
- Storm weather
- Industry versus habitat
- Economic benefits versus environmental quality

*Subgroup: Overarching*

Issues:

- Regulation
- More Enforcement
- Hurricane preparation (marine/land)
- Land-use conflicts

*Subgroup: Miscellaneous*

Issues:

- Coordinated marketing like “Discover Tampa Bay” lacking
- Bay studies (scientific/economic)

Each small group reported the results of their work to the group as a whole. No changes were made to the small group results.

## **LUNCHTIME PRESENTATION: “EIGHT DAYS KAYAKING BISCAYNE BAY” A SLIDESHOW**

Audrey Ordenes, CFABSF, participated in a fundraiser for Biscayne Bay in which she kayaked, along with two others, the entire Bay during an eight-day trip. Ms. Ordenes showed slides of the progress of their trip to the Team. A discussion followed this presentation in which the following observations were made:

1. Even those who want to follow rules and abide by the law have trouble: signs are bad, signs are down, charts are unclear or confusing, etc.
2. There are those who know the rules and regulations and still fail to comply.
3. Implementation of measures is a problem, too. Even if the action is funded and authorized, getting it implemented by overworked staff or understaffed agencies are sometimes impossible.

Questions posed: How do we resolve these? What actions work, which ones do not?

### **OBJECTIVES-HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE REACHED OUR GOAL?**

Team members once again broke into small groups according to the Team Goals. Ms. Fleischer asked that members go to the group in which they have the most expertise. The groups were instructed to draft objectives for the sub-groups (sub-goals) that were generated for each Goal. Ms. Fleischer reminded the groups that an objective is always “SMART”: specific, measurable, achievable, responsible, and has a timetable. Each sub-goal can have several objectives. An objective is an end that determines when you have reached your goal.

The results of this activity are shown below:

#### ***Goal: Readily Accessible & Appreciated***

Note: the ‘Objectives’ working group changed the subgroup headings created by the previous ‘Issues’ working group and offered implementation strategies in some instances.

#### **Subgroup: Education**

Target Audiences:

- Elected Officials and agency representatives
- Direct users of the Bay (boaters...)
- Tourists/tourist industry

- General Population (emphasis on minorities)
- Teachers/educators/students

Objectives:

- Create awareness/understanding/support/appreciation of 5 target audiences\*
  - Implementation
    - Install and maintain adequate signage (navigational, interpretive, historical, connection to Everglades)
    - Events
    - Training workshops
    - Volunteer recruitment
    - Curriculum
    - Meeting with elected officials
    - Eco-tourism (travel writers, etc.)
    - Multilingual publications
    - Multimedia (TV, radio, internet)
- Establish a dedicated and consistent funding source for education outreach /access
  - Implementation:
    - grants
    - obtain legislative funding support
    - agency support
    - bond issue
    - identify existing funding support
- Coordinate existing education outreach to leverage resources
  - Implementation:
    - expand and enhance education alliance

Subgroup: Public Access

Objectives:

- Improve Bay (physical and visual) access for 5 target audiences
  - Implementation:
    - implement Biscayne Bay Access Plan
      - boating (recreational, commercial access)
      - visual access
      - pedestrian access
      - fishing

- marina / boat storage (wet/dry)
  - responsible planning to prevent overcrowding/traffic
  - kayak/canoe friendly trail
  - water taxi service
- Establish a dedicated and consistent funding source for public access
  - Implementation:
    - grants
    - obtain legislative funding support
    - agency support
    - bond issue
    - identify existing funding support
- Ensure existing regulation designed to protect physical, visual and public access to the shoreline are fully utilized
  - Implementation:
    - establish citizen watch group
    - assess effectiveness of existing regulations to protect shoreline
    - improve enforcement

### ***Goal: Ecological/Physical Restoration***

#### *Subgroup: Coordination*

##### Objectives:

- Reduce duplication, eliminate “gaps” and resolve conflicts among agencies and groups by securing formal approval/agreement before project implementation
- Increase the profile of Biscayne Bay in CERP

#### *Subgroup: Water Management (timing and flow)*

##### Objectives:

- Restore more natural quantity, timing and distribution of fresh water inflows to Biscayne Bay to restore or enhance more natural estuarine conditions

#### *Subgroup: Resources and Funding*

##### Objectives:

- Secure funding support to implement Biscayne Bay restoration projects (\$10 million per year)

*Subgroup: Water Quality*

Objectives:

- Develop and adopt water quality standards for the restoration of Biscayne Bay by Dec. 31, 2005
- Reduce inputs of toxics/contaminants to the Bay by 10% per year until water quality standards are met
- Develop and implement a comprehensive BMP program to minimize storm water runoff, point and non-point source pollution by Dec. 31, 2005
- Develop a regulatory program to implement and enforce the above
- Evaluate impact of waste water reuse for wetlands of Biscayne Bay by Dec. 31, 2004.

*Subgroup: Endangered/Loss of Species*

Objectives:

- Reduce human-related mortality of endangered species by 10% per year
- Increase the acreage of suitable endangered and threatened habitat by 5% per year

*Subgroup: Coastal Development*

Objectives:

- Achieve 100% compliance with permitting for coastal development
- Eliminate coastal development permits issued with variances to regulations
- All permits issued should be consistent with Biscayne Bay Aquatic Reserve Act and rules

*Subgroup: Debris*

Objectives:

- Eliminate 100% of trash and marine debris from natural environment by Dec. 31, 2010

*Subgroup: Habitat*

Objectives:

- Increase acreage of seagrass and coastal wetlands by 5% per year
- Reduce areas infested by exotics by 5% per year
- Enhance 5% of degraded benthic communities and wetlands every year (measure: apply method similar to Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC))

*Subgroup: Fishing Impact*

Objectives:

- Define sustainable “take” for all species (commercial and recreational) by Dec. 31, 2005

- Complete fisheries management plan for BNP by Dec. 31, 2003
- Develop and implement commercial fisheries regulations to protect habitat and reduce by-catch by Dec. 31, 2005

*Subgroup: Vessel Pollution*

Objectives:

- Incorporate into “Water Quality” objectives

Due to time constraints, the following sub-groups did not have Objectives identified.

*Subgroup: User Impacts*

*Subgroup: Global Warming*

*Subgroup: Dredging*

***Goal: Supports Uses and Economic Activity***

*Subgroup: Fishing*

Objectives:

- Achieve sustainable fish population
- Increase average size of fish
- Reduce incidental by-catch
- Increase commercial landings
- Increase use of sustainable fishing techniques
- Increase employment in commercial/recreational fishing

*Subgroup: Boating (uses)*

Objectives:

- Increase adherence to boating laws
- Decrease propeller scars
- Decrease boating fatalities (human & manatees)
- Increase level of boater education
- Decrease debris from boaters
- Increase employment in boating industry
- Increase number of registered boaters
- Increase number of boating facilities

*Subgroup: Sustainable Uses*

Objectives:

- Increase number of park visitors
- Increase number of scuba/snorkel activities
- Increase value of eco-tourism



- Increase employment in eco-tourism
- Increase eco-tourism facilities
- Increase number of trips via water-taxi
- Increase kayak/canoe sales/rentals
- Increase number of marine mammals to see
- Increase number of food/drink establishments on water

*Subgroup: Marine Industries (infrastructure)*

Objectives:

- Increase, or no net loss of, waterfront land for marine industry
- Increase employment in marine industry
- Increase efficiency and contiguity of deep and shallow water port areas
- Decrease non-water dependent uses on waterfront land
- Decrease negative impacts from dredging

*Subgroup: Historical/Cultural*

Objectives:

- Increase opportunities for cultural/historical experiences
- Increase number of visitors to cultural/historical sites

*Subgroup: Ecological Impacts*

Objectives:

- Decrease debris from land sources
- Decrease beach closures
- Decrease number of boat groundings
- Increase dedicated funding from marine law enforcement returned to Bay and users

Due to time constraints, the following subgroup did not have identified objectives: Overarching

Each small group reported back to the group as a whole. No changes were made to the small group results; however, the following general comments were noted:

- How do we resolve conflicts between and among all objectives?
- Make sure the overarching themes (funding, coordination, land use conflicts, and regulation/enforcement) are eventually incorporated into the Action Plan.

## **EVALUATIONS/NEXT STEPS/ADJOURN**

Ms. Fleischer thanked everyone for their hard work and reminded everyone to make sure to fill out an evaluation form.

Mr. Alonso announced that the State Legislature did not provide any money in the State budget for any water body in the State. He also stated there has been some rumor about a possible water bill that may come up in the special session in June, but there are no guarantees.

Ms. Fleischer announced the next meeting would be on August 1, 2003 at the Rosentiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.