

Biscayne Bay Regional Restoration Coordination Team

NOAA SE Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC)
Statistics Building Conference Room
75 Virginia Beach Drive, Miami, FL 33149

May 22, 2013

Attendees

Dick Frost
Phil Everingham
Sarah Bellmund
Nancy Diersing
Jerrilyn Ashworth
Joan Browder
Kahlil Kettering
Captain Dan Kipnis
Patrick Pitts (by phone)
Ashton Youngquist
Julie Dick
Beth Lewis

1. Welcome and Introductions

Dick Frost, Chair of the Biscayne Bay Regional Restoration Coordination Team (BBRRCT or Team), and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Review and Discussion of Action Steps

Phil Everingham led the discussion of Action Steps. All meeting attendees were asked for input on Accomplishments and Benefits of BBRRCT as well as BBCT Issues. The responses were as follows:

Accomplishments/Benefits of BBRRCT

- Developed a BBRRCT Action Plan (and have revisited and revised on timely basis)
- Played key role in getting Economic Impact Study of Biscayne Bay done
- Sent position/advisory letters to the Working Group on Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project and the C-111 Canal
- Help to develop consensus on issues that impact Biscayne Bay
- Developed presentation to the Coastal Society Conference that is a good summary of the status of Biscayne Bay
- Raised public awareness of Biscayne Bay issues

- Helped improve group knowledge and focus
- Provides an excellent forum for the sharing of information and perspectives

BBRRCT Issues (for the Team)

- **Declining attendance over the past 2-3 years**
 - Reasons
 - Work pressures
 - Conflicting/competing meetings
 - Lack of impact on funding decisions
 - Lack of momentum and accomplishments for Biscayne Bay due to duplicative and too drawn-out Action Plan exercises
 - Perception that meeting topics often weren't important or of too narrow focus
 - Lack of recognition of BBRRCT or its work/accomplishments/impact
 - Solutions
 - Strive for BBRRCT to have an impact on decisions and outcomes affecting the Bay
 - Reconnect with member groups that rarely or never attend
 - Have more topical agendas and discussions
 - Have ongoing discussions/carryover from meeting to meeting on key issues
 - Develop an Agenda Committee (Sarah Bellmund volunteered to chair same)
 - Make recommendations regarding Biscayne Bay to the Working Group on a regular basis
 - Consider adding new team members
 - Focus on three key areas
 - Education
 - Science
 - Management

3. Miami-Dade Water & Sewer Lawsuit

Julie Dick of the Abraham Law Group representing Biscayne Bay Waterkeeper gave a status report on the Federal lawsuit against Miami-Dade County including background on the legal cause of action. Her PowerPoint presentation has been posted on the web. Biscayne Bay Waterkeeper has intervened in the lawsuit. Julie reported that Miami-Dade County and the Environmental Protection Agency have entered into a Consent Decree with an approximately \$1.6 billion capital project plan to stop ongoing sanitary sewage overflows. The Biscayne Bay Waterkeeper argues that the capital project list would not make the system resilient or meet current standards for mitigation of risks from extreme weather, sea level rise or storm surge; may not qualify for federal funds; and will result in a higher cost for repairs when a storm surge hits and the plant is not built to withstand the impacts. Biscayne Bay Waterkeeper says that the actual cost of compliance may be higher than the Consent Decree itself and the Consent Decree

doesn't assure long term compliance. Julie said that Judge Moreno will make a determination of whether the Consent Decree is "fair, reasonable, and in the public interest".

4. BBCW Project Reservations

Beth Lewis, Senior Supervising Attorney at the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), stated that the water reservation for Phase 1 of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands (BBCW) Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project will be brought to the June Regular Meeting of the SFWMD Governing Board to be held in Miami-Dade County. The SFWMD intends to reserve water identified in the Project Implementation Report for the protection of fish and wildlife from consumptive use. The BBCW reservations are a prerequisite for the SFWMD to receive cost share credit for land purchased and project work already done as well as for the project to proceed. To date the SFWMD has proceeded with elements of the BBCW Project without Federal dollars. The Team had a discussion of the proposed reservation and participated in a question and answer session with Beth. Members were encouraged to attend the SFWMD Governing Board Meeting if they wished to comment on the proposed reservation and future needs of the Bay.

5. Future Items, Miscellaneous and Meeting Wrap-Up

Chair Dick Frost announced that due to family health reasons he would have to resign as Chair of the BBRCT as of the end of this meeting. The Team expressed their appreciation for Dick's leadership of the Team and its best wishes for the future. Pamela Sweeney will act as Interim Chair until a new Chair is appointed by the Working Group and a Vice-Chair is elected by the Team. The Team will make a recommendation to the Working Group on the Chair; this should be a priority item on the June agenda. Captain Dan Kipnis moved to recommend Phil Everingham as the new Chair and Sarah Bellmund seconded the motion. However, as the item was not on the agenda, it was decided to wait and agenda the recommendation for the June meeting.

The next Working Group Meeting is scheduled for June 25th in the South Florida Water Management District's B-1 auditorium. The Team is planning to develop a report to present at that meeting, focusing on freshwater needs of the Bay. It was decided to move the date of the June meeting to allow for development of the report prior to the Working Group meeting.

Tentative Agenda items for the June meeting were discussed and agreed upon:

- New Chair and Vice Chair
- Develop report for presentation at 6/25 Working Group Meeting
- Presentation on status of CEPP

The Team wishes to further discuss going back to scheduling meetings on Fridays. The Team also wished to consider adopting a new name such as "Biscayne Bay Restoration Team".

Dick Frost adjourned the meeting.