

Biscayne Bay Regional Restoration Coordination Team

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

April 24, 2013

Attendees

Brian Carlstrom
LTC Tom Greco
Pamela Sweeney
Phil Everingham
Cara Capp
Jennifer Tisthammer
Sarah Bellmund
Nancy Diersing
Laura Reynolds
Erik Stabenau
Jerrilyn Ashworth
Joan Browder
Lisa Krinsky
Jeffrey Mullins
Stephen Blair
Ed Swakon
Susan Kaynor
David Bray
Beth Lewis
Rick Alleman
Rene Price
Susan Shapiro
Ian Zink
Roy Sonenshein

1. Welcome and Introductions

Pamela Sweeney called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone as Vice-Chair of the Biscayne Bay Regional Restoration Coordination Team (BBRRCT or Team), and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Groundwater to Biscayne Bay/Reservations

Rene Price, a professor at Florida International University gave a PowerPoint presentation on *Determining the dominant sources of freshwater, including submarine groundwater discharge, to Biscayne Bay*. Professor Price and her team utilized geochemical tracers to distinguish the groundwater contribution to the Bay. Conclusions her team reached were that rainfall is the dominant source of freshwater to Biscayne Bay (50 to 55%) and most important in the eastern Bay; canal inputs account for between 38 to 40% of freshwater inputs from coastline to central bay; fresh groundwater inputs range from 5 to 10% along the coastline; and for a Bay-Wide budget including seawater and freshwater inputs, fresh groundwater accounts for 1 to 2% of the total water in the Bay. This presentation has been posted along with a paper entitled *Determining Spatial and Temporal Inputs of Freshwater, Including Submarine Groundwater Discharges, to a Subtropical Estuary Using Geochemical Tracers, Biscayne Bay, South Florida*. The paper does cite concern over the degree of error (25%) and cites that improvements in the degree of error could be obtained by sampling closer to the shoreline.

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 questions and general discussion focused on the need for more protection for Biscayne Bay than just the proposed reservation for the BBCW Project. The Team generally thought that a larger area of the Bay should be protected, that groundwater should be protected as well as surface water, and that water from terminated permits should not be reallocated for consumptive use. Some members of the Team thought that a letter/memo should be sent to the Working Group by the BBRRCT commenting on the proposed reservation. The next Working Group meeting had not been scheduled.

3. Discussion with Brian Carlstrom & LTC Greco

Brian Carlstrom, the new Superintendent for Biscayne National Park, joined the Team and discussed his background and the General Management Plan for BNP. Brian noted that a new visitor's center located in downtown Miami is probably not fiscally possible in this economic climate. Hurricane Sandy had an impact on BNP -Elliot Key is virtually inaccessible to the public.

LTC Tom Greco of the US Army Corps of Engineers attended the meeting and gave the Team a brief update on the Central Everglades Planning Process.

4. Future Items and Meeting Wrap-Up

Among the member issues mentioned were questions by Ed Swakon regarding HB 599, the Update on the Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan is being updated, concern about the Shrine property being developed, and interest in a field trip for the Team. There was a brief discussion on whether there should be a standing agenda committee. Sarah Bellmund volunteered to chair such a committee if it were created. A review and discussion of the Action Steps will be on the May 22nd agenda. The meeting was adjourned by Pamela Sweeney.