

# **Biscayne Bay Regional Restoration Coordination Team**

**NOAA Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC)  
Statistics Building (rear of main building) Conference Room  
75 Virginia Beach Drive  
Miami, FL 33149**

**June 18, 2014**

## **Attendees**

Pamela Sweeney  
Phil Everingham  
Joan Browder  
Sarah de Fusco  
Jeffrey Mullins  
Dan Kipnis  
Sarah Bellmund  
Susan Shapiro  
Patrick Pitts (by phone)  
Lisa Krinsky  
Caroline McLaughlin  
Inger Hansen  
Jennifer Tisthammer  
Caroline Herman  
Elizabeth Jones  
Geoff Cook  
Laura Eldridge  
John Stieglitz  
Joan Lawrence

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Phil Everingham, Chairman of the BBRRCT, called the meeting to order and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

## **2. Aquatic Preserve Management Planning:**

Pamela Sweeney, Manager Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserves, Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA), FDEP, gave a presentation on the *Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserves: Draft 10 Year Management Plan*. 2014 is the Preserve's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year.

Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve was “established for the purpose of preserving and enhancing Biscayne Bay...in an essentially natural condition” and “to preserve and promote indigenous life forms and habitats:

- Sponges, soft corals & hard corals
- Seagrasses, mangroves, mud flats
- Marine reptiles
- Game and non-game fish
- Marine mammals
- Tropical marine invertebrates
- Birds
- Shellfish”

The Florida Coastal Office covers 4 million acres. The four long-term goals of CAMA’s Aquatic Preserve Program are to:

- Protect and enhance the ecological integrity of the aquatic preserves;
- Restore areas to their natural condition;
- Encourage sustainable use and foster active stewardship by engaging local communities in the protection of aquatic preserves; and
- Improve management effectiveness through a process based on sound science, consistent evaluation, and continual reassessment.

This is the first-ever management plan, it covers the period from June 2012 to May 2022 and can be found at [http://dep.state.fl.us/coastal/sites/biscayne/pub/Biscayne\\_Bay\\_A\\_P\\_Management\\_Plan.pdf](http://dep.state.fl.us/coastal/sites/biscayne/pub/Biscayne_Bay_A_P_Management_Plan.pdf) .

The draft Management Plan consists of seven chapters. Chapter 5 contains five important issues:

- Water Quality and Quantity
- Habitat Loss
- Obstacles to natural Resource Management
- Public Awareness, Access, and Use
- Sustainable Economic Use and Viability

along with goals, objectives, integrated strategies, and performance measures.

Additional information can be found at the following links:

Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserves: [www.aquaticpreserves.org](http://www.aquaticpreserves.org)

Seagrass Outreach Partnership: [http://www.flseagrass.org/facts\\_news.php](http://www.flseagrass.org/facts_news.php)

Changing Seas: <http://www.changingseas.tv/episode203.html>

Think Green: <http://www.miamigov.com/evideo/pages/>

(Note: This presentation can be found can be found on the Task Force Web Site at [http://www.sfrestore.org/rrct/bbay/documents/bbrct\\_handouts\\_past.html](http://www.sfrestore.org/rrct/bbay/documents/bbrct_handouts_past.html) )

### **3. Habitat Blueprint Nomination for Biscayne Bay as part of the South Florida Coastal Marine Ecosystem and its Watershed:**

Dr. Joan Browder, NOAA, gave a presentation on the *South Florida Coastal Marine Ecosystem And Its Watershed, a Joint SEFSCO-SERO-OAR-CRCP Nomination for SE US Habitat Blueprint Area*. The NOAA Habitat Blueprint Initiative is a Framework for NOAA

- To think strategically across programs, with partners both within and outside of NOAA, to counter loss of irreplaceable coastal habitat and improve habitat for fisheries, marine life, and coastal communities.
- To increase the effectiveness of efforts to improve habitat and increase economic, cultural, and environmental benefits.

The NOAA Habitat Blueprint was developed to build on existing programs, prioritize NOAA activities, and guide future actions to improve the way NOAA does business. The Blueprint is a Watershed approach (from the Florida Keys to above Lake Okeechobee) with the principal objective of building upon existing multi-agency management framework and use of sound science to conserve and restore marine habitat structure and function and the health and productivity of fisheries and to protect and recover protected species and restore biological diversity. It sets out the major habitat issues in Coastal Waters:

- Loss of coral cover and structure, coupled with little visible natural coral recruitment or coral reestablishment from fragments
- Loss of nursery and other essential fish habitat, including seagrass, mangrove, and reef
- Degraded water quality
- Overfished stocks and stocks experiencing overfishing
- Imperiled (especially, ESA listed and proposed) coastal marine species.

(Note: This presentation can be found on the Task Force website at [http://www.sfrestore.org/rrct/bbay/documents/bbrrct\\_handouts\\_past.html](http://www.sfrestore.org/rrct/bbay/documents/bbrrct_handouts_past.html) )

### **4. The Aquaculture Industry – An Overview:**

Dr. John Stieglitz, University of Miami – RSMAS, gave a presentation entitled *SUSTAINABLE MARINE AQUACULTURE AND THE FUTURE OF SEAFOOD PRODUCTION*. The presentation centered on sustainable development and the rational use of natural renewable resources and gave critical information on the current status and trends in fisheries, aquaculture and human population. In a few decades, due to population growth, the world will need to produce 60-70% more food than is produced on earth today. Fisheries and aquaculture can provide answers. Although world aquaculture production has been steadily rising, the US lags behind and only produces 3% of the total world aquaculture production. The US presently has a \$11Billion per year seafood trade deficit. The University of Miami has an experimental hatchery at RSMAS (Rosenstiel School of Marine & Atmospheric Science) which works with Yellowtail Jack, Mutton

Snapper, Pacific Red Snapper, and Yellowfin Tuna. RSMAS does collaborative research with industry partners such as Open Blue Sea Farms in the Republic of Panama and Earth Ocean Farms in Mexico. Commercial-scale production of juveniles is crucial – need consistent and reliable production. Examples of offshore aquaculture were presented, i.e. Aquapods; there have been advancements in open ocean aquaculture including automation; modern surface systems are flexible.

The technological feasibility of aquaculture has been proven; the next step is commercial viability. The key is to improve ecological and economical efficiencies so it can be environmentally sustainable and profitable.

A portion of the presentation centered on “How we can grow the aquaculture industry in the United States. There are opportunities in South Florida for aquaculture:

- Land-based marine finfish culture
  - Recirculating aquaculture systems (RAS)
- Aquaponics
  - Combine aquaculture (fish production) and hydroponics (plant production in water)
- Ornamentals
  - Warm, stable climate and proximity to international airports

(Note: This presentation can be found on the Task Force website at [http://www.sfrestore.org/rrct/bbay/documents/bbrct\\_handouts\\_past.html](http://www.sfrestore.org/rrct/bbay/documents/bbrct_handouts_past.html) )

##### **5. Sub-Team Committee Reports & Updates:**

Jennifer Tisthammer gave a short report.

Pamela Sweeney introduced materials on: BB Initiative, “Paddle Out”, the Management Plan Summary, and a Boating & Angling guide to Biscayne Bay.

On October 5<sup>th</sup> there will be a “Soiree on the Bay” at the Deering Estate and on October 25<sup>th</sup> an Adventure Paddle leaving the BBAP Office.

Dan Kipnis discussed the artificial coral reef and the failure of the USACE to follow through with their permit. An article in the Miami Herald regarding the Deep Dredge Deadline was provided. A biologist is attempting to “rescue” living coral before the reef is dynamited as part of the Deep Dredge to deepen the Port of Miami. The article states that by the time the USACE permit to save the creatures came through, the biologist had less than 10 ten days to save thousands of specimen before blasting begins.

##### **6. Future Meetings:**

Future meeting presentations focusing on Miami River Greenway (possibly July), FL Sea Grant (possibly August or September and a meeting in the Fall dedicated to commercial and recreational fishing. Phil is trying to focus more on the stakeholders/bay users.

7. **Wrap-up**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:00pm.