

MANAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARY FORM

BISCAYNE BAY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Who did the plan?

Miami Dade County

When was the plan completed?

March 1981

What is the status of the plan?

Adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 1981.

Major recommendations have been implemented, incorporated into the Code of Miami-Dade County or the Comprehensive Development Master Plan, or continue to be implemented through ongoing monitoring, restoration, recreation, water management and acquisition programs. For more details, see list of Restoration and Enhancement projects at the end of this outline.

What entities were involved in the plan?

The Biscayne Bay Management Plan (BBMP) was jointly prepared by the Miami Dade County Planning Department and Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM). The County Manager appointed a five-member Policy Advisory Committee to oversee the general scope and direction of the project. Additionally, a large Scientific/Technical Committee was selected from universities, federal and state agencies to provide input and insure accuracy. A Local Government Liaison Committee composed of representatives of shoreline municipalities was established to assure that cities were informed of and had an opportunity to review various waterfront land use policies.

Over a period of several years, staff compiled data and drafted documents, which were then reviewed by the advisory groups, as well as numerous Bay users and community interest groups at workshops and hearings. The draft plan was revised to reflect this input and approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

One of the principal recommendations in the plan involved the establishment of the Biscayne Bay Management Committee, a 15-member coordinating body composed of representatives of local, state and federal government, as well as citizens. This committee provided a forum for ongoing public discussion of major policy issues and developed recommendations for action by various public agencies.

DERM's Biscayne Bay Restoration and Enhancement Program, a major implementation tool of the Plan, has been funded over the years by Miami-Dade County with assistance from the State of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, FIND, and the South Florida Water Management District.

What is the geographic area of the plan?

The Plan focused on Biscayne Bay and adjoining waters from the Broward County line to Card Sound. The planning area extended inland a short distance to include the lower reaches of canals and waterfront.

What is the scope of the plan?

The BBMC is comprehensive in scope and addressed a broad range of interests and concerns. These were broadly categorized into three major headings: 1) *ENVIRONMENTAL*,

2) *USER-RELATED*, and 3) *MANAGEMENT*. Concerns under each of these major categories include the following:

ENVIRONMENTAL: canal discharge and stormwater runoff; water clarity; recreational and developmental user impacts; and habitat management.

USER-RELATED: conflicts among user groups; need for more marine-oriented recreational facilities; need to improve visual and physical access; persistent trash and litter

MANAGEMENT: need for less duplicative, more locally accountable Bay management program; need to resolve overlapping and fragmented jurisdictions

What are the key goals or objectives that directly relate to the Biscayne Bay Partnership Initiative?

The goals and objectives of the BBMP are generally identical to the process outlined by the BBPI. Although almost 20 years old, the BBMC purposes and list of major objectives remain relevant. The following information is quoted directly from the BBMP.

“Purpose of the Bay Management Plan. This plan is intended to serve five basic purposes: (1) to define the scope of concerns and programs that should be addressed within a comprehensive, coordinated approach to Bay Management, (2) to recommend programs and actions that should be undertaken in order to move towards comprehensive and coordinated management of Biscayne Bay, (3) to identify a coordinating committee structure to oversee the scope and direction of programs that are recommended, (4) to identify those agencies and community based groups that have responsibility for implementing certain management programs, and (5) to identify sources of funding or community based resources that can be utilized to achieve a coordinated approach to Bay management.”

“Primary Goal. The primary goal of BBMP project is to develop a unified, Countywide management plan for the entire bay system, including its adjacent wetlands, embayments and contiguous developed shorelands in a manner that will maintain or enhance where necessary, those physical, chemical, biological and aesthetic qualities that provide the basic character and value of this resource.”

“Program Objectives. In order to realize this primary goal, the following program objectives shall be achieved:

To address and resolve the jurisdictional issues relating to Biscayne Bay in order to provide long-term management capability;

To provide a wide array of water oriented opportunities at the water’s edge, consistent with the Primary Goal;

To enhance physical and visual access thereby increasing the potential for environmentally sound utilization and attractiveness of Biscayne Bay for the public at large

To identify and maintain, or enhance where necessary, those biological communities that are essential to the long-term viability of Biscayne Bay;

To optimize the quality and quantity of marine life

To maintain, or enhance where necessary, water quality that permits safe water contact, recreation and propagation of fish and wildlife;

To provide protection for endangered, threatened or rare species of plants and animals that exist within the waters of Biscayne Bay or the adjacent coastal wetlands;

To avoid irreversible or irretrievable commitments of Bay resources;

To seek funding for activities which are necessary to achieve the Primary Goal;

To promote water transportation and enhance the Bay's contribution to the economic health of the community through marina development and other appropriate measures consistent with the Primary Goal;
To provide continuing monitoring of the Bay in order to assemble an adequate data base for Bay management."

Additionally, during development of the Plan, the Policy Advisory Committee and the Board of County Commissioners developed a prioritized list of Restoration and Enhancement projects as follows (*indicates project completed; +indicates project continuing):

1. Improve public awareness*+
2. Improve access*+
3. Identify areas that need stabilization or wave energy abatement*
4. Obtain baseline data on fisheries and fisheries pathology*+
5. Monitor existing mitigation/restoration efforts*+
6. Develop fisheries management program*+
7. Obtain baseline water chemistry obtain baseline circulation data*+
8. Stabilize shorelines*+
9. Map benthic community*
10. Riprap public areas*
11. Identify sources of turbidity*
12. Obtain baseline data on water epidemiology and pathology {sanitary quality}*+
13. Plant mangroves*+
14. Install artificial reefs*+
15. Plant seagrass*
16. Fill deep holes*
17. Redistribute circulation
18. Remove fine bottom sediments

Additional Comments and Observations:

The advantages of this particular plan are that it has a broad, comprehensive scope and was developed through a community-inclusive process. Many of the most significant policies and recommended actions have been largely implemented and have formed a foundation for continuing science-based management activities. Most remain relevant today. The Biscayne Bay Management Committee coordinating structure was generally successful, until its sunset by the Board of County Commissioners in 1993.

The disadvantage of the BBMP is that it is older and not familiar to some present-day interests. Also, the planning boundary did not extend fully into the watershed, and although the Plan recognized canal discharge and freshwater delivery as principal concerns, it did not envision a major South Florida/Everglades restoration. These deficiencies could be addressed by updating the supporting data in the Plan, utilizing information collected for the local CDMPs, the Biscayne Bay SWIM Plan, the C & SF Restudy and other more narrowly focused ongoing planning projects. Goals and objectives could also be updated or expanded to address current concerns and regional restoration programs.

Reviewer:

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