

BISCAYNE BAY REGIONAL RESTORATION COORDINATION TEAM

Meeting #34

12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

July 16, 2004

SFWMD Miami Field Station
Miami, Florida

Report of Proceedings

WELCOME/CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Team Chair, Humberto Alonso, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He made two announcements: first, that Team member, Rick Clark of Biscayne National Park, had become a new father (a son, Bradley) and second, that Team member, Daniel Apt, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, will be leaving the Team to pursue his Ph.D. in Hawaii. Everyone congratulated both members.

Members present:

Humberto Alonso, Jr., Chair, South Florida Water Management District
Daniel Apt, Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Fran Bohnsack, Miami River Marine Group
Marisa Bluestone, Florida Legislature
Rick Clark, Biscayne National Park
Marsha Colbert, Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve
Amy Condon, Trust for Public Land
Don Pybas, John D. Campbell Agricultural Center
Nancy Diersing, NOAA, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
Cindy Dwyer, Miami Dade Planning and Zoning
Phil Everingham, Miami Marine Council
John Hulsey, South Florida Regional Planning Council
Cynthia Guerra, Tropical Audubon Society
Susan Markley, Department of Environmental Resources Management
Edith McClintock, Citizens for a Better South Florida
Lloyd Miller, Izaak Walton League
Keith Revell, At Large member

Mr. Alonso then turned the meeting over to the Facilitator, Janice Fleischer, to review the Agenda.

AGENDA REVIEW/GUIDELINES

See **Exhibit A** for the Agenda.

All Reports of Proceedings, Exhibits, Team Guidelines and other pertinent information can be found at www.sfrpc.com/institute.htm, then "Projects", then BBRRCT.

FUNDING FRAMEWORK

Deborah Drum, Director, Coastal Ecosystems Division, SFWMD, delivered a presentation on the current funding framework for the South Florida Water Management District. (Exhibit B) In addition to the powerpoint presentation, Ms. Drum distributed the Water Management District's 10-year (was current) Strategic Plan, pointing out that pages 8 & 9 on the subject of Coastal Watersheds was the portion relevant to this Team. (For the 10-year Strategic Plan see www.sfwmd.gov) She explained that, although the Strategic Plan extends to the year 2014, there is an annual spending plan developed every year. For this coming fiscal year, Biscayne Bay has been allotted \$1.5 million dollars. One important component of this is Biscayne Bay restoration which is why the Action Plan of this Team is so important-it will help direct where the money is spent on projects for restoration.

Ms. Drum said she envisioned designating time for the Team to speak to legislators during "Dade Days" in Tallahassee. At that time, representatives of the Team would lobby for Biscayne Bay funds for the work of the Team. She also encouraged the Team to look beyond these specific appropriations and seek out other sources of funding through Team member agencies and grant possibilities. In this way, the Team will fulfill part of its mandate of locating and identifying additional funding sources. Currently, a database of available coastal grants is being compiled for the Team and will be made available as soon as it is completed.

PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT- STATE OF THE TEAM'S ACTION PLAN

Mr. Alonso announced that Liz Abbott, Project Manager for the BBRRCT has accepted a new position with the SFWMD and will be leaving the Team as soon as a replacement can be found. As her outgoing message to the Team, she gave a presentation on the accomplishments of the Team, what needs to be done next and gave some suggestions for how they should continue their work on the Action Plan when they next meet. Exhibit C

At the conclusion of Ms. Abbott's presentation, the Team took a short break.

Upon returning from the break, Mr. Alonso asked the Team Facilitator, Janice Fleischer, to share her thoughts about the future work of the Team and her observations of what has been done and where she sees the Team focusing its attention. Ms. Fleischer first repeated a quote she recently heard that she found very relevant to groups such as this one: "Don't let perfection be the enemy of excellence". She acknowledged that some Team members have suffered with the concern that they must know all the answers and get all the data before they can adopt a plan. She reminded them of two of Ms. Abbott's philosophies: first, don't try to be perfect, just get started and second her "sphere of influence" model. This action plan is an iterative process. It can be developed and then refined as time goes by.

The areas where this Team has the most influence and actually do the most are concentrated in the Team's identified Overarching Goal themes of Coordination, Funding, Evaluation and Monitoring. It is in these areas that specific action by the Team itself can be accomplished and

the Team needs to come to consensus on what objectives they will pursue in each of these areas and develop action steps to accomplish those objectives.

With regard to the three remaining Goals of “Readily Accessible and Appreciated”, “Supports Uses and Economic Activity”, and “Ecological and Physical Restoration”, Ms. Fleischer acknowledged that the Team had never really finalized and adopted by consensus objectives for each of these Goals. She believed that this was the reason there was so much concern about adopting the Biscayne Bay Strategic Access Plan and the Science Plan. She indicated that the Team would develop and finalize those objectives when they reconvene in the Fall. Once objectives were finalized for each of the substantive goals, then the Team could look at the Biscayne Bay Strategic Access Plan and the Science Plan and see if they could be adopted either in part or in whole as plans that seek to accomplish the same objectives as identified by the Team. Further, if each plan does not go far enough in its reach, the Team can then discuss how to accomplish those objectives not addressed by each of these plans.

Most importantly, Ms. Fleischer indicated that it was necessary for the Team to clearly express whether it wants to review and select specific projects to address these objectives as they had been doing in the past or identify priority areas that would then inform what projects should be sought by the Working Group, the SFWMD and other organizations each year.

At the end of both presentations and the Facilitator’s comments, Team members were asked for comments and suggestions. The following comments were made:

1. Don’t lobby during Dade Days in Tallahassee, go when the legislature is not in session and follow up after that
 - a. Marissa Bluestone will help us make appointments
2. Concern with the concept of how to proceed regarding the Science Plan
 - a. We need to go further than just Science Plan with our objectives; the Science Plan does not go far enough; restoration in not in the science plan
3. Science Plan does not go beyond and into Restoration, habitat restoration and conservation
4. We should be concerned with more than just funding by the legislature, look at Bills and other things that affect Biscayne Bay restoration (look locally too)
 - a. We should be doing POLICY not just funding
5. Need this Team to really evolve to assure restoration
6. Need a matrix ultimately so we can get external funding other than legislative
 - a. Opportunities with external entities
7. Think of designating possible standing committees on our Team to address specific issues
8. What do we do about things that are moving ahead before the Action Plan is done?

9. Have a “check back” mechanism, so projects that are picked are brought back to the group to see if they are accomplishing what they said they would, what new information they have uncovered, etc.
10. Our priorities will inform what projects are needed
 - a. As soon as priorities are established, you are a “player”
11. Better control the uplands or nothing else will happen, development needs a buffer
12. Who are we coordinating with? We need to have a higher profile.
 - a. Team members need to make outsiders aware of Team existence
13. How do we figure out what the economic benefits are from the restoration of Biscayne Bay?
 - a. The current Economic Plan is not representative of what is needed overall
14. Look at the Miami River Commission, meet quickly and more often

At the conclusion of this discussion, the Team was asked: “Does the Action Plan stop at establishing priorities and not trying to do action steps for anything other than the Overarching Objectives of Coordination, Funding, Evaluation and Monitoring and leave the picking of particular projects to the Working Group or the SFWMD?”

If you ranked this a 5, it meant you wanted to stop at establishing priorities:

5	4	3	2	1
7	4	3	1	2

After some discussion with the members who ranked this question a “1” or a “2”, a second ranking was taken,

5	4	3	2	1
7	5	5	0	0

Pursuant to this Team’s consensus ranking policies, full consensus was reached on this subject. (See www.sfrpc.com/institute.htm for this Team’s consensus rules.

MEMBER FORUM

Daniel Apt thanked the Team for the time he was involved and said he would miss everyone. He said he very much enjoyed his tenure on the Team and felt it was a very valuable learning experience for him.

No other recorded announcements were made.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments made prior to meeting adjournment.

MEMBER COMMENT CARDS

“What is the state of coordination between the BRRCT and the Watershed Study group? What weight do our recommendations carry with people like Commissioners? Coordination with whom? Will they pay attention? How does the Watershed Committee relate to the original objectives of the BBPI? In my view, objectives other than funding are almost immaterial if the upland is not controlled sufficiently to permit objectives to be realized.”

-Lloyd Miller

“For the BRRCT to truly be a player, it will have to grow beyond being advisory to the Working Group; it will have to be its own team with a seat on the Working Group for connectivity purposes”

-anonymous

“I think we had a “mini-epiphany”! Let’s move ahead-point toward a Miami River Commission type of functioning organization”.

-anonymous
