

History of consultation and coordination between the NPS and the Florida Fish and Wildlife

Conservation Commission for the Biscayne National Park Fishery Management Plan

The NPS has consulted and cooperated with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) for over a decade regarding the development of a Fishery Management Plan in the park. The NPS will continue to coordinate and consult with the FWC regarding the fishery management plan and implementing regulations

Below are some highlights of this multi-agency effort.

- In 2001, the NPS and FWC engaged initial discussions regarding the need for a plan to guide interagency decision-making concerning fishery management in the park. In the summer and fall of 2001, a Technical Committee was formed to guide development of a fishery management plan. The Technical Committee is comprised of NPS and FWC staff, Tennessee Valley Authority contractors, and ad hoc members representing the National Marine Fisheries Service, University of Miami – Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences (RSMAS), and the FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute. The FMP Technical Committee began scheduling and taking part in regularly-scheduled (typically monthly) conference calls to discuss and guide development of the plan. In November 2001, NPS representatives attended an FWC Commission Meeting in Key Largo and made a presentation to FWC Commissioners outlining progress in development of the plan. BISC Superintendent (at that time) Linda Canzanelli stressed the importance of partnering with the FWC to the success of the plan.
- In April 2002, the BISC fishery management plan and the in-development memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the NPS and the FWC were discussed before the FWC Commissioners at an FWC meeting in Tallahassee. In July 2002, the Technical Committee met to consider public comments generated from the May 2002 public meetings and public comment

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period, to determine issues on which the Fishery Management Plan would be based, and to determine the developmental process to be followed. On October 1, 2002, the NPS and FWC signed the MOU outlining each agency's role, function and responsibilities in developing the Fishery Management Plan for BISC.

- In March 2003, BISC representatives attended an FWC Commission meeting in Tallahassee, FL. BISC Assistant Superintendent (at that time) Monika Mayr updated the FWC Commission on progress regarding the Fishery Management Plan. In September 2005, the NPS worked closely with the Florida Department of Marine Fisheries Management (which develops regulatory and management recommendations for consideration by the FWC) to develop Fishery Management Plan alternatives.
- On September 14, 2007, the NPS and FWC signed another MOU to facilitate the management, protection, and scientific study of fish and aquatic resources within BISC by improving communication, cooperation and coordination between the FWC and the NPS. In the MOU, the parties agreed to work together to promulgate or revise existing state and federal regulations as may be identified and recommended within a comprehensive fishery management plan for the park. The parties agreed that FWC will play a crucial role in promulgating new regulations and agreed to consult with each other on any actions they may propose to take to conserve or protect fish populations or other aquatic resources within park boundaries or to further regulate fisheries. The MOU between the NPS and FWC was renewed for an additional two years in 2012.
- In November 2007, the park hosted a multi-agency meeting attended by representatives of NPS, FWC, National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Fisheries Science Center, FWC's

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Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, and University of Miami/RSMAS. At this meeting, scientists and managers were together able to provide a comprehensive summary of the status of fisheries-related resources within the park, as well as the status of relevant research and monitoring projects related to the park's fisheries resources. The results of this meeting included an agreement of the final set of alternatives to be included in the fishery management plan and recommendation for development and implementation of the plan.

- In 2008, the NPS worked with the FWC to select a preferred alternative for the fishery management plan, and FWC staff participated in workshops held later that year on the plan.
- In March 2010, park representatives and the FWC met in Tallahassee to review all of the public comments received during the public comment period for a 2009 Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The cooperating agencies jointly developed responses to the various issues and concerns expressed by members of the public. These responses included explanations on the cooperating agencies' views on the phasing-out of commercial fishing.
- In August 2010, FWC Chairman (at that time) Rodney Barretto signed a document addressed to BISC Superintendent (at that time) Mark Lewis indicating that the FWC intended to initiate Commission rulemaking following the acceptance of the Fishery Management Plan and reaffirmed the FWC's commitment to continue to work with the park as stipulated in the MOU. A similar document was signed by FWC Chairman Richard Corbett and delivered to BISC Superintendent Brian Carlstrom in February 2014.