



BISCAYNE BAY COMMISSION

Semiannual Report

June 2025

ABOUT THE BISCAYNE BAY COMMISSION

On June 3, 2021, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis took a major step forward in protecting vital natural resources within Biscayne Bay through the creation of the Biscayne Bay Commission. While Biscayne Bay is protected in its entirety by either a national park or state aquatic preserve, it faces global, regional and local stressors. The Governor supports direct action to strengthen coordination efforts to protect Biscayne Bay and protect and preserve the integrity of the Bay. Commission meetings provide a forum for exchange and serve as a clearinghouse for public information on all plans, programs and projects being conducted.

As required by statute, the Biscayne Bay Commission developed a strategic plan and compiled an associated financial plan in partnership with local agencies.

A copy of all meeting agendas, minutes, recordings and additional materials including past reports can be found online on ProtectingFloridaTogether.gov/BiscayneBayCommission. This Semiannual Report is made available to describe the accomplishments of the commission and each member agency and the status of each pending task. This includes:

- Summary of any meetings since the last submitted Semiannual Report.
- Attachment A — Project Tracker: Updated as new information is available by the member agencies, this tracker identifies projects and tasks designed to improve Biscayne Bay. Information on the spreadsheet primarily includes project name, description, project type and project status.
- Attachment B — Financial Plan: Copy of the consolidated financial plan through 2024, inclusive of any necessary updates.
- Attachment C — Biscayne Bay Commission Strategic Plan: A strategic plan was approved by the commission on Jan. 19, 2024, and includes strategies for three strategic goals including enhancing water quality monitoring, improving communication and outreach and addressing sources of nutrients and ecosystem restoration needs.

“The commission shall submit a semiannual report describing the accomplishments of the commission and each member agency, as well as the status of each pending task, to the Miami City Commission, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners, the mayor of Miami, the mayor of Miami-Dade County, the Governor and the chair of the Miami-Dade County Legislative Delegation. The report shall also be available on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Miami-Dade County websites.”

section 163.11(7), Florida Statutes

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Commission members and the statutory composition established in law are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Biscayne Bay Commission members.

Section 163.11, F.S., Appointment Requirements	Commission Member	Position Title
1. One member appointed by the Governor.	Noah Valenstein	Commission Chair; Founder, Brightwater Strategies
2. Three members of the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners, appointed by the board.	Micky Steinberg	Miami-Dade County Commissioner, District 4
	Unassigned	Miami-Dade County Commissioner, District 6
	Unassigned	Miami-Dade County Commissioner, District 8
3. One member of the Miami-Dade County League of Cities who resides within the boundaries of a city that borders Biscayne Bay, nominated by the league and appointed by the secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. To the extent practicable, the league must nominate a member from each city that borders Biscayne Bay on a rotating basis.	Tim Meerbott	Mayor, Town of Cutler Bay, representing the League of Cities
4. One member of the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board who resides in Miami-Dade County, appointed by the board.	Scott Wagner	South Florida Water Management District
5. One representative of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, appointed by the agency's secretary.	Adam Blalock	Commission Vice-Chair; Deputy Secretary of Ecosystems Restoration
6. One representative of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, appointed by the commission.	Dr. Thomas Reinert	South Regional Director
7. One representative of the Florida Inland Navigation District, appointed by the district.	Spencer Crowley	Florida Inland Navigation District, representing Miami-Dade County

MEETINGS SINCE THE LAST SEMIANNUAL REPORT

The meeting agendas, minutes and recordings will be posted when available to:

ProtectingFloridaTogether.gov/BiscayneBayCommission.

Jan. 24, 2025

The Biscayne Bay Commission met on Jan. 24, 2025, virtually via GoTo Webinar. The meeting welcomed 110 total participants to hear presentations, discussion and public comment.

This meeting included an update from the Biscayne Bay Watershed Advisory Board presented by Danielle Cohen-Higgins, District 8 Miami-Dade County Commissioner and team members from Miami-Dade County; a Reasonable Assurance Plan update presented by Pamela Sweeney of Miami-Dade County; and a review of the Strategic Plan and Project Tracker presented by Hampton Hotard, the Biscayne Bay Commission Coordinator, on behalf of the Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve. These presentations were followed by public comment, commission discussion and closing remarks.

April 2, 2025

The Biscayne Bay Commission met on April 2, 2025, at Florida International University's Biscayne Bay Campus and via GoTo Webinar. The meeting welcomed approximately 102 total participants (67 online attendees, 35 in-person attendees) to hear presentations, discussion and public comment.

This meeting included a Water and Sewer Department presentation, presented by Amanda Kinnick, the Interim Director of Miami-Dade County's Water and Sewer Department; an Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program update presented by Janet Gil, EEL Program Director; a Stormwater and Canal Management update presented by Matahel Ansar and Richard Virgil on behalf of the South Florida Water Management District; and an update on the Biscayne Bay Water Quality Improvement Grant Program, presented by Mollie Cordo on behalf of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. These presentations were followed by public comment, commission discussion and closing remarks.

STATUS OF PENDING TASKS

The commission has and will continue to discuss these tasks identified in statute and how to address each at upcoming meetings. Tasks include:

- (a) Consolidate existing plans, programs and proposals into a coordinated strategic plan for improvement of Biscayne Bay and the surrounding areas, addressing environmental, economic, social, recreational and aesthetic issues.
 - A final version of the Biscayne Bay Commission Strategic Plan was approved by the commission at the January 2024 meeting. The Biscayne Bay Strategic Plan is included here as Attachment C and is published [online](#).
- (b) Prepare a consolidated financial plan using the projected financial resources available from the different jurisdictional agencies. The commission will monitor the progress of each element of the plan and revise the plan regularly.
 - A financial resources report is provided as Attachment B.

- (c) Provide technical assistance and support as needed to help implement each element of the strategic and financial plans.
 - A presentation on the Strategic Plan implementation is to be presented annually to the Commission and presentation and discussion is available by viewing meeting minutes and materials.
- (d) Work in consultation with the U.S. Department of the Interior.
 - No updates to report.
- (e) Provide a forum for exchange of information.
 - Commission meetings are public forums conducted in accordance with the Sunshine Law. Members of the public may provide written and oral comments during the meeting or email comments after the meeting to BiscayneBayCommission@FloridaDEP.gov. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection also furnishes meeting summaries.
 - Miami-Dade County provides regular updates to the Commission on the work of the Miami-Dade County Watershed Advisory Board. Updates are available on the [Biscayne Bay webpage](#). The commission discussed these two groups magnifying awareness of the issue at hand and amplifying the potential for environmental change by using the same talking points for projects where all levels of government aggregate actions focus on one basin.
- (f) Act as a clearinghouse for public information.
 - Protecting Florida Together's Biscayne Bay Commission [webpage](#) serves as a clearinghouse of information on the bay and the commission.
 - This and future reports as well as meeting agenda, minutes and recording will be posted online.

The Biscayne Bay Commission will continue to meet regularly, with the next meeting scheduled for July 2025.