



# **BISCAYNE BAY COMMISSION**

## **Semiannual Report**

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**June 2026**

## 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](https://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 becomes available from 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: A 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.

Attachments are available online at [ProtectingFloridaTogether.gov/BiscayneBayCommission](https://ProtectingFloridaTogether.gov/BiscayneBayCommission).

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 (F.S.)

## 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;<br>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;<br>Deputy Secretary of Ecosystem 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](https://ProtectingFloridaTogether.gov/BiscayneBayCommission).

### Feb. 12, 2026

The Biscayne Bay Commission met on Feb. 12, 2026, at Cutler Bay Town Hall and via GoTo Webinar. The meeting welcomed 91 total participants (19 participants in person and 72 participants online) to hear presentations, discussion and public comment.

This meeting included an update from the Miami-Dade County Derelict Vessel Program, presented by John Ricisak; a 2025 law enforcement overview from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, presented by Captain Rafael Almagro; and updates on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Grant Funding from Fiscal Year 2025-26, presented by Mollie Cordo, the Southeast Regional Administrator for DEP's Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection (ORCP). These presentations were followed by public comment, commission discussion and closing remarks.

### May 27, 2026

The Biscayne Bay Commission met on May 27, 2026, virtually via Microsoft Teams Webinar. The meeting welcomed approximately 49 total participants to hear presentations, discussion and public comment.

This meeting included a Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary presentation on the Water Quality Protection Program, presented by Karen Bohnsack, the Associate Director of Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration of Florida International University, and Dr. Nicholas Parr of DEP ORCP; an overview of the Statewide Ecosystem Assessment of Coastal and Aquatic Resources (SEACAR) Program, presented by Cheryl Clark of DEP ORCP; an overview of the Florida Seafloor Mapping Initiative provided by Alex Reed, Director of DEP ORCP; and an overview of the Miami-Dade County Boater Safety and Education Task Force, presented by Nancy Jackson and Kathleen Oswald. 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, including the recommendations outlined in the [June 2020 Biscayne Bay Task Force report](#), into a coordinated strategic plan for improvement of Biscayne Bay and the surrounding areas, addressing environmental, economic, social, recreational and aesthetic issues.
  - The commission used the six categories listed in the June 2020 Biscayne Bay Task Force report to inspire discussion around developing the strategic plan for Biscayne Bay.
  - 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.
  - The Strategic Plan implementation is to be presented annually to the commission; presentations and discussion are available by viewing meeting minutes and materials.
- (d) Work in consultation with the U.S. Department of the Interior.
  - No updates to report at this time. See previous [December 2025 Semiannual 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 [BBCommission@FloridaDEP.gov](mailto:BBCommission@FloridaDEP.gov).
  - Coordination with the Miami-Dade County Watershed Advisory Board:
    - Miami-Dade County's Chief Bay Officer is invited to provide an overview/update from the board at the Miami-Dade County Watershed Advisory Board. Updates are available on the [Biscayne Bay webpage](#) and DEP furnishes meeting summaries. In addition, 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.
  - The [Biscayne Bay Commission website](#) serves as a clearinghouse of information on the bay and the commission.
  - This and future reports, as well as meeting agendas, minutes and recordings will be posted online.

The Biscayne Bay Commission will continue to meet regularly, with the next meeting tentatively scheduled for Sept. 2026.