

Biscayne National Park (Park) Supplemental Draft General Management Plan (Plan)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE • U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



Welcome

PUBLIC MEETING

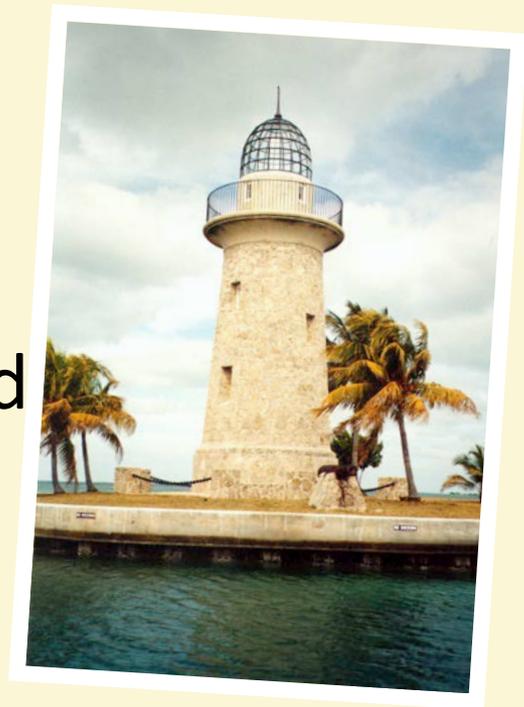
Agenda

- **6:00 p.m.** Meet & Greet
- **6:30 p.m.** Presentation
- **7:00 p.m.** Opportunity to Comment
- **8:45 p.m.** Closing Remarks



Purpose of Meeting

- Obtain your views on new alternatives presented
- Summarize Plan history and alternatives
- Describe new alternatives, including a new NPS preferred alternative & collaboration
 - Special recreation zone (SRZ)
 - SRZ fishing access



A Word from FWC

- Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
 - Jessica McCawley, Director
 - Division of Marine Fisheries Management



Purpose of Biscayne National Park

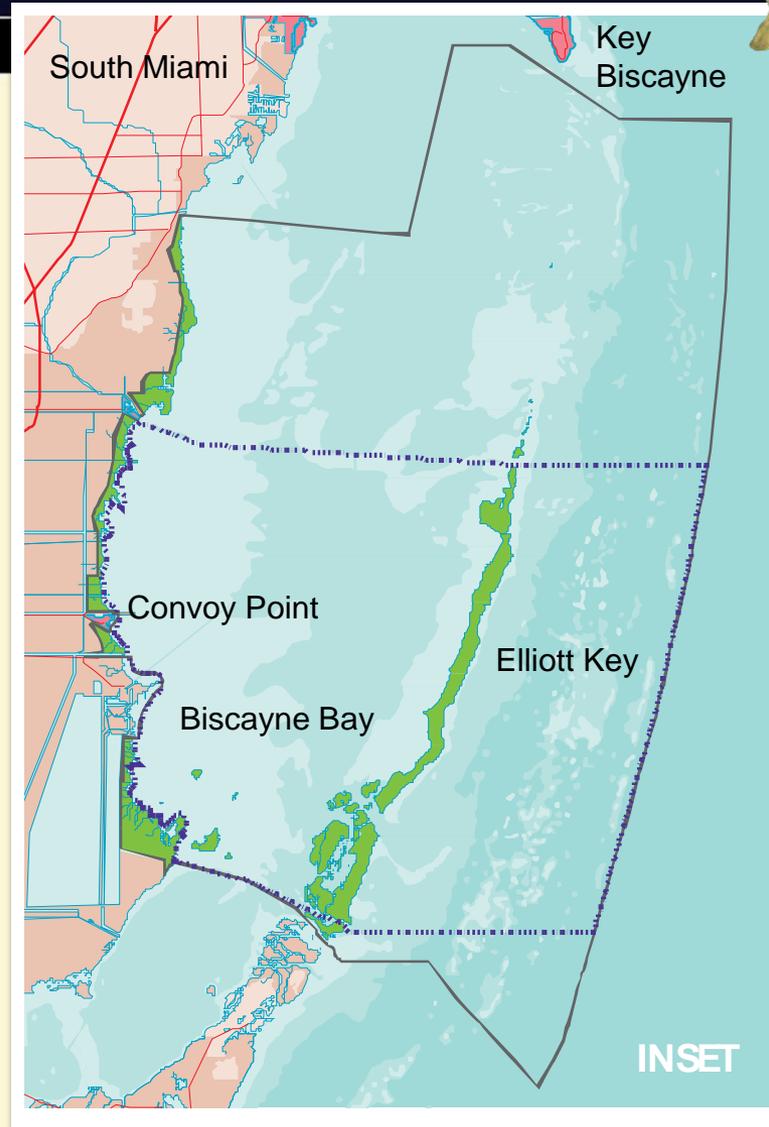
“To preserve and protect for the education, inspiration, recreation, and enjoyment of present and future generations a rare combination of terrestrial, marine and amphibious life in a tropical setting of great natural beauty.”



What is a General Management Plan?

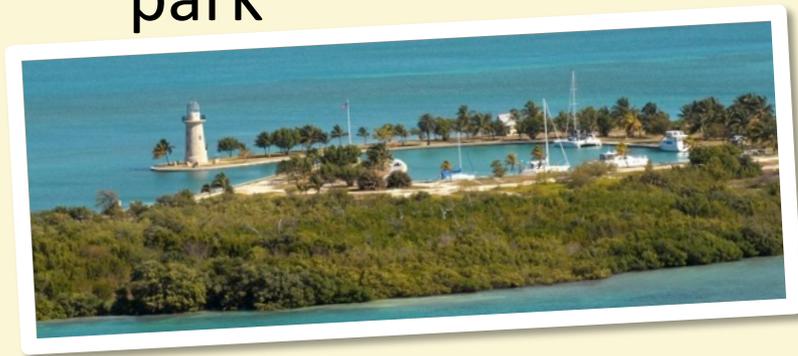
- Proposed zoning for the park as a whole
- Sets desired resource conditions and visitor experiences
- Meant to last ~20 years (last one 1983)
- Provides a framework for decisions by future park managers
 - How to protect resources & provide visitor experiences
 - Manage visitor use
 - What kinds of facilities could be developed

Biscayne National Park Location



Biscayne National Park Highlights

- One of the largest marine parks (95% water) in the national park system
- Recreation destination for 496,000 people annually
- Provides recreational opportunity for 4.4 million people in South Florida within 50 miles of the park



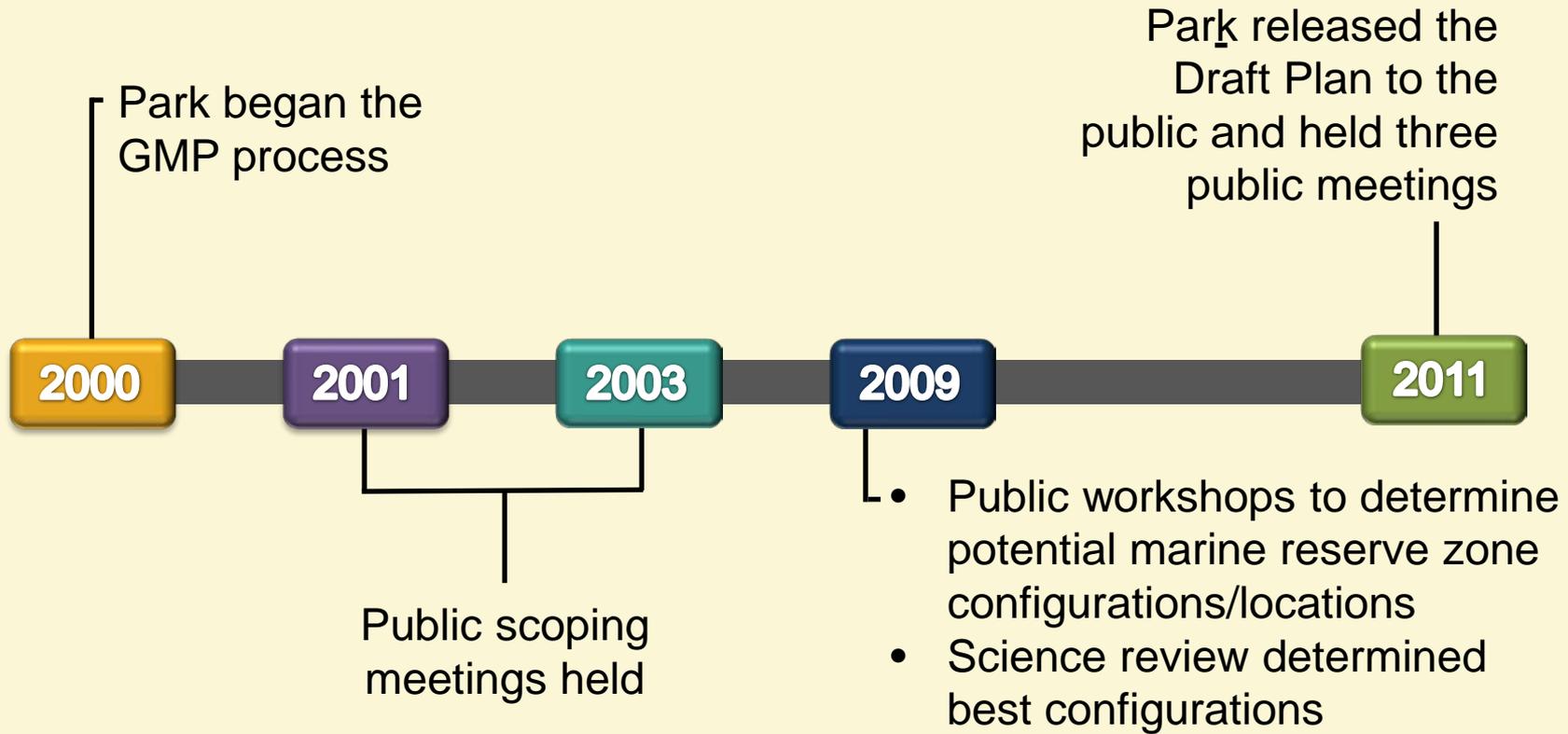
Biscayne National Park Highlights

Visitor opportunities to experience:

- multiple ecosystems
- wildlife watching
- snorkeling, diving, fishing
- historic shipwrecks
- historic structures
- coral reefs



General Management Plan History



Alternatives from 2011 Plan

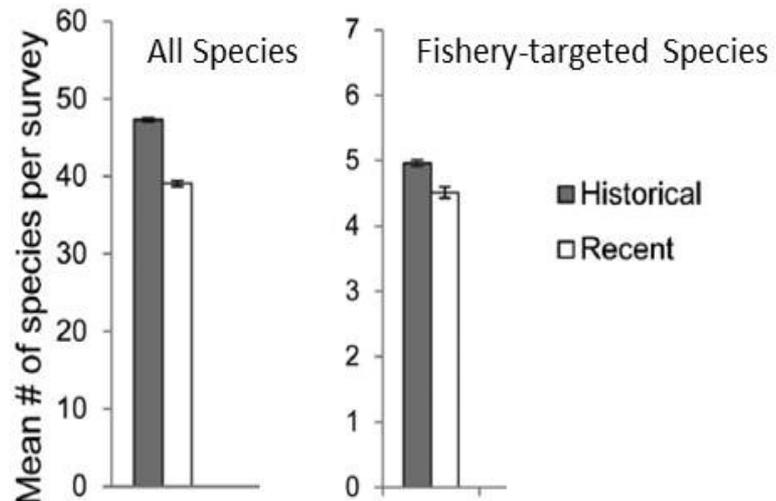
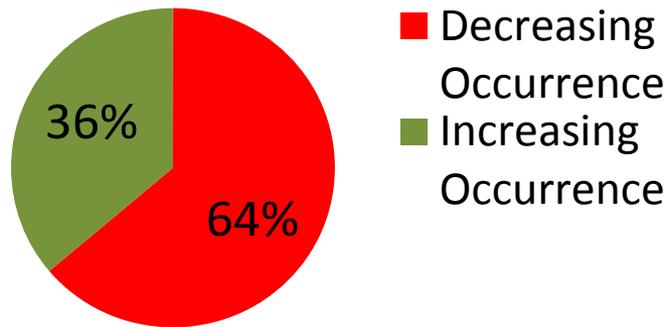
- **ALTERNATIVES 1-5** (Details in 2011 Plan)
- **ALTERNATIVE 1** (No Action)
- **ALTERNATIVE 4** (Original preferred)
with Marine Reserve Zone



Why increase reef protection?

The park has experienced a drastic reduction in fish abundances and diversity over the past 30 years, with most fish observed below the legal minimum size limit.

**Trends in reef fish species over
~30 years**



Furthermore... over half of fishing trips in park return with no fish.

ALTERNATIVE 1 (No-Action)

- Current condition
- Used for comparison



2011 Plan

ALTERNATIVE 4

Marine Reserve Zone

- Provide memorable visitor experience while maintaining a healthier reef
- Protect aquatic community and reef ecosystem
- Improve fishing opportunities outside of zone from spillover



Public Input on the 2011 Plan

Draft Plan released in August 2011 for public comment on alternatives 1-5.

- Over 18,000 comments on the draft plan
- Most comments were related to the proposed Marine Reserve Zone

Why Consider a New Approach?

- Comments included substantive comments on negative impacts from marine reserves
 - Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
 - Fishing stakeholders
- NPS considering a different approach:
 - Allow continued fishing
 - Still achieve many original MRZ goals
 - Healthier reef, memorable visitor experience, enhanced marine resource protection
 - Review progress over time with potential for future management changes
 - Process known as “Adaptive Management”

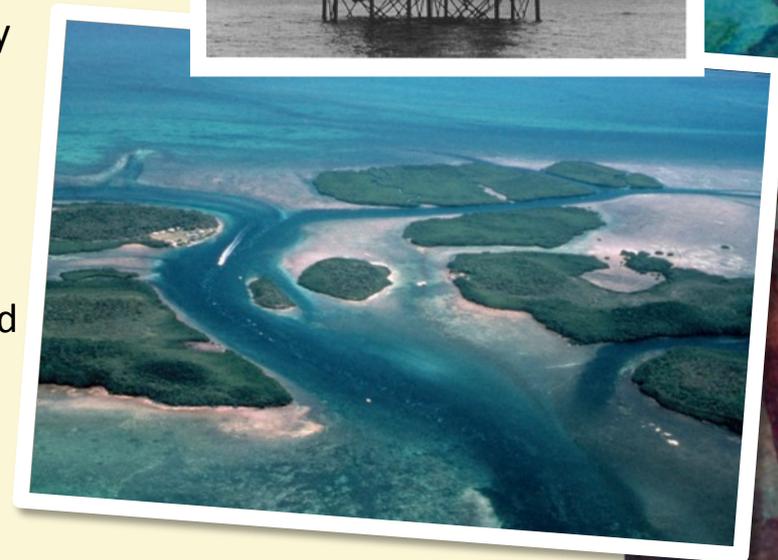
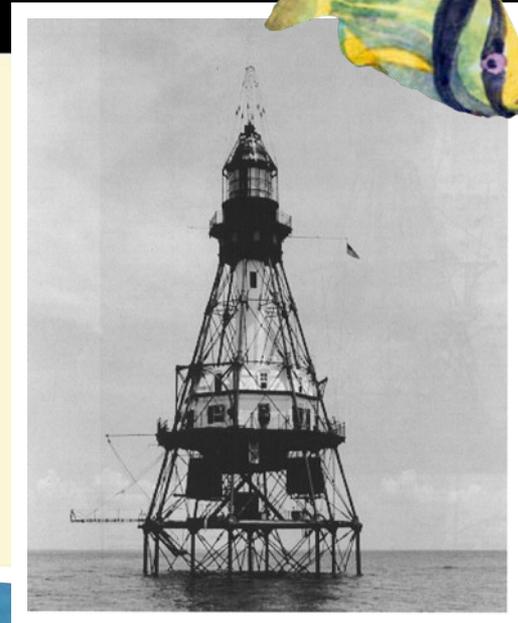


Development of Supplemental Plan



Overview Alternatives 6 (*preferred*) & 7

- Common to both alternatives
 - Implement Fishery Management Plan
 - Pursue acquisition of Ragged Keys 2, 3, and 5 from willing sellers
 - Maintain Fowey Rocks Lighthouse
 - Increased protection in a smaller area for Legare
- Mainland
 - Add platform and boardwalk
 - Install informational kiosks outside park boundary
- Keys
 - Porgy: Add canoe dock
 - Adams/Elliott: Add new kayak/canoe staging area
 - Arsenicker, West Arsenicker, and Swan: closed as natural resource protection zone primarily for bird nesting and protected plant species
- Reef tract
 - **NEW! Special Recreation Zone**



ALTERNATIVES 6 & 7

- Alternatives were based on Alternative 4
- Changes based on public comments
- Location of new zone similar to Alt 4
- Special Recreation Zone 39% larger
- Protect 70% of park's reefs
- Reduced Legare Anchorage



Marine Resource Protection in the SRZ

Special recreation zone larger than marine reserve zone while providing similar goals of healthier coral reef system.

- Balances visitor use and resource protection: less restrictive than a marine reserve zone
- Enhanced range of opportunities for visitor experiences
- Many protections retained: no anchoring, no traps, no commercial fishing except ballyhoo
- Mooring buoys



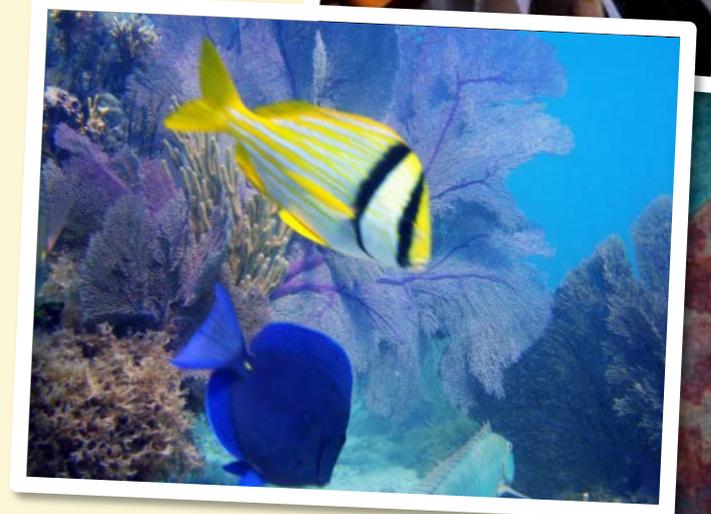
Fishing Access in the SRZ

- Dual state and federal permit system (Alternative 6 only)
- Spearfishing, lobstering, and grouper harvest prohibited
- Lionfish harvest encouraged (spearfishing allowed for exotics)
- Commercial fishing prohibited, except ballyhoo lampara net fishery



Commercial Fishing

- GMP **ALTERNATIVE 6** and **ALTERNATIVE 7** eliminate commercial fishing in the SRZ
 - Exception for lampara net ballyhoo fishery
- Final Fishery Management Plan is anticipated for release early 2014 and would phase out commercial fishing in the entire park
- Special state and federal regulations would be required to phase out commercial fishing
 - Ballyhoo commercial fishery would be phased out in Fishery Management Plan



Special Recreation Zone Goals/Benefits

- Larger than Marine Reserve Zone
- Balances visitor use and resource protection
- Provides unique opportunity to experience healthier reef system
- Reduces coral damage
- Allows for unique fishing experience
- Allows for adaptive management



Special Recreation Zone, **ALTERNATIVE 6** (*New Agency Preferred*)

- Fishing access allowed via state and federal dual permit system
 - 430 permits for public
 - 70 permits for guides

See poster for proposed permit details

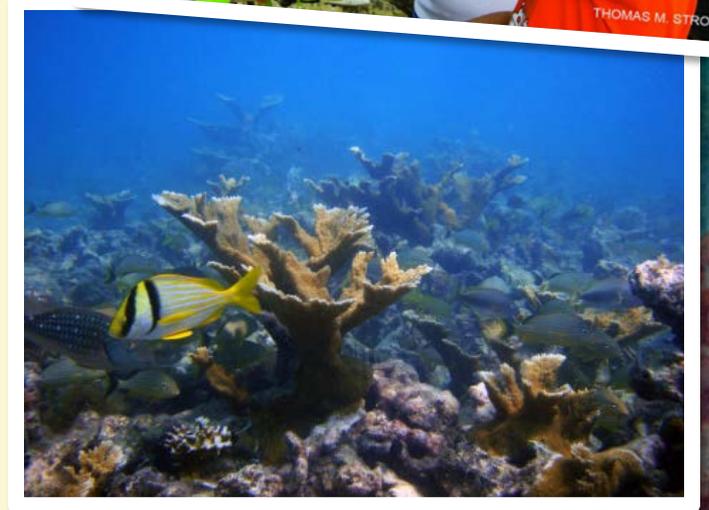
FWC supports and will participate in implementation of this alternative



Special Recreation Zone, **ALTERNATIVE 7**

- Same as **ALTERNATIVE 6**, except for zone management.
- Same Special Recreation Zone geographic area and location.
- Differences in zone fishing access:
 - No zone fishing permits required
 - Open to fishing from October–May
 - Seasonally closed to fishing (June–September)

FWC would not participate in implementation of this alternative



Adaptive Management Strategy for Special Recreation Zone (both alts)

- Monitor/evaluate/adjust 
 - Data reviews at 3, 5, 8, 10 years
 - Monitor Resource Trends – fish, benthic communities, etc.
 - Evaluate Management Tools – education, law enforcement, buoys
 - Adjust – number of permits (Alt 6 only), mooring buoys, education and law enforcement
- Independent panel review at 5 and 10 years
 - Provides recommendations on the science plan, monitoring results, and long-term management

After 10 years - NPS makes decision to continue special recreation zone or convert to marine reserve zone

Schedule



Release
revised
plan

Nov.
2013

Public
comment
period
ends

Feb. 20
2014

Public
comment
analysis

Mar. 2014

Release
final plan

Nov.
2014

Sign
Record of
Decision

Dec.
2014





Thank You!

**In a moment, it's your turn
to comment.**

Ways You Can Comment

- **Verbal Comments Today**

- Sign up to speak at the microphone
- Give your comments to staff at an easel pad

- **Electronic Comments**

- Online via PEPC
- <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/bisc>

- **Paper Comments**

- **Deliver in person** during this meeting, or go to the lobby visitor center
- **Mail to**
Biscayne National Park GMP
ATTN: Morgan Elmer (DSC-P)
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, CO 80225-0287

