



Carlos Alvarez, Mayor

Department of Environmental Resources Management

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Vizcaya Museum and Gardens
Water and Sewer

Mr. Kipp Frohlich
Imperiled Species Management Section
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 South Meridian St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Mr. Frohlich:

The Miami-Dade County Manatee Protection Plan (MPP) was approved by the Board of County Commissioners and the State of Florida in 1995. There is increasing local interest in updating the plan, particularly in view of changes in the status of the manatee and in increasing demand for boating access. The Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners is considering an ordinance requiring the establishment of a new advisory committee and collection of data to update the MPP. In order to develop a meaningful process for this effort, our department is requesting some guidance from your office with respect to FWC's requirements for consideration of revisions to existing plans. We also know that coordination with US Fish and Wildlife Service is required, and we would like to understand the necessary steps for accomplishing revisions.

We note that there are general guidelines in the Draft Florida Manatee Management Plan requiring counties with existing approved MPPs to provide updated information on boat facilities, boat traffic and distribution, manatee aerial surveys, and other information in order to receive priority for review by FWC. We also note that revision of Miami-Dade's MPP is not specifically shown as a priority on the proposed timeline for MPP actions included in your plan. Appendix VIII, Facility Siting Guide, states that seasonal variations in boating activity and manatee use patterns must be addressed. Additionally, your staff has kindly shared with us an example of a recent boat traffic study conducted in Broward County, which included quarterly sampling for one year. We interpret this to mean that at least one year's worth of data is required, to describe seasonal patterns. We request confirmation and further guidance from your office on the frequency and duration of sampling required for a boating traffic study and manatee surveys.

As you can realize it is critical that we know with some degree of certainty what information would have to be generated in order to update the County's twelve-year-old Manatee Plan, since it would have budgetary and timeline implications. We would also invite your staff to participate in the upcoming public meetings.

I appreciate your assistance and look forward to receiving more guidance from your office.

Sincerely,

Carlos Espinosa, P.E.
Director

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