

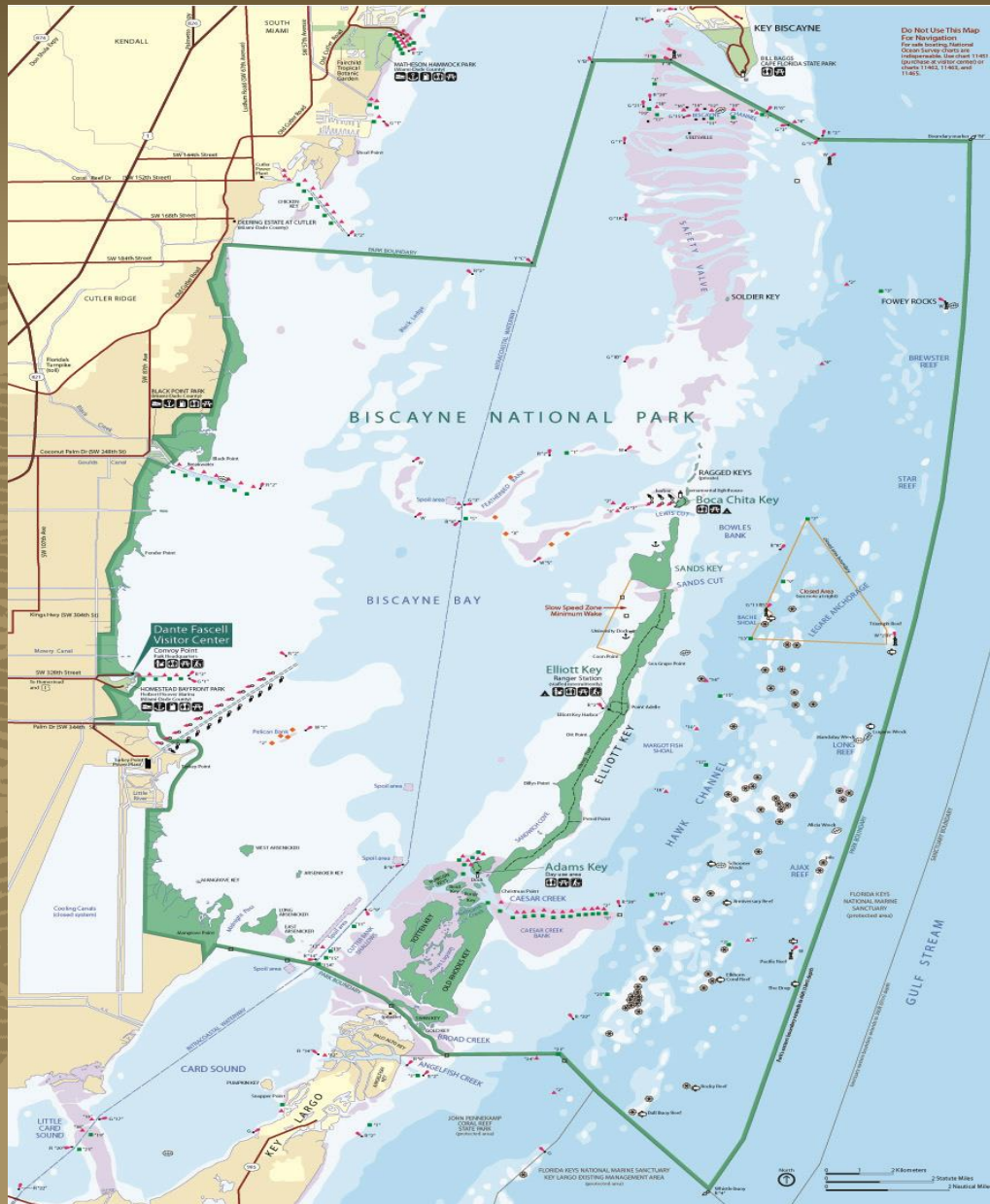
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



# Biscayne National Park

*South Florida*





# Enabling Legislation

In order 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, there is hereby established the Biscayne National Park.

*Public Law 96-287, Title I, §101, 6/28/1980*



# Fishing Regulation

Section 103 of the park's enabling legislation states:

“The waters within the park shall continue to be open to fishing in conformity with the laws of the State of Florida except as the Secretary, after consultation with appropriate officials of said State, designates species for which, areas and times within which, and methods by which fishing is prohibited, limited, or otherwise regulated in the interest of sound conservation to achieve the purposes for which the park is established...”



# Popular Activities

- BNP is 95% water
  - Most popular activities are boating and fishing followed by snorkeling and diving
  - Vast majority of visitation is by local South Floridians



# Ongoing Planning Efforts

## ■ General Management Plan (GMP)

- 15-year effort with extensive public meetings and workshops
- 43,000 unique public comments and Final GMP signed in 2015
- Proposed MRZ ( No Take Zone) 6% of the Park / 20% of the fishing within the park.  
FWC does not support a MRZ



## ■ Fisheries Management Plan (FMP)

- 12-year cooperative planning effort with the State of Florida (FWC)
- Goal of increasing size and abundance of fish and invertebrates by 20%
- Management strategies included:
  - changes in bag and/or size limits for some species
  - gear restrictions on spearfishing
  - gradual phase-out of commercial fishing within the park
  - FWC does not support commercial fishing phase-out

# Current Challenges

- Fishing continues to be a very controversial topic
- The proposed MRZ (No Take Zone) has strong bipartisan opposition
- Several bipartisan bills proposed to limit NPS authority to regulate fishing access in BNP and NPS-wide

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EDITORIALS

## Senators right to block preserve Biscayne National Park Marine reserve

AUGUST 31, 2016 2:23 AM

Sens. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., and Marco Rubio, R-Fla., recently introduced a bill, which has already passed out of committee, to stop an unwarranted marine reserve in Biscayne National Park. In the U.S. House, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.) championed bipartisan legislation that passed last year addressing this flawed management decision.

Our community depends on sound, science-based policies focused on conservation needs while ensuring public access to maintain and enhance recreational fishing opportunities. Marine protected areas (MPAs) are almost always a contentious subject in fisheries management.

In instances where traditional fisheries management are unsuccessful at sustaining a healthy fish population, MPAs can serve as an important tool.

MPAs do nothing to address the true challenges to our coral reefs, such as temperature rise, ocean acidification, pollution or invasive species. However, the success of well-planned MPAs in rebuilding certain fish stocks has fueled a movement to broadly promote MPAs as a response for the problems facing the ocean environment.

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A bill proposed by Florida Sens. Bill Nelson and Marco Rubio would undo a plan to create a 10,000-acre preserve in the 225-square-mile park. - Biscayne National Park

ENVIRONMENT

## Florida senators move to undo Biscayne National Park preserve

BY AMY SUTOW  
jsutow@miamiherald.com

AUG 29, 2016 1:07 PM

A marine preserve in Biscayne National Park — a key piece of a new management plan 15 years in the making and designed to protect Florida's declining reef tract — may be derailed by a new bill proposed by Florida Sens. Bill Nelson and Marco Rubio.

The bill, proposed Friday and first touched through a committee hearing, would undo the preserve and require the National Park Service to consult with Florida wildlife managers, who opposed the preserve.

"This is a reasonable bill that will ensure the park consults with the state and uses the best available science to guide forward," Nelson said.

# New Engagement

## ■ Listening Tour

- 100+ meetings with stakeholders
  - FWC Managers
  - Conservation groups
  - Sport and commercial fishers
  - Boating clubs
  - Local marine industries
  - Elected officials



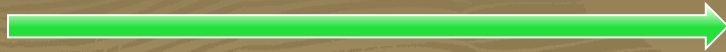
## ■ Concerns Expressed

- More law enforcement: Presence/enforcement of existing regulations
- Mooring buoys: Installing to reduce coral damage
- Fishing regulations: Less restrictive methods first
- Increased staff presence on islands
- More fresh water: Better water quality for Biscayne Bay



# Response Status

## ■ More Enforcement



- Additional funding requested to hire more marine rangers
- Marking manatee zones, installing reef markers

## ■ Mooring Buoys



- Installing mooring buoys in popular areas to protect corals from anchor drops
- Six new buoys installed at Fowey Rocks Lighthouse

## ■ Fishing Regulations



- Working closely with FWC to develop more restrictive State fishing regulations for the park

## ■ Staff Presence on Islands



- Requested additional funding for Interpretation Rangers
- Roving VIPs

## ■ More Fresh Water



- Working to accelerate fresh water restoration efforts to Biscayne Bay

# What Can You Do?

## Support Restoration Efforts-

- CERP was authorized by Congress in 2000 as a plan to "restore, preserve, and protect the south Florida ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection."
- At a cost of more than \$10.5 billion and with a 35+ year timeline, this is the largest hydrologic restoration project ever undertaken in the United States.

# Biscayne is YOUR National Park

