

Manatee Time Line

What are some Important Dates or Notable Information about Manatees in Florida?

1492 – 1785

1903 – 1965

1976 – 1985

1996 - 2005

1824 – 1893

1966 – 1975

1986 – 1995

2006 - Present

References

1976 Cooperative endangered species agreement between U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State of Florida.

- Sea World of Florida began its Manatee Rescue and Rehabilitation Program.
- West Indian Manatee Recovery Team formed.

1977 – Cooperative endangered species agreement between the State of Georgia and the State of Florida.

- Marine Mammal Commission sponsored a Marine Mammal Stranding Conference—subsequently, the National Marine Fisheries Service coordinated volunteer programs to report and respond to strandings in each of its management regions.
- A partial shut down of a power plant in Brevard County was implicated in the deaths due to cold stress of 38 manatees on the East Coast.
- Under approval of the National Marine Fisheries Service, research biologist Dan Odell volunteered to be the state coordinator for marine mammal strandings in Florida and 'scientific coordinator' for the southeast region.

1978 – Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act (amended the 1907 state law) – Florida Statutes Chapter 370.12(2) – declares entire state as a refuge and sanctuary for manatees - and allowed regulation of boat speeds in proximity to manatee aggregation areas.

- The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), DNR, Florida Audubon Society and Sea World of Florida sponsored a "West Indian Manatee Workshop" in Orlando, Florida—six management recommendations resulted from the meeting (in summary here)
 1. regulations to control boaters and divers,
 2. land acquisition for refuges,
 3. study of potential artificial refuges
 4. explore technological control mechanisms to protect manatees
 5. develop oil spill contingency plans
 6. increase public education

The group presented this report to the Marine Mammal Commission.

1979 – The Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission listed manatees as an endangered species. Freshwater Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Code of the State of Florida, Specific Authority Article. IV, Section 9, Florida Constitution, 372.021 FS. Law Implemented 120.53 FS, Art. IV, Section 9, Fla. Const. History—New 8-1-79, Formerly 39-1.01, 39-1.001 – Includes the 68A-1.002 Regulation of Wild Animal Life and Freshwater Aquatic Life in the State and 68A-1.004 Definitions (including endangered species, species of special concern and threatened species lists).

- Governor Bob Graham proclaims November as Manatee Awareness Month in Florida. The first state-designated manatee protection zones adopted. Most of these zones were established in close proximity to areas where manatees were known to aggregate in large numbers during winter due to the availability of warm water provided by either natural or artificial sources (e.g., springs, power plants, or other industrial sources). The zones were in effect seasonally between November 15 and the end of March. The zones were located in the following counties: Brevard, Broward, Citrus, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lee, Martin, Palm Beach, St. Lucie, and Volusia.

1980 – U.S. Congress made a special Fiscal Year Appropriation of \$100,000 to the Marine Mammal Commission for work on manatees. A Manatee Recovery Activities Coordinator was hired.

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) developed the initial Federal Manatee Recovery Plan.
- USFWS established three manatee sanctuaries in the Kings Bay area (Citrus County).

Early 1980's – The National Aeronautics and Space Administration at the Kennedy Space Center incorporated auxiliary water-jet propulsion systems on the ships used to retrieve booster rockets after launches of the space shuttle.

1981 – Governor Bob Graham and singer/songwriter Jimmy Buffet founded the non-profit Save the Manatee Committee with a mission to protect endangered manatees and their habitat—the Adopt-A-Manatee program began. The committee operated under the non-profit status of the Florida Audubon Society and was the predecessor of the Save the Manatee Club.

- The Manatee Technical Advisory Council was formed to advise DNR about manatee related issues.

DNR

Florida Department of Natural Resources

1982 – Red tide caused a manatee epizootic in southwest Florida.

- The Florida Chapter of the Nature Conservancy, with donations from people all over the country, bought 14 islands in Kings Bay (Citrus County) to use for a manatee sanctuary.
- The USFWS completed the Comprehensive Work Plan, which implemented the Manatee Recovery Plan.

1983 – Florida Department of Natural Resources Manatee Program began at the Florida Marine Research Institute (FMRI) in St. Petersburg, Florida.

- The USFWS provided funding for the establishment of a State of Florida manatee coordinator, which allowed DNR to begin the implementation of its many and varied recovery responsibilities.

- Per a permitting process, DNR required Tampa Electric to close access to a natural boat ramp to protect manatees near the Big Bend Unit Four. State manatee protection zones were adopted for Turkey Creek (Brevard County), the Faka Union Canal area (Collier County), Black Creek (Dade County), the Loxahatchee River (Martin and Palm Beach counties), and the Venice Inlet area (Sarasota County).

1984 – The Marine Mammal Commission transmitted a report to the USFWS entitled, "Habitat Protection Needs for the Sub-population of West Indian Manatees in the Crystal River Area of Northwest Florida." This report recommended the purchase of wetlands and uplands along the Crystal and lower Suwannee Rivers.

1985 – DNR received funds from the State's Motorboat Revolving Trust Fund to expand its manatee program—staff increased to four members.

- FMRI took over the manatee carcass salvage and rescue program (three field stations and one contractor) from the USFWS and used federal endangered species funds to administer the program.
- The Florida Growth Management Act of 1985 required counties and municipalities in Florida to develop local growth management plans to control new boating facilities and protect wildlife.
- Florida Power and Light produced and distributed 100,000 copies each of its manatee booklets and bumper stickers. State manatee protection zones adopted for Manatee Cove (Brevard County) and portions of the Withlacoochee River (Citrus and Levy counties).



Prop Cuts from a large vessel

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