

Manatee Time Line

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

1492 – 1785	1903 – 1965	1976 – 1985	<u>1996 - 2005</u>
1824 – 1893	1966 – 1975	1986 – 1995	2006 - Present

References

1996 USFWS completed the third edition (second revision) of the Manatee Recovery Plan. Objectives of the Plan:

1. Assess and minimize causes of manatee mortality and injury,
2. protect essential habitat,
3. determine and monitor the status of the manatee population and essential habitat,
4. coordinate and oversee cooperative recovery work.

- Aerial manatee survey results counted 2,639 manatees.
- National media event showcased manatee capture and tagging in the Tampa Electric Big Bend canal. Lt. Governor Buddy MacKay participated in the event.
- Red tide Brevetoxin contributed to the highest manatee epizootic on record—a total of 145 adult manatees and 6 perinatal manatees died in southwest Florida. Manatee deaths for the year were 415—the highest annual total up to that point.
- The Marine Mammal Commission convened The Working Group on Unusual Marine Mammal Mortality Events to address the epizootic. The MMC recommended that a contingency plan for manatee die-offs be developed to assist in future events.
- FACEE was replaced by the Advisory Council for Environmental Education (ACEE) and funds were cut for environmental education programs as more money was made available for research and management needs.
- Manatee protection devices on water control structures tested around the state.
- FMRI released its first Atlas of Marine Resources on CD-ROM.
- Legislators passed the Boater Education bill.
- FPL Fort Myers power plant leased a 12-acre site near a discharge canal to Lee County (Parks and Recreation) to create the Lee County Manatee Park and a manatee viewing area.
- Marine Mammal Commission requested USFWS to address harassment issues in Kings Bay (Crystal River, FL).
- The National Biological Service (NBS) that administers the Sirenia Project became part of the U.S. Geological Survey as the Biological Resources Discipline.

1997 – The Manatee Technical Advisory Council conducted a Manatee Program Review to provide guidelines to improve the state's manatee program.

- Five manatees (not suitable for release) were transferred from SeaWorld Orlando to its facility in San Diego.
- Researchers discovered the first cases of viral infections ever reported in manatees—lesions caused by the papillomavirus (Dr. Ruth Ewing, University of Miami, School of Medicine).
- Dock study begun—addressed impact to seagrass growth.
- Citrus County Manatee Protection Plan was revised.
- Collier County countywide amendments were adopted to the state manatee protection rule.

- A proposal for the deregulation or reorganization of the power industry in Florida, which would result in closure or intermittent operation of certain critical power plants for manatees, highlighted the need for stakeholders to work together to address this issue.
- USFWS contracted a study to document manatee-human interactions in Kings Bay (Crystal River, FL).

1998 – Per the program review recommendations for a research coordinator, Buddy Powell was hired to lead the manatee research program at the DEP Florida Marine Research Institute.

- The St. Johns Water Management District formed a manatee task force to address concerns for establishing a minimum flow for Blue Spring (Orange Spring, FL) as it relates to protection of a primary manatee warm water refuge (by Administrative Rule).
- Propeller guard study was contracted with Florida Atlantic University.
- After a two and a half-year trial period, Valentine, a captive born manatee was released into the wild without a tag. This was the first time that biologists documented a successful reintroduction of a captive manatee based on Valentines' health and gross appearance.
- USFWS established an additional manatee sanctuary in the Kings Bay area (Citrus County), bringing the total number of federal sanctuaries in the area to seven.
- Amendments were adopted to the General Provisions rules of Chapter 62N-22 (62N-22.001 through 62N-22.003, FAC) based on recommendations that were submitted by the Boating Advisory Council. These rules describe the processes the Department uses to establish zones and issue authorizations to conduct activities that are otherwise prohibited by manatee protection rules.
- Amendments were adopted to the state manatee protection rule for Brevard County to add seasonal (November 15 through March 31) No Entry and Motorboats Prohibited zones in the vicinity of the power plants on the Indian River between Titusville and Cocoa.

1999 – The DEP manatee web site was updated and redesigned (later updated to reflect the new FWC agency).

- DEP approved local manatee protection zones established by the City of Jacksonville and the Duval County Manatee Protection Plan.
- DEP Bureau of Protected Species Management (BPSM) moved to the newly formed Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

FWC

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

- First Power Plant Manatee Protection Plans were approved by FWC, USFWS and DEP.
- Countywide manatee protection rules were adopted in Lee County.
- Following the creation of the FWC and the transfer of the manatee program to the FWC, all of the manatee protection rules were moved from Chapter 62N to Chapter 68C of the Florida Administrative Code (FAC). The chapter was also renamed "Manatees" instead of "Manatee Sanctuary Act."

2000 – Significant amendments were made to the countywide rule for Duval County – adopted in association with the city of Jacksonville’s Manatee Protection Plan (approved in 1999). In addition to revising the zones in Duval County, the rule also added new zones in the St. Johns River area of northern Clay County and St. Johns County.

- Manatee Protection Plan was approved for Indian River County.
- A coalition of environmental organizations filed lawsuits against the executive director of the FWC for allegedly violating portions of the Endangered Species Act and against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Department of Interior for allegedly modifying critical habitat and authorizing impacts through permitting coastal construction projects.
- Governor Jeb Bush mandated a statewide Florida Manatee Summit held in Tallahassee, Florida, after stating at a cabinet meeting, "We should not be expanding marinas without using some influence to try to accelerate these manatee protection plans across the state." The attendees at the summit unanimously agreed that improved law enforcement and improved boater education should be a priority and that speed zones and sanctuaries were an effective means of protecting manatees.
- FWC implemented the redesign of waterway signage to improve compliance with the waterway speed zones.
- The USFWS formed the Manatee Habitat Warm Water Task Force to address issues related to industrial facilities providing warm water habitat used by manatees during the cold season.
- Florida Power & Light (FPL) funded a research and development project completed by Dr. John Reynolds of Eckerd College entitled, "Possible Locations for Long-term, Warm-water Refugia for Manatees in Florida: Alternatives to Power Plants," which was hailed by regulators and scientists as being one of the most important and timely contributions to address the issue of manatees and their dependence on industrial warm water outfalls. FPL sponsored the completion and printing of a study done by the U.S. Geological Survey in 2000 entitled, "Winter Movements and Use of Warm-water Refugia by Radio-tagged West Indian Manatees along the Atlantic Coast of the United States."
- A Final Order was issued regarding a rule challenge that had been filed contesting the validity of several of the existing state manatee protection zones in the Canaveral Barge Canal area of Brevard County (DOAH Case No. 99-5366RX). The validity of the zones was upheld.
- FWC approved local manatee protection zones established by Hillsborough County for the Apollo Beach area.
- Number of boats registered in Florida – approximately 880,000 boats (pleasure and commercial boats).

2001 – Excellent weather and water conditions allowed researchers to record 3,276 manatees during the statewide synoptic manatee aerial survey.

- Environmental groups agreed to separate settlements to resolve the lawsuits they had filed in 2000 against the FWC, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Interior. The settlements required each agency to perform specific actions and consider the need for additional regulations in specific areas.
- BPSM posted information signs at winter warm water sites around Florida.
- FWC received a petition to down-list the manatee from the endangered species list.
- Countywide amendments were approved for the state manatee protection rule for Brevard County. Three separate rule challenges were filed contesting the validity of the changes, which delayed FWC’s ability to adopt the changes until 2002.

- FWC/BPSM web site was redesigned with an extensive update of content in the manatee section.
- Elsa Haubold followed Buddy Powell as the administrator of the manatee research program. Buddy Powell left FWC to work with Wildlife Trust.
- The Florida Legislature appropriated money in the Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund to fund research projects that directly address the problem of collisions between manatees and watercraft and sought to reduce collisions using technological solutions. Six proposals were selected for funding.
- After a break of a few years, positive identification of Chessie the manatee was again reported when he traversed a lock system in Great Bridge, Virginia.
- FMRI completed the Boater Compliance Baseline and Law Enforcement Study.

2002 – FWC approved the first revision of the Indian River Manatee Protection Plan.

- FWC approved the Martin County Manatee Protection Plan.



Miss Her Now or Miss Her Forever...

- FWC approved the St. Lucie County Manatee Protection Plan.
- A Final Order was issued regarding the rule challenges that had been filed contesting the validity of proposed amendments to the state manatee protection zones in Brevard County (DOAH Case Nos. 01-2114RP, 01-2197RP, and 01-2198RP). The validity of the zones was upheld. Two separate appeals of the Final Order were filed with the Fifth District Court of Appeals (Case Nos. 5D02-1424 and 5D02-1440); however the appeals did not prevent the FWC from adopting the amendments. (The DOAH Final Order was affirmed by the District Court in 2003.)
- FWC approved a local ordinance passed by Hillsborough County to establish local manatee protection zones in the area between the Alafia River and the Little Manatee River.
- USFWS established four manatee sanctuaries (in Citrus, Hillsborough, and Pinellas counties) and 11 manatee refuges (in Brevard, Charlotte, Hillsborough, Lee, and Sarasota counties). Two of the refuges (in Brevard and Sarasota counties) were later withdrawn because of the existence of identical state protections in the areas.
- As part of the implementation of the 2001 settlement agreement, new or amended state manatee protection zones were adopted in Charlotte (and DeSoto), Citrus, Hillsborough, Indian River, Manatee, and Sarasota counties.

- The FWC named a panel of three marine mammal experts to review a FWC scientific biological status report regarding the reclassification of manatees from endangered to threatened species. Panel members: Professor Solange Brault, University of Massachusetts; Professor Doug Demaster, University of Washington and Scripps Institution; Professor Helene Marsh, James Cook University.
- The FWC Florida Marine Research Institute changed its name to the FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute.

2003 – FWC approved the Brevard County Manatee Protection Plan.

- USFWS established three manatee refuges (in Lee, Volusia, and Duval counties, with the latter refuge including small portions of Clay and St. Johns counties).
- Amendments were adopted to the General Provisions rules of Chapter 68C-22 (Rules 68C-22.001, 68C-22.002, and 68C-22.004) to: adjust for changes that were made to the Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act in 2002; amend the definitions of several terms to reflect revised definitions in 68D-23, FAC; and, otherwise improve the rules and remove unnecessary language.
- As a result of internal agency reorganization, the FWC Bureau of Protected Species Management became the Imperiled Species Management Section (ISM) under the leadership of Kipp Frohlich. ISM is responsible for the state's management programs for the following imperiled species - manatees, sea turtles, panthers, black bears and right whales. Carol Knox took the leadership position as Biological Administrator for the manatee management program.

2004 – FWC approved local ordinances passed by: Manatee County to establish local manatee protection needs throughout much of the county; the City of Jacksonville (Duval County) to amend its local manatee protection zones.

- As part of the implementation of the 2001 settlement agreement, new or amended state manatee protection zones were adopted in Tampa Bay (portions of Hillsborough, Manatee, and Pinellas counties).
- FWC approved the second revision of the Indian River County Manatee Protection Plan.
- FWC approved the Lee County Manatee Protection Plan.
- FWC approved the Sarasota County Manatee Protection Plan.

2005 – FWC approved local ordinances passed by: Manatee County to amend its local manatee protection zones that were established in 2004; Pinellas County to establish local manatee protection zones in the Safety Harbor area of Old Tampa Bay; and, Hillsborough County to establish local manatee protection zones in the Cockroach Bay area.

- USFWS established a manatee refuge in a portion of Lee County and revised the federal zones in the downtown Jacksonville area of Duval County.
- Amendments were adopted to the General Provisions rules of Chapter 68C-22 to describe how the FWC uses the measurable biological goals when considering the need for new or amended state manatee protection rules. Chapter 2004-343, Laws of Florida, required that the rules be amended to address this issue.
- The state manatee protection rule for Lee County was re-evaluated and re-promulgated in light of new permanent and emergency federal zones established by the USFWS, as well as, issues raised in a January 2003 Lee County Court ruling. Amendments were adopted to some of the existing zones and new zones were added in a few areas.

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