



May 8, 2014

Jonathan Jarvis  
Director, National Park Service  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Nick Wiley  
Executive Director, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
620 South Meridian Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Director Jarvis and Executive Director Wiley:

I am writing as the Chairman of the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (Council) to express appreciation for the continued efforts between the National Park Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to cooperatively develop an updated General Management Plan (GMP) for Biscayne National Park. For the past several years, the Council has taken a strong interest in the GMP process in the hope that an agreement can be reached that ensures strong resource conservation and allows ample public access to this magnificent public resource. We are pleased to see the significant progress made to date, as reflected in the November 2013 Supplemental Draft GMP, and urge your two agencies to continue working cooperatively together toward the finalization of this important plan.

The Council's interest in the GMP process has primarily been focused on the marine reserve proposal included in the August 2011 GMP and its potential negative impacts on recreational fishing and boating opportunities. Marine reserves are a tool – albeit the most restrictive tool – in the fisheries management toolbox that should be the measure of last resort after less restrictive approaches have failed. By proposing a marine reserve, the National Park Service bypassed other fisheries management options proposed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and stakeholders that would allow reasonable public access while improving resource conservation.

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National Marine Manufacturers  
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*Director*  
Wildlife Resources Div.  
Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

**Dan Ashe**, ex officio  
*Director*  
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While increasing demands on our public resources may require stricter management in some situations, the fastest way to make those resources irrelevant is to take away access from the people who strongly value them and provide the bulk of the nation's conservation funding. Numerous factors are threatening the health of our nation's public resources and in considering how to address these challenges, managers must maintain public access, including recreational fishing and boating, as a top priority.

The new preferred alternative in the supplemental GMP marks a significant improvement upon the previous preferred plan, which included a marine reserve, by laying the foundation for an innovative management approach (i.e., the Special Recreation Zone) that controls fishing pressure without closing off all recreational fishing access. While additional modifications are necessary to improve the functionality of this approach, including reexamining the number of fishing permits and allowing for shorter duration of permits, we believe this is a workable path forward.

We applaud the National Park Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for working together to develop an improved management plan and urge you continue these efforts in good faith as this process moves toward finalization. If the Council can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Dammrich', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Thomas J. Dammrich  
Chairman