

# Governance to Oversee Implementation

## BACKGROUND

Sarasota Bay is the center of a community of 600,000 people. The Bay's economic, aesthetic, and recreational value makes it a highly valuable asset to the community. Like other coastal areas of the



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CAC members visit Perico and Neal Preserves.

United States and Florida, the region continues to experience population growth. The resulting impacts of pollutants and human use could damage Sarasota Bay.

Although federal funding through Section 320 of the Water Quality Act of 1987 is critical to sustaining programmatic activities, most of the revenue for implementation has been provided by state and local governments, as well as other federal agencies. Total revenue expended on Bay restoration approximates \$700 million.

Fostering a cooperative spirit among federal, state, and local governments and private citizens, the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program pursued a variety of technical, public-outreach and early-action projects to support implementation of the comprehensive management plan for the Bay. The Conservation Conversation and Management Plan provided the operational guideline, while the annual workplans approved by the SBEP Policy Board set priorities. Large-

scale grants and loans have been made by federal, state, and regional agencies, while local funds have been provided through utility fees and property taxes. Implementation activities have been broad-reaching and extensive, with the majority of implementation activity occurring within the local governments supported by the NEP process and state agencies.

In 1995, clear direction was provided by the community:

- The Management Conference did not wish to establish another layer of bureaucracy
- The institution to be established should not have regulatory authority
- The program was not to be involved in land-use or environmental-permitting decisions.

With these policies at the forefront, the SBEP Citizen Advisory Committee took the lead in developing the Governance to Oversee the Implementation Plan in 1994, and again in 2010/2011, as presented.

# Governance to Oversee Implementation

## ACTION PLAN

### GOAL:

Establish an appropriate institutional structure to oversee implementation of the Sarasota Bay Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)

### POLICIES:

Oversee and promote implementation of the CCMP to ensure effective participation of public agencies and private citizens. Improve Sarasota Bay to the maximum extent possible, given best-available technology and economic constraints. The SBEP should not get involved in land-use or environmental permitting decisions.

### OBJECTIVE 1.0:

Maintain an appropriate committee structure and staff to ensure effective implementation of the Sarasota Bay CCMP.

#### ACTION 1.1:

Implement the CCMP utilizing the Interlocal Agreement.

#### ACTION 1.2:

Conduct an independent strategic assessment of program performance at intervals not to exceed three years subsequent to approval by Florida's governor and the U.S. EPA administrator.

### OBJECTIVE 2.0:

Expand financial opportunities to benefit Sarasota Bay.

#### ACTION 2.1:

Support Clean Water Act reauthorization for continuing appropriation for CCMP implementation.

### ACTION 2.2:

Maintain the designation of Sarasota Bay (in 1995) as a State of Florida Surface Water Improvement and Management program priority water body.

### ACTION 2.3:

Continue and expand grant writing to benefit Sarasota Bay and fund specific projects in the CCMP.

### ACTION 2.4:

The SBEP encourages an independent foundation to further support the goals of the CCMP.

### Action 2.5:

Implement the Southwest Florida Regional Ecosystem Restoration Plan.

### OBJECTIVE 3.0:

Expand environmental education programs, with an emphasis on boaters.

### OBJECTIVE 4.0:

Implement Land Use and Environmental Permitting policy (below).

## Land Use And Environmental Permitting Policy

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP) is an independent special district established pursuant to an Interlocal Agreement among local, state, and federal governmental entities. The SBEP serves as a cooperative program to provide resources for the long-term health of the Sarasota Bay Estuary and its contributing water-bodies (the "Bay"). In keeping with this role, the SBEP Policy Board has maintained a policy of refraining from participation in proceedings regarding land use or environmental permitting decisions before individual government entities.

Accordingly, SBEP staff, the SBEP Management Board, and SBEP advisory committees (the Technical Advisory Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee) are not authorized to take a position on behalf of the SBEP in any such decisions. Individuals who serve as members of such staff, boards or committees, are, of course, free to voice their own views in such proceedings, but are strongly encouraged to clarify that they do so as private citizens so as to avoid any inference that they are speaking on behalf of the SBEP.

The SBEP maintains a wide range of data, records, and reports regarding the environmental conditions of the Bay. In keeping with the requirements of Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, the Florida Public Records Act, SBEP staff will make such materials available to all individuals and organizations requesting to access, inspect, and duplicate such materials, regardless of whether such parties wish to do so in furtherance of their participation in a land use or environmental permitting proceeding. The sharing of such public records with any such individual or organization shall not be construed as an endorsement of any position taken by such individual or organization in such proceeding, nor shall it impose any obligation upon any staff member of the SBEP to participate in such proceeding to verify or explain the relevance of such records.

# Governance to Oversee Implementation

## PROGRESS REPORT

The SBEP Interlocal Agreement (IA) requires a re-examination of the CCMP every five years. The SBEP IA was enacted October 1, 2005, adding the Town of Longboat Key and the City of Bradenton to the Policy Board as contributing members. The CWA was re-authorized in 2000 and is presently undergoing revision at the Congressional level. Surface Water Improvement Management Program (SWIM) designation occurred in 1996, and funding continued through FY2014. Independent assessments by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency were completed in 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, and 2013.



Joan M. Durante Park, Town of Longboat Key.

Patti Cross

## PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS & RESULTS

In 1995, performance measurements were established to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation.

### MEASURE #1:

The Management Conference shall report to the people annually on progress made toward completing actions and achieving “Measurements of Success” listed in the Sarasota Bay restoration plan.

### RESULTS 1.1:

Annual work plans provide progress reports to the public and management conference on successes and achievements by action plan objective annually.

### RESULTS 1.2:

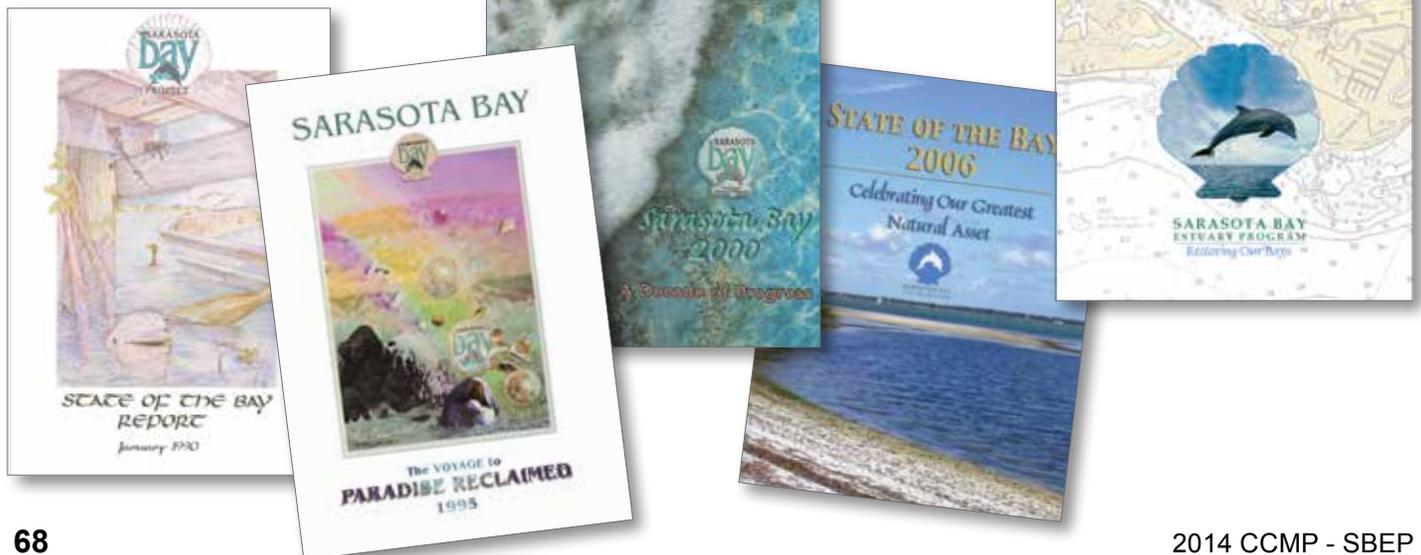
The SBEP reports on the “State of the Bay” and “Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)” progress every three to five years, respectively.

### RESULTS 1.3:

Sarasota Bay should continue to show improvement through monitoring of Action Plan implementation as the CCMP is implemented.

### RESULTS 1.4:

Sarasota Bay and its resources continue to show improvement.



# Governance to Oversee Implementation

## ACTION PLAN UPDATE

During the CCMP development process (1994 to 1995) it was determined that the structure utilized throughout the planning phase was successful, and therefore should be continued during the implementation phases. In July 2004, the Management Conference was solidified per the establishment of the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Interlocal Agreement (IA).

The IA provides a legal mechanism for the establishment of the SBEP as an independent state agency with annual funding contributions by its partners.

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Management Conference consists of four committees:

- Policy Board
- Management Board
- Citizen Advisory Committee
- Technical Advisory Committee.

Following is a discussion of the roles and responsibilities of each of those committees:

### Policy Board

The Policy Board establishes the general policies and goals for the SBEP and sets priorities by reviewing and approving annual budgets and work plans, and evaluating progress in meeting the goals set forth by the Management Conference.

### Management Board

The Management Board serves as liaison between the Policy Board and the Technical and Citizen Advisory

committees. This committee advises the Policy Board on all matters for which the various committees have direct responsibilities. The Management Board regularly reviews work plans, funding plans, work products, and all other activities of the SBEP and makes recommendations to the Policy Board on necessary actions for specific program needs. The Management Board selects and approves contractors, and approves changes in annual operating budget.

### Technical Advisory Committee

The Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC) primary role is to provide technical advice and support to the SBEP. The TAC also reviews and comments on the technical content of completed projects, offers suggestions and advice on implementation policies, reviews monitoring data, and makes recommendations to the Management Board on technical issues.

### Citizen Advisory Committee

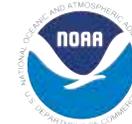
The Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) provides a mechanism for structured citizen input to the SBEP, and assists in disseminating information on its programs to the public. The CAC also helps establish SBEP goals and objectives, helps set funding levels, assists with public-participation activities, communicates SBEP activities to user groups, provides public input

on research priorities, reviews technical findings, and helps further develop and implement the CCMP. The CAC works closely with the SBEP staff through the Executive Director and the Public Outreach Manager to assist in developing an effective public education and participation process.

Significant progress has been made over the past two decades in solidifying the SBEP's role in the community. The Interlocal Agreement of 2004 provides for continued funding of base program activities by partnering organizations:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Town of Longboat Key
- City of Bradenton
- City of Sarasota
- Manatee County
- Sarasota County
- Southwest Florida Water Management District
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Each entity has contributed substantially to restoration, with the majority of funds for implementation of local origin. Other federal agencies (the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Agency, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) have also made substantial contributions.



US Army Corps of Engineers