

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

--MEMORANDUM--



The City Beautiful

TO: Members of the City Commission
City Manager, Peter Iglesias

FROM: Mayor Vince Lago

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "V. Lago", is written over the "FROM:" line.

DATE: December 15, 2023

SUBJECT: Biscayne Bay Economic Study Update Final Report

By way of this memo, I would like to share insights from the Biscayne Bay Economic Study Update, completed by Hazen and Sawyer, which emphasizes our critical role in the preservation of this essential ecosystem. As Vice Chair of the Biscayne Bay Watershed Management Advisory Board, my involvement has deepened my understanding of the Bay's significance to our community and economy.

Biscayne Bay, a vast tropical saline lagoon, is the lifeblood of the greater Miami and Miami Beach areas. Extending nearly the entire length of Miami-Dade County, from Haulover Inlet to the upper reaches of Key Largo, the Bay, along with the fully channelized Miami River, forms a cornerstone of our county's quality of life and economy. These waters facilitate a myriad of activities and industries, including recreational and commercial fishing, swimming, boating, sailing, shipping operations at PortMiami and the Miami River, and cruise ship operations at PortMiami. The bayfront and riverfront views also add immeasurable aesthetic value to our region.

The 2022 study, an update to the 2004-2005 study by Hazen and Sawyer, underscores the Biscayne Bay's and Miami River's economic contributions, particularly in terms of recreational uses and impacts on residential property values. This comprehensive analysis demonstrates that these bodies of water are not just natural wonders but are also economic powerhouses. Their preservation is crucial for maintaining and enhancing our community's wellbeing and economic prosperity.

As we delve into the findings of this study, it is evident that Biscayne Bay's health directly influences our county's residential property values, recreational opportunities, and overall

economic vitality. The study's focus on recreational uses of the Bay and the impact of the Bay and River on residential property values provides a clear justification for investments and programs aimed at protecting this invaluable resource.

Your continued guidance and collaboration are essential as we use this data to shape our strategies for preserving Biscayne Bay. We are tasked with a significant responsibility to safeguard this vital asset for future generations, ensuring its benefits continue to bolster our community and state.

Collectively, as a governing body, we should leverage the insights from this study to inform our decisions and actions. Our shared commitment to Biscayne Bay's preservation will resonate through our economy, environment, and quality of life.

[BBWMAB Final Report](#)