

ONE VOICE *for the river*

In 2005, the Miami River Corridor's mixed-use revitalization progressed with several groundbreaking and landmark achievements. Historic neighborhoods revived, greenways were built, new marine-industrial businesses opened and major redevelopment projects created new downtown riverfront homes.

BY FALL 2005, 40 percent of the Miami River maintenance-dredging project was completed, ahead of schedule and under budget. Maintenance dredging commenced in September 2004 at the salinity dam (NW 36 Street) in unincorporated Miami-Dade County, and proceeded east of the 22 Avenue Bridge in the City of Miami, removing 240,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediments, in addition to debris including three cars, four boats and 15 handguns.

Maintenance dredging has been the top priority of the Miami River Commission (MRC) since the Florida Legislature created it in 1998. Restoring the river's 15-foot-deep federal navigable channel allows vessels to fill cargo to full capacity and traverse regardless of tide, therefore increasing international trade, commerce and local employment. In addition, removing the contaminated sediments improves the natural environment of the Miami River and Biscayne Bay.

The MRC is grateful to the following indispensable partners in this venture: U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Senators Bill Nelson and Mel Martinez, former Sen. Bob Graham, the Miami-Dade Delegation, Gov. Jeb Bush, the Florida Legislature, Miami-Dade County, the City of Miami, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Florida Inland Navigation District, South Florida Water Management District, Miami River Marine Group, Bean Environmental and Weston Solutions.

THE MIAMI RIVER GREENWAY broke ground in several sections in 2005, under the leadership of the Trust for Public Land, the City of Miami, Florida Department of Transportation and the private development community. The publicly accessible pedestrian path will feature landscaping, decorative lighting, historical markers, way-finding signage, and other amenities.

In 2005, 1000 Friends of Florida honored the MRC with the "Community Steward Award" for implementing the *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan*, a blueprint for a mixed-use river community worthy of our stewardship.

In August 2005, Antillean Marine christened the *Habib Express*, the international shipper's largest, fastest, most expensive ship ever. Antillean bought the ship with confidence that completing maintenance dredging would restore full navigation to the river and spur increased international trade.



Photo by: Faroy Aerial Projects

ur mission

committee have met every month, as have the MRC subcommittees dedicated to dredging, greenways, stormwater, urban infill, public safety and economic development. You can read their minutes and reports at the commission's website, www.miamirivercommission.org

THE MRC'S PRIORITIES ARE completing the maintenance dredging of the Miami River and implementing its strategic plan, titled the *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan*.

Paying for the dredging was the greatest challenge. The local cost share was 80 percent of the \$74 million project and therefore not financially feasible. In 1999-2000, the MRC was instrumental in changing that by working with elected and appointed officials to reduce the local cost share for dredging to 20 percent – finally making the project possible.

Under a joint planning agreement, the city, county and MRC conducted a two-year planning process and hosted 42 public hearings to create the award-winning *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan* in 2002. The private sector has used this blueprint in planning more than 12,000 mixed-income residential units along the Miami River's multi-cultural corridor, as downtown becomes an evening destination.

THE PLAN EVOLVES BY growing. Of 73 implementation steps (up from 62 in 2004), 61 are either completed or ongoing with significant progress. These include: commencing dredging of the river; development of sections of the Miami River Greenway, in

partnership with the Trust for Public Land and the City of Miami; decontamination vessel services; authoring the *Energy Efficiency and Water Conservation Report*; storm water system retrofits; redevelopment; creation of seven new waterfront parks; increased tree canopy; removal of derelict vessels; environmental education programs; volunteer clean-up and beautification projects; extending the hours of Metromover stations near the river, and expanding the Enterprise Zone economic incentives.

SEAN MARINE:
of the ultimate success of led dredging that we and fastest ship ever in putting more online finished."

CAROL WEHLE, SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT:
"The river is not just a center for commerce, boating and living, it is part of an ecosystem that links Lake Okeechobee to Biscayne Bay. For that reason, we are proud to provide the commission with the funding necessary so it can continue its vital work."



2005 been a year progress challenges opportunities The Miami River

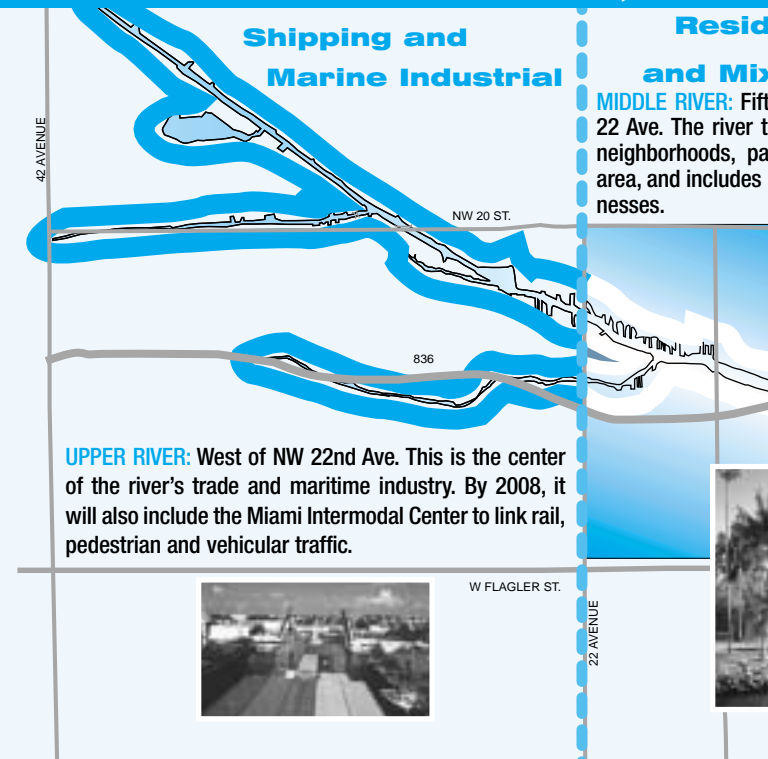
The MRC worked to include all interests in the river and its three distinct communities: the marine industrial community of the "upper river" (Salinity Dam to NW 22 Avenue); the historic neighborhoods, Civic Center area, marine industry and parks in the "middle river" (NW 22 Avenue to the NW 5 Street Bridge), and the emerging 24-hour downtown of the "lower river" (NW 5 Street Bridge to Biscayne Bay). The Miami River's 11 miles of shoreline is sufficient for the river's mixed uses to co-exist, including the downtown high-density re-development, preserving low density historical neighborhoods, marine industrial businesses and public parks. (See map below).

We have welcomed and promoted public participation in shaping the Miami River community and will continue to do so in the future.

AMONG THE 2005 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Dredging moved forward, ahead of schedule and under budget, with crews finishing their work from the western terminus of navigation to east of NW 22 Avenue, encompassing the entire "upper river" shipping and marine industrial area.
- More than \$30 million has been appropriated from the public and private sectors to create the Miami River Greenway, to beautify and link the river's community. For this work, I would especially thank Lavinia Freeman and the Trust for Public Land; bipartisan help from U.S. Reps. Kendrick Meek, Mario Diaz-Balart and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen;

The river consists of three distinct, coexisting communities:



URBAN INFILL WORKING GROUP

James
Murley,
Chair

The *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan*, was prepared over two years and 42 public hearings under a joint

planning agreement with the MRC, City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, and Miami River stakeholders. The plan was adopted as MRC's strategic plan in October 2002. In 2003, the Florida Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects recognized the Infill Plan with an "Award of Excellence." In 2005 the 1000 Friends of Florida recognized the MRC's success in implementing the plan with the "Community Steward Award."

The plan envisions the river in three distinct sections, described in greater detail on the map at the bottom of Page 3. The "Miami 21" plan for a comprehensive approach to zoning and development divides the city into four quadrants, three of which include sections of the river. Since the *Miami River*

Corridor Urban Infill Plan is a comprehensive and holistic plan for the river, the MRC looks forward to collaborating with the City of Miami to bring it into harmony with "Miami 21," while protecting the interests of all communities on the river.

AMONG THE URBAN INFILL WORKING GROUP'S HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2005:

- Sixty-one of 73 implementation steps are either completed or ongoing with significant progress, including: commencing maintenance dredging; riverwalk construction; stormwater and sanitary sewer system improvements; creation of new parks; increasing tree canopy; expansion of the Enterprise Zone Economic Incentives to attract new businesses; de-pollution vessel services and authoring the *Energy Efficiency and Water Conservation Report*
- More than 12,000 residential units have been recently completed, are under construction or are in advanced permitting stages, up from 8,000 units last year.



New developments – such as Brickell On the River, in the "lower river" – include public riverwalks to link the greenways on the river's banks.

- To meet the demands of this growing population, the Infill Plan recommended a *Miami River Corridor Multi-Modal Transportation Study*, which will be conducted in 2006. This study will include plans to alleviate traffic congestion through water taxis/water bus, transit systems, light synchronization, greenways, tunnels and more.

The public and private sectors have requested hundreds of copies of the plan to assist their planning and river improvement initiatives. The plan is available for downloading at www.miamirivercommission.org.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMERCE WORKING GROUP

Megan Kelly,
Bruno
Barreiro,
Co-Chairs

The Economic Development and Commerce Working Group (EDC)

welcomes Bruno Barreiro as co-chair, joining fellow co-chair Megan Kelly. On behalf of the MRC, the EDC

coordinated the September 2004 Marine Industries Symposium.

During 2005, the EDC worked on bringing the action items identified during the Symposium to fruition, and the following progress was made:

- Miami-Dade County adopted a resolution to create a Miami River "Boat Slip Bank" to protect existing dockage. This prevents a net loss of existing boat slips as areas around downtown are redeveloped, to ensure the continued viability of the recreational marine industry, which is a vital part of the river's character.

NW Fifth Street Bridge

The United States Coast Guard deemed the NW Fifth Street Bridge an illegal structure upon its construction in 1929. The problematic bridge was struck by vessels under tow twice in the fall of 2005, and 14 times over the decade, sometimes knocking out service for months during repairs. It has been placed in the up position until its replacement is scheduled.

The bridge was deemed an illegal structure because it is built over the federal navigable channel, too close to the river, and without spillways creating strong currents, while the bascule bridge spans overhangs and fenders in the open position.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has agreed to the MRC's recommendation to replace the 76-year-old Fifth Street Bridge. We commend the FDOT for appropriating more than \$44 million in 2004 to replace the bridge, fast-tracking the construction to 2006.

- The Miami-Dade County Planning and Zoning Department drafted the MRC-recommended Marine Industrial Zoning Ordinance, to be considered by the Board of County Commissioners in 2006.
- The Florida Legislature adopted the "Working



neighborhoods with the riverfront and its 10 public parks.

The *Miami River Greenway Action Plan* in full is available on our website at www.miamirivercommission.org

STORM WATER WORKING GROUP

Sallye Jude and Arsenio Milian, Co-Chairs

In a growing community prone to flooding and hurricanes, stormwater management is important for its ecological health. The main

source of pollution into the Miami River and Biscayne Bay is an antiquated stormwater drainage and sanitary sewer system, serving the 69-square-mile Miami River water basin.

TO SOLVE THAT PROBLEM, THE CITY OF MIAMI did a major part of implementing the MRC Stormwater Subcommittee's *Miami River Basin Water Quality Improvement Report*,



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by installing new solid waste interceptor baskets within the water basin. A grid protects the system with baskets that keep debris from entering the Miami River and Wagner Creek through the stormwater system's underground culverts.

The subcommittee is coordinating agency partner's efforts to create total maximum daily load (TMDL) water quality parameters, and a Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP), first for Wagner Creek and then for the Miami River. In addition, the stormwater subcommittee is recommending the dredging of Wagner Creek and the Seybold Canal, which the City of Miami has committed to completing.

Miami-Dade County appropriated \$100,000 in its Fiscal Year 2006 budget for the continued services of the

Outreach

The MRC coordinated the Ninth Annual Miami Riverday in March 2005, when we launched the "Miami River...Works for Me" PR campaign. The Tenth Annual Miami Riverday will be held March 25, 2006, at Jose Marti Park. The free festival celebrates the unique environment, heritage and culture of Miami's working river.

The MRC coordinated and sponsored volunteer Miami River beautification and clean-up projects this year, including the East Little Havana Riverside Garden, North River Drive between NW 24th and NW 33rd Streets, and along South River Drive with a sunset mural, designed by renowned local artist Xavier Cortada, beneath the 27 Avenue Bridge.

We thank Miami-Dade County for its renewed funding to continue providing thousands of students with environmental and historical Miami River boat tours.

Scavenger 2000 de-pollution vessel, which removes floating debris, while treating the water through a decontamination system and oxygenating the Miami River.

PUBLIC SAFETY WORKING GROUP

Gary Winston, Chair

Public safety and security are of paramount concern to the Miami River Commission, which acknowledges the leadership on this issue provided by

the Miami River Marine Group (MRMG), a consortium of private marine industrial businesses on the river. The MRMG turned over its \$1 million video surveillance system to the Miami Police Department, which now has 24/7 access to view real-time images from the cameras placed at all Miami River shipping terminals.

In 2005, the MRMG collaborated with city and county marine patrols and received a \$1.6 million grant from the Department of



Leisure and sport fishing boats line up at the 27 Avenue Bridge.

Homeland Security to buy two patrol boats and a mobile diving unit, for use on the Miami River. In addition, the MRMG was awarded more than \$2 million in Department of Homeland Security grants in 2003-2004 to help bring the river's private international shipping terminals into compliance with the nation's new Homeland Security laws.

The Miami River's 23 Coast Guard-certified shipping terminals have participated in



Hands On Miami volunteers cleaning a section of the south shoreline.

ONE VOICE for the river

CHAIR: IRELA BAGUÉ

Designee: South Florida Water Management District

VICE CHAIR: MR. PHIL EVERINGHAM

Chair of Marine Council

FLORIDA GOV. JEB BUSH

Designee: Mr. Tony Garrastazu

FLORIDA REP. GUSTAVO "GUS" BARRIERO

Chair, Miami-Dade Delegation

MAYOR CARLOS ALVAREZ

Miami-Dade County Mayor
Designee: Ms. Amy Gonzalez-Hernandez

MAYOR MANUEL A. DIAZ

Mayor of the City of Miami
Designee: Mr. Otto Boudet-Murias

COMMISSIONER BRUNO BARREIRO

Miami-Dade County Commissioner
Designee: Ms. Betty Gutierrez

COMMISSIONER JOE SANCHEZ

City of Miami Commissioner
Designee: Mr. Steve Wright

MR. KEVIN McCARTY

Chair, Governing Board, South Florida Water Management District
Designee: Ms. Irela Bagué

KATHERINE FERNANDEZ RUNDLE, ESQ.

Miami-Dade State Attorney
Designee: Gary Winston, Esq.

ERIC BUERMANN, ESQ.

Member at Large Appointed by the Governor

MR. CHARLES "BUD" MORTON

Chair, Miami River Marine Group
Designee: Captain Beau Payne

MR. DANA NOTTINGHAM

Executive Director, Downtown Development Authority
Designee: Mr. Adam Lukin

MR. BARRY JOHNSON

Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Designee: Ms. Megan Kelly

DR. ERNEST MARTIN

Neighborhood Representative appointed by the City of Miami Commission
Designee: Mr. Michael Cox

MS. SALLYE JUDE

Neighborhood Representative appointed by the Miami-Dade County Commission
Designee: Ms. Jane Caporelli

MS. SARA C. BABUN

Member at Large appointed by the Miami-Dade County Commission
Designee: Mr. Eddie Rodriguez

MR. MANNY PRIEGUEZ

Member at Large Appointed by the City of Miami Commission

REPRESENTATIVE FROM ENVIRONMENTAL OR CIVIC ORGANIZATION APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR: To be designated

Ex-Officio Members:

U.S. REP. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

Designee: Ms. Debbie Zimmerman

CAPT. JAMES MAES, USCG

Captain of the Port of Miami

MANAGING DIRECTOR

MR. BRETT BIBEAU

ASSISTANT MANAGING DIRECTOR:

MS. ASHLEY CHASE

PREPARED BY:

Mark Sell Communications, Inc.

DESIGNED BY: Toni Kirkland

Learn more about the river's history, view records of our meetings, see all our major reports at our web site at www.miamirivercommission.org, a great resource for what's happening on and near the river.

THE MIAMI RIVER COMMISSION
ONE VOICE for the river

MIAMI RIVER COMMISSION

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Spring Garden, a designated historic neighborhood, on the north shore of the "middle river."