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BEAR STEARNS COMPANIES INC

PRICING SUPPLEMENT NO. 21

Form 424B3

March 07, 2006

Rule 424(b)(3) DATED: March 1, 2006 File No. 333-121744 (To Prospectus dated February 2, 2005, and Prospectus Supplement dated February 2, 2005) \$12,410,781,162 THE BEAR STEARNS COMPANIES INC. Medium-Term Notes, Series B Principal Amount: \$385,000,000 Floating Rate Notes [x] Book Entry Notes [x] Original Issue Date: 03/06/2006 Fixed Rate Notes [_] Certificated Notes [_] Maturity Date: 03/06/2008 CUSIP#: 073928N82
Option to Extend Maturity: No [x] Yes [_] Final Maturity Date: ___ Optional Optional Optional Optional
Repayment Repayment
Date(s) Price(s) Redemption Price(s) Redeemable On N/A N/A N/A N/A Applicable Only to Fixed Rate Notes: _____ Interest Rate: Interest Payment Dates: Applicable Only to Floating Rate Notes: _____ Interest Rate Basis: Maximum Interest Rate: N/A [_] Commercial Paper Rate Minimum Interest Rate: N/A [_] Federal Funds Effective Rate [x] Federal Funds Open Rate Interest Reset Date(s): Daily [_] Treasury Rate Interest Reset Period: Daily [_] LIBOR Reuters Interest Payment Date(s): * [_] LIBOR Telerate [_] Prime Rate [_] CMT Rate Initial Interest Rate: 4.50% Interest Payment Period: Quarterly Index Maturity: N/A Spread (plus or minus): +0.14%

^{*} Commencing June 6, 2006 and on the 6th of each September, December, March and June thereafter, up to and including the maturity date.

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The distribution of Notes will conform to the requirements set forth in Rule 2720 of the NASD Conduct Rules.