



SOUTH FLORIDA ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION TASK FORCE

United States Department of the Interior
Office of Everglades Restoration Initiatives

Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020

Authorized by the U.S. Congress in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1996, the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) brings together the federal, state, Tribal, and local agencies involved in restoring and protecting America's Everglades. The critical role of the intergovernmental Task Force is to facilitate the coordination of the myriad conservation and restoration efforts being planned and implemented. It also provides a forum for the participating agencies to share information about their restoration projects, resolve conflicts, and report on progress. The Task Force is chaired by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior or their appointed designee. The Task Force is staffed and supported in the accomplishment of its mission and duties by the Department's Office of Everglades Restoration Initiatives (OERI) located in Davie, Florida.

In 2019, Congress recognized the importance of invasive species management for restoration to succeed and new legislation referred to as the Suppressing Looming Invasive Threats Harming Everglades Restoration (SLITHER) Act was developed and included in the WRDA 2020, section 504, as "Invasive Species Risk Assessment Prioritization and Management." This legislation amended section 528 of WRDA 1996 and added specific duties to the Task Force related to invasive species. In WRDA 2020, section 504, Congress directs the Task Force to develop a priority list of invasive species that significantly impact the structure and function of ecological communities, native species, or habitats within the South Florida Ecosystem. The Task Force member agencies are directed to manage those species through coordination and collaboration to develop innovative strategies and tools, guide applied research, facilitate improved management, and to prevent future introductions of nonnative species.

The WRDAs 1996 and 2020 can be found at www.evergladesrestoration.gov/overview.