

Biscayne Bay Regional Restoration Coordination Team

NOAA SE Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC)
Statistics Building Conference Room
75 Virginia Beach Drive, Miami, FL 33149

March 16, 2016

Attendees

Phil Everingham
Sarah Bellmund
Joan Browder
Joan Lawrence
Eric Buck
Rebecca Elliott (by phone)
Sam Poole (by phone)
Leslye Waugh
Bahram Charkhian
Mark Bailey
Nancy Diersing
Craig Grossenbacher
Celeste De Palma
Tom Jamir

1. Welcome and Introductions

Phil Everingham, Chairman of the BBRRCT, called the meeting to order. Introductions were made by attendees.

2. Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Update:

Leslye Waugh, Lead Project Manager, Office of Everglades Policy & Coordination, South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) gave an update on the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands (BBCW) Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) Project.

Project Objectives:

- Improve delivery efficiency within Biscayne National Park
 - Redistribute freshwater flow and minimize point source discharges
 - Preserve and restore natural coastal wetlands habitat
 - Re-establish connectivity between the coastal and adjacent wetlands
 - Deliver freshwater to historical tidal creeks
 - Hydrate areas (tidal wetlands) susceptible to hypersaline conditions during extended dry periods

- Improve nearshore salinity regimes and re-establish productive nursery habitat

SFWMD Phase I Expedited Projects: Provide for early ecosystem restoration benefits by distributing flows along coast and near shore including Biscayne national Park (BISC).

- L-31E Tidal Restoration Components (construction completed June 2010)
- Deering Estate (construction completed April 2012)
- Cutler Wetlands
 - Cutler Flow Way
 - Design completed November 2009
 - Design update scheduled for 2019
 - Construction scheduled 2020 to 2021
- L-31E Interim Pump (interim operation to continue up to 5 years or until the permanent pump station S-709 is constructed by the USACE; ameliorates the effects of the Ag drawdown)
 - Temporary diesel pump operation October 2014 to April 2015
 - Temporary electric pump currently being installed

Remaining Phase I Project Features: USACE is the Lead Agency for design & construction

- L-31E Flow Way Phase 1 features – budget of \$2.6 million for design in 2016
 - 5 pump stations: S-703, S-705, S-709, S-710, and S-711
 - Inverted Siphon (S-707)
 - Six L-31E Culverts
 - Spreader Canal in freshwater wetland between C-103 Canal and North Canal

Remaining Phase I Real Estate Acquisition

- 622 Acres
- FY State Legislative Budget Request of \$5.8 Million

BBCW –Alternative O Phase II

- Integrated Delivery Schedule has BBCW Phase II planned for 2010-2023
- Estimated real estate acquisition approximately 4,501 acres
- Estimated PIR project cost approximately \$350 million (not including additional water source deliveries)

Leslye's presentation, including maps, can be found in the BBRRCT section on The Task Force website under the October presentations at:

http://www.evergladesrestoration.gov/content/bbrrct_handouts.html).

3. BBCW Project Discussion:

After Leslye's presentation, the Team had several questions.

Project Partnership Agreement – this is not expected until 2018, but there is considerable pressure to move this closer in time. Until the PPA is executed, the USACE cannot begin construction and the SFWMD cannot get cost-share credit.

Real estate acquisition questions –

- Have there been any conversations/agreements with FPL re FPL owned lands in the project footprint?
- Has there been an assessment of lands in the project footprint and owned by Miami-Dade County?

The Team urged the SFWMD to have conversations with Miami-Dade County re moving the project ahead.

Leslye agreed to report back to the group at the next BBRRCT Meeting (in person or by phone) with answers to the real estate questions and to do an update (in person or by phone) on the BBCW Project at every BBRRCT Meeting (if there is nothing to report, Leslye will inform the Chair prior to the meeting).

4. Action Items

The Team agreed that the *freshwater needs of Biscayne Bay* is an appropriate #1 priority. Sarah informed the group that Walter Wilcox, SFWMD, will be conducting a modeling effort to look at ways to make improvements in delivering water to Biscayne Bay.

The Team also agreed on the importance of getting BBCW Phase II started. Craig reminded the Team that benefits from Phase II are not dependent on additional water. The Phase II components increase the performance/benefits of BBCW with existing water.

5. Announcements:

April 2nd is Miami River Day

- Celebrations will take place at Lummus Park, 250 NW N River Drive from 1 to 6.

The BBRRCT Meeting will not be held on April 20th due to conflicts; an alternate date is being Sought and will be announced.

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 1:00pm.