

South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group Sponsored Public Workshop
Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP)
South Florida Water Management District
February 25, 2013

1. Welcome and Introductions

Barry Rosen called the workshop to order at 1:00PM. Allyn Childress provided opening remarks and reminded everyone the workshop was being webcast. A call in number has also been provided for those unable to attend. All presentations and handouts are available at: <http://www.sfrestore.org/cepp/cepp.html>

2. Overview of CEPP TSP

Kim Taplin went over CEPP and the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) which is a revised version of Alternative 4 with changes in the northern part of the system. She reviewed the next steps, the documentation of how the TSP was developed then went over the many different reviews.

Martha Musgrove had a question on two issues, value engineering and savings clause. She thought it might be nice to have a workshop after these two items are incorporated. Shannon said her only hesitation is that having workshops during the public process of NEPA will confuse the two. Kim explained that there would likely be two NEPA public workshops and went over the process. Martha noted that the NEPA workshops are not interactive and added that the savings clause is a critical piece. John Rosier explained his experience with NEPA workshops.

Chad Kennedy noted that the good news is that everyone is pleased because of these workshops adding that this is the way to do business. He thought that before another workshop is scheduled they should make sure it is necessary before taking staff off of other activities.

3. CEPP Adaptive Management (AM) Overview

Kelly Keefe went over the goals of her presentation which included providing a status update on the AM Plan process. She explained today's activity and review of process presentation of criteria and uncertainties. She explained uncertainties are the items in CEPP that we don't know enough about. The AM Plan is part of the project document and will help to maximize benefits and inform sequencing. The AM plan only deals with uncertainty linked to management option to ensure that something could be done. They reviewed existing monitoring to ensure that there is no redundancy. AM Plan is due on March 7th. She went over the different levels of screening. She went on to discuss the key questions that the

uncertainties are grouped under and gave examples. She explained the expectation and how they were set using existing information. She explained the activity for today's workshop.

Tom McVicar asked about question A and was worried that if someone says no one might ask, "do we get 1 billion back?" Tom thought it should be a "how" question. Drew Martin said that Kelly has done a great job. If there is not a certain level of confidence then won't get funded so he was on track with Tom's comment. Some changes may be quick and easy to see and others will be more gradual, for example the return of ridge and slough may not be seen that quickly. He added that we all know not we are not getting enough water with this step, but this is a good step to take and is needed. Drew cautioned the group not to rely on agencies to do monitoring and pointed out the issues with sequestration as an example of why we should be careful. He added that unpredicted events may drive system more than CEPP. Therefore, we need to take into account non-CEPP events and calculate how it feeds into system

Susan Markley suggested that in the final version the team turn the questions into positive statements. I would not phrase them all as questions. Question C implies that some tradeoff is necessary and that some kind of operations can fix it. It may need to be reworded and maybe another question added. The first time we talked about this were talking about constraints. It still seems AM should contemplate as consequence of regulation that CEPP might be effected and might have to change sequencing or operations to take these changes or unexpected events into account.. She said an example would be if we find that there is not as much water as expected, we would need to do something different. We still need to think about what kinds of things we may need to do in CEPP as we move forward. What happens to rest of CEPP after Regulatory decision is made. Kim Taplin noted that Susan's comment relates to construction sequencing.

Freddy Fisikelly was worried that this may be his last chance to participate and had some concerns with the numbers he was shown from the Corps and the fact that they were never part of a workshop discussion.

Barron Moody noted that the presentation has A-D, but crosswalk only has A and B. Agnes explained that is because they were only going over the ecologic and hydrologic pieces and avoiding regulatory.

John Rosier asked if these are benchmarks. Kelly explained that the A and B designations were not meant to be consecutive. Kim Taplin noted that construction sequence is a form of AM. John Rosier asked if you start and look at it ecologically then do go back and revise. Kim Taplin said it depends if it is an operational change or structural, cost may determine that the project needs new authorization. Shannon Estenoz thought John was "hitting nail on head" that the project should be staying flexible enough to change as implement. What Kim is saying is we do

have some flexibility but some constraints related to big cost increase. Look at Everglades as patient on table and we are monitoring vital signs and then the new stuff we did to know that it is actually making system better. Have to put monitoring in place so we can learn as we go.

Andy Gottlieb said that in the past there was a huge list of indicators. He urged the team to focus in on individual important uncertainties. When we talk about regions, talk about specific regions.

Drew Martin said there are some things we can accomplish that are short term goals like rehydrating soils and we know if we remove certain levees we can benefit crocodilians. Set those first so we have goals we can meet then include goals that take more time to respond like ridge and slough. We know we can improve Florida Bay, but maybe not Caloosahatchee and IRL estuaries.

Andy Gottlieb said this project is such a large scale, not sure at what scale items were screened out. How did it differ from project scale. Kelly Keefe said that things at a large scale belonged in RECOVER Shannon Estenoz asked for an example. Kelly gave the example of the 10 years limit for projects. Shannon noted that CEPP is more of Project with a capital P. Kelly Keefe said it is still a project, so it is restricted to a decade of monitoring, meaning we would have to go to RECOVER for longer term needs.

Susan Markley noted that not every part of CEPP will start at same time and asked how the 10 year window be dealt with. Kelly Keefe explained that monitoring timelines would be tracked and linked to the piece of implementation feature it is tied to. Shannon Estenoz asked if we start to build in 2014 and do not stop until 2034 how long would we monitoring? Kelly Keefe noted that this is policy stuff, but her understanding is that it would be monitored for 10 years. Kim Taplin used the example of hydropattern restoration and then monitoring for 10 years to see if we get what we expected or not.

Dave Rudnick said we need to have sufficient understanding of the why something is happening so can tie back to management of the system. He noted that CEPP is a "tall order" and we are changing a lot of hydrologic features and many factors we don't control. He said there is point type measurements that will tell us what is going on, but he doesn't want to give false expectation. We need something embedded in broader system-wide monitoring.

At 3:00 PM Barry Rosen asked if there were comments from anyone on the phone - none heard.

Freddy Fisikelly explained what happened at the last meeting and he believes everyone knows that he is concerned with moving 200,000 acre feet across WCA 3. At the last meeting he still didn't have the numbers he asked for so couldn't make comments. He noted that the numbers

have not been covered in the workshop setting. He asked why it has not been presented. Shannon Estenoz explained she couldn't answer the question and they would have to wait for Kim Taplin.

Fred Sklar explained how AM was developed and has evolved two parts: 1) scientific and then 2) managing adaptively to a system. He said that the Corps should actually collect data before constructing anything for at least 3 or 4 years. This doesn't fit in mold of how the Corps monitoring used to be. He added that we are trying to figure out the rules here in the Everglades.

John Rosier said that for fire AM is same, but the tools are different-. He is concerned as to how far the Corps will be able to AM. Shannon Estenoz said that 1 small difference is that you have a lot of past knowledge of firefighting that tells you what you should do and also a suite of things not to do, that someone like me might do. We lack that knowledge here in Everglades. Is it possible that we are making this too complicated? I don't know if my children are going to go to college be doctor, but I do have recipe and I may change the approach which is AM.

Fred agrees it is too complicated. It is not the same for the Everglades. No one has ever created tree islands or reversed the ridge and slough system. Instead of trying to raise our child it is like trying to raise a bobcat and it get too complicated. He thought we should just categorize into specific areas such as hydrology, ecology and tree island.

Andy Gottlieb used his GPS as an analogy and said it tells me where I am not where I am going, but if I get moving then I can see where I am heading.

Susan Markley thought we were trying to over structure the process and that is when we get into debate. She said we should look to see if the 4 questions are right. She has a question on ongoing system-wide monitoring but would like to reserve right to talk when Kim Taplin and COL Greco get back.

Martha Musgrove said that the political problem is that AM can become an excuse to change the goal and 1 of the signals you are changing the goal is eliminating some of the monitoring. The surrogate measure of rather or not to flow increases to Florida Bay is not adequate. She would like more measures going south as well as in Shark River. That could be why we are constrained. Shannon Estenoz asked if we are talking about funding. Martha said she has been trying to get money for monitoring. Barry Rosen added that they have obligation to prove to the tax payer they are getting what they paid for, so we then need more than 10 years, so we can get the noise out of system.

Dennis Duke explained that until WRDA 2000 the Corps' method was to design, construct and then turn it over to the sponsor to operate and to retain benefit. If the project did not meet the benefits then it was up to the sponsor or public to bring it back to the Corps who would then have to go back to Congress to authorize a new project. He said that the hardest thing is to get a new construction start appropriation. What they have given them is a gift. It allows them to stay in the business of restoration.

Joel Trexler said he was confused by the AM program and wanted to understand what would be added that is unique to CEPP if all things for MAP are still in place.

John Marshall said that this has fallen into the category of making things too hard. What is projected from that baseline and what can we retain from funding to build the project. Then how is the project measuring up and how does that affect other goals and objective. He added that species and diversity ought to have a baseline.

4. Overview and Discussion of Current Monitoring for CEPP Adaptive Management

Agnes McLean provided a presentation for the discussion. The AM and monitoring folks did a cross walk for monitoring assumed to be continued and needed for CEPP. A matrix was handed out to the CEPP team to provide comments back to the RECOVER team. The matrix showed CEPP specific uncertainty, hypothesis keywords, and existing RECOVER MAP Monitoring programs. The purpose of the discussion was to fill in the gaps and other monitoring programs that have not yet been identified. Agnes went through the matrix. RECOVER looked at CERP as a whole, not project by project. CEPP is almost as big as CERP, some of monitoring contracts can be adjusted but for example, we don't have any landscape panels in proposed blue shanty area. This area will change due to inflows, so existing monitoring network may not be suitable or enough for CEPP as it was designed for another reason. This is an example of where other monitoring programs may be able to help.

Barry Rosen asked what it what that they wanted back from the group. Agnes McLean said that she did a quick rundown of RECOVER monitoring and they need to know if are there things being missed. Kelly Keefe added that they have a need for baseline data. We should have data so we don't need to start from scratch. This matrix has monitoring supported by RECOVER and should overlap CEPP. Need to try the monitoring listed to help to provide baseline data. Need a 10 year window of data. We may need to design additional information to overlap CEPP (e.g. uncertainty about sawgrass and ridge and slough next to each other). RECOVER has GIRTS panels where people are tracking vegetation change and 2 panels falls where we need it. Good data, scientifically sound. To answer CEPP we need to keep panels in place and may have to increase only the frequency of monitoring.

Shannon Estenoz asked if that wouldn't that be true for everything that they have been monitoring for last decade. With exception to the Blue Shanty levee, all components were part of CERP. RECOVER was in place for 10 years, we should have good baseline data for most of this stuff. Kelly Keefe said there is good data out there such as System Status Report (SSR) and Ecological Indicator Reports.

Shannon Estenoz said they need to be thoughtful in the way they talk about baseline data. They have had monitoring for a decade and they were investing well in monitoring. They need to continue to invest in monitoring. Kelly Keefe said that RECOVER hasn't focused on stuff for Miami Dade flood protection where RECOVER doesn't have data because it's not part of its purview. Shannon Estenoz said that she was getting the sense that people think they don't have baseline data. They need to show that we do have good data but may have gaps that need to be filled in.

Joel Trexler said that sapling designs for vegetation were specifically designed to incorporate for project levels already anticipated that projects like this will come along. It's all there; we're in pretty good shape. Susan Gray said the baseline makes assumption that you can capture a period of time and you can see conditions. Need to see variability of system to see what we are doing. Perception that once you have a baseline you can stop monitoring and that's not accurate. RECOVER may not capture everything because of scale. Good portion of monitoring were in areas not captured by CEPP. Need to look to see where features are going in and then increase frequency of monitoring or areas.

Shannon Estenoz said the term baseline causes confusion. They need to find a way to talk about it instead of causing confusion. In the communication arena, they ought to be talking about monitoring plan in the framework that how good what they have is. Project monitoring where they have gaps and what they anticipate. Help to explain project level monitoring.

Susan Gray said RECOVER data is used a lot for CEPP as well as weekly monitoring. Joel Trexler-project level work, nested in system wide level. Underscores challenges of budget cuts etc. how will you evaluate and answer questions. Helpful if we had statement of the goals (targets), when CEPP is funded we need to goals so then scientists can help do projects to meet goals. What's the goal statement? Then it would be easier to deal with data down the road.

Kim Taplin- monitoring will be scrutinized. Need to lay out key uncertainties. CEPP will provide a good portion of CERP, so question will be asked why monitoring in MAP enough to cover needs. What's most important for the money that we have to do this?

Joel Trexler- need transition of uncertainty. Uncertainty is like research questions. Some of section around blue shanty will benefit recreational fisheries. Can monitor canals through time.

Kim Taplin said they need to determine where is most risk for scientific uncertainty for getting ecosystem lift that we expect to get. Joel Trexler asked whether it works at all. Kim Taplin said performance measure- not all need to be measured. Joel Trexler asked if the Corps not succeed if CEPP doesn't work, then I don't know why. Kim Taplin - does it succeed for money spent.

Joan Browder asked if the worksheets are a mechanism for people to provide gaps. Allyn Childress said yes, for today's workshop, that's what the sheets will be used for. Joan Browder added that the pink shrimp project could provide gaps. She has seven years' worth of data. There is also a NOAA water quality project along southwest coast that could be used.

Kim Taplin said that she needs to tell her why those projects would help and whether there are other projects that address same issues. Barry Rosen added that they need the information so that it can be transmitted to the Corps. Chris McVoy said they are not doing a cookbook project, lots of uncertainty along the way, will be surprises.

John Rosier said he didn't see any public input anywhere. When you do monitoring down the road the public needs to be involved. We are out there all the time and no one ever asks us anything. I'm out there all the time and I know what's going to happen. It would be nice if the Corps can call public in and ask them about the area. Public needs to stay involved and be asked about projects. FWC is also out there all the time and their opinion should be included. Kim Taplin said that was a good point and she would take that message back.

Laura Brandt said she appreciated John's comments adding they can learn a lot from people out there in the field. There should also be potential for another workshop as we move forward. The SCG put together ecological indicators years ago. We had public workshops, as we knew what scientist value are not the same as what the public values. Glad the public keeps coming back.

Freddy Fisikelli said they need to make a list of what was happening before levees were built, like conservation 3 had no airboats as the water was not deep enough. He asked is they were there for nothing. If they won't listen then he won't come. We need as much info that you can give us. I have seen things that people haven't seen. That info I'm here to give you. Kim Taplin explained that the information was not presented because it was not yet available. It will be provided as soon as it is available. Freddy Fisikelli said everyone should be in an airboat and see how great it is. Conservation areas were the best things ever done in Florida.

Dave - John, your point is well taken, I can reinforce the value from talking to fishermen in Florida Bay. State of WQ monitoring- homework to be done. Nature of adaptive management and learning what happens and why.

Kim Taplin said if there's a why then you have to explain why it's so critical to know. We need to be able to answer why do we need to do this monitoring, why it's so critical, how does it help us. Andy Gottlieb - monitoring at different spatial scales. Need to be able to understand temporal differences. Need operation folks as well. John Marshall said it was important to have a target that we are shooting for in numerical terms. Kim Taplin said that what we have from output and lifts are all we have.

Barry thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the workshop at 5:00 PM.