

10-25-12

Shannon

Excutive Director of S. FL Ecosystem Restoration Task Force and other CERP leaders

Please enter the following statement into the records of the CERP-CEPP Working Group meeting that is being held today, 10-15-12. I do hope you can get the planners and engineers to start showing some common sense in their desired outcomes.

I request that this statement be read aloud so that all can hear it and it is properly recorded in the CERP records.

1. Discussion on CERP water models. results of model runs re water levels under various scenarios- We have to have the basic assumptions that were used to build these models CERP models.

A modeler can make a model do anything they want to by changing the assumptions. This is why I asked them to give me a graph comparing the water depths/elevations in the WCAs along Transect L2 using the same data points and processes as the graph they presented at the meeting a few weeks ago. First I was told no problem. Then the day before the 10/22 meeting I was told by Matt Morrison he does not think they can do this. Therefore I am do not trust their models on water elevations/depths. In the last conversation with Matt and after he said they could not duplicate that graph I wanted under the conditions of today and with my requirements I told him that their work was not science because proper science protocols require all experiments, modeling is an experiment, to be able to be duplicated and obtain the same results -in this case a graph. I called their black magic which is what some of university science friends are calling these models. He did not agree. Of course he did not agree.

Ask them to duplicate the graph in question as I have requested and using the data points and processes to obtain this graph with water elevation data taken as of 10/22.

2. Agenda reference to yellow line is principally a discussion of seepage management, including south Miami-Dade.

You need to get them talk about seepage control from the S side of WCA2B and all along the US 27 boundary area. I have shared what I know with you all about the boils of water that occurred during the 1990's floods. Also, they are counting on seepage from WCA3B to resupply the NW Well Fields with water.

3. Back-filling of Miami Canal. On track but... fill would come from spoil mounds that over the years the FWC commission has planted and which are serving as tree islands and refugia. You will want to hear these discussions. FWC made a pitch to save the cypress that have grown up on the islands.

Once again the ACOE engineers, as Kim did in the meeting of 10/22 did, are going to the extreme. They do not have to use ALL the levee fill to back fill the Miami Canal. They use some of it, leave some holes and the levee with the trees. This is basically what the USFWS in Lox NWR is doing today only they digging and stacking up islands there. So, if the Fed's can do this in one place they can do this in another place and call both of them restoration. By doing what I say here, and said to them on the Sustainable and afterwards, they will create deep water refugia and upland habitat, islands, and stop the Miami Canal from draining the area. By doing this they do not need to dig the spreader canals along L5 as I suggested in the 10/22 meeting to sheet flow the water across WCA3A north. All they will need to do is

turn on the pumps, as they did before they dug the Miami Canal, and the water will go down a short Miami Canal, 2 miles, and spread out across the area. We talked about this in the 10/22 meeting. By doing what I suggest here they will make great fishing holes, gator holes, bird areas and duck hunting locations. CERP planners and engineers must start thinking about their individual projects as not just being about moving or stopping the moving of water but how will man and wildlife benefit from this one project. That there is no direct benefit they the bosses must send them back to the rooms to develop plans for that project that include and identify such man/wildlife benefits. Engineers may need to a cultural training workshop so they can become sensitive to the needs and desires of people and wildlife. Or, bosses must give them marching orders that include these human/wildlife needs and desires. Good planning starts with good directions.

4. One of the big problems with the entire CERP project is the DOI/NPS will not allow this or that and wants this or that. They are only interested in protecting their property and not the entire system to the extent possible.

Ideas:

1. Get rid of ENP and give the land back to the State of FL. A side note: when DOI/NPS wants to move dirt and build something on their land it is ok even if that project is going to harm habitat. They like to have their cake and eat it too.
2. I am not sure what benefits they are looking for measuring for or want. They must identify and define all the individual components that causes them to make the statement above about cost benefits.
3. If they put the degraded levee 9x14 along the L67s line and leave the canals they will make SAFER happy and a lot of fisherman. They will also create upland areas.
4. they cannot bury the canals and remove the fisherman from the water they need. This violates the CERP law. see the statement below by the head of the FWC. It is also what I was saying when the CERP law was being written and the water supply folks were demanding protective language. This same language protects the fisherman and sportsman. I suppose we should sue the agencies to protect our water uses.

Finally, I look forward to ALL the questions I sent to you and others before the meeting of October 22, 2012 being answered and sent to those who attended.

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cc: Florida Sportsman

Statement made by the head of the FWC to the Everglades Coalition, 2004:
For Ken Haddad, panel member
"Angling for Access: Recreational Issues"
Everglades Coalition Conference 2004

Introduction

ü What I hope to convey today is the idea that not only can wise public use be blended with Everglades' restoration goals, but also should be encouraged and promoted.

- ü Both the historic Everglades and the heavily managed system that we have today have long been used by outdoor enthusiasts for hunting, fishing, boating, and wildlife viewing. These activities have social, economic, and intrinsic values.
- ü The mission of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is to manage Florida's fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people. We believe strongly in the value of public use and enjoyment of the resources that we're talking about restoring and protecting.
- ü We (I?) view the ability and determination of South Florida residents to live close to nature as the primary source of the passion that led to the creation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. This may be a national program, but it was South Floridians who asked for it and are intricately connected to its success or failure.
- ü In addition to being typical taxpayers, many of our South Florida stakeholders pay, in a very direct manner, for the maintenance of fish and wildlife habitat through hunting and fishing licenses and commercial permits.
- ü Let me remind you that the legislation that authorized the CERP provided for protections of "existing legal users". It may not be such a stretch to recognize these stakeholders by this term given the fact that the fees they pay actually fund ongoing habitat management and restoration activities in a large portion of the Everglades.
- ü Let me quote from the Strategy for the Restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem, in which the Task Force stated: "As citizens and their governments work to restore and protect the unique South Florida ecosystem, they must not lose sight of the importance of public access to natural areas. At the same time, the public must respect the sensitivities of the natural system and ensure their activities do not unduly stress the wildlife and landscapes that are such an important part of their heritage". We've been hearing from our stakeholders that the first part, public access, has been missing from the balanced approach the Task Force expected.

Economics

- ü Florida truly is the "Fishing Capital of the World". Florida has over three million anglers and leads the nation in the number of jobs (~80,000), the salaries and wages (~ \$2 billion), fuel taxes (~ \$227 million), and the total retail sales revenues (~ \$4.1 billion) that are supported annually by freshwater fishing.
 - ü The amount of money spent by individual anglers per hour ranges from what a teenager gets paid at McDonald's to the rate you'd pay your plumber and FWC issues 375,000 freshwater fishing licenses annually. It's also worth mentioning that the southern third of the state accounts for 42% of Florida's population and 35% of its registered boats.
 - ü The canals in the northern and central everglades are important [socioeconomically] as a recreational fishery. For example, freshwater anglers spent an estimated 1.1 million dollars in a single six-month period fishing the L-67A canal (FWC Data 2001). That works out to \$222/mile/day.
 - ü However, the economic impacts of our state lands are not limited to freshwater fishing. FWC issues approximately 100,000 hunting licenses, 875,000 saltwater fishing licenses, 130,000 spiny lobster permits, 190,000 snook permits, and 14,000 commercial fishing licenses annually.
 - ü It's estimated that all recreational activities including hunting and fishing within the Everglades Wildlife Management Area generate ~ \$31 million dollars in revenues, ~\$3.6 million dollars in state sales taxes and support over 700 jobs.
 - ü Despite these figures, South Florida continues to lag behind the rest of the state in investing in recreational development. However, many opportunities exist for improving recreational access in the CERP footprint.
- #### Opportunities

- ü Opportunities to improve the both the natural and human condition are integral to the Comprehensive Plan. By virtue of saving and restoring both our freshwater and estuarine resources we also can protect the leisure uses to which these resources are put.
- ü While the intent of the plan is to protect and restore those natural features that define the Everglades, we should not allow ourselves to ignore the potential for multiple uses of CERP project features. Keep in mind that planning for multiple uses can add value to these projects.
- ü The creation of wetlands with controlled water-depths, such as storm-water treatment areas, can provide superb harvestable species management opportunities. Not only do such areas provide excellent foraging habitat for wading birds and waterfowl, semi-closed systems such as these also can provide our staff with better opportunities for the management and study of these species.
- ü For example, STA-5, which is situated in the southwest Everglades Agricultural Area and is expected to provide water quality improvements to the central everglades, also provides high quality habitat for wintering waterfowl. Thus far this hunting season, STA-5 has accounted for 91% of all waterfowl harvest reported for South Florida's state-owned lands and is fast establishing a reputation for quality hunting among out-of-state hunters wishing to relax in Florida.
- ü The addition of new storage and conveyance features...can provide wonderful recreational opportunities when designed with additional environmental benefits in mind.
- ü While Henry Dean was head of that agency, the St. John's Water Management District flooded a citrus grove to create the Stick Marsh, so named for the citrus trees they left in place. The habitat enhancement provided by these snags now supports a world-renowned bass fishery and provides additional perching structure for wetland birds.

Challenges

- ü As with any great endeavor the Comprehensive Plan presents both opportunities and challenges. The very purpose of the Comprehensive Plan serves as a reminder that it's easier to destroy a resource than it is to repair it. While we pursue the restoration and preservation of our wilderness areas we need to keep in mind the human environment that the original C and SF project created. The long-term benefits of that project included not only flood control and water supply, but also outdoor recreation.
- ü Florida has 7,700 lakes and 12,000 miles of rivers and streams. Even so, the canals in the Everglades Wildlife Management Areas are ranked among the top 10 bass fishing locations in the entire state and consistently have the highest catch rates for large mouth bass in the state; higher even than Lake Okeechobee, Lake Toho or the Stick Marsh.
- ü Unfortunately, the early plans for restoration of the Everglades assumed that all internal canals and their adjacent levees needed to be leveled to ground elevation in order to achieve appropriate overland flow.
- ü Our agency's view was and continues to be that the potential for restoring overland flow by removing levees without full-scale backfilling of canals was not adequately explored during that earlier planning cycle. It would be a shame to unnecessarily lose the valuable fishery that those canals support.
- ü Just as WRDA defines and protects water sources under the savings clause, F.S. Chapter 373.171 protects water "uses". This section, which addresses the authorities and duties of the water management districts, states that "no rule or order shall require any modification of existing use or disposition of water in the district unless it is shown that the use or disposition proposed to be modified is detrimental to other water users or to the water resources of the state."
- ü The hope that (we?) I have is that everyone with a stake in the CERP will keep in mind that the plan is meant not only to restore our natural areas, but also to provide for all the other water-related needs of the region; and towards that end challenge the plan participants to: 1) aim at dramatically increasing the benefits provided by the CERP by including multiple uses in project feature design, and, 2) to spend energy in determining the ability to save, rather than destroy, existing recreational resources.

