

**Project Name:** Kissimmee River Restoration (KRR)  
**Project ID:** 1306  
**Lead Agency:** USACE / SFWMD  
**Authority:** WRDA 1986 Section 1135 (PL 99-662); WRDA 1988 Section 46 (PL 100-676);  
WRDA 1990 (Section 116 (h) (PL 101-640); **WRDA 1992** Section 101 (8) (PL 102-580)  
**Funding Source:** Federal/State

**Strategic Plan Goal(s) Addressed:** Primary: 2-A.3

**Measurable Output(s):**

- 27,000 acres of floodplain wetlands improved
- 43 miles of meandering river channel restored
- 22 miles of backfilling of Canal 38
- 9 miles of new river channel

**Project History:** The *Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study* (Restudy) noted that the WRDA 1992 (section 101) authorized remaining portions of the Kissimmee River Restoration (lower basin ecosystem) and construction of the Kissimmee River Headwaters Revitalization project (upper basin creating a more natural physical environment in the lower Kissimmee River Basin. The project included backfilling the 30-foot deep Canal 38 and restoring flow to over 43 miles of presently isolated river channel to restore an estimated 27,000 acres of floodplain wetlands and associated fish and wildlife resources. The project would also provide more natural seasonal flow to Lake Okeechobee.

**Current Project Synopsis:** As the headwaters of the Everglades system, the health of the 3,000-square-mile Kissimmee River stretching from Orlando to Lake Okeechobee in central Florida is crucial to the health of the South Florida ecosystem. That health will be assured by the reestablishment of more natural flow. Several alternative plans were reviewed, as part of the USACE planning process, to address the lower basin and the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) was identified in 1992. The plan involves reestablishing historic hydrologic conditions, recreating the historical river/floodplain connectivity, recreating the historic mosaic of wetland plant communities, and restoring the historic biological diversity and functionality. This would be accomplished by modifying the operation of the many lakes and Structure 65; enlargement of canals 36 and 37; backfilling 22 miles of C-38; excavation of nine miles of new river channel; removal of two water control structures and locks, along with land acquisition [Lower Basin Land Acquisition (SFWMD 68,332 acres) and Upper Basin Land Acquisition (SFWMD 36,763 acres)]. The project will restore the ecological integrity of the historical Kissimmee River/floodplain ecosystem by recreating 40 square miles of the river/floodplain ecosystem, including re-establishing flow to 43 miles of contiguous meandering river channel and 27,000 acres of wetlands.

A comprehensive evaluation program for tracking the environmental response to the plan is in place to gauge the success of meeting goals for ecological integrity for the river and the floodplain. This program predicts and tracks resulting ecological changes that are expected, including changes in hydrology, water quality, and major biological communities such as plants, invertebrates, fish, and birds. Evaluation research is required to be continued by the SFWMD for at least 5 years following completion of the final phase of construction (projected for 2014), or until environmental responses stabilize.

The SFWMD and Corps are conducting the Kissimmee Basin Modeling and Operations Study (KB MOS) to evaluate alternative water regulation schedules for the Upper Kissimmee Basin to meet its hydrologic requirements and achieve a more acceptable balance between operations objectives associated with flood control, water supply, aquatic plant management, natural resource requirements of the Kissimmee River Restoration and the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, and Lake Okeechobee.

NEPA/EIS work for this initiative will begin as alternatives narrow ending with the Coordination Act Report done with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. KBMOS involves many participating local, state, and federal entities, as well as the public. In addition, SFWMD has prepared the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes Long Term Management Plan is expected to further define roles and responsibilities for the future.

The following features are completed: C-38 Reach 1 backfilling (2001), C-35 maintenance dredging (2001), S-65 enlargement (2001), S-65A gate extension (2001), C-36 widening (2003), US highway 98 bridge openings (2004), S-84/84 spillway addition (2007), radio tower (2007), S-65DX2 grade control structure (2007), C-38 reach 4A backfilling (2007), S-68 spillway addition (2009), C-38 Reach 4B backfilling (2009), S-65DX2 retrofit, and Istokpoga Boat Ramp (2010).

**Current Status:** More than 90% of the 102,061 acres of land needed for the restoration have been acquired by the SFWMD. Natural flow has been reestablished for 22 of 43 miles of historic river channel, including the 4 miles reconnected in 2009, 4 miles in 2007 and 14 miles in 2001. 6,500 acres of floodplain wetlands are restored and several species, including the Ring-necked Duck, American Avocet and Black-necked Stilt, have returned to the Kissimmee after an absence of 40 years.

This latest backfilled section of C-38 work is located south of the Avon Park Bombing Range Boat Ramp, and connects with a previously backfilled segment of the canal reconnecting historic oxbows and re-carved sections of the river lost during the 1960s channelization project that had been constructed to reduce area flooding. The USACE has restored 13 of the 22 miles of the C-38 (lower basin) to date. This section will be closed to navigation in May 2010 as the SFWMD refurbishes navigation locks along the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and Kissimmee River for the first time in 50 years.

A draft Post Authorization Change Report/General Reevaluation Report to increase the Section 902 limit was prepared and is anticipated for completion in Fall 2011.

Features currently under construction include: the River Acres Flood reduction project, CSX Rail Road Bridge construction, widening of the Canal 37 and the excavation of oxbows and embankment construction projects. .

The following features have yet to be awarded, due to the required sequencing of work: Reach 2 and Reach 3 oxbow excavation (2011), Structure 69 weir (2011), Structure 65D boat ramp (2011), Reach 3 backfilling (2012), S-65EX1 gated spillway addition (2012), and Reach 2 backfilling (2012).

**Est. Cost:** \$ 738,600,000

**Project Schedule:**

1994 Start  
 1999 Construction begun  
 2015 Completed

**Detailed Project Budget Information (rounded):**

KRR	Expenditures Thru FY 2011
USACE	\$236,759,000
SFWMD	\$401,371,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$638,130,000</b>

**Hyperlinks:** [http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/projects/non\\_cerp\\_sf\\_projects.aspx](http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/projects/non_cerp_sf_projects.aspx)

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**Source:** Project description summarized from the *Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study (1999)*. Current status information was provided by the project manager. Cost estimate information is updated to reflect current price levels in October 2011 dollars.

**Additional Information:**



