Project Name: **C&SF: CERP Picayune Strand Restoration**
(F/K/A *Southern Golden Gate Estates Hydrologic Restoration)*
Project ID: 2307 (CERP Project WBS # 30)
Lead Agency: USACE / SFWMD
Authority: WRDA 2007
Funding Source: Corps/State

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

Measurable Output(s): 55,000 acres wetlands restored

April 1999 (Restudy) Project Synopsis: Involves the restoration of natural water flow across 85 square miles in western Collier County that were drained in the early 1960s in anticipation of extensive residential development. This subsequent development dramatically altered the natural landscape, changing a healthy wetland ecosystem into a distressed environment. Implementation of the restoration plan would also improve the water quality of coastal estuaries by moderating the large salinity fluctuations caused by freshwater point discharge from the Faka-Union Canal at the Port of the Islands. The plan would also aid in protecting the City of Naples' eastern Golden Gate well field by improving groundwater recharge.

The project includes a combination of spreader basins, canal plugs, road removal, and pump stations located in the Western Basin and Big Cypress, south of I-75 and north of US 41 between the Belle Meade Area and the Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve in Collier County,.

Current Project Synopsis: The plan will restore and enhance over 55,000 acres of wetlands in the former Southern Golden Gate Estates, now Picayune Strand State Forest, and in adjacent natural areas and public lands by reducing over-drainage. Implementation of the restoration plan will also improve the water quality of coastal estuaries by moderating the large salinity fluctuations caused by the freshwater point discharge from the Faka Union Canal.

The project significantly increasing the size and improve major wetland ecosystems in adjacent lands including the Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve, Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, and Collier Seminole State Park; benefiting threatened and endangered species communities such as the Florida panther and the red cockaded woodpecker. In addition, the project provides public access and recreational opportunities. Features include a combination of spreader basins, tie-back levees, numerous canal plugs, miles of road removal, and several pump stations located in the Western Basin and Big Cypress, south of I-75 and north of US 41, between the Belle Meade Area and the Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve in Collier County.

In 2003, the state of Florida identified this effort as a state expedited project. A PIR was completed in 2004 and the Report of the Chief of Engineers was signed September 15, 2005. The Assistant Secretary of the Army (ASA) completed a review and referred the project to Congress by letter dated April 2, 2007 and it was authorized for construction in WRDA 2007 for $375,330,000, dependent upon appropriation funding from Congress.

Current Status: The initial phase of the project, plugging of the northern two miles of the Prairie Canal, was completed by South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) in 2007 and successfully reduced drainage of the adjacent Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve and restored habitat for threatened and endangered species as part of the early-start work.

Benefits are already being realized as native vegetation is quickly covering the plugged areas and very few nuisance or exotic plant species have been observed. Ospreys and wading birds have been observed foraging in the area as were beneficial surface water flows during the wet seasons.

In August 2009, the SFWMD Governing Board approved the Master Agreement, and Amendment 2 to the Design Agreement and addressed Land Valuation and Crediting Policy for CERP projects in general. The Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) for the Picayune Strand Restoration project was executed August 13, 2009.

Federal construction was implemented by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and initiated with the October 2009 award of the Merritt Pump Station and Road Removal Contract. The cost for the first federally funded CERP project component was $53 Million with $40M in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

The Faka Union Pump Station & Road Removal contract was awarded in October 2010 for approximately $79M and is the largest of the three Pump Stations planned for construction.

The construction contract for the Miller Pump Station & Road Removal was awarded in September 2013 for approximately $76M and construction is scheduled to start in December 2013.

The Southwestern Protection feature and the manatee mitigation feature are currently on hold pending authorization of a project cost increase. A post authorization change Limited Reevaluation Report is scheduled for approval in July 2014.

Est. Cost: **$ 484,021,401**

Project Schedule:

2004	PIR completed
2006	Prairie Canal expedited state construction begun.
2009	Merritt USACE construction began.
2010	Faka-Union USACE construction began.
2013	Miller construction began.
2014	Merritt construction physically completed.
2014	Faka-Union construction physically completed.
2014	Limited Reevaluation Report scheduled to be approved.
2017	Miller construction physically completed.

Detailed Project Budget Information (rounded):

Picayune Strand	**Obligations Thru FY 2013**
USACE	$346,695,816
SFWMD	$143,870,032
Total	$490,565,848

Hyperlinks: http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/projects/proj_30_sgge.aspx
https://my.sfwmd.gov/portal/page?_pageid=1855,2831193,1855_2831931&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&navpage=prjsgge

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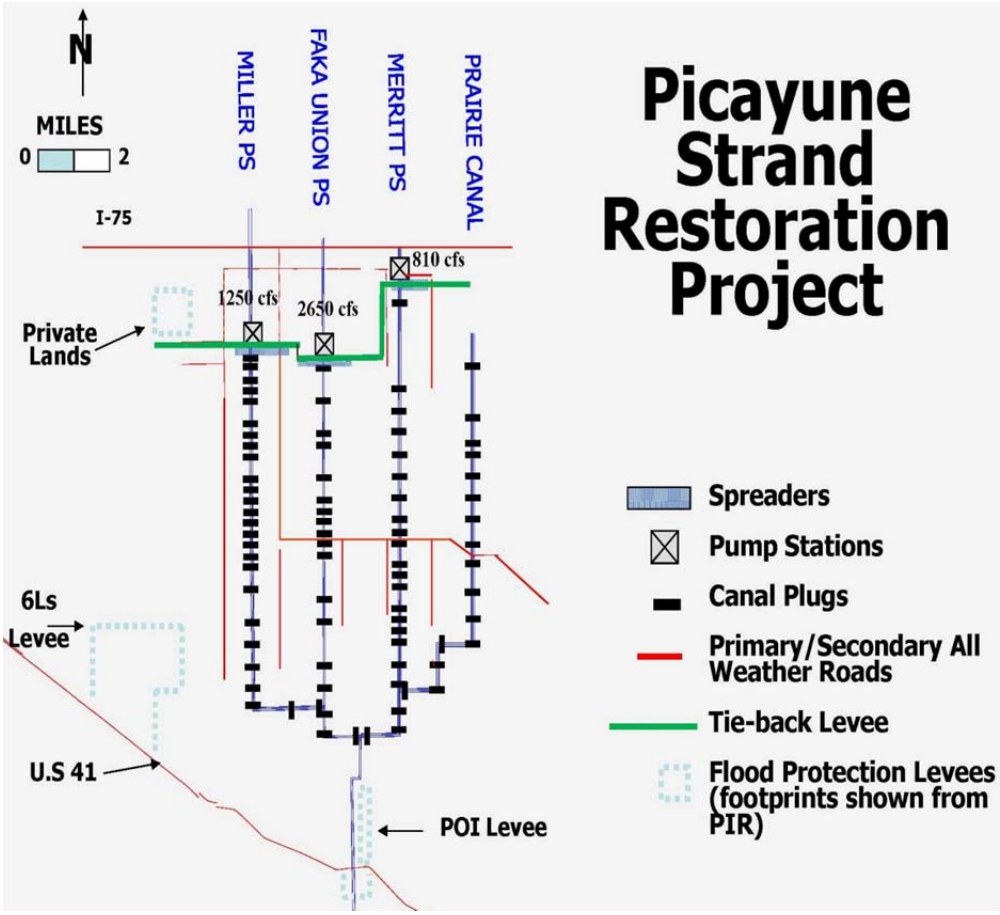
Source: Original project description summarized from the Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study (Restudy) (1999). Detailed information is summarized from the Final Integrated Project Implementation Report and Environmental Impact Statement (PIR/EIS). Cost estimate information is updated to reflect current price in FY 2015 price levels. Actual expenditures include all federal expenditures through FY13 (Sept, 2013), including real estate in the project footprint per the PPA; and sponsor verified and recorded in kind credit through 4th quarter FY13.