

*Approved Meeting Summary  
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force  
South Florida Water Management District, W. Palm Beach, FL  
June 19, 2000*

**Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Ms. Mary Doyle called meeting to order at 12:42 PM. She welcomed everyone and noted the purpose of this meeting will be to review the latest iteration of the Strategic Plan.

Ms. Doyle reviewed the work of the past year leading up to the current draft plan. She noted that Congress asked for the development of the Strategic Plan in the report language attached to the Interior Department's appropriation bill last fall. The GAO had also recommended in April 1998 that a Strategic Plan be developed that "would embrace all the goals of Everglades Restoration" with measurable performance standards. A progress report was provided to Congress in February 2000 based on a letter report from the Working Group. Congress asked that the Strategic Plan be provided by the end of July 2000. Ms. Doyle noted the meeting minutes from September 1999 are provided for approval later in the day.

**The Following Task Force Members Were Present:**

Mary Doyle, Task Force Chair – U.S. Department of the Interior  
Clarence Anthony, Mayor - City of South Bay  
Ernie Barnett for David Struhs, Department of Environmental Protection  
Brad Brown and Billy Causey for Sally Yozell, U.S. Department of Commerce  
Peter Coppelman for Lois Schiffer, U.S. Department of Justice  
Michael Davis, U.S. Department of the Army  
Joan Lawrence for Michael Collins, South Florida Water Management District  
Dexter Lehtinen, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians  
Jan Rogers for Jonathan Charles Fox, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Rick Smith for J. Allison DeFoor, Office of the Governor  
Ron Smola for Glenda Humiston, U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Craig Tepper for Jim Shore, Seminole Tribe of Florida

**The Following Task Force Members Were Not Present:**

Michael Collins, South Florida Water Management District  
Jonathan Charles Fox, Environmental Protection Agency  
J. Allison DeFoor, Office of the Governor  
Jonathan Charles Fox, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Glenda Humiston, U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Lois Schiffer, U.S. Department of Justice  
Jim Shore, Seminole Tribe of Florida  
David Struhs, Department of Environmental Protection  
Sally Yozell, U.S. Department of Commerce

## Strategic Plan

Ms. Linda Dahl and Mr. Rock Salt provided an overview of the Plan. Mr. Salt concluded by providing the Task Force with three issues identified by the Working Group for Task Force guidance.

- 1. Is there opportunity to extend the deadline a few months for improved review and support of the Strategic Plan?*
- 2. Can the name Strategic Plan be changed to Strategy for Restoration to address the non-federal partners' concerns?*
- 3. How should the Working Group proceed in acquiring broader consensus on Goal 3 language, given that there is not complete Working Group support for the current language?*

Mr. Terry Rice also asked the Task Force to consider how to quantify the output for each of the goals rather than just counting.

Ms. Doyle stated the product was promised for the end of July. Many legislators from outside of Florida are asking why Everglades restoration should be funded. They are also asking why this restoration project should be funded when there isn't a Strategic Plan in place. She cautioned everyone to be sensitive to those comments. Rick Smith stated that many have been working for years to put a plan in place and it is a very well thought out plan to restore the ecosystem. He felt that there is a need to educate Congress so that they will understand. He asked what the Task Force could do to move this entire effort forward. Ms. Doyle hoped this product would serve to start the educational process.

Mr. Ernie Barnett added it was important to have this compendium of how things work together and complement the effort with the CERP being the backbone. He suggested that this product is more of a compendium and serves as an inventory and not a plan. Ms. Doyle suggested having a document along with the Strategic Plan. Peter Coppelman stated that there will be "hell to pay" if something other than a Strategic Plan is provided.

Mr. Lehtinen asked if the Task Force had ever approved the three goals in the draft plan. Mr. Salt noted that Congress specifically asked for a Strategic Plan using these three goals. The three goals were first used in the Success in the Making document and were never approved by the Task Force. The specific wording for the third goal originated from the Governor's Commission Report. Mr. Dexter Lehtinen noted the Miccosukee Tribe expressed concerns that Goal 3 would get picked up and misunderstood as has clearly happened.

Mr. Barnett noted the introductory paragraph in the Goal 3 section was walking a fine line with the federal government interjecting itself into local land planning. The Task Force has a unique opportunity to provide a public forum for issues to be raised and discussed. He feared the framework for this document could set up a new third party that could raise challenges. Mr. Clarence Anthony reiterated Mr. Barnett's comments and added this could cause delays to a process that currently works and there needs to be recognition that the built environment is

part of the ecosystem restoration. Ms. Dahl said she did not intend to have a federal presence in local land use decisions. She noted that the Strategic Plan team went to every county commissioner in the 16 counties and they embraced the old language in the Success in the Making and they understood everything was inextricably linked. Mr. Anthony agreed with the recognition of the built environment, however, he feared that the Task Force could become a participant in a process without the authority to do so.

Ms. Patty Power said one of the initial Seminole concerns was that the Task Force is viewed by GAO and some in Congress as an agency, and it is not. She suggested the Task Force adopt the Goals as a matter of process. She questioned what the purpose of this document once it is sent up. She also suggested including a description of the historical perspective.

Mr. Lehtinen recommended the Strategic Plan be sent back to the Working Group for re-drafting. He provided everyone with a letter from Gene Duncan (Enclosure 2) and noted the Tribe's concern with endangered and threatened species and recommended the removal of sub goal 2c. He noted the Plan endorses the Everglades Forever Act and ignores the 10 ppb ruling of EPA among other things.

Mr. Salt replied that Mr. Duncan's letter was in response to a previous draft and it is hoped that his comments have been dealt with in this draft. Mr. Salt asked for discussion or even a straw poll by the Task Force on the Goal 3 language.

### Public Comment on Goal 3

Mr. Jack Moller a former Governor's Commission member stated the Goal 3 language "transform the built environment" was developed to encourage the federal entities to participate in the Regional Planning Council process. It was not intended "to put the federal government in our backyards".

### Task Force Guidance on Goal 3

The Task Force took a straw poll favoring the "foster compatibility of the built and natural systems" instead of "transform the built environment" as the language for Goal 3.

Mr. Salt stated the document will contain an appendix on Science as well as a detailed list of project sheets which many feel would be too much detail. Congressional language asked for the identification of resources needed.

### Public Comment

Mr. Darren Harrell (Audubon of Florida) encouraged the Task Force reach consensus on the goals and objectives, especially if there is to be an extension past the July deadline. He noted the discussion this afternoon for over an hour with no decision being made.

Mr. John Arthur Marshall (JAM Foundation) noted the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee NWR is incorrectly referenced in the document. The citizens of Florida have not been involved in the Strategic Plan

process. The goals and objectives are different from the goals established in the PEIS for the CERP and in the overview of the original C&SF that went before Congress. He felt those goals have been thrown aside in favor of the three new goals. He added that it was a violation of NEPA since this represents a significant change from the PEIS. The document states the GAO report called for a "restoration effort", however, GAO did not use the word "effort". He suggested breaking out costs in a matrix form. He announced the Marshall foundation would prepare its own Strategic Plan. Congress should be viewed as the customer and should answer the GAO challenges.

Mr. Lehtinen asked if the Task Force is exempt from NEPA. Mr. Salt said the Task Force is not exempt, but that he believed that the Task Force had no authority to act in a way that would trigger NEPA. This document pulls existing plans and shows how it all fits together. The public notification and involvement is the responsibility of the individual agencies and this does not contemplate any new federal action and there is no intent to propose anything new. Ms. Lawrence added this represents a compendium of plans that have already gone through the public review process.

Mr. Jack Moller (FWF – ECC – SCI) complemented Ms. Doyle on her leadership of the Task Force. He asked the document include language on how to get the responsible parties to do their jobs. The Strategic Plan fails to address the phosphorus and water levels in Lake Okeechobee. State of Florida looking at far more land acquisition than has been document and feared this document would interfere with that process. He also added that the county process has not been included and hoped this document did not work against restoration. Mr. Moller added that when people see the word closure it creates confusion. Reservoir 1 is on top of the Fish and Wildlife Tourist Center planned for Loxahatchee. Mr. Salt stated the Loxahatchee Refuge issue has been referred to the Corps and is exactly the type of feedback needed.

Mr. Ed Davidson (Audubon) felt there was a sense of urgency with the strong competition for funding and the window of opportunity. There is a need to quantify all that has happened at all levels and Congress needs to be convinced that the money is needed in south Florida.

Ms. Joette Lorion (Miccosukee Tribe) agreed that the atmosphere has improved. The Task Force has been known to notoriously never answer questions that are asked. One of the bigger problems is the inability to show implemented projects such as Modified Water Deliveries. She asked whether the Corps received the \$4 million for Modified Water Deliveries for FY 99. She expressed her concern over Interior vetoing the money to the Corps. Ms. Doyle promised to provide a response after discussing this issue with the Park people.

### Approval Items

The Task Force approved the September 1999 meeting minutes as amended to separate the C-51 and STA- 1east discussion from that discussion on the C-111.

## Open Discussion

Mr. Lehtinen requested time on the next agenda to discuss the S 332 (pump station construction) issue and the ISOP/IOP. The Task Force also agreed to possibly meet again in two weeks to discuss the Task Force's role in implementing this plan, how to better articulate Goal 3, better describe the historical background (text should be provided on this) and to formally adopt the goals and sub goals.

Meeting adjourned at 3:35 PM.

Enclosures:

Briefing Binder

- a. [Agenda](#)
- b. Draft Minutes September 1999
- c. Draft Strategic Plan (June 13, 2000)
- d. [Working Group Progress Report \(March 13, 2000\)](#)
- e. Department of Interior Progress Report (March 8, 2000)
- f. Working Group Comments and Issues
- g. [Miccosukee Tribe Letter re: Strategic Plan \(June 2, 2000\)](#)