



South  
Florida  
Ecosystem  
Restoration

**Land Acquisition Strategy**

**Land Acquisition Task Team**

# General Accounting Office Report

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GAO

United States General Accounting Office  
Report to Congressional Requesters

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April 2000

## SOUTH FLORIDA ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

A Land Acquisition  
Plan Would Help  
Identify Lands That  
Need to Be Acquired



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GAO/RCED-00-84

# GAO Recommendations

**“To ensure that the lands needed to accomplish the goals of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Initiative are identified and acquired...”**

- ✦ an assessment of the lands needed to accomplish each of the goals of the restoration
- ✦ a description of the purpose for which the lands will be acquired and how they will be managed
- ✦ an estimate of the cost of these lands
- ✦ an estimate of when the lands will be needed for related restoration projects
- ✦ the agencies responsible for acquiring the lands

# Working Group:

“Land acquisition is critical to South Florida ecosystem restoration efforts.”

Land is needed:

- ✦ preserve habitat for native plants and animals
- ✦ act as a buffer to existing natural areas
- ✦ water quality treatment areas
- ✦ water storage reservoirs
- ✦ aquifer recharge areas

# Working Group Guidance

The plan will focus on acquisition efforts for lands where there is a federal or joint interest

# Recommendations

## GAO

✦ an assessment of the lands needed to accomplish each of the goals of the restoration

## Working Group

✦ an assessment of the lands with both joint state and federal interest needed to accomplish each of the goals of the restoration

# Working Group Guidance

- ✦ The plan will focus on those federal or joint requirements supportive of Goal 1 (surface water storage reservoirs and ASR facilities) and Goal 2 (habitat protection).
- ✦ The plan will be limited to those lands that will be acquired with federal funds or as part of a federally cost shared project.
- ✦ The plan will be updated to reflect changes and additions to the restoration initiative's land acquisition needs.

# Working Group Guidance

- ✦ The plan will not infringe on existing missions, authorities or jurisdictions of the participating agencies.
- ✦ The plan should include other related state, district, local government, or non-governmental organization land acquisition projects in an appendix as appropriate.

# South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy

## For Goal 1 and Goal 2

- ✦ Identification of lands needed
- ✦ Land acquisition funding
- ✦ Timing of acquisitions
- ✦ Cost of real estate
- ✦ Project profile sheets

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## Project Profiles

- ✦ One Profile for each project
- ✦ Provides information suggested by GAO
- ✦ Provides additional information to enhance coordination on multi-agency projects

# Summary of Goal 1 Lands

- ✦ 44 projects with federal or joint federal/state land acquisition dollars identified
- ✦ 462,312 acres total required
- ✦ 215,136 acres (40%) acquired
- ✦ Total estimated cost - \$2.7 billion
- ✦ Estimated remaining cost - \$2.1 billion

# Summary of Goal 2 Lands

- ✦ 12 projects with federal or joint federal/state land acquisition dollars identified
- ✦ 1,517,182 acres identified
- ✦ 1,487,539 acres (98%) acquired
- ✦ Total estimated cost - \$683 million
- ✦ Estimated remaining cost - \$204 million

# Land Acquisition Strategy

APPENDICES include:

- ✦ Map - South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy Federal Projects and Joint Federal Projects
- ✦ Project Profile Sheets and Summary Table (federal and joint federal-state projects)
- ✦ Map and Table - South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Update Map and State/Federal Cost Share Table (DEP documents)

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## Future efforts

- ✦ Update the Land Acquisition Strategy annually
  - ◆ Address Subgoals and Objectives for Goal 3: Foster Compatibility of the Built and Natural Systems
  - ◆ Include additional information on local government contributions
  - ◆ Other tasks as directed by Task Force, Working Group, and Task Team

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## Future efforts (cont'd)

- ✦ Agencies refine boundaries, acquire identified lands, update profiles
- ✦ Further analysis and identification of land needs
  - ◆ CERP analyses
  - ◆ USFWS Multi-Species Recovery Plan (MSRP) MSRP implementation strategy
  - ◆ FWC updated land cover classification



# Task Team Members

✦ EOG (Co-chair)

✦ FDEP (Co-Chair)

✦ SFWMD

✦ FWC

✦ SWFRPC

✦ Miami-Dade

✦ Palm Beach

✦ Broward

✦ NPS

✦ NWR

✦ USACE

✦ USDA

✦ Office of  
Executive  
Director, Task  
Force

# Additional Support and Participation

- ✦ Muller and Associates, Inc.
- ✦ Florida Natural Areas Inventory
- ✦ FDEP Division of State Lands
- ✦ Department of Community Affairs



# Land Acquisition Strategy

## ✦ S FL ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION FEDERAL/JOINT FEDERAL-STATE LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

### ✦ Land Cost Estimates - **CAUTIONS**

- **Only for the federal and joint federal-state projects that have been identified at this time**
- **Some estimates are still to be determined**
- **Not all projects have been identified, e.g., CERP and NWR identification processes**
- **Not all estimates use the same estimation method, e.g., full costs related to land acquisition vs. Fair Market Value**

# S FL ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

## Land Acquisition Update map (Graham map) Table

✦ Provides cost and acres for:

- ✦ National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service conservation properties & projects
- ✦ SFWMD Save Our Rivers and State conservation holdings and projects and Florida Communities Trust properties & projects
- ✦ Includes only CERP projects where they overlap with projects listed above (others will be added)

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## ✦ S FL ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION FEDERAL/JOINT FEDERAL-STATE LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

### ✦ Assessment of Lands

- **Goal 2: Restore, preserve, and protect natural habitats and species**
  - ◆ **FWC reports, e.g., Closing the Gaps**
  - ◆ **FNAI reports, e.g. Conservation Needs Assessment**
  - ◆ **MERIT**
  - ◆ **Regional/local e.g. SWFRPC Strategic Land Acquisition Plan**

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## ✦ S FL ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION FEDERAL/JOINT FEDERAL-STATE LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

- ◆ Land Acquisition Funding
- ◆ Assessment of Lands
  - **Goal 1: Get the water right – CERP identification efforts**

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## Timeline

- ✦ Public Comment Workshop April '02 (done)
- ✦ First draft for Working Group review May '02 (today)
- ✦ Land Acquisition Strategy information incorporated into Strategic Plan update for Task Force review June '02
- ✦ Final draft strategy for Working Group Approval July '02
- ✦ Final Land Acquisition Strategy for Task Force Approval October '02

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## ✦ S FL ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION FEDERAL/JOINT FEDERAL-STATE LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

### ✦ Assessment of Lands

- **Goal 3: Foster compatibility of the built and natural systems**
  - ◆ Local programs
  - ◆ Local projects with state funds, e.g. FCT, FRDAP, LWCF

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## ✦ S FL ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION FEDERAL/JOINT FEDERAL-STATE LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

- ✦ Map of Federal and Joint Federal-State Projects
  - **Each project will be illustrated on the map**
  - **Accompanying table will provide information on each project**

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## ★ S FL ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION LAND ACQUISITION UPDATE

- ◆ Appendix to provide context for the Federal and joint Federal-State Projects
- ◆ Map and table produced by FDEP of State and Federal holdings and land acquisition projects
  - **Each current holding and land acquisition project will be illustrated on the map, indicating source of acquisition funds**
  - **Accompanying table will provide information on each project**

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## ✦ S FL ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION FEDERAL/JOINT FEDERAL-STATE LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

- ◆ Agencies responsible for acquiring the lands
- ◆ Land acquisition timing

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## ✦ LAND ACQUISITION PROGRESS

- ◆ Being calculated on a per project basis, as well as overall

# Suggested Land Acquisition Strategy Review Process

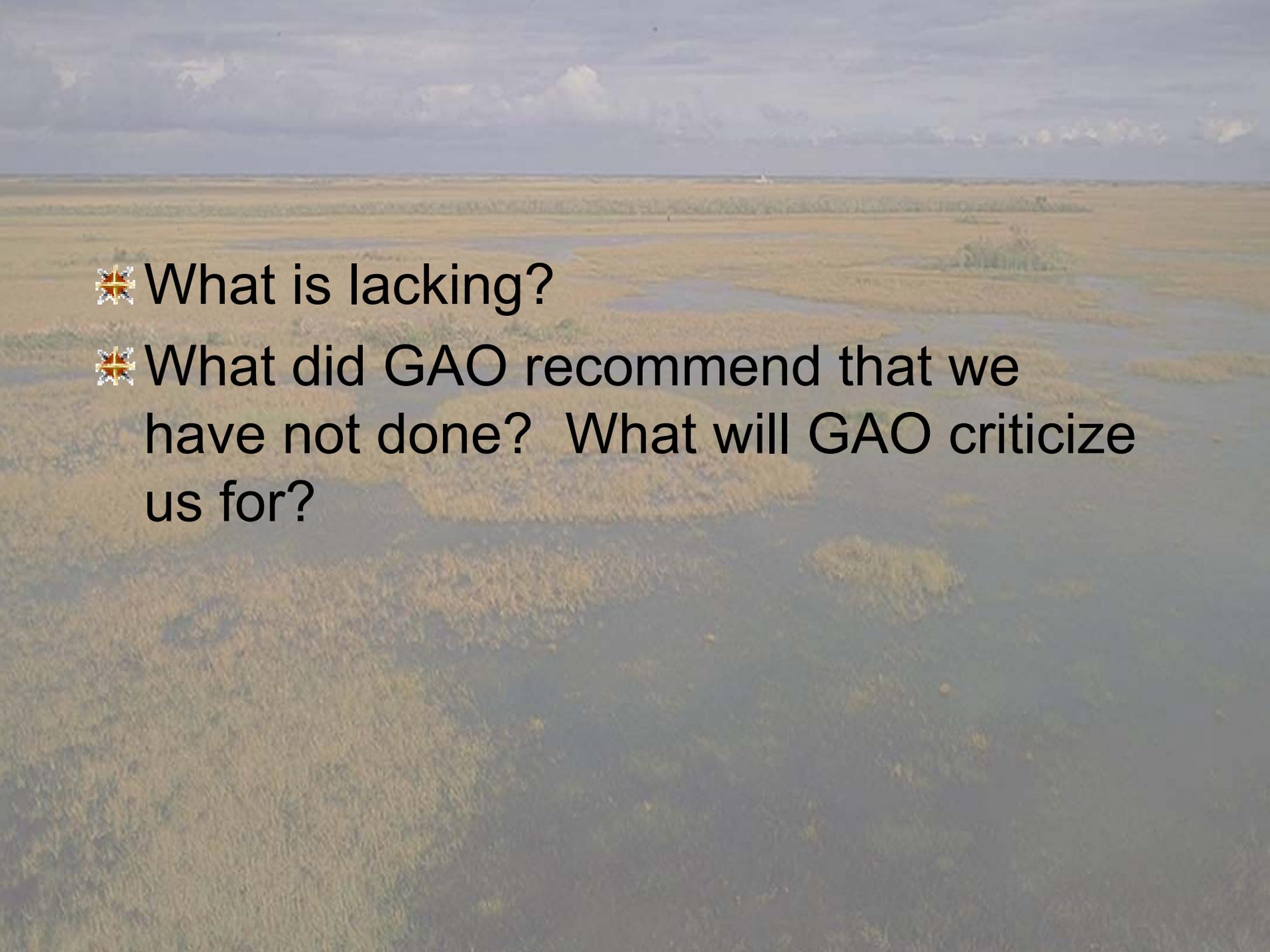
- ✦ Circulate draft strategy to working group and those on the land acquisition strategy interested parties list
- ✦ Notify parties of Land Acquisition Task Team meeting to review the Strategy
- ✦ Conduct Task Team meeting with full participation from all interested parties
- ✦ Bring Strategy to Working Group for final approval

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## Summary of CERP Land Acquisition

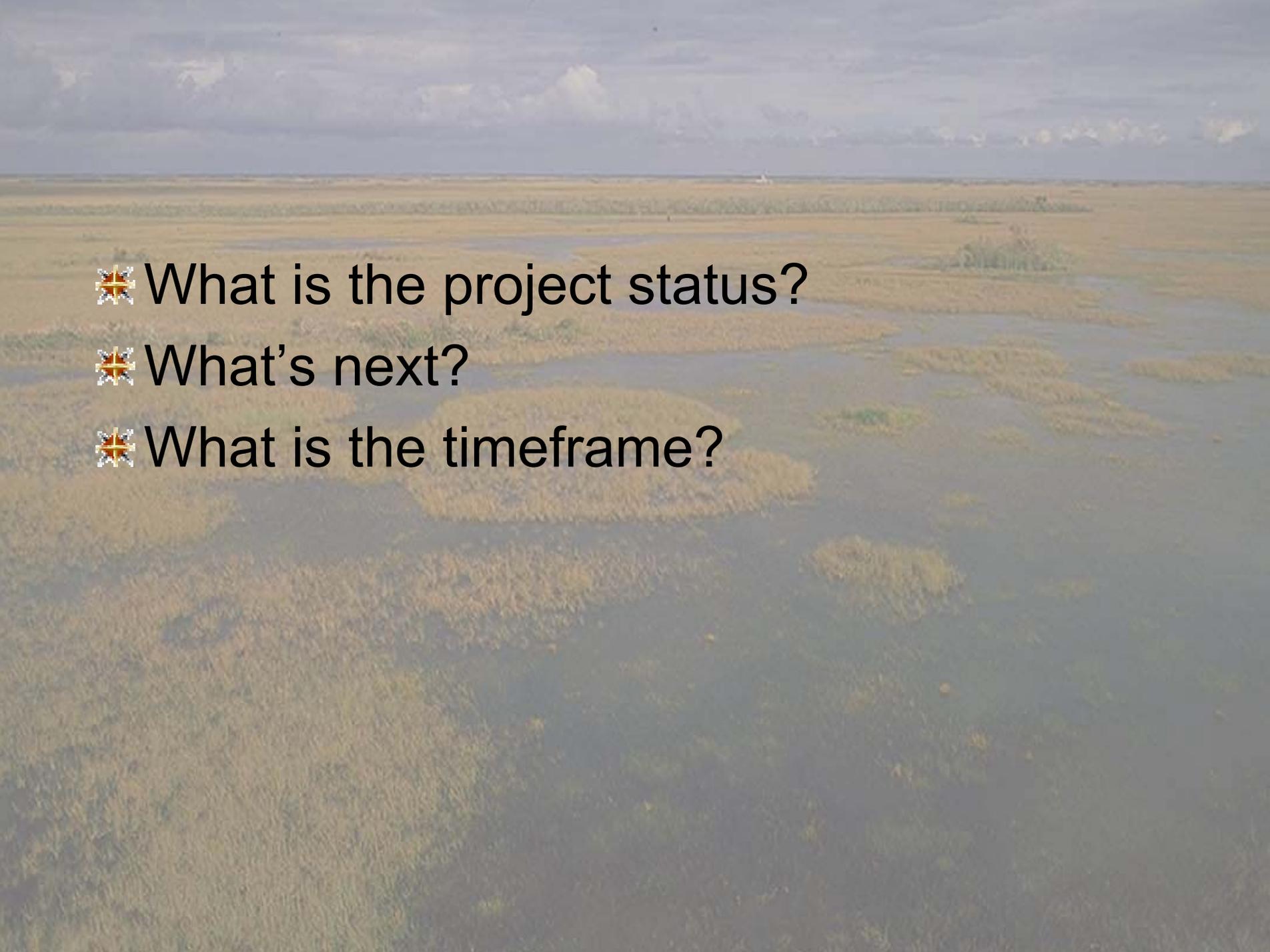
- ✦ 40 CERP projects with land acquisition components are described in the project profiles
- ✦ estimated 372,894 acres are needed for CERP
- ✦ 142,511 acres (38%) acquired through February 2002
- ✦ total estimated cost of CERP lands is \$2.4 billion
- ✦ estimated \$1.9 billion needed to complete acquisition of these parcels
- ✦ (These figures are a subset of those included in the Goal 1 and Goal 2 summaries, not in addition to those figures)



A wide, flat landscape, possibly a coastal plain or marsh, with a body of water in the foreground. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

✦ What is lacking?

✦ What did GAO recommend that we have not done? What will GAO criticize us for?

A wide, flat landscape, possibly a wetland or marsh, with a body of water in the foreground. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

✦ What is the project status?

✦ What's next?

✦ What is the timeframe?

# Project Profiles

|   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Program Name:</b> Land Acquisition   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Project Name:</b> A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Project Name Synonyms:</b>   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Project ID:</b>  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Overlapping Project(s):</b>  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Primary SFER-related goal:</b> 2.A.1   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Secondary SFER-related goal(s):</b> 1.A.1  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <p><b>Project synopsis:</b> Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee NWR was established in 1951 through an agreement between the South Florida Water Management District and the Fish and Wildlife Service under the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929. Acquisition is for the purposes of providing buffer to the refuge, Everglades habitats, water recharge and storage, and for habitat protection. Increasing population growth is rapidly changing the landscape, converting farmlands to residential neighborhoods. Acquisition supports both refuge wildlife management goals as well as CERP restoration goals.</p> |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Project Sponsorship:</b> Federal   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Land Acquisition Funding Type:</b> Federal   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Land Acquisition Funds Source:</b> LWCF  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Agency Responsible for Acquiring the Land:</b> NWR   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Land Acquisition Program(s):</b> LWCF  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Land Managing Agency:</b> NWR  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Land Acquisition Schedule</b>  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Initiate Acquisition</b>   |                       |                              | <b>Conclude Acquisition</b> |                           |                  |                  | <b>Date Needed for Restoration</b> |                                |                        |
| 1955  |                       |                              | 2005                        |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Project Acreage/Progress</b>   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Total size</b>   |                       | <b>Acquired previous yr.</b> |                             | <b>Acquired all years</b> |                  |                  | <b>Remaining to acquire</b>        |                                |                        |
| 149,016   |                       | 0                            |                             | 145,787                   |                  |                  | 3,229                              |                                |                        |
| <b>Project Cost - Land Acquisition only (in thousands of dollars)</b>   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Agency</b>   | <b>Closed in 2000</b> | <b>Closed through 2000</b>   | <b>2001</b>                 | <b>2002</b>               | <b>2003</b>      | <b>2004</b>      | <b>2005</b>                        | <b>Cost of Remaining Acres</b> | <b>Total Est. Cost</b> |
| Federal   | \$ -                  | \$ 119                       | \$ -                        | \$ -                      | \$ 10,000        | \$ 10,000        | \$ 10,000                          | \$ 30,000                      | \$ 30,119              |
| State   | \$ -                  | \$ -                         | \$ -                        | \$ -                      | \$ -             | \$ -             | \$ -                               | \$ -                           | \$ -                   |
| Tribal  | \$ -                  | \$ -                         | \$ -                        | \$ -                      | \$ -             | \$ -             | \$ -                               | \$ -                           | \$ -                   |
| Local   | \$ -                  | \$ -                         | \$ -                        | \$ -                      | \$ -             | \$ -             | \$ -                               | \$ -                           | \$ -                   |
| Other   | \$ -                  | \$ -                         | \$ -                        | \$ -                      | \$ -             | \$ -             | \$ -                               | \$ -                           | \$ -                   |
| TBD   | \$ -                  | \$ -                         | \$ -                        | \$ -                      | \$ -             | \$ -             | \$ -                               | \$ -                           | \$ -                   |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$ -</b>           | <b>\$ 119</b>                | <b>\$ -</b>                 | <b>\$ -</b>               | <b>\$ 10,000</b> | <b>\$ 10,000</b> | <b>\$ 10,000</b>                   | <b>\$ 30,000</b>               | <b>\$ 30,119</b>       |
| <b>Land Cost Estimation Method:</b> FMV   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Degree of Ownership desired:</b> Fee Simple  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Comments:</b> 143,238 acres of the acquired acres above is owned by the State of Florida and managed by NWR >>do we need to show the state \$ in the project cost table? 145,787 acquired all years correct as of 2002-01-18 according to FWS.   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Hyperlink(s):</b> <a href="http://loxahatchee.fws.gov">http://loxahatchee.fws.gov</a>  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Contact:</b> Roger Beckham, Branch Chief, NWR; 404-679-7204  |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |
| <b>Update:</b> 2001-11-08; Roger Beckham, NWR   |                       |                              |                             |                           |                  |                  |                                    |                                |                        |

# GAO and Working Group Recommendations

✦ an estimate of when the lands will be needed for related restoration projects

✦ the agencies responsible for acquiring the lands

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# GAO and Working Group Recommendations

✦ a description of the purpose for which the lands will be acquired and how they will be managed

✦ an estimate of the cost of these lands

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✦ an estimate of the cost of these lands

>>insert SFER Land  
Acquisition Plan map/ Graham  
map TABLE here – credit to  
DSL

An aerial photograph of a wetland or marsh area. The landscape is a mix of dark, shallow water channels and patches of brownish-green grass. The horizon is flat and extends to the top of the frame under a cloudy sky.

# Approach

- ✦ Land Acquisition Task Team (LATT) meetings/conference calls
- ✦ Agree on approach, information needed
- ✦ Project Profiles - Decide on content and layout; each agency completes profiles on its projects
- ✦ Maps and tables – decide on categories of lands to represent; review and revise drafts

# Land Acquisition Strategy

## ✦ INTRODUCTION

- ◆ Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP)
- ◆ South Florida Ecosystem Restoration
- ◆ South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force)
- ◆ Land Acquisition
- ◆ Land Acquisition Plans and Coordination
- ◆ General Accounting Office Report (GAO Report)
- ◆ S FL Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy