



South
Florida
Ecosystem
Restoration

Land Acquisition Strategy

Land Acquisition Task Team

General Accounting Office Report

GAO

United States General Accounting Office
Report to Congressional Requesters

April 2000

SOUTH FLORIDA ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

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



GAO/RCED-00-84

The background of the slide is a photograph of a vast, flat landscape, likely a wetland or marsh. In the foreground, there is a body of water with a light blue-grey hue. The land beyond the water is a mix of brown and green, suggesting sparse vegetation. The horizon is flat and extends across the entire width of the image. The sky is filled with soft, white and grey clouds, creating a diffused light across the scene.

General Accounting Office Report

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

The background of the slide is a photograph of a vast, flat landscape. In the foreground, there is a body of water, possibly a marsh or a wide river, with some reeds or grasses. The middle ground is a flat, open area, likely a plain or a large field, extending to a distant horizon. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, suggesting an overcast day. The overall color palette is muted, with greens, browns, and grays.

Land Acquisition Task Team Directive from Working Group

“The purpose of the Task Team is to develop a land acquisition plan for lands identified jointly by federal and state agencies for ecosystem restoration.”

Task Team Directive (cont'd.)

“When completed, this plan and its appendices should provide a broad picture of all land acquisition initiatives that contribute to the restoration.”

Land Acquisition Strategy Process and Timeline

- ✦ GAO report recommends a land acquisition plan (April 2000)
- ✦ Working Group issues Land Acquisition Task Team Directive (Feb. 2001)
- ✦ Task Team initial meeting (March 2001)
- ✦ Preliminary draft to Working Group (March 2002)
- ✦ Public comment workshop (April 2002)
- ✦ Draft to Working Group (May 2002)

Land Acquisition Strategy

Process and Timeline (cont'd.)

- ✦ Information from Strategy incorporated into Strategic Plan update for Task Force review (June 2002)
- ✦ WRAC review (July-Nov. 2002)
- ✦ Working Group approval (Aug. 2002)
- ✦ Draft to Task Force (Oct. 2002)
- ✦ Working Group review & approval (Jan. 2003)
- ✦ Task Force review (Feb. 2003)

Task Force Guidance from October 2002 meeting

- ✦ Clarify the purpose statements (p. 2)
- ✦ Add a discussion of “less than fee” acquisitions (p. 8)
- ✦ Update the data in the project sheets in the original draft (Appendix C)

Land Acquisition Strategy Purpose

“The purpose of this South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy (Strategy) is to describe the strategy for land acquisition needed for ecosystem restoration projects that are either wholly federally funded or jointly funded by federal and non-federal agencies.”

Land Acquisition Strategy

Purpose (cont'd.)

“The Strategy sets forth estimates of the lands needed for restoration, estimates of the cost of land acquisition for the restoration initiative and measures progress in acquiring lands for the restoration.”

Summary of Federal and Joint Federal-State Land Acquisition Projects (Goal 1 and Goal 2, thru Sept. 2002)

Appendix C

- ✦ Total estimated cost: \$3.15 billion
- ✦ Estimated remaining cost: \$1.89 billion
- ✦ Total acres (estimated): 1,979,554
- ✦ Acres acquired to date: 1,729,816
- ✦ Acres to acquire (est.): 249,738 (13%)

State and Federal South Florida Land Acquisition Update (some projects solely State/local)

Appendix D

- ✦ Total expenditures: \$2.15 billion
- ✦ Total acres: 5,827,545
- ✦ Acres acquired to date: 4,901,861
- ✦ Acres to acquire (estimated): 925,684

Land Acquisition Strategy

Next Steps

- ✦ Land Acquisition Strategy to Congress and GAO
- ✦ Publish the Land Acquisition Strategy online
- ✦ Reconvene the Land Acquisition Task Team to prepare the next edition

Land Acquisition Task Team Future Efforts

- ✦ Broaden Task Team representation to include more local governments
- ✦ Utilize new information as it becomes available
 - ◆ USFWS Multi-Species Recovery Plan (MSRP) MSRP implementation strategy (MERIT)
 - ◆ FWC species and land cover analyses

Land Acquisition Task Team

Future Efforts (cont'd.)

- ✦ Address Goal 3: Foster Compatibility of the Built and Natural Systems
- ✦ Continue coordination with WRAC
- ✦ Prepare next edition of Land Acquisition Strategy using acquisition data through Sept. 2003

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



