

SOUTH FLORIDA ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION TASK FORCE
December 17, 2013
DRAFT Agenda

U.S Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW, Yates Auditorium
Washington, DC 20240

Task Force Duties: To provide intergovernmental coordination, exchange information, facilitate the resolution of conflict, coordinate programmatic science, assist members, and promote public participation.

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| 12:30 – 12:45 | Welcome, Goals for the Meeting and Administrative Items
<i>Purpose: The agenda and minutes from the July 2013 meeting will be presented.</i> | Rachel Jacobson |
| 12:45 – 1:15 | Task Force Member Introductions and Opening Remarks
<i>Purpose: Each member has the option of providing brief introductory remarks at this time.</i> | ALL |
| 1:15 – 1:30 | Update on Congressional Perspectives
<i>Purpose: An update will be provided on current funding to include the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2013 which promotes investment in the nation's critical water resources infrastructure, accelerates project delivery, and reforms the implementation of Corps of Engineers projects.</i> | |
| 1:30 – 1:45 | Farm Bill Update
<i>Purpose: The Farm Bill represents the nation's largest investment supporting the voluntary and successful conservation, restoration and management of America's working lands. Across the nation, USDA works directly with farmers and ranchers to carry out conservation practices aimed at strengthening our nation's soil and water resources. Many of these conservation efforts, and USDA's ability to continue working with farmers, ranchers and landowners to protect our environment, depend on Congressional passage of a new Farm Bill. Americans are counting on Congress to get its job done and pass a Farm Bill as soon as possible.</i> | Ann C. Mills |

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- 1:45 – 2:30 **Invasive Exotic Species in the Everglades**
- **Strategic Action Framework** Shannon Estenoz
Purpose: The Task Force, at its December 2012 meeting, directed the Office of Ecosystem Restoration Initiatives (OERI), Working Group and Science Coordination Group to conduct a comprehensive review of current efforts to combat invasive exotics. An updated set of recommendations for improving efforts and boosting effectiveness was presented to the Task Force at its July 2013 meeting. There was general consensus for the OERI to provide enhanced coordination support for the development of an Invasive Species Strategic Action Framework that includes a cross cut budget planning tool. An update will be provided on the framework progress to date.

 - **Large Constrictor Workshop Report** Bob Johnson
Purpose: To update the Task Force on the Large Constrictor Workshop held in November 2013. Of the numerous reported invasive animals in the Everglades, invasive reptiles (totaling 49) are thought to be a particularly disruptive group, because they are near the top of the food chain, and have few native predators. Large constrictors tend to expand rapidly, and are believed to be responsible for a substantial loss of small mammals in the Everglades. A formal, well organized inter-agency management structure (with higher level policy involvement) has been shown to be key to successful invasive species control programs.
- 2:30 – 2:45 **Restoration Strategies Update** Temperince Morgan
Purpose: In June 2012, the state of Florida and the U.S. EPA reached consensus on new restoration strategies for further improving water quality in America’s Everglades. A progress report will be provided on the plan.
- 2:45 – 3:00 **Public Comment**
- 3:00 – 3:15 **Break**
- 3:15 – 3:30 **Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation Natural Areas and adjacent portions of the Big Cypress (formerly known as Restoration of the Western Everglades Natural System) Update** Patty Power
Purpose: The Seminole Tribe of Florida, at the December 2012 meeting, raised concerns with the hydrology in the western basins and flagged the lack of monitoring, modeling, planning, and project implementation in this region for many years. A subset of the Task Force member agencies has held five meetings to discuss these issues and an update will be provided.

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- 3:30 – 4:00 **Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) Update** Eric Bush
Purpose: The CEPP was announced at the October 27, 2011 Task Force meeting. The CEPP will incorporate updated science and maximize the use of publicly owned lands to focus the next phase of Everglades restoration in the Central Everglades. The public comment period on the Draft Project Implementation Report (PIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) closed on November 1st. The Corps and the SFWMD will provide a status update.
- 4:00 – 4:10 **National Research Council Update** Bob Johnson
Purpose: The Congressionally established CISRERP committee is holding their last open session in December, prior to releasing their fifth Biennial Review of Everglades restoration progress. This meeting will focus on four topics: (1) Update on non-CERP and CERP projects including budget requirements, timelines, and any major policy issues that need to be resolved; (2) Update on the CEPP and lessons learned; (3) Congressional perspectives on Everglades restoration; and (4) senior agency leadership perspectives on issues affecting restoration progress.
- 4:10 – 4:25 **General Public Comment**
- 4:25 – 4:30 **Assignments, Next Steps and Closing Comments**
- 4:30 **Adjourn**

Updated 12/12/13