



South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

Date: May 25, 2001
Subject: Working Group Highlights, May 23 - 24 meeting
To: Working Group Members

Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), Programmatic Regulations: The Corps briefed the Working Group (WG) on the schedule for developing the regulations. Meetings with stakeholders will be held in June, the draft outline will be developed in July, followed by a second round of public meetings with agencies in September. The first draft is scheduled for December 2001, followed by a third round of stakeholder meetings. The regulations will be approved for implementation in December 2002.

For more information, contact: Stu Appelbaum (USACE), 904/232-2584

Minimum Flows and Levels (MFL) in the Everglades: The WG was briefed on the current status of MFL rulemaking for the Water Conservation Areas. A Governing Board Workshop will be held on June 13, followed by consideration to adopt the rule and changes on June 14. The results of the Governing Board's action will be published in the Florida Administrative Weekly. The rules are expected to go into effect in September.

For more information, contact: Joan Lawrence (SFWMD), 561/687-6252

Legislative Update: Rick Smith provided a briefing regarding the results of the recent session of the Florida Legislature. Of the bills that passed, the following were discussed: SB-1524, Expedited Permitting for CERP Projects; SB-1468, Florida Forever Act revisions; SB-1922 - Florida Dept of Agriculture and Consumer Services – Rural and Family Lands Protection Act. Important issues in bills that did not pass included Aquifer Storage and Recovery, organic muck removal from freshwater bodies by private property owners, comprehensive water policy and growth management. A summary of the bills important to our efforts is being posted on our website.

For more information, contact: Rick Smith (Governor's Office), 850/487-7914

Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Issue Team: The ASR Issue Team is keeping close track of the CERP project development team and project management plans to assure the team and the Working Group that the issues identified in the original ASR Issue Team report and in the CROGEE report are being adequately addressed. The team reported that the Corps and SFWMD appear to be dealing with all issues in an effective manner. The key current issue is to determine the monitoring plan to document microbial die-off and ensure public health is not compromised. The team is also seeking appointees to ensure wider agency diversity in the ASR Issue Team's membership.

For more information, contact: Richard Harvey, Issue Team Chair (EPA), 561/615-5292; or Fred Rapach, Issue Team Co-Chair (Palm Beach County Water Utilities Dept), 561/641-3429

Biscayne Bay Basin Watershed Team: Jim Murley briefed the Working Group regarding the Biscayne Bay Partnership Initiative (BBPI). The Working Group also discussed the first reading of the draft charter for the Working Group's proposed Biscayne Bay Watershed Team. Input is needed by June 1 on the draft charter and on appointees for team membership.

For more information, contact: (SFERTF OED) Allyn Childress, 305/348-6746; or Rafaela Monchek, 305/348-6722

SFWMD Governing Board Water Resources Advisory Commission: The Working Group was briefed regarding the status of this new advisory commission. The Commission plans to meet the first Thursday of every month. At the June 7 meeting, the Commission will receive high-level briefings on CERP, Water Supply Planning, Lake Okeechobee and begin discussion on the development of a priority work plan.

For more information, contact: Julio Fanjul (SFWMD), 561/682-2769

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Next Working Group Meeting: June 18 and 19 in the Kissimmee area (Sebring)