

## HISTORY OF THE MUSEUM COLLABORATION COMMITTEE OUTREACH PLAN

- ◆ The Museum of Discovery and Science was named an official partner of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in September of 1999.
- ◆ The Museum was a natural partner for the Task Force to provide public outreach. The Museum has had a commitment to educating its half million visitors (including urban, minority and underserved communities throughout South Florida) through on site and outreach programs and exhibits about Florida's unique environment.
- ◆ The Museum is centrally located near the Everglades. Because of the close proximity to South Florida's largest population base, the Museum is able to provide a target audience, dedicated community partners and a strong foundation upon which to build the Florida Environmental Education Center (FEEC).
- ◆ The partnership agreement defines the scope and vision of the relationship through a long-range plan. This long-range public Outreach Plan is the first product of the Partnership and was developed by a joint committee of Task Force and Museum representatives.
- ◆ This long-range plan was first presented at the October 2000 Working Group meeting. Comments were solicited from members of POSST, SCT and other interested parties. These comments are reflected in this revised version of the Plan.

## OVERVIEW OF THE OUTREACH PLAN

- ◆ The MCC Outreach Plan is a long-range, multi-phased plan that meets the needs of all the parties involved. The three-phase approach allows for each element of the plan to fully develop and be completed within a timely manner.
- ◆ **Phase I:** The primary intent of Phase I is to update the Museum's existing environmental education efforts and build the foundation for implementing phases II and III of the Outreach Plan. Phase I contains a full range of programmatic offerings and will serve as the key aspects for future activities of the partnership. Components identified to date include: information dissemination, electronic outreach, school and Museum-based education, retrofit displays and exhibits, outdoor exhibitory, South Florida Restoration Science Forum, and a "fun" childrens' educational piece.
- ◆ **Phase II:** This second phase will renovate and enhance the Museum's existing *Florida EcoScapes* exhibit to include information about the Greater Everglades Ecosystem Restoration and improve the visitor experience.
- ◆ **Phase III:** The Museum has been awarded \$4.4 M in Public Education Capital Outlay funds to create the Florida Environmental Education Center. This center will consist of interactive exhibits, classroom and laboratory facilities, an environmental resource center and educational programs for both children and adults. This FEEC will be the only one of it's kind. It will serve the South Florida community as a hands-on facility, and the global community through its outreach and virtual components.

## **OUTREACH PLAN GOALS HAVE ROOTS IN EXISTING MUSEUM EFFORTS**

- ◆ Our current *Florida EcoScapes* exhibit showcases Florida's unique ecosystems. Included in Phase II are the renovation of both the living systems and the hands on exhibitry. The newly renovated exhibitry will include an Everglades exhibit that will focus on Florida's environment and the Everglades restoration efforts.
- ◆ Outreach programs have been and continue to be a priority for the Museum to teach both children and adults about Florida's environment. Programs will have an Everglades Restoration component.
- ◆ The Museum is currently able to provide educational spaces to its visitors through an existing laboratory and classrooms. Phase III of the Outreach plan will increase educational spaces and enable more hands-on learning. The FEEC would include a wet lab and a multimedia lecture/assembly auditorium.
- ◆ The Museum has begun to reach its goals as outlined in the public Outreach Plan, by:
  1. Designing and building an informative kiosk to house Everglades restoration information
  2. Designing and maintaining an Everglades Restoration web page on [www.mods.org](http://www.mods.org)
  3. Renovating and expanding the outdoor exhibits
  4. Collecting, organizing, and cataloguing resource materials to create a future reference library about Florida's ecosystems and environmental education. The Museum has 900+ volumes to date and looks forward to enhancing this collection and converting it to a public use library.
- ◆ The Museum's goal, through this partnership, is to become a major provider of public education and outreach about the Florida environment and efforts to restore the Greater Everglades Ecosystem.

## **THE PARTNERSHIP'S IMMEDIATE NEEDS**

- ◆ The completion of Phase I of the Outreach Plan represents a full range of programmatic offerings and will serve as the foundation for key aspects of future partnership activities. Full funding for these efforts totals \$65,370.
- ◆ To reach this goal, funding support from participating agencies is needed. Agencies actively participating in Phase I activities have been contacted. All members of the Working Group are encouraged to participate.
- ◆ Print materials are needed to provide the public with information regarding the Everglades restoration and the CERP.
- ◆ The Museum of Discovery and Science link ([www.mods.org](http://www.mods.org)) on partners' web sites.
- ◆ Assistance from Working Group members in building the foundation for Phases II and III (design and possible future budget requests).