

South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy

[>>insert map of the SFER Land Acquisition Strategy: Federal and Joint Federal-
State Projects]

Draft

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South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force
Working Group Land Acquisition Task Team
Staff support: Muller and Associates, Inc.

South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy

INTRODUCTION

The South Florida ecosystem is an 18,000 square mile region that includes all or part of 16 counties with over 6 million human inhabitants. The watershed stretches from the Kissimmee River Basin-Lake Okeechobee system to the coral reefs in the Atlantic Ocean and from the Caloosahatchee to the St. Lucie estuaries. This water dominated system encompasses a myriad of interconnected freshwater rivers, lakes, marshes, prairies, forests, and estuaries, and includes the natural systems of the Kissimmee River Basin, Lake Okeechobee, the Everglades, Big Cypress Swamp, Florida Bay, Biscayne Bay, the Florida Keys reef tract, Charlotte Harbor, the Caloosahatchee River and the Indian River Lagoon.

In 1948, the ongoing efforts to drain the Everglades, protect the region from hurricanes, and make the region habitable culminated in the Congressional authorizations of the Central & Southern Florida (C&SF) Project, a flood control project jointly built and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). The primary project goal was to provide water and flood control for urban and agricultural lands. Another goal was to ensure a water supply for Everglades National Park. The first goal was achieved. The second goal has not yet been accomplished.

The C&SF Project significantly altered the region's hydrology (quantity, timing and distribution of water). Whereas historically most rainwater had soaked into the region's wetlands, the C&SF canal system, comprised of over 1,800 miles of canals and levees and 200 water control structures, drained an average of 1.7 billion gallons of water per day into the ocean and the gulf. As a result, not enough water was available for the natural functioning of the Everglades or for the human communities in the region. Water quality was also degraded.

Today, the Everglades are only about half of its original size, and the natural and man-made water systems providing life to the Everglades that remain are inadequate for the survival of this international treasure. The desirability of South Florida's climate, geographic location, cultural and social setting and thriving economic opportunities have contributed to a population explosion that is predicted to double in the region by the year 2050. The sustainability of the South Florida ecosystem is in jeopardy. In response to this crisis, the federal, state, regional, local governments and two American Indian Tribes have committed to the restoration of the South Florida ecosystem, which includes the Everglades.

Land acquisition is critical to South Florida ecosystem restoration efforts. Land is needed to preserve habitat for native plants and animals and to act as a buffer to existing natural areas. In addition, acquisition programs can provide opportunities for passive and active recreational pursuits. Land is also needed for water quality treatment areas, water storage reservoirs, and aquifer recharge areas that will help restore natural hydrology.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe a strategy for land acquisition needed for ecosystem restoration projects which are either wholly federally funded or jointly funded by federal and non-federal agencies. The strategy identifies lands needed for restoration, estimates of the cost of land acquisition for the restoration initiative and measures progress in acquiring lands for the restoration. The Working Group member agencies responsible for land acquisition participated in this initial assessment of the lands needed to accomplish the ecosystem restoration goals of the Task Force.

This document is the initial South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy. The Strategy builds on the information in “Coordinating Success”, the 1999 Everglades Ecosystem Land Acquisition State-Federal Cost Share map, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and the Florida Forever work plan. This initial strategy addresses two of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration goals: Goal 1: Get the Water Right and Goal 2: Restore, preserve and protect habitats and species.

The Task Force acknowledges that this document will continue to evolve. All lands needed for South Florida Ecosystem Restoration have not been identified. Also, lands conceptually identified for CERP projects may change as projects are further refined in the planning process. As the restoration proceeds and additional lands are identified, future editions of this plan will reflect these changes.

South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

Six federal departments (twelve agencies) seven Florida state agencies or commissions, two American Indian Tribes, sixteen counties, scores of municipal governments, and interested groups and businesses from throughout South Florida participate in the restoration effort. Four sovereign entities (federal, state, and two tribes) are involved in the Everglades and South Florida restoration effort. Given the large geographic area, the diverse missions of the agencies, and the need to maximize the resources available for this effort, coordination among these entities is essential to the restoration effort.

The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) coordinates and tracks the work of the restoration. The Task Force was created in 1993 as a federal interagency partnership, with informal participation by the State of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians. The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1996 authorized the operation of the Task Force and provided for specific membership and duties. WRDA directed the Task Force to establish a Florida-based working group. The Task Force and its Working Group facilitate resolution of conflicts among participants; coordinate scientific or other research; provide assistance and support to member agencies in their restoration activities; coordinate the development of consistent policies, strategic plans, programs, projects, activities and priorities for addressing the restoration; exchanges information among participants; prepare an integrated financial plan and recommendations for coordinated budget requests (Cross Cut Budget), and submit a biennial report to Congress summarizing restoration activities. However, the Task Force does not have oversight or project authority. Each member entity retains its authority, jurisdiction, and mission.

Task Force members share a vision of a healthy South Florida ecosystem that supports diverse and sustainable communities of plants, animals, and people. Three goals have been set to achieve this vision: Goal 1: Get the water right; Goal 2: Restore, preserve, and protect natural habitats and species; and Goal 3: Foster compatibility of the built and natural systems. Land acquisition is an essential part of achieving these goals. This strategy document reflects land acquisition necessary for achievement of Goals 1 and 2. The Task Force is developing the objectives needed to achieve Goal 3. Future editions of the Land Acquisition Strategy will incorporate the lands needed for this goal.

General Accounting Office Report (GAO)

In its April 2000 review of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Initiative, the General Accounting Office (GAO) recognized that the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Initiative is a complex, long-term effort that covers over 18,000 square miles, and that that will take over 20 years and require the continuous effort and commitment of all the agencies involved. The GAO report stated that the development of a land acquisition plan would be valuable in coordinating the member agencies' land acquisition activities. Such a plan would ensure that the lands needed to accomplish the goals of the Task Force are identified and acquired. The intent is to aid the Task Force in (1) determining how much land will be needed to accomplish its goals; (2) estimate the full cost of acquiring these lands, (3) measure progress in acquiring lands for the restoration, and (4) increase the chance that the lands acquired are those most needed.

While the federal, state, and local land acquisition programs prepare annual and multi-year plans and coordinate acquisition efforts on a day-to-day and annual basis to ensure effective use of staff time and fiscal resources, the GAO believes

that the coordination needs of the Task Force would be better served if this information was assembled into one document.

The GAO recommended that the members of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force develop a land acquisition plan for the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration that would include:

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

The GAO stated that the land acquisition plan should supplement the Task Force's July 2000 Strategic Plan, and that the land acquisition plan should build on the land acquisition information and assessments already compiled by the federal and state agencies. It was suggested that the document would be useful to the funding entities, such as Congress and the State of Florida. The GAO envisioned that the land acquisition plan would be a dynamic document updated to reflect changes and additions to the restoration initiative's land acquisition needs.

South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Initiative Requires Significant Land Acquisition

The members of the Task Force have been engaged in the protection and restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem for many years prior to the formation of the Task Force. The Task Force tracks these projects and has worked to build on the progress made to date. Acquisition of land to provide water for South Florida's human population and to protect the remaining natural ecosystems has been an ongoing priority in ecosystem restoration.

State and federal agencies already manage 4.7 million acres of land important to ecosystem restoration in South Florida. Approximately 4.55 million acres are for habitat purposes and 0.15 million acres for water storage. The State of Florida alone has acquired 3.5 million acres of habitat conservation land in South Florida at a cost of \$1.5 billion. However the condition of the ecosystem continues to deteriorate. This continued deterioration has necessitated a more comprehensive approach to protection, preservation and restoration.

Recognizing this need, Congress authorized the C&SF Comprehensive Review Study known as the Restudy in 1992 to determine "whether modifications to the existing project are advisable ...with particular reference to modifying the project or its operation for improving the quality of the environment, improving

protections of the aquifer, and . . . urban water supplies affected by the project or its operation.” In 1996, the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) further instructed the Secretary of the Army to develop a Comprehensive Plan for the purpose of restoring, preserving, and protecting the South Florida ecosystem. The Task Force was also directed by WRDA 96 to provide recommendations to the Secretary of the Army and the non-Federal project sponsor on the Restudy.

WRDA 2000 authorized the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). With an estimated cost of \$8.2 billion over 39 years, CERP is perhaps the most ambitious ecological restoration project ever undertaken. Comprised of more than 60 projects further organized regionally, CERP provides a framework for modifications and operational changes that are needed to restore, preserve and protect the South Florida ecosystem while providing for other water- related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection. The goal is that the right quantity of water, of the right quality, gets delivered to the right places at the right times.

The cost share for CERP is 50% federal and 50% non-federal with the non-federal sponsor responsible acquisition of all land, easements, right-of-way, and relocations necessary to implement the plan. Roughly 220,000 acres at an estimated cost of \$2.2 billion in 1999 dollars will be needed for the CERP. As mentioned earlier, these estimates will be modified as the CERP projects are further refined in the planning process.

For example, the Indian River Lagoon and Water Preserve Feasibility Studies are further refining projects in those study areas. Land acquisition and related expenses will comprise about one-fourth of the total cost-of CERP.

Lands needed for habitat restoration and protection are also included within the restoration mosaic for South Florida. As of September 2001, about 5.6 million acres have been identified as necessary for habitat protection. About 3.4 million acres have been acquired, with 927,125 acres remaining to be purchased.

South Florida Ecosystem Land Acquisition Strategy Development

The Task Force also recognized the value of having a single document that would describe land acquisitions planned by the member agencies and relate these lands to the goals of the restoration. The Task Force directed the Working Group to produce a Land Acquisition Strategy. On February 2, 2000, the Land Acquisition Task Team was chartered by the Working Group to develop the strategy. As defined in the guidance to the Task Team, “The purpose of the Task Team is to develop a strategy for land acquisition needed for [South Florida] ecosystem restoration projects, which are either federally or jointly funded by federal and non-federal agencies. When completed, this plan and its appendices should provide a broad picture of all current land acquisition initiatives that contribute to the restoration.”

The Working Group instructed the Team to identify land acquisition projects that are entirely federally funded or jointly funded by the federal government and a non-federal sponsors or sponsors. These projects have two aspects: The acquisition of additions and inholdings necessary for the ecological integrity of existing national parks, preserves, and wildlife refuges, and joint projects, such as CERP, that contribute to the overall environment and human habitability of South Florida.

The guidelines also focused the land acquisition planning efforts on Goal 1: Getting the Water Right, defined as restoring natural hydrologic functions and water quality in wetland, estuarine, marine, and groundwater systems, while also providing for the water resource needs of urban and agricultural landscapes and Goal 2: Restore, Preserve and Protect Natural Habitats and Species, defined as when the diversity, abundance, and behavior of native South Florida animals and plants in terrestrial and aquatic environs are characteristic of predrainage conditions. These ecosystem restoration goals include significant land acquisition in their implementation plans and were clearly defined in the Task Force's July 2000 Coordinating Success Strategy Document.

Related land acquisition projects without any federal funding were to be addressed in appendices. The Working Group stated that the Strategy and its appendices should provide a broad picture of all current land acquisition initiatives that contribute to the restoration. The Florida Division of State Lands and the Florida Natural Areas Inventory collaborated to update the 1999 Everglades Ecosystem Land Acquisition State-Federal Cost Share map known as the "Graham Map" to produce the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Update, Appendix XXX.

Member agencies of the Working Group responsible for acquiring lands to implement the strategy served on the Land Acquisition Task Team. Federal agency representatives from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Wildlife Refuge System and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and State of Florida agency representatives from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), the Executive Office of the Governor, the South West Regional Planning Council, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), joined by local government representatives from Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade Counties produced this document. Assistance was provided by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory and the Department of Community Affairs with staff support from Muller Associates, Inc and the Task Force's Office of the Executive Director.

Member agencies identified lands needed to meet Goal 1 and Goal 2 and prepared project sheets that describe the purpose of the land acquisition, and discuss funding and acquisition status. Information was compiled as of Fall 2001. However, land acquisition is a dynamic process and a static snapshot is not

always the most useful tool for decision-makers. The project sheets for lands needed to implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project (CERP) have been updated to reflect lands acquired as of February 2002.

A Long History of Coordination on Land Acquisition Funding

In 1947, the federal government acquired the lands necessary to establish Everglades National Park with the substantial contribution 908,031 acres of land by the State of Florida. Federal and state holdings now include three other national parks or preserves, 30 state parks, 16 wildlife refuges, and 19 aquatic sanctuaries or preserves dedicated to protecting the South Florida Ecosystem. According to the April 2000 GAO report, the State of Florida has acquired 3.1 million acres—many of which were conveyed to the federal government to be managed as national parks and preserves between 1947 to 1995. The federal government acquired another 1 million acres during the same period.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection Division of State Lands continues to coordinate park and refuge land acquisitions with the federal government. 70% of the acres remaining to be acquired for the National Key Deer Refuge are also on the Florida Forever acquisition list. The Division of State Lands is also cooperating with the National Park Service on the Big Cypress National Preserve Addition and the Everglades National Park Expansion.

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), the Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) have a history of funding partnerships for land acquisition. The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act (Farm Bill) of 1996 in Section 390 provided \$200,000,000 to the Secretary of the Interior to fund or conduct restoration activities in the Everglades ecosystem. To carry out the aforementioned activities, these Farm Bill monies, along with state monies, were utilized to purchase lands in the East Coast Buffer/Water Preserve Area, the EAA/Talisman property and Southern Golden Gate Estates (SGGE). Through Fiscal Year 2000, the SFMWD has received about \$120.5 million in grant monies for land acquisition from the DOI through the Land and Water Conservation Fund in addition to the \$154.4 million from the 1996 Farm Bill. FDEP has received over \$38 million from the 1996 Farm Bill to acquire lands in Southern Golden Gate Estates. Substantial federal funding for land acquisition is dependent on specific Congressional action.

The State of Florida is nationally recognized as a leader in state land acquisition funding. Preservation 2000 (P-2000) has been the most successful state land and water conservation program in the United States. Florida spent \$300 billion in the ten years of P-2000 to acquire lands for resource protection. In 1999, the state enacted the Florida Forever Act, a new statewide environmental lands and resources protection funding program. Florida Forever replaces P-2000 and

commits another \$300 million per year from 2001-2010 to continue this important effort.

The State of Florida's Conservation and Recreation Land (CARL) programs and the Save Our Rivers (SOR) programs have a long history of shared acquisition projects. In the period from February 1995 through January 2001 alone, these two programs jointly acquired 41,868 acres at a cost of more than \$84 million. Land acquisition projects may be on both the SOR and Florida Forever lists to maximize the opportunities to acquire these lands. State lands program managers coordinate funding decisions for land purchases to avoid duplication of effort. This land acquisition strategy document includes only those acquisitions that are completely funded by the federal government or through a joint state/federal effort. Land acquisitions funded by the State of Florida are in Appendix XXX.

This long history of cooperation and coordination between state and federal partners in restoration has maximized the resources available for land acquisition. The Task Force will build on these partnerships for future land purchases.

SOUTH FLORIDA ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

Goal 1: Get the Water Right

The Task Force will achieve Goal 1 through the implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project (CERP) and other authorized modifications to the C& SF System defined as “base conditions” in CERP including the Kissimmee River Restoration and Headwaters, the C-111 Project, the Critical Project authorized in WRDA 96 and Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park as well as water quality improvement projects such as the SFWMD’s Everglades Construction Project (ECP). With the exception of STA1-E, the ECP is wholly state funded and is included in Appendix XXX.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District prepared the project sheets for Goal 1.

Project Profile Sheets

Each project profile sheet lists the project’s name; identifies overlapping projects; relates the project to one or more goals of the Task Force; provides a project synopsis; lists the sponsoring agencies; the land acquisition funding type; the source of funds; the agency responsible for acquiring the land; the land acquisition program; the land managing agency; and the funding partners if any. There is a Land Acquisition Schedule for each project with the date that acquisition was initiated, the date acquisition will be concluded and the date the project is needed for restoration. Each profile sheet lists the total size of the project, the acres acquired in the previous year, acres acquired all years and the acres remaining to be acquired. The estimated cost of the project, the estimated cost of lands closed through 2000 and 2001, the estimated cost of remaining acres and the cost of real estate and associated costs is listed for each project. The land cost estimation method, the degree of ownership desired, comments, web hyperlink and project manager are also reflected on the project profile sheets.

The Project Profile sheet relates each project to the Goals, Subgoals and Objectives of the Task Force. These are the Goals, Subgoals and Objectives for Goal 1.

Goal 1: Get the Water Right

Subgoal 1-A: Get the Hydrology Right

Objective 1-A.1: Provide 1.6 million acre-feet of surface water storage by 2039

Objective 1-A.2: Develop aquifer storage and recovery systems capable of storing 1.6 billion gpd (gallons per day) by 2020

Objective 1-A.3: Modify 279 miles of impediments to flow by 2019.

Subgoal 1-B: Get the Water Quality Right

Objective 1-B.1: Construct 80,000 acres of stormwater treatment areas by 2046

Objective 1-B.2: Prepare TMDLs for all water on the 1998 303 (d) list using EPA's schedule (through 2011) unless the water is delisted

For those Goal 1 projects that also have Goal 2 (habitat) attributes, the project sheet reflects both the primary and the secondary project goals.

Identification of Lands Needed

Member agencies engaged in acquiring lands for restoration activities utilized comprehensive processes to identify those lands needed for restoration. The processes may vary from agency to agency. The following is an example of the processes used by the USACE and SFWMD for CERP projects. During the Central and Southern Florida Comprehensive Review Study (Restudy), acreage was preliminarily identified, and in some cases, conceptual footprints were developed for CERP projects based on preliminary designs. Identification of CERP lands needed for Goal 1 is further refined through the Project Implementation Report Process, other more detailed design documents and the Feasibility Study Process. General characteristics of the needs are considered, such as the basin in which the project needs to be located and acre-feet of water storage capacity needed. Lands within the basin that conceptually meet the established criteria are identified for each alternative, and a gross appraisal is conducted for a selected alternative. A Real Estate Plan for the selected alternative is then completed. This Real Estate Plan provides updated land acquisition and associated cost estimates. Acquisition cost estimates have been completed for the Water Preserve Areas and Indian River Lagoon projects through the feasibility studies for those areas.

Land Acquisition Funding

As discussed earlier in the section of the history of coordination on land acquisition funding, there are several land acquisition funding mechanisms available to secure Goal 1 lands. The project profile sheets discuss the potential funding sources for each project. The following is a discussion of the variety of funding sources potentially available for Goal 1 lands.

The State of Florida is a full partner in CERP implementation having adopted the Everglades Restoration Investment Act in 2000 providing \$100 billion per year for 10 years. The amount will be matched with local sponsor funds and credits for a total of \$200 billion per year for 10 years. These monies are deposited in the Save Our Everglades Trust Fund.

Florida Forever bond monies are a component of Florida's Save Our Everglades Trust Fund. Land acquired with these monies must be on the SFWMD's five-year work plan. Florida Forever is the successor to the state's P-2000 land acquisition program.

The Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust (CARL) acquires lands to conserve and protect unique natural areas, endangered, species, unusual geologic features, wetlands, and significant archaeological and historical sites. CARL monies can be used to match federal monies. All acquisitions made with CARL monies must be on a willing seller basis at appraised value and exclusive of improvements. Any change to this restriction must be made by the Florida Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund.

SFWMD Ad Valorem Tax Revenue may be used for CERP and other Goal 1 land acquisitions.

Special State Legislative Appropriations may also be available to fund specified CERP projects. In the 2000-01 Legislative Session, the Miami-Dade Delegation sponsored a Special State Legislative Appropriation for monies to be used by the SFWMD in support of the Biscayne Bay initiatives. \$6 million was appropriated, of which \$3.5 million will be utilized for CERP land acquisition in the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project. Future opportunities for these special appropriations will be actively sought by the SFWMD and its partners.

Local governments have contributed to the purchase of lands conceptually anticipated to be necessary the CERP Projects. Broward County has contributed money toward lands conceptually located within a Water Preserve Area Project. Martin County has contributed money through its 1% Sales Tax Referendum monies toward the purchase of lands conceptually located within the Indian River Lagoon (IRL) Project component and is anticipated to partner on land acquisition for other IRL Project components. Palm Beach County has contributed toward the purchase of property conceptually located within the Palm Beach County Agricultural Reservoir. Miami-Dade County, through its Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Trust has purchased lands conceptually located within the C-111 North Spreader Canal and Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project. St. Lucie County has contributed funds toward the purchase of lands conceptually located within an Indian River Lagoon Project component. Both Collier and St. Lucie County have contributed funds for Critical Project lands. These partnerships are anticipated to continue.

As discussed earlier, The Department of the Interior has a history of grants to the SFWMD for land acquisition with monies earmarked specifically for land acquisition within the State of Florida under the DOI's Annual Appropriations Bill and through the Farm Bill. The Department of the Interior also manages the Land and Water Conservation Fund with the ability to transfer monies from this fund to

the SFWMD for land purchases. These partnerships are expected to continue through the implementation of CERP with varying amounts of funding available to leverage state monies. Other federal partnerships through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Restoration and Enhancement Program (CREP) and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) will be explored as funding sources of Goal 1 lands.

Timing of Acquisitions

The timing of land acquisition is critical as project construction cannot begin until lands are acquired. The timelines for CERP projects are those contained in the July 2001 Master Project Implementation Schedule agreed to by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the SFWMD. The Detailed Design memorandum for the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park and Supplemental General Reevaluation Report for the C-111 Canal Project dictate the deadline for acquisitions for those projects. The deadline for land acquisition for STA 1-E is proscribed in the Everglades Forever Act.

The success of many of the CERP projects depends on the successful implementation of other parts of the restoration plan such as the C-111 Canal and Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park Projects mentioned above. Failure to obtain critical parcels in a timely manner can result in delays and reconfiguration not just for one project, but for other related projects as well. The GAO report noted that much of the undeveloped land in South Florida is under development pressure, and that a land acquisition plan increases the likelihood of the restoration's success. Delay reduces the possibility that the necessary lands will be acquired.

In addition, strategies are being developed for early land acquisition in support of future CERP projects where there is development pressure to acquire property; when the real estate is part of other acquisition programs; or when there are cost effective "opportunity purchase" with sellers which the SFWMD may wish to pursue. The USACE and SFWMD are developing Standard Operating Procedures and working closely with each other through these types of acquisitions in anticipation of lands being suitable for future CERP projects.

The project schedules and the projections of outputs included in this report span multiple decades and depend upon certain planning assumptions about state and federal budget requests and funding levels, optimized construction schedules, willing sellers, and other contingencies. These assumptions are likely to change the project progresses, and appropriate revisions to this strategy document will be necessary. Therefore, this document does not represent a commitment by the federal, state or local governments or the tribes to seek appropriations for specific projects and activities at the funding levels laid out in this document.

Costing of Real Estate

Cost Estimates for CERP lands as contained on the Project Profile Sheets are the estimated Fair Market value in 1999 dollars as described in the C&SF Restudy Appendix F. These estimates include the probable costs of real estate, associated costs, and contingency. (check with Jim, maybe Wanda offered better wording on contingency). Projects contained within the Indian River Lagoon Feasibility Study and the Water Preserve Area Feasibility Study reflect land cost estimates in October 2000 dollars. If some land has been acquired for a project, actual costs are known and are reflected on the project sheets.

Real Estate cost estimates for USACE/AFWMD non-CERP projects such as the C-111 Canal Project and Kissimmee River Restoration are based on actual costs and recent appraisals, remaining properties to be acquired, and implications of condemnation proceedings.

The Corps land cost estimates include the cost of the land plus other costs incurred in the land acquisition process. This includes staff time for land acquisition, federal review of the acquisition process, relocation costs, etc. Depending on the reliability of the estimated cost information, the Corps also included a contingency cost factor for each project, ranging from 5% to 50%.

Summary of Goal 1 lands

There are XXX number of projects with federal and joint federal/state land acquisition dollars needed for Goal 1. XXX number of acres are needed with XXX number of acres acquired to date. The total estimated cost of these lands is \$XXX with an \$XXX needed to complete acquisition of these parcels. Goal 1 lands in the project profile sheets are summarized below

Goal 1 lands summary chart here.

Goal 2: Restore, Preserve, and Protect Natural Habitats and Species

The acquisition of lands that provide habitat for native plants and animals and act as a buffer to existing natural areas is an important component of the Task Force's strategy to achieve Goal 2. Some Goal 1 projects that provide water quality treatment areas, water storage reservoirs, and aquifer recharge with a primary goal of restoring the natural hydrology will also provide habitat for native flora and fauna.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection prepared the project profile sheets for Goal 2. Other lands that contribute to this strategy which have no federal investment are in Appendix XXX.

Project Profile Sheets

Each project profile sheet lists the project's name; identifies overlapping projects; relates the project to one or more goals of the Task Force; provides a project synopsis; lists the sponsoring agencies; the land acquisition funding type; the source of funds; the agency responsible for acquiring the land; the land acquisition program; the land managing agency; and the funding partners if any. There is a Land Acquisition Schedule for each project with the date that acquisition was initiated, the date acquisition will be concluded and the date needed for restoration. Each profile sheet lists the total size of the project, the acres acquired in the previous year, acres acquired all years and the acres remaining to acquire. The estimated cost of the project, the estimated cost of lands closed through 2000 and 2001, the estimated cost of remaining acres and the cost of real estate and associated costs is listed for each project. The land cost estimation method, the degree of ownership desired, comments, web hyperlink and project manager are also reflected on the project profile sheets.

Each project profile sheet ties that project to the Goals, Subgoals and Objectives of the Task Force. These are the Goals, Subgoals and Objectives for Goal 2.

Goal 2: Restore, preserve, and protect natural habitats and species

Subgoal 2-A: Restore, Preserve, and Protect Natural Habitats

Objective 2-A.1: Acquire 1.95 million acres of lands for habitat protection

Objective 2-A.2: Protect 20 percent of the coral reefs by 2020

Subgoal 2-B: Control Invasive Exotic Plants

Objective 2-B.1: Prepare management plans for the top twenty South Florida invasive exotic plant species by 2010

Objective 2-B.2: Achieve maintenance control status for Brazilian pepper, melaleuca, Australian pine and Old World climbing fern in all natural areas statewide by 2020

Objective 2-B.3: Complete an invasive exotic plant prevention, early detection, and eradication plan by 2005.

Subgoal 2-A.1 will require land acquisition will require land acquisition.

Identification of Lands Needed

The six USFWS and two NPS projects are for acquisition of lands within originally designated boundaries or expansion of the boundaries. Some of the project profiles represent multiple conservation areas, such as the Florida Keys NWR Complex (which includes National Key Deer, Great White Heron, and Key West refuges) and the Ding Darling Complex (which includes Caloosahatchee, Island Bay, Matlacha Pass, and Pine Island).

The NPS projects are nearly complete, with 5% or less of the land remaining to be acquired. The FWS reports its projects not as expansions of existing refuges, but as acres of land within refuge boundaries remaining to be acquired. Less than 2% of refuge acres remain to be acquired when compared to original NWR boundaries.

Land Acquisition Funding

For both NPS projects, the State (including the SFWMD) is a land acquisition partner for at least part of the project. The State is a partner in some of the FWS projects as well, such as Florida Panther NWR and National Key Deer National Refuge. Federal funds for national park and national wildlife refuge land acquisitions are provided through Congressional appropriations.

Timing of Acquisitions

Land acquisition to complete park and refuge boundaries is a multi-year process and can span decades. The lands must be acquired before the on-site resources are destroyed. For Goal 2 purchases, the funding may be timed to specific appropriations, or as a project is positioned on an acquisition funding list. A land acquisition schedule is included for each of these projects.

Costing of Real Estate

Federal cost estimates include the cost of land plus other costs incurred in the land acquisition process. This includes staff time for land acquisition, federal review of the acquisition process, relocation cost, etc. Depending on the reliability of the estimated cost information, a contingency cost factor is added for each project, ranging from 5% to 50%.

Summary of Goal 2 lands

There are XXX number of projects with federal and joint federal/state land acquisition dollars needed for Goal 2. XXX number of acres have been identified with XXX number of acres acquired to date. The total estimated cost of these lands is \$xxx with an estimated \$xxx needed to complete acquisition on these parcels. Goal 2 lands in the project sheets are summarized below.

Insert Summary Chart here

Map of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy

Each of the projects addressed in the project profiles is represented in Figure >>Xx, South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy: Federal Projects and Joint Federal/State Projects.

FUTURE EFFORTS

The initial Land Acquisition Strategy provides a structure for identifying lands needed to accomplish the goals of the Task Force. It also measures and reports on the acquisition of identified lands. The strategy provides an overall picture for those responsible for providing funds for land acquisition, and also provides cooperating agencies and programs with a perspective on how their current and potential land acquisition projects relate and contribute to the vision of the Task Force.

Since many of the CERP projects have only conceptually estimated land requirements and any additional land requirements for the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration have not been determined, lands needed for restoration and their costs as identified in the plan and its appendices are subject to change over time.

The Strategy will be updated on an annual basis. Updates will reflect the increased certainty of which lands are needed for the ecosystem restoration, and will report on the progress made in acquiring those lands. Some project lands will likely be lost to development, making it necessary for alternative lands to be identified.

During the next year, the SFWMD and other agencies will continue to acquire identified lands and refine the boundaries of those lands still needed. Additional project may be identified through ongoing studies like the CERP Southwest Florida Feasibility Study.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Multi-Species Recovery Plan (MSRP) will be further refined to include a map to assist in identifying critical habitat for threatened and endangered species. The initial draft of the MSRP implementation strategy is due in December 2002, with the final strategy to be completed by December 2003.

In 1994, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission classified all of Florida into various land cover categories. FWC is currently reclassifying the entire state, and will compare the results to earlier classification efforts to show the changes that have occurred in the state. The statewide project will be done in two years, but the area south of Lake Okeechobee (excluding the Florida Keys) will be completed before then. The FWC is also modeling Florida panther need in southwest Florida.

The Task Force is developing Subgoals and Objectives for Goal 3: Foster Compatibility of the Build and Natural Systems. It is anticipated that land acquisition will be a component of achieving this goal. It is anticipated that local, county and regional government acquisitions will be an important part of the

mosaic of lands needed for Goal 3. Future editions of the Land Acquisition Strategy will include Goal 3 lands.

The SFER Task Force has not formally conducted an independent assessment of lands needed for the restoration beyond those already identified by the state and federal agencies. The Task Force will review the assessments detailed above to determine if these efforts are sufficient to identify lands needed for the SFER restoration. As mentioned earlier, the Task Force itself has no authority to direct others to conduct assessments. Neither does the Task Force have funds to acquire lands. However, given the membership of the Task Force, it is likely that any consensus recommendation will result in meaningful action by agencies.

Table >>xx. South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Goals

(from *Coordinating Success: Strategy for Restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem*, South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, July 31, 2000)

Goal 1: Get the water right

- Subgoal 1-A: Get the hydrology right
 - Objective 1-A.1: Provide 1.6 million acre-feet of surface water storage by 2037
 - Objective 1-A.2: Develop aquifer storage and recovery systems capable of storing 1.7 billion gallons per day by 2020
 - Objective 1-A.3: Modify 279 miles of impediments to flow by 2019

- Subgoal 1-B: Get the water quality right
 - Objective 1-B.1: Construct 122,000 acres of stormwater treatment areas by 2036
 - Objective 1-B.2: Prepare plans, with strategies and schedules for implementation, to comply with TMDLs (total maximum daily loads) for 100 percent of impaired water bodies by 2011

Goal 2: Restore, preserve, and protect natural habitats and species

- Subgoal 2-A: Restore, preserve, and protect natural habitats
 - Objective 2-A.1: Acquire 1.95 million acres of land for habitat protection by 2015
 - Objective 2-A.2: Protect 20 percent of the coral reefs by 2020

- Subgoal 2-B: Control invasive exotic plants
 - Objective 2-B.1: Prepare management plans for the top twenty South Florida invasive exotic plant species by 2010
 - Objective 2-B.2: Achieve maintenance control status for Brazilian pepper, melaleuca, Australian pine, and Old World climbing fern in all natural area in the region by 2020
 - Objective 2-B.3: Complete an Invasive Exotic Plan Prevention, Early Detection, and Eradication Plan by 2005

Goal 3: Foster compatibility of the built and natural systems

Tables

- SFER Goals and Objectives
- Table to accompany map – list of CERP names and numbers – organized like Table 5 in Coordinating Success

>>Appendices

Appendix I

- Summary Table - like Table 5 in the "Coordinating Success" appendix >>and/or have this in the body of the report
- Project Profiles - Profiles of fed-related projects only
 - a. Organize as in the "Coordinating Success" appendix - arrange projects by strategic plan goal which a project addresses
- Project profile field explanations

Appendix II

- Comprehensive SFER land acquisition map - 11x17 - also produce limited number of poster-sized maps
- Explanation of comprehensive SFER land acquisition map
- Table of projects on comprehensive SFER land acquisition map – DSL table

Appendix III copy of signed LATT LAP directive

>>**Add'l appendices?

FWC GAP map

FNAI FL Forever Conservation Needs Assm – overlay maps

list of members of MERIT and the 4 p MERIT description