

Approved Meeting Minutes
 Joint Working Group (WG) and Science Coordination Group (SCG)
 West Palm Beach, Florida
 January 31, 2013

Welcome and Introductions

Barry Rosen called meeting to order at 10:05AM. Susan Markley welcomed Gina Ralph representing the Corps on the SCG. Dan Kimball said they received approval from their Director for the General Management Plan (GMP). GMP will be released shortly and a series of public meetings will be held in March and April. Briefings will be provided at upcoming WG and WRAC meetings. Agenda (Encl. 1) and draft minutes (Encl. 2) from the September 2012 meeting were provided. Chad Kennedy made a motion to approve the minutes which was seconded. Minutes were approved as presented. Shannon Estenoz noted the great turnout for this meeting. She recognized Carrie Beeler for 15 years of federal service.

In Attendance:

Jan 31

Working Group (WG) Members

Alternates

Barry Rosen – Vice Chair - United States Geological Survey	√	
Ernie Marks - FL Dept. of Environmental Protection	√	
Ernie Barnett - South Florida Water Management District	-	Tom Teets
Billy Causey – NOAA, FL Keys Nat'l Marine Sanctuary	-	
Chuck Collins – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	√	
COL Dodd - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	-	Howie Gonzales
James Erskine - Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of FL	-	
Roman Gastesi – Local Government	-	
Vacant - U.S. Dept of Transportation	-	
Veronica Harrell-James – U.S. Attorney's Office	√	
Eric Hughes – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	-	
Dan Kimball – Chair – NPS – ENP & Dry Tortugas National Parks	√	
Vacant – Office of the Governor of Florida	-	
Keith Neves - Bureau of Indian Affairs	-	
Fred Noble - FL Dept. of Transportation	-	
Bonnie Ponwith – NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service	-	
W. Ray Scott - FL Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services	√	
Craig Tepper – Seminole Tribe of Florida	√	
Larry Williams – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	√	
Vacant - Palm Beach County Water Resources Manager	-	
Vacant - Broward County Department of Natural Resource	-	
Vacant – U.S. Department of Agriculture	-	Jeff Schmidt
Shannon Estenoz - Special Advisor	√	
Science Coordination Group (SCG) Members		
Susan Markley – Chair – Miami Dade County	√	
Nick Aumen – Vice Chair – National Park Service	√	

Calvin Arnold - U.S. Department of Agriculture, ARS	√	
John Baldwin – Florida Atlantic University	√	
Lisa Beever – Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program	-	
Ronnie Best - United States Geological Survey	√	
Joan Browder - NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service	√	
Amy Casteneda - Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of FL	√	
Susan Gray - South Florida Water Management District	√	
Bob Johnson - National Park Service	√	
Chris Kelble - NOAA, AOML	√	
Chad Kennedy - FL Dept. of Environmental Protection	√	
Cherise Maples - Seminole Tribe of Florida		
Gil McRae – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Comm.	√	Amber Whittle
Bob Progulske – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	√	
Gina Ralph - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	√	
Bill Reck - U.S. Department of Agriculture - NRCS	√	
Dan Scheidt – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency		

Leadership Discussion

Shannon Estenoz reported that Susan Markley was confirmed as the permanent SCG Chair at the Dec 7th TF meeting. She had been serving in an acting capacity for several years. She noted that Barry Rosen has been serving as Acting WG Chair since Greg Knecht’s departure. She noted that it has been the tradition to alternate the WG chairmanship between a federal and state representative. She opened the floor for nominations for a non-federal representative to serve as the WG Chair. Tom Teets nominated Ernie Marks which was seconded by Dan Kimball. Ernie Marks said he would be proud to serve adding that he worked with Greg Knecht for eight years and looked forward to helping this group move the ball forward. All voted in favor and none were opposed. It was agreed to allow Barry Rosen to chair the remainder of this meeting.

Barry Rosen announced that the SFWMD is experiencing some technical difficulties with the webcast and they are working to get it up and running.

Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP)

Working Group Sponsored Public Workshops

Allyn Childress provided a presentation (Encl. 3) noting they have had 14 workshops since the start of CEPP. Three were held since the last WG meeting with one dealing with recreation. Next workshop is scheduled for Feb 13th at the SFWMD and will include a briefing on the TSP and a configuration exercise.

Project Delivery Team (PDT)

Tom Teets recognized Kim Taplin, Matt Morrison and the members of the team for all of their hard work. Kim Taplin provided a presentation (Encl. 4) comparing the results of the four alternatives the Project Delivery Team (PDT) looked at to capture water from the lake and treat it before it enters the natural system. Team considered the flow equalization basin (FEB) on A-2 that optimizes the capability to move water south from Lake Okeechobee and optimizes integration with what will be the state constructed facilities on A-1. To distribute inflows along the top of WCA 3A they considered spreading

water to the west of the Miami Canal as well as extending the spreader canal to the east of the Miami Canal. They looked at different options to optimize rehydration of the former ridge and slough areas that have been over-drained in the northern portion of WCA 3A. Backfilling of significant portions of the Miami Canal between the S-8 pump station south to I-75 was also considered. Different configurations of inflow and outflow structures between WCAs 3A, 3B and ENP to reconnect the system and optimize the size and distribution of those inflow structures along the L-67 were looked at. Team also looked at different outflow mechanisms to pull water out of WCA 3B. Gravity flow through spillways, pump assisted or a focused flowway that included levee removal was considered. Finally, team looked at optimizing seepage management along the East Coast protected levee and looked at cut-off walls, distributed pumps that recycle seepage back to the natural area or a hybrid combination of that. Kim reviewed the results of the various evaluation accounts the Corps used to analyze the four alternatives to include costs, average annual benefits, cost effectiveness, incremental cost analysis and efficiency.

Bob Progulske referring to the habitat units asked if there were statistical confidence limits around the numbers. Kim said they have not done a statistical analysis to determine the difference. They are relative comparisons that are showing relative differences between the alternatives. They used the performance metrics RECOVER has indicated they need to look at and it just shows the spread between alternatives. Bob said he would guess that statistically there would be no difference between the alternatives since they are close and there is such a large value. He asked whether the cost of the removal of the Blue Shanty levee was included in the cost estimate of Alternative 4. Kim replied no adding that it would take another action of Congress to take the next step to remove it.

Shannon Estenoz, referring to the stage duration curve slide in Southern WCA-3B noted that for that flowway they have a fully restored ridge and slough portion of WCA-3B but in the remainder of WCA-3B under Alternative 4 the orange line is actually below Alternative 1. Kim added that Alternative 4 was too dry outside of the flowway. All the alternatives had an effect on seepage management and were too aggressive at managing seepage. There were issues and concerns with water supply. They recommend being able to increase the inflows to that other portion of WCA-3B to ensure they meet the savings clause requirements for water supply and ensure that flows get to Biscayne Bay. Alternative 4 will be revised to reflect the hydropattern restoration feature in WCA-3A that was in Alternative 1. They are going to recommend Alternative 4R as the TSP. It will provide the greatest overall benefits with the least cost per habitat unit; provide the greatest ecological connectivity and longest uninterrupted flowway via the removal of the L-29 levee; and provide the greatest benefits to Everglades National Park and Florida Bay.

Ernie Marks asked whether the operational optimization was only to inflows to WCA-3B. Kim said no adding that when they were looking at south of Tamiami Trail they saw that the seepage management they were doing was cutting off too much seepage. They were having an effect on potential water supply and some reduction in flows to Biscayne Bay that were concerning. By allowing some of that seepage to continue to go to those regional canals and ensure they replenish the wellfields as well as deliver water to Biscayne Bay there will be some operational refinements around G-211 and the main coastal canals. Modeling results will be available in three weeks and a PDT meeting will be scheduled when they get the results. Bob Johnson said there will also be a change in capacity at S-333 from

3,000cfs to 2,500cfs. Kim Taplin said the S-333 structure that delivers water from WCA-3A to L-29 into NE Shark River Slough was set at 3,000csf but it only got to 2,500csf. They are going to recommend 2,500csf. Bob added the idea is to get the same capacity of flow out and save money. The partial seepage barrier south of Tamiami Trail may be less than 5 miles and the modeling will also determine that.

Susan Markley noted her comments are on behalf of Miami Dade and not anything the SCG has discussed. She thanked the team for responding to some of the issues that came up in the early reviews. Miami Dade wants CEPP to succeed and for restoration benefits to be maximized for the Everglades system. Miami Dade is also concerned that they maintain flood protection to the east and water supply needs for the human part of the system as well as Biscayne Bay and the Pennsuco wetlands. They were all pleased when they saw the model outputs that showed how well all the alternatives were doing in maintaining flood protection but they were very concerned about multiple bits of evidence coming out of the model output that suggested there were going to be decreases in canal stages and groundwater stages including some of the wellfield areas to the east, some going all the way to the coast which raised their concerns about saltwater intrusion. Miami Dade is working closely with the technical staff to develop some more ways to evaluate the performance of the models in those areas. They don't have some of the agreed upon targets that have been done for some of the ecological measures but they know they need to work closely. They are treading a thin line to try and improve how the alternative will deal with maintaining fresh water flows to the east, not aggravate flood protection problems and not reduce some of the benefits in the Everglades and Florida Bay. Miami Dade is not ready to support Alternative 4 but they are committed to working with everyone to make it work better. Adaptive Management is important and provides opportunities to include how to deal with some of these issues related to water supply and flood protection. The project is delivering a lot more water to the south that they should find a way to maintain the existing flows on the east side as they go forward with restoration. Joan Browder said she is glad to hear that they are going to look at these changes to protect Biscayne Bay and water supply and make them part of the plan rather than try to fix them later.

Craig Tepper asked whether the modeling they will have in three weeks showing the water supply and/or flood protection revisions will also include the ecological models to make sure they are not tricking something else. Kim Taplin replied they are not looking to run the full suite of performance measures but she would take that back to the team. Chuck Collins asked how they were planning to sequence this in. Kim Taplin said they are going to look at optimizing operations during the savings clause analysis and value engineering next week in Jacksonville with members of a national team. They will be talking about risks, value engineering, etc. It was clear that if ever there was a time to use Adaptive Management, this is it. They all recognize that they have to build a levee as part of restoration. All the evidence in front of them, the topography and groundwater slopes in WCA-3B shows that when they put water in there it will tend to go east. As they go about implementing Alternative 4R they will lay out what they should do first and incrementally introduce flows into WCA-3B. The last thing they will do is build the levee and the L-29 removal. Given the water budget they have, if they want to get significant flows south and get the connectivity envisioned for CERP they have to put a levee in WCA-3B.

Shannon recognized the SFWMD has a lot of experience in building structures and asked to what extent the District was going to be involved in the value engineering. Matt Morrison said SFWMD staff would be there all next week and will take a look at what has been done from a cost and design perspective and make recommendations based on their experience. Kim added they are currently at a rough order of magnitude and the Walla Walla District is the cost center of expertise that will develop the cost estimate. They don't have detailed designs on this and there is a lot of contingency. Effort is formally being kicked off next week and the costs may change.

Dan Kimball asked what assumptions in terms of performance have been made about the two-mile seepage barrier that is out there. Kim said they are making no assumptions since the rock miners built it. They are doing a demonstration test through the regulatory process. They may need to revisit their recommendations when more information comes out of that effort. Tom Teets added the modeling team assumes the cut-off wall is there. Susan Markley added that the alternatives and the future without did not include the pilot project seepage barrier, part of which is already in the ground. As the team goes forward in some of these refinements they will consider this information and include it in the Adaptive Management plan. It may turn out that the seepage barrier wall may not work as well and they may end up with a flood problem. Her county's concern even before there was a CEPP was that seepage barriers have some advantages because they don't have to be operated down the line so there are no operation costs but if it turns out that it was not performing well or there is some extreme condition it can't be operated.

Kim Taplin finished her presentation by reviewing the features in the TSP. Next steps include working on the savings clause/project assurance analysis, implementation strategy, draft preliminary operating manual, adaptive management plan that includes the monitoring plan. April 2013 is the date they are scheduled to release the draft report. All of the remaining activities have to occur between now and then. Team has been trying to document everything they have done. All the presentations, model outputs and detailed information is available at: www.evergladesplan.org

Bob Johnson regarding the seepage management issues south of Tamiami Trail, said the reason why they have to fix them is because the future without condition had about 165,000 acre feet going eastward and Alternative 4 cuts that off by about 100,000 acre feet. More water is going to be leaking out of that part of the park as they fix it. The adjustment to get WCA-3B a little wetter outside the levee is another thing that will have some impacts. They are still not sure how the volumes of water flowing through the system are going to change. Hoping they don't see huge reductions in habitat units. They do not have any specific issues about removing old Tamiami Trail but when they look at the flow volumes Alternative 4 and the other alternatives that remove the L-67 extension pass more water on average through the S-12s than Alternative 1. There is no reduction with the data shown so far. He does not see a water budget reason why they would want to go in and remove old Tamiami Trail. Kim Taplin replied that Jacksonville is looking into that. They need to be able to do the appropriate study and evaluation and work up the cost.

Shannon Estenoz congratulated Kim, Matt and the entire team for reaching this milestone and for showing that the planning process can be different by working closely with the local sponsor. Ernie

Marks added it was a herculean effort and hopes it continues to move forward at this pace. Kim Taplin said she appreciated the agencies and the resources provided. Ronnie Best noted the length of time for ultimate approval of this project to appropriation, construction and completion. There is an enormous amount of time to address things such as directional flow in WCA-3B. As components are implemented it requires that they have the necessary science to support the Adaptive Management questions. He asked them to consider it not as a monitoring program but as engineering and design questions that need to be addressed. Dan Kimball recognized the sensitivities shown in working through the complexities by the CEPP team particularly along Tamiami Trail. Barry Rosen noted the tremendous progress made since this effort was kicked off.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan

Kelly Keefe provided a presentation (Encl. 5) introducing the Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan that is part of the CEPP. She reminded everyone that the Plans are required as part of the CERP PIRs. The Monitoring Plan specifies the data collection, analysis, and reporting that will inform project performance. The Adaptive Management Plan guides the use of the data to maximize project benefits while reducing project costs. It helps inform implementation sequencing of CEPP and determines if adjustments are needed in project implementation to improve performance. The Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan will be part of the CEPP PIR document as Annex E. The Adaptive Management itself will not be proposing a lot of new monitoring but will be looking to integrate and dovetail as much as possible with the Monitoring Plan.

She reviewed the process for the Adaptive Management Plan development adding that they won't start from scratch and will pull information from other projects, efforts, RECOVER and SCG. Plan development will include identifying potential CEPP uncertainties and management questions and preliminary identification of management options and strategies to address uncertainties. The Adaptive Management Integration guide has generic criteria to be used and the team has come up with their list of things to make sure that the items they are looking at are CEPP specific and relevant to Adaptive Management. They will use the criteria to narrow down the list and make decisions on what will actually go into the Adaptive Management Plan. Team recognizes there is a lot of work and good science going on throughout the Everglades and throughout several teams so they are going to do a crosswalk which will also help them identify needs and gaps. Draft Plan due March 1st. Team has fully committed to working on this and refinements will be made before April. Additional refinements of low impact can be made into the summer but they cannot impact the costs.

Shannon Estenoz noted that the next WG sponsored workshop on Feb 13th is to get the input of the public. Kim Taplin added that they would go over the implementation strategy. Shannon stated that they currently do not have a Task Force meeting scheduled but at some point they need to consult with the Task Force. They will also need to have another WG/SCG meeting before the Task Force meets to deal with the invasive species topic. Kim Taplin asked the WG to host an additional workshop in order to have a broader set of folks look at the Adaptive Management. Susan Markley suggested having another SCG facilitated workshop to reach out to the science community. Larry Williams said it would be wise to plan for some type of workshop given that the value engineering process may change some things. Chris Kelble noted the Monitoring Plan and Adaptive Management plan are both due March 1st

and asked how they could have a workshop that would allow them time to incorporate the feedback. Kelly Keefe said they could use the workshop for linking what's needed with what science programs already exist and they could possibly work on the crosswalk as a group. Nick Aumen suggested the workshop could be used to discuss the Monitoring Plan as well. Susan Markley suggested the workshop be no later than mid-February to make sure it is linked to the science program and how science can inform management decisions.

Ronnie Best said they could do this effectively through a half day webinar followed by an in person meeting. Both could be sponsored by the WG. Shannon Estenoz said the Auditorium at the SFWMD is available on February 21, 22 and 25th and asked everyone to hold those dates for the Adaptive Management workshop. Kelly Keefe reviewed the schedule noting that reviews of the draft PIR begin on March 4, 2013.

Public Comment

John Arthur Marshall (Everglades) referring to Kelly Keefe's second slide 'maximize project benefits while reducing project costs' suggested adding long term. He asked how long has been considered for O&M costs, how much pumping and energy gets expended since this increases the uncertainty of the costs without the lifecycle projections and is a critical part of system engineering.

Drew Martin (Sierra Club) gave kudos to Matt Morrison and Kim Taplin. Overall, Alternative 4R is the best alternative and all the environmental groups are behind it. They know no plan is perfect but they need to move forward. This is the first step, plan is not bringing enough water south to satisfy the estuaries and they need to get that message out. There are some concerns with the berm itself and its height. It is important that building the berm does not destroy the landscape. Hope that the berm won't be necessary. Scientific monitoring will be important and some areas are excluded and if they continue to deprive these areas of water they will continue to lose soil. Finally he agreed with Susan Markley's comment that they need to make sure there is enough water, they don't want to stop all the seepage.

Rosa Durando said she did not see anyone from the Corps analyzing and commenting on the various permitting situations. What will influence success or failure is the permit application process. The special drainage districts have wrecked havoc with the Everglades and water management has not been very noble about granting permits either. Because of political pressure there will probably be the replacement of the Cross Florida Barge Canal. She was also at the Regional Planning Council (RPC) meeting and heard two Florida DOT representatives say they were going to deepen and widen Taylor Creek. She said she couldn't believe it since it is the dirtiest water possible. Now to satisfy some of the little communities around the lake there will be back pumping into Lake Okeechobee. She asked whether they were aware that the Lykes Brothers have come to the district for a permit for 16,000 acres for cattle. She said she did not see any of those permit applications helping to restore the Everglades.

Martha Musgrove (Florida Wildlife Federation) said she was impressed with the Alternative 4 revision. She called attention to the monitoring program and science has to inform policy making. The monitoring program continues to be in serious budget troubles. The state has gone to a two year

budget process which includes a lot of legislative input and oversight. If the monitoring is not budgeted for then it does not happen. They won't know what the benefits will be without the monitoring in place. The members have to tell the policy makers. Alligators and crocodiles will be off the map because Frank Mazzotti will be out of money. The scientists have to rescue what is necessary.

Dawn Shirreffs (NPCA) reported on the surprise visit by General Walsh at the last PDT meeting. For the TSP they are looking for a level of detail needed for investment and not design build. That provides them with a lot of opportunity. She urged them to be flexible and continue to work together. NPCA is committed to help work this through. They knew they were going to have a higher level of uncertainty. CEPP will put 10,000 acres of historic sheetflow back into WCA- 3B and create nearly 19,000 jobs. The TSP has the highest benefits for Florida Bay, ENP and tree islands and they all deserve to be congratulated for all the hard work over the past year.

Steve Davis (Everglades Foundation) said he was in support of Alternative 4R particularly with regard to the Adaptive Management and what he believes to be the underestimated or overlooked benefits that they expect to accrue downstream. They really don't know to what extent they can restore landscape patterns, ridge and slough patterns and tree islands in the Everglades. This is the first real opportunity to understand how introducing flow will affect these ecosystems and reshape the landscape. This is an opportunity to learn a lot of valuable information. They expect to see benefits downstream along the southwest coast, the most extensive and productive mangrove forest in the U.S.

Julie Hill Gabriel (Audubon of FL) thanked everyone for the way this meeting was organized. One of the greatest benefits for Alternative 4 is being able to apply Adaptive Management and they have to keep their eyes on that as the plan is implemented. Seeing the results of the models and the benefits to Florida Bay has been a great opportunity to build more support. Audubon of Florida is committed to working with a large coalition of stakeholders.

Sara Fain (Everglades Law Center) thanked the SFWMD and the Corps noting that over the last 13 months the agencies have thrown conventional wisdom out the window. Obstacles and challenges have come up but they have been able to sit together and talk about how they were going to work those problems out. There are still some concerns but is looking forward to figuring out some solutions so that they come up with the best possible plan. Alternative 4R they are starting to put the pieces back together and starting to see the vision of reconnecting WCA-3A to WCA-3B to ENP and restoring 10,000 acres of flow through the central Everglades. She hopes they continue to listen to stakeholder's concerns, not cause any damage to water supply and flood protection for Miami Dade County, not hurt Biscayne NP and look at the big picture of what they are trying to restore.

Invasive Exotics Workshop

Shannon Estenoz provided a presentation (Encl. 6) on addressing the Everglades invasive species crisis. She thanked Carrie Beeler, ECISMA and everyone who worked to pull the presentation together. The experts in the field are saying that effective invasive species management requires an integrated approach with sustained resources and involves: long-term suppression of established species; containment of established but localized populations; detection and possible eradication of newly

established species; and prevention of new introductions of un-established species and cross-jurisdictional coordination. However, coordination and implementation is often ad hoc and reactive without well-defined strategies. Existing programs have had success and some areas could be as successful with additional resources. Bottom line is that coordination takes time and resources and the folks addressing invasive species in the Everglades are already overworked and working with too few resources. Coordination is done on an ad hoc and volunteer basis. Existing programs have had success and some areas could be as successful with additional resources. She noted the Task Force directed the Office of Ecosystem Restoration Initiatives (OERI), WG and SCG to conduct a comprehensive review of current efforts to combat invasive exotics and present a set of recommendations on how to improve our efforts and boost our effectiveness at the next Task Force meeting. Her office met with the invasive species experts and started the process of a comprehensive review of current efforts to combat invasive exotics. She had hoped to have a white paper for this meeting but they did not have enough time. They were able to put together the framework in the form of the power point presentation. They would have at least one more WG meeting before the TF meeting to discuss this issue.

She reviewed the invasion curve which could help them organize their thinking about the problem. Most of their effort is spent on resource protection and long term management. They can increase their success by coordinating the management of multiple strategies and educating the public. They can't focus all of their resources on one particular part of the curve and they need to spread their resources along the curve. A significant amount of investment and effort is already going into the problem but there is recognition that they have a lot more to do. Some existing management programs for established species are not adequately funded. They lack a formal, region-wide response mechanism to nimbly react to new invasions. They need to evaluate opportunities to improve legislative, regulatory and policy prevention strategies. The team used the four strategic categories (long-term management, containment, prevention and eradication) from the invasion curve and created a model with strategic options that they should be thinking about as they pull together a strategic set of shared goals and objectives. At the python summit she attended the prior day she heard that they need to invest in research development for invasive species management tools. There is so much that they do not know (e.g. ambrosia beetle that causes laurel wilt disease). They are already testing new strategies such as the Python Challenge which is important to their success.

She reviewed some of the resource requirements for established species in several areas to give the group a sense of the costs. As an example Loxahatchee receives \$1.5 million per year for exotic plant management for *Melaleuca* and *Lygodium*, this is not necessarily the number that it will take to solve the problem. Broad level coordination may be the backbone of their recommendations to the TF. Some potential approaches include creating an enhanced coordinating structure that includes them being more strategic, integrating and supporting existing programs, having a dedicated operating budget to meet periodic gaps and needs, support coordinated outreach efforts and serve an advisory role to decision making bodies and policy makers. OERI will continue to work with ECISMA and others to flesh out the enhanced coordinating structure.

Joan Browder noted that much of the work in the presentation has already been done and it is the latter part, the broad coordination, rapid response and the money for rapid response and prevention is where

the emphasis needs to be. The WG and the SCG is the vehicle that should carry this forward to those higher up in their agencies and tell them that this is a crisis and they need to do something about it now. Ernie Marks asked how effective the \$1.5 million is for Loxahatchee. Sylvia Pelizza replied that they ask for \$4 million to focus on Melaleuca if they had more money they would put more people on the ground. Sylvia Pelizza noted her concern about having dollar numbers and asked if the purpose of this document was to bring more money to the Everglades. Shannon Estenoz clarified that it is up to them what the comprehensive recommendations will be so that they can be more effective.

Susan Markley said that whether they are talking about funding or regulatory strategies they may want to look at developing a coordinated legislative request package so that all the members and local governments could include in their packages. Instead of everyone competing, everyone is sending the same message. A collective request may have more weight and get more attention. Shannon Estenoz said they need some kind of comprehensive plan to pull together all the efforts, goals and objectives and come up with a priority list. Chris Kelble said there is a list of recommendations and asked why that wasn't being used. Shannon said they are trying to be more comprehensive enough to make them implementable.

Tom Teets suggested making ECISMA more formal would address the idea of enhanced coordination. There are a lot of good people already involved and there are additional entities that should be involved. He said it would be helpful for ECISMA to organize the recommendations going forward so that everyone is on the same page. Nick Aumen noted that part of what is being proposed has some science aspects to it and there is a challenge when they have a new initiative or are trying to expand one how they weigh that against the other science needs. He asked how they are looking at the whole picture to make sure they are making the right decisions. They have a limited number of scientists to work on research issues in south Florida and he was not sure how they would focus those efforts and dollars in the big picture. Shannon said there were a lot of different reasons such as economic, agricultural and human health to combat invasive species. She was not ready to assume that every dollar they put towards invasive species has to come out of some other restoration "hide".

Ronnie Best suggested that when they go to the TF they will want to know what is needed and what is needed is much better coordination. There is a lot of activity going on right now and they are still not effectively addressing the question. The TF will want to know why this is important and they want to get ahead of the python issue or any future invasion. They need to move forward with early detection and rapid response as quickly as possible and they need the funding to do so. They have to put a cost estimate in there and part of that cost estimate is what is on the ground now versus what is needed for those on the ground activities. The invasive species money will have to come from a different pot of money not ecosystem restoration. It has regional and national implications and the kinds of activities they implement here could have broader scale implications. They need to define "who's in charge" so that it isn't separate individuals going in different directions. In some sense, they need to be told by the TF, their bosses that this is important - make it happen. They need to coordinate with the OMB folks to put this into their 2014 and 2015 budgets. They are the one that will provide the dollars to address this issue.

Ernie Marks, top R&D priorities, he had the opportunity to sit in on a meeting and the citrus industry – presented to the legislative committee – looking for short term and long term successes under R&D. What do we have there now and what do we need to develop long term? Based on the funding we have now - what are those dollars getting us along the curve? Chuck Collins said they do have coordination throughout their agencies they key is the right level of coordination in order to get things done. The follow through and the accountability is critical. It is a synergistic effect when they start reporting up to the decision makers, the decision makers to the coordination and actually get it done. Accountability comes back and people see those wins so the coordination effort is enhanced. Bill Reck said that NRCS does do some stuff on private agricultural lands that need to be accounted for and he and Calvin Arnold will provide that information when the document is circulated.

Shannon Estenoz said she will take the framework that ECISMA has given them and take it from power point to some other forum. They want to have some crystal clear recommendations to elevate to the TF. An attempt will be made to get a handle on the dollar numbers, the need numbers. Realistically they are not going to have the Strategic Plan done by the next TF meeting. They would recommend to the TF that a Strategic Plan needs to be developed over the next several months. As part of that Strategic Plan the team attempts to assign dollars to those strategic goals. Ernie Marks said that what he was saying was instead of trying to project out what their needs are going to be that they look at what they are currently spending and where that puts them along the curve and project where they will be two and four years out with existing dollars. The question is whether they are containing or improving the problem. The draft will be circulated to all the members via e-mail. They are looking at a possible TF meeting sometime in March or April. Everyone was encouraged to contact Carrie Beeler at cbeeler@sfrestore.org with suggestions or resources that they should be looking at.

Corps Project Update

Howie Gonzales noted there has been a lot of emphasis and focus on CEPP. He provided a presentation (Encl. 7) on the status of CERP construction projects. First generation projects authorized by WRDA 2007 are all in some stage of construction. Site 1 Impoundment awarded with AARA money. Dewatering efforts weren't happening and the contractor was terminated. On January 21st they re-awarded the contract and he expects a mobilization effort in the March – April timeframe. Completion delayed from original date. Indian River Lagoon – South (IRL-S) has three contracts. Contract 1 for the intake canal, access road and bridge awarded in July 2011. Construction will be completed in May 2014. Contract 2 for the Reservoir is scheduled in 2014 and Contract 3 for the STA is scheduled for award in 2017. Picayune Strand project features include three spreader canals, three pump stations, plugging of 48 miles of canals and removing 260 miles of crumbling roads. They are already seeing some re-growth out in that area. Melaleuca Eradication Facility is a joint effort with USDA, Interior, SFWMD and the University of Florida. Facility is part of a long-term plan to use biological controls to supplement existing efforts to control and reduce the most aggressive, widespread and problematic invasive exotic plants in south Florida. Completion expected in April with turnover in May/June timeframe. DECOMP Physical Model project was awarded the end of last summer. Completion of construction delayed to April/May 2013 and project will be ready to receive data for the next operational period.

Second generation projects are more planning efforts. C-43 West basin Storage Reservoir submitted to Congress in April 2011, C-111 Spreader Canal submitted to Congress in July 2012, Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands submitted to Congress in September 2012 and Broward County Water Preserve Area submitted to Congress in October 2012. All are awaiting Congressional authorization and appropriation. The SFWMD has completed construction efforts on the C-111 SC and BBCW showing a commitment from the state to get out ahead of the federal process. Congressional authorization means more credits and more credits mean the ability to cost share federal appropriations and continue the program.

Chris Kelble asked where the DECOMP physical model was in relation to the Blue Shanty levee and other components. Bob Johnson said it will be inside the flowway within WCA-3B. The structures will be up in the northern corner inside the levee alignment. It will be west of the proposed new levee. Tom Teets encouraged everyone to see the progression of the restoration of the Picayune Strand using Google Earth. Ronnie Best said that they have the opportunity to answer some of the questions that are emerging as unknowns in CEPP if they make a slight investment in the DECOMP Physical Model beyond what the DECOMP Physical Model is laid out to do. Bob Johnson asked about the timeframe for the BCWPA if there is a WRDA bill in the near future. Howie explained that if they were to get the authorization tomorrow they wouldn't be able to start construction for another 3-5 years. They would have to get the Project Partnership Agreements (PPAs) in place then they would have to finalize the detailed designs. Most of these projects are taking 7 – 10 years.

Bob Johnson said there are water quality concerns with the projects they have already invested in that are dependent on this project. They are half a billion dollars into the Modified Water Deliveries between the land acquisition and the construction project. The water quality improvements in the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) and in BCWPA are lynchpin for how much flexibility they have to move water. Hoping this is seen as a high priority project. Shannon Estenoz said lining up the implementation of these projects in the right order will be everything. It is CEPP, Modified Water Deliveries, Tamiami Trail next steps and BCWPA. At some point they are going to have to talk about what the right mechanism for doing that is. At this time the only one authorized is the Tamiami Trail next steps.

Public Comment

Ed Fielding (Martin County Commission) said they are fascinated for the collaborative effort and applaud them for that. What he sees is that most of these activities are incremental or marginal in achieving what he sees as the essential two things that they have to accomplish. One is getting quality sufficient water into a sustaining Everglades system. The other is getting relief for the estuaries. His view is that they need 10,000csf out of the lake in order for them to achieve relief. Downstream they need two million acre feet of storage. He is encouraging them to consider the necessity to get the water from the existing system that they are currently sending to tide.

Julie Hill Gabriel (Audubon of Florida) said they all know how important authorizations and appropriations are from Congress and she reported that a number of congressional staffers were down and they were able to show them the one mile bridge and Florida Bay. They were very interested in seeing the actual ecological changes. They want to see what the money paid for and monitoring will be

essential. On the invasive issue, she noted that at the Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary they have their own controlled burn programs and their own invasive program that they have implemented using their own money. She urged investment in the early detection tools adding that invasives are hurting the private sector as well.

Drew Martin (Sierra Club) said he agreed with Commissioner Fielding. They need to focus on relief to the estuaries and somehow reconnect Lake Okeechobee with the Everglades to restore the river of grass. On the invasive species issue he wondered whether the pythons could eat the tegu.

Next Steps and Closing Comments

Barry Rosen reminded everyone to look at the integrated calendar available on the web (www.sfrestore.org) for upcoming meetings and workshops.

Shannon:

- Will work with Kelly and Kim Taplin on the Adaptive Management workshop, either an in person workshop or webinar in Feb
- Invasive species – a draft document will be circulated in the next month
- CEPP TSP will come before WG and TF for consultation

Bob Johnson announced that the final report for CISRERP IV will be available on their website for free. Their upcoming meeting is scheduled on March 27th. A field trip is planned to see three projects (Tamiami Trail, BBCW and C-111 SC). Open meeting scheduled on March 28th in Miami to discuss three topics (central Everglades, invasive exotic species and climate change)

Meeting adjourned at 2:54PM.

Handouts:

1. Agenda
2. Draft meeting minutes, September 2012
3. Working Group Sponsored public workshops for CEPP presentation
4. CEPP – Project Delivery Team (PDT) presentation
5. CEPP – Adaptive Management presentation
6. Addressing the Everglades Invasive Species Crisis presentation
7. CERP Construction Project Status presentation