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# CERP Guidance Memorandum

South Florida Water Management District – Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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**CGM NUMBER-REVISION:** 041.01

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 21, 2010

**CATEGORY:** Data Management

**SUBJECT:** Agency Responsibility and Coordination for Quality Assurance, Quality Control and Data Validation for CERP Monitoring Activities

## DESCRIPTION:

This memorandum provides guidance to the staff of the Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), members of the Program [including REstoration, COordination, and VERification (RECOVER)] and Project Delivery Teams (PDTs) on the establishment and administration of a Quality Assurance (QA)/Quality Control (QC) and Data Validation program for Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) environmental data.

QA/QC processes help provide accurate and defensible monitoring and sample data (hydrological, meteorological, water quality and biological) which is critical to the overall success of CERP and each of its project and program components. However, the design, development, and documentation of a QA/QC Program does not of itself ensure the quality of the data generated. The Quality Assurance Systems Requirements (QASR) manual, located at the following link [http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/program\\_docs/qasr.aspx](http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/program_docs/qasr.aspx), is the CERP Quality System, and provides specific guidance for CERP monitoring and sampling QA/QC. Critical to effective implementation of this program are the knowledge of and conformance to sampling and analytical protocols-, as well as the implementation of minimum standards for data submittal, processing, and review. This CERP Guidance Memorandum (CGM) establishes multi-agency responsibilities for CERP Quality System development and implementation through the formation and continuous support of a Quality Assurance Oversight Team (QAOT).

## PURPOSE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE OVERSIGHT TEAM

The QAOT is responsible for providing guidance on, and evaluating the implementation of, the CERP Quality Systems through the QASR and CGMs. This responsibility includes developing and providing guidance on procedures, QA/QC requirements and data validation for CERP monitoring activities. The

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QAOT is the forum to develop consistency regarding data quality and QA/QC processes among the various entities involved with hydrological, meteorological, water quality, and biological monitoring activities for CERP.

## **GUIDANCE:**

Each agency and individual involved with CERP monitoring activities has the responsibility for maintaining knowledge of the CERP Quality System and for adhering to the procedures listed in the QAOT QASR. The ultimate responsibility for maintaining the QAOT QASR and evaluating whether the QASR is being implemented by CERP projects and programs and/or their contractors rests with the QAOT.

The USACE and SFWMD are the lead agencies for the QAOT, with the goal of providing guidance such that data collected meet or exceed the data quality objectives of each project. In addition to providing guidance, other responsibilities of the QAOT include:

- Develop and implement data review criteria and quality assessment procedures.
- Standardize electronic data deliverables.
- Establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) when they do not exist.
- Oversee the approval process for alternative procedures for sampling and analysis as described in the QASR.
- Implement a QA audit program for CERP monitoring activities.
- Oversee the laboratory and field comparison studies program to assess consistency and comparability among agencies involved in CERP monitoring activities.
- Produce a QA report on CERP monitoring activities on a biennial basis, evaluating whether the QASR is being implemented by CERP projects and programs and/or their contractors.
- Review and provide guidance in the development of QA/QC procedures in Scopes of Work and Monitoring Plans for CERP projects and programs.
- Review program and project-level monitoring plans and scopes of work to ensure all required QA/QC protocols are addressed.

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- Familiarize Project Delivery Teams (PDTs) and programs (such as RECOVER) with the requirements of the QASR.
- Provide guidance, if requested, for data quality objectives to PDTs and programs.
- Coordinate and/or Facilitate Relevant Workshops, Meetings and Coordination Activities
- Prepare and Update the Program Management Plan
- Provide a Link between QAOT and DCT
- QAOT Document Control
- QASR Preparation and Updates
- CGM Development and Updates Related to QAOT

## **QAOT Membership**

The QAOT is a multi-agency team comprised of one representative from six standing member agencies:

- U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District (USACE)
- South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

While the lead agencies for the QAOT are the USACE and SFWMD, critical technical advice is provided by the FDEP, USFWS, USGS, and the USEPA. While each organization has only a single representative, any number of agency personnel may attend to support the team's efforts. Final decisions are, however, made by the standing members only. The QAOT organizationally reports to the Design Coordination Team - DCT (CERP Program Managers) and maintains communication with programs and projects.

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## QAOT Roles and Responsibilities

The QAOT roles and responsibilities are further outlined in the QAOT Program Management Plan [http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/qaot\\_plan.aspx](http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/qaot_plan.aspx) and QAOT SOPs <http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/qaot.aspx#team>.

## APPLICATION:

Effective the date of this memorandum, the provisions of this CGM, maintains the QAOT as the body governing all environmental QA/QC and data validation activities undertaken in conjunction with CERP monitoring and sampling activities.

## APPROVAL:



**Tom Teets**  
Assistant Deputy Executive Director  
Everglades Restoration and Capital Projects  
South Florida Water Management District

DATE: Aug 30, 2010



**Eric L. Bush**  
Assistant Chief,  
Everglades Division  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

DATE: 26 JULY 2010

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