# CENTRAL EVERGLADES PLANNING PROJECT | CEPP

FACTS & INFORMATION

NOVEMBER 2012

## PURPOSE

The goal of the Central Everglades Planning Project is to deliver, within two years, a finalized plan, known as a Project Implementation Report (PIR), for a suite of restoration projects in the central Everglades to prepare for congressional authorization, as part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). The Central Everglades Planning Project will identify and plan for projects on land already in public ownership to allow more water to be directed south to the central Everglades, Everglades National Park and Florida Bay while protecting coastal estuaries. Public participation is a major component of this planning effort. A number of public workshops, sponsored by the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force's Working Group, are planned to receive input from the public and keep them informed and engaged as active participants.

## BACKGROUND

While much progress has been made on the CERP, efforts to date have mostly been in areas outside of the central Everglades. The heart of the Everglades restoration effort is restoring a more natural quantity, quality, timing and distribution of water to the remaining portions of the central area of the historic Everglades, often referred to as the "River of Grass."

In October 2011, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), the Secretary of the Interior, the Governor of Florida, the Executive Director of the South Florida Water Management District and other senior principals agreed to initiate the planning effort of the CERP central Everglades components. Due to the desire to expeditiously complete the study, the Central Everglades Planning Project is part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' National Pilot Program for Feasibility Studies.

## STUDY APPROACH

The Central Everglades Planning Project incorporates updated science and technical information gained over the last decade to identify a recommended plan and prepare a PIR for congressional authorization of the next generation of CERP projects. The pilot planning study process uses clearly defined decision points to make the process more predictable and more efficient, while reducing the current planning study process timeline. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is leading this planning effort in partnership with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). The SFWMD is fully integrated in the technical planning process and is leading modeling efforts for the study.

This study will develop the next increment of project components that focus restoration on more natural flows into and through the central and southern Everglades, re-establishing the hydroperiods and hydropatterns that characterize the "River of Grass" by:

- Increasing storage, treatment and conveyance of water south of Lake Okeechobee
- Removing and/or plugging canals and levees within the central Everglades
- Retaining water within Everglades National Park and protect urban and agricultural areas to the east from flooding

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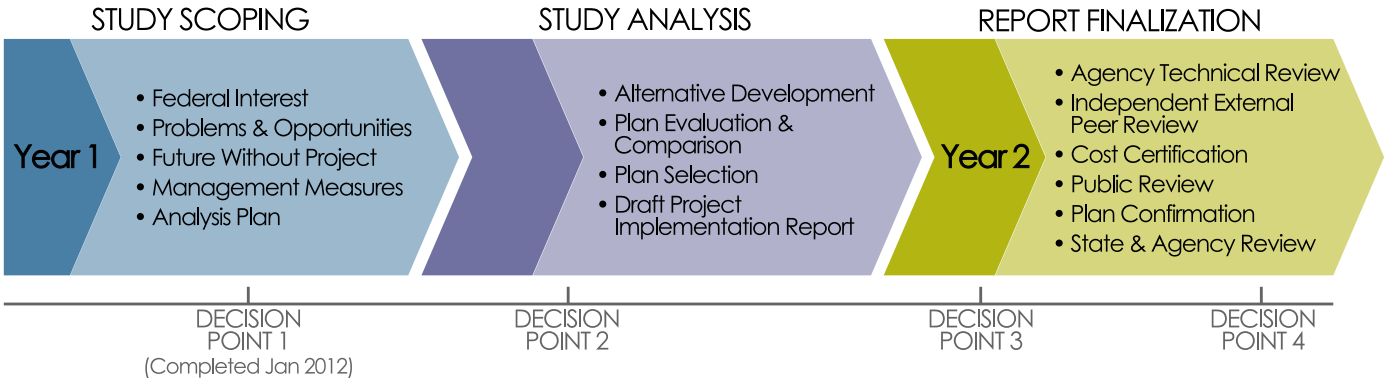
The CERP components identified to be studied as part of the Central Everglades Planning Project are: the Everglades Agricultural Area Storage Reservoir, Decompartmentalization of Water Conservation Area 3, Everglades National Park Seepage Management and Everglades Rain Driven Operations. These components are highly interdependent features of the recommended plan that are being formulated, optimized and implemented in a comprehensive and integrated manner. They make up the heart of the CERP and will lead to the next suite of restoration projects.

## STUDY SCHEDULE

The schedule for the Central Everglades Planning Project utilizes the principles outlined in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Planning Transformation Process. The project is currently in the study analysis phase.

### CENTRAL EVERGLADES STUDY PROCESS




## PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM

The USACE and SFWMD are the principal federal and non-federal sponsors for the CERP, and other environmental restoration efforts. Together, they are facilitating CERP Project Delivery Team (PDT) meetings for the Central Everglades Planning Project in parallel with public workshops sponsored by the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force's Working Group. PDT meetings enable federal, state, local agencies and tribal governments to provide input into the Central Everglades Planning Project.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION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Information on upcoming public workshops and related documents are available on the Task Force website at: www.sfrestore.org/cepp/cepp.html

Information on the Central Everglades Planning Project and related project documents are available online at: www.evergladesplan.org /pm/projects/proj_51_cepp.aspx