

**Science Coordination Group  
Meeting Summary – Meeting #11  
Miami Dade Fire Rescue Headquarters  
Miami, Florida  
July 6, 2005**

**Attendance:**

**Members:**

Calvin Arnold	Todd Hopkins (for Barry	Susan Markley
Joan Browder	Rosen)	Greg May
Barbara Cintron (for Loren	Dan Kimball	Rock Salt
Mason)	Cherise Maples	

**Staff, Contractors, Public:**

Jim Barnes	Peter Cousins	David Erne
Kurt Buchholz	Bob Doren	
Kevin Burger	Kate Elliott	

**Members not present:**

Lisa Beever	Greg Knecht	Jay Slack
Ronnie Best	John Ogden	John Volin
Ken Haddad	Peter Ortner	Ed Wright
Richard Harvey	Terry Rice	

**Administrative Items:**

The meeting summary was approved without objections.

**Whiparound:**

Todd Hopkins announced that last December the FWS and NOAA released a notice that the American Eel may be listed shortly, and coordination will need to begin. The eel can be found in the Caloosahatchee River, the Bastion River, Jupiter, and Miami canals. The federal register will provide more information on the decline.

Rock Salt said the USACE is looking at segmented bridge options in the Tamiami Trail report and EIS. The alternative will be known when the draft comes out in mid-August. The USDOJ hopes the 4 mile option will be selected by the Corps, but are open to reviewing the segmented 4 mile option. Increase bridging is better for ecological connectivity, with cost being the limiting factor. John Ogden spoke to Dan Kimball about maximizing opportunities to become better educated to provide input for the next round of decisions. He also reported that Judge Moreno issued an order on June 1<sup>st</sup> to end debates over the water quality lawsuit. In May there were the highest readings ever in the middle of the refuge. The judge honestly wants to understand and deal with water quality issues and remedies

Susan Markey said the RPDT PPT included alternative analysis that had several different bridge options with cost analyses for a skyway alternative, and one lesser alternative. The presenter suggested the selected alternative would be one of the 4 mile options. There was some concern with the rankings. Additional information is available on the RPDT website. She also reported that the Florida City annexation was approved by commissioners.

Barbara Cintron from the USACE introduced herself as a former SCT member. She reminded the team that CSOP is for operating the southern portion of CSF before CERP comes on line. Regarding Tamiami Trail, said she knows there are advantages to putting more than just one bridge in place, but also not having it too close to areas where there would be unwanted invasion or visual exposure. The design must also fall within cost constraints. The Corps has sent out letters

advising their notice of intent to people who have sent in comments on the alternatives. More information is available on the website [www.skyway.com](http://www.skyway.com). The preliminary report will be available in August and something that can be authorized is needed. The CSOP is vexing to work through the tree island depths in 3B. Rock added that DOI will not support plans to harm tree islands. ENP believes that with unobstructed flow there can be relatively high depths and long durations as long as there is flow out. Other evidence says those conditions can be fatal to tree islands. John Ogden agreed it must be worked through, and doesn't think the science is available to answer the question. The goal should be to determine an interim approach and adapt as needed. Rock added that a conservative answer is being explored in CSOP. John Ogden added that they are trying to weave LILA into the strategy, but there are different time frames.

Greg reminded the team that the Task Force asked them to implement Phase I of the PCS, develop indicators, and develop Phase II. Today's agenda has all three of those items. He thanked the SCG, the staff of OED, and contractors for producing Phase I. Final copies of Phase I are now available.

Dan Kimball reported that a broad area announcement for CESI came out recently. The broad area announcement is intended to cover an estimated \$11 million in USGS and park funding, a lot of continuing projects.

John Ogden informed the team of the problem that RECOVER is using different definitions of goals than the definition in the interim goals agreement. He also reported that the Natural Resource Council's environmental committee reviewed contaminants. Their next meeting is in early October to draft their 1<sup>st</sup> report to congress, due next summer.

Cherise Maples announced the Tribe has a critical project with the USACE representing half of Big Cypress. It's designed to be compatible with USACE critical projects and adjacent STA's. The Tribe is also working with FWS office to start their wildlife management program/plan.

Joan Browder informed the team of the results of the NOAA technical workshop, revealing that the biggest pollutant is copper. The potential exists for another workshop for indicators. Susan Markley clarified that redox changes effects whether contaminants are bound up or available. The issue is not that restoration will produce contaminants, but whether it could make them available to the natural system.

David Erne introduced Kurt Buchholz from Booz Allen Hamilton. Kurt has a background with the EPA in program review, sediments and dredge materials. He will be working on the PCS. John Ogden requested authors be better cited for literature used in the PCS.

### **Indicators:**

The 12 ecological indicators were reviewed by the SCG; all but two are from the RECOVER process. Among the indicators, 1 – 10 were labeled attributes, and 11 and 12 are stressors. By utilizing RECOVER results, this is an opportunity to not duplicate work, and to have complimentary reports to congress. Understanding the linkages is key in this process, knowing what an indicator does independently isn't enough.

The 12<sup>th</sup> indicator presented is a place holder for the subgroup that will be working on built indicators. Some built indicators will address some hydrologic indicators but may not address natural needs. RECOVER targets will also be explored for assistance on the built system. Contaminants will also need development; they are currently lacking the science to base them as an indicator.

The indicators have clear metrics, and known targets. The unknown is what pieces will be used to report to the Task Force on whether they are good, bad or neutral. The information used from the RECOVER process has not been changed, only Spoonbills were added. There is concern over the science on Spoonbills, and the literature will be needed to support what is published.

The SCG developed a recommended list of system-wide indicators through an open process and will determine how to fulfill public input as part, and keep peer review in mind. The system for communicating the information has not yet been determined (red, yellow, green, ABCDF). When our approach is determined the SCG will have to explain the methods to the Task Force for all three of their requirements.

The team must decide if there will be a review of the vital signs, whether these indicators are doing what is hoped for, and what kind of review is needed for the indicators. The reviews for each of the SCG tasks should be done independently of each other. Independent review of the indicators will be done on the entire suite, and on the two that were not previously reviewed during the RECOVER process.

Bob Doren will develop a draft prototype of the report for the subteam and ultimately the Task Force. He will also be sending out draft review questions for subteam input. Please advise him on the logic of the questions, suggest alternatives, new questions, or request removal of specific questions. The questions will help determine the reviewers. Battelle was recommended for assistance with the review.

### **Exotics/Vegetation Mosaic:**

This is comprised of 4 projects, with metrics encompassing density, quantity, location and coverage. The indicator will be based on these metrics. John Volin is mapping all the vegetation that can then be overlaid with the exotics to describe the effects. Exotics will be a separate piece, with the indicator itself being vegetation. The bulk of this indicator will be ready this winter.

### **Status of Phase II:**

Workshops will be held on August 16-17 in West Palm Beach, and in September. Patricia Sime's team will attend the August 16-17<sup>th</sup> workshop. The modules to review include the Northern Estuaries, Lake Okeechobee, the Greater Everglades and Florida Bay. The added modules are Kissimmee basin, the basin in Big Cypress and the Florida Keys. Lisa Beaver will provide a map outline of areas in West Florida. Completion of the Phase I work on the total system will also be completed during the workshops. The Southwest has been included, but the map and boundary are needed from Lisa Beaver. The purpose is to identify the needs, gaps and action steps. BAH will assign experts to take the lead in producing these sections of the document, with various levels of support from the members of the SCG. Experts will be taking the lead on the built system sections as well. Bob Doren will facilitate the production of the document to ensure the information is captured correctly, and to ensure the details of the technical information are not lost.

Rock Salt volunteered to serve on the quality assurance subteam. The team hopes to have several members of the RECOVER oversight team serve as well.

Calvin Arnold, Dan Kimball, Susan Markley, Ronnie Best and Joan Browder volunteered to serve on the information sharing subteam.

Progress tracking was a specific requirement in the SCG charter. The subteam meetings will help define progress tracking, as well as quality assurance and information sharing.

### **Review of the PCS:**

The team reviewed the potential question for the review of the PCS. The provided the following comments:

Question 2:

- replace "remedy" with "solution"
- explain what is being coordinated

Question 4:

- clarify that remedies will not be given
- potentially reword

Question 5:

- revise to ask "do the needs and gaps help us clarify?"
- place it before question 2

Question 6:

- reword to remove awkwardness of asking Task Force how to use a Task Force document
- potentially move to the top of the questions list

The final question will be set as a separate heading asking for addition suggestions.

The reviewers should be provided the background that this document is based on a specific Congressional requirement, and the team is seeking independent comments to complete the effort, not to change the document.

These questions with the recommended changes will be distributed to the team for revision and additional questions. Battelle will be used to assist in the review.

**Built system indicator and potential hydrology indicator:**

BAH consulted with Lisa Beaver about the Southwest list, but further discussion is needed. Often restrictions in the built system are more a matter of policy than science. Metrics and vital signs will need to be determined. Currently the Task Force has flood protection, water supply, interface, greenways and recreation. The State law plan is for 1 in 10 security supply, with the same for flood protection. The team also discussed not having an increase in salt water intrusion, and a general index for habitat fragmentation. In permitting and regulation, there is a concern over judgmental scoring of connectivity and transition zones.

The team discussed PIRs being written for hydrologic and ecologic restoration. Broad, overarching hydrologic goals are needed because goals may be reached before the system shows ecological restoration. Hydrologic indicators may also be necessary to take a pulse of the ecosystem, and should be more clearly articulated. While all the indicators have hydrological factors, there isn't one big measure of hydrology. Meteorological events that are unusual should also be measured. After the built system has been reviewed, the group can evaluate the extent to which the focus should be on non-CERP restoration goals if CERP is handled by RECOVER.

The built system team will be comprised of Barbara Cintron, Lisa Beaver, Rafaela Monchek, Susan Markley, Dan Kimball and Bob Doren. Bob Doren will provide the logic that was used to choose ecological indicators for consistency. The subteam will be tasked with determining a list of proposed indicators with a logical framework in September.

Joan Browder, Susan Markley and Kurt Buchholz will develop a contaminants strawman.

John Ogden will provide OED with the presentation to the Governing Board on the numbers for RECOVER/CERP MAP. Keeping track of Phase I actions is part of the team's responsibilities.

Improvements must be made to the NSM, and looking for ways to create eco targets for it. Lorraine Heisler was suggested to give a presentation on NSM to the SCG.