

CHARTER

South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

1. **AUTHORIZATION.** The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force was established by section 528(f) of Public Law 104-303, the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (hereinafter referred to as the Act), enacted October 12, 1996.

2. **DUTIES.** The Task Force was established to:

a. Consult with, and provide recommendations to, the Secretary of the Army and the non-Federal project sponsor in developing a comprehensive plan for the purpose of restoring, preserving, and protecting the South Florida ecosystem, in accordance with sections 528(b)(1) and 528(f)(2)(A) of the Act.

b. Coordinate the development of consistent policies, strategies, plans, programs, projects, activities, and priorities for addressing the restoration, preservation, and protection of the South Florida ecosystem, as provided in section 528(f)(2)(B) of the Act. Such coordination shall include cooperation with the Secretary of the Army and the non-Federal project sponsor in determining whether a critical restoration project for the South Florida ecosystem will produce independent, immediate, and substantial restoration, preservation, and protection benefits, and will be generally consistent with the "Conceptual Plan for the Central and Southern Florida Project Restudy" prepared by the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida, in accordance with section 528(b)(3)(A) of the Act.

c. Exchange information regarding programs, projects, and activities of the agencies and entities represented on the Task Force to promote ecosystem restoration and maintenance, as provided in section 528(f)(2)(C) of the Act.

d. Establish a Florida-based working group to formulate, recommend, coordinate, and implement the policies, strategies, plans, programs, projects, activities, and priorities of the Task Force, in accordance with section 528(f)(2)(D) of the Act.

e. Facilitate the resolution of interagency and intergovernmental conflicts associated with the restoration of the South Florida ecosystem among agencies and entities represented on the Task Force, as provided in section 528(f)(2)(F) of the Act.

f. Coordinate scientific and other research associated with the restoration of the South Florida ecosystem, as provided in section 528(f)(2)(G) of the Act.

g. Provide assistance and support to agencies and entities represented on the Task Force in their restoration activities, as provided in section 528(f)(2)(H) of the Act.

h. Prepare an integrated financial plan and recommendations for coordinated budget requests for the funds proposed to be expended by agencies and entities represented on the Task Force for the restoration, preservation, and protection of the South Florida ecosystem, as provided in section 528(f)(2)(I) of the Act.

i. Submit a biennial report to Congress that summarizes the activities of the Task Force: the policies, strategies, plans, programs, projects, activities, and priorities planned, developed, or implemented for the restoration of the South Florida ecosystem; and progress made toward the restoration, as provided in section 528(f)(2)(J) of the Act.

3. POWERS. The Task Force may -

a. Establish advisory bodies as it deems necessary to assist the Task Force in its duties, including advisory bodies on public policy and scientific issues, in accordance with section 528(f)(2)(E)(i) of the Act.

b. Select as an advisory body any entity, such as the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida, that represents a broad variety of public and private interests, as provided in section 528(f)(2)(E)(ii) of the Act.

c. Seek advice and input from any interested, knowledgeable, or affected party as it determines necessary to perform its duties, as provided in section 528(f)(3)(B).

4. MEMBERSHIP.

a. The Task Force consists of 14 members, as follows, pursuant to section 528(f)(1) of the Act:

(1) Seven Federal members, each of whom may be represented by a designee at the level of assistant secretary or the equivalent:

- (i) The Secretary of the Interior, who shall serve as chairperson.
- (ii) The Secretary of Commerce.
- (iii) The Secretary of the Army.
- (iv) The Attorney General.
- (v) The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.
- (vi) The Secretary of Agriculture.
- (vii) The Secretary of Transportation.

(2) One member from each the following Indian Tribes, each of whom shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Interior based on the recommendations of the respective tribal chairman:

- (i) The Seminole Tribe of Florida.
- (ii) The Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida.

(3) Two representatives of the State of Florida appointed by the Secretary of the Interior based on the recommendations of the Governor.

(4) One representative of the South Florida Water Management District appointed by the Secretary of the Interior based on the recommendations of the Governor.

(5) Two representatives of local government in the State of Florida to be appointed by the Secretary of the Interior based on the recommendations of the Governor.

b. There is no time limit for the term of any member. A person's membership shall terminate after leaving the office from which that member was appointed or designated. Any of the federal officials listed in subparagraph 4.a.(1), above, may at any time designate a substitute member at the level of assistant secretary or the equivalent. Any member appointed by the Secretary of the Interior based on the recommendation of the Governor may be removed or replaced by the Secretary of the Interior based on the recommendation of the Governor. Any member appointed by the Secretary of the Interior based on the recommendation of a tribal chairman may be removed or replaced by the Secretary of the Interior based on the recommendation of the chairman of the same Tribe.

c. Any vacancy on the Task Force shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

d. A member shall receive no additional compensation for service on the Task Force, in accordance with section 528(f)(4) of the Act.

5. ADMINISTRATION.

a. An Executive Director shall assist the Secretary of the Interior and the Task Force in carrying out their administrative and procedural duties, including the requirements in section 528(f)(3)(ii) of the Act. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, and shall be an employee of the United States Department of the Interior.

b. The Task Force will meet at the call of the Chairperson or of a majority of the members, but not less often than semi-annually.

c. A majority of the members then serving will constitute a quorum.

d. Travel expenses incurred by a member of the Task Force in the performance of services for the Task Force shall be paid by the agency, tribe, or government that the member represents, as provided in section 528(f)(5) of the Act.

e. The Task Force is not considered an advisory committee subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, and it may seek advice or input from interested, knowledgeable, or affected parties without being subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, pursuant to section 528(f)(3)(C) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996.

f. The Task Force shall implement procedures to facilitate public participation in its functions. Those procedures shall include providing advance notice of meetings, providing adequate opportunity for public input and comment, maintaining appropriate records, and making a record of the proceedings of meetings available for public inspection, as required by section 528(f)(3)(A)(i) of the Act.

g. The Task Force may adopt principles and operational guidelines to set forth the required procedures for public participation, and for any other purpose necessary or convenient

for the accomplishment of the duties of the Task Force.

h. In the absence of procedures adopted by the Task Force, the Executive Director may establish protocols for accomplishment of the duties of the Task Force. The Executive Director will promptly notify all members of the protocols. Such protocols may be amended by the Task Force.

i. Nothing in this Charter shall be construed to prejudice the appointments of members already made pursuant to the Act, or the activities of the Task Force since October 12, 1996.

6. PERSONNEL.

a. The Executive Director shall provide staff support to the Task Force.

b. The Executive Director may be assisted by a permanent staff of the executive directorate; personnel on temporary assignment to the executive directorate from agencies, governments, or tribes represented on the Task Force or the Working Group; by members of the Task Force or Working Group or the staffs of such members; or by contractors. The Task Force may authorize the Executive Director to request, from the head of any Federal agency not represented on the Task Force, personnel to be detailed to assist the Executive Director or the Task Force.

7. TERMINATION. The Task Force shall continue to exist only for so long as it is authorized by Federal law.



Secretary of the Interior

AUG 1 1997

Date Signed: _____