

# Integrated Delivery Schedule Workshops Concept Paper

## **Introduction**

Over the past year, the Corps of Engineers, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), the Department of the Interior (DOI), and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) have been developing a new sequencing plan called the Integrated Delivery Schedule for the South Florida restoration program. The ultimate goal of the Integrated Delivery Schedule is to develop a realistic schedule and sequencing plan for achieving restoration benefits as soon as possible consistent with existing state and federal authorizations and funding.

The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force and the SFWMD Water Resources Advisory Commission have been briefed several times on the development of the Integrated Delivery Schedule. At their December 2007 meeting, the Task Force agreed to engage in a more intensive process to assist the Corps, SFWMD, DOI, and FDEP in the development of the Integrated Delivery Schedule. As a result, agency staff have developed a process to engage and solicit input from the Task Force and the WRAC in developing the Integrated Delivery Schedule.

## **Background**

**Project Sequencing:** An initial sequencing plan for CERP was developed in 1999 to guide the implementation effort. The sequencing plan was included in Chapter 10 of the 1999 Feasibility Report and described the sequencing and scheduling for implementation of all of the projects in the comprehensive plan, including pilot projects and operational elements, based on the best scientific, technical, funding, contracting, and other information available. Projects were sequenced to maximize the achievement of the goals and purposes of the comprehensive plan at the earliest possible time and in the most cost-effective way.

In October 2003 the State and Federal agencies jointly agreed to accelerate implementation of several project components that were included in the plan through the Acceler8 initiative. Most of the projects included in Acceler8 were initially authorized by WRDA-2000 and were identified for early implementation in the 1999 sequencing plan.

In 2005, a revised sequencing plan, called the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan (MISP) was developed to account for new information developed since 1999 and the requirements of the Programmatic Regulations. This revised sequencing plan grouped projects into five-year periods, called bands, during which construction was expected to be completed. Bands provided a clearer view of project completion and sequencing. The accelerated schedules for projects included in the October 2003 Acceler8 agreement were incorporated into the 2005 MISP. The 2005 MISP for CERP was based on the assumption of \$200 million in Federal and \$200 million in non-Federal funding each year.

Based on the reality of Federal budget constraints for CERP implementation to date, which has fallen short of the \$200 million per year assumption for the early years, it is necessary to re-evaluate the project delivery schedule and MISP.

**Incremental Adaptive Restoration:** As required by WRDA 2000, the National Research Council, a part of the National Academies, established the Committee on Independent Scientific Review of Everglades Restoration Progress (CISRERP) in 2004.

The Committee's first report on Everglades restoration progress was completed in September 2006. The Committee found that much good science has been developed, but that restoration progress in key areas in the Everglades has lagged progress made in other areas of the south Florida ecosystem. They found that one of the reasons for the delays is a project planning process that can be stalled by unresolved scientific uncertainties. The Committee concluded that if the construction of restoration projects continues to be delayed until these scientific uncertainties are eliminated, then there will be many negative consequences, including continued decline of the Everglades ecosystem, lagging public support, and increased project costs.

The Committee recommended an approach they termed Incremental Adaptive Restoration be considered by the Corps of Engineers and its implementation partners. Incremental Adaptive Restoration would involve early implementation of CERP project features that provide immediate restoration benefits while addressing scientific uncertainties. Resolving critical uncertainties through adaptive management early in project implementation will increase the speed and efficiency of program planning and execution. The learning obtained during this early phase will enable assessments of benefits and impacts to the environment to be efficiently applied to succeeding projects. Remaining phases can then focus on optimizing performance based on actual findings from the earlier phases.

### **Guiding Principles for the Integrated Delivery Schedule**

The development of the Integrated Delivery Schedule should be guided by a number of principles. These are:

- No CERP projects are being taken off the table; this re-evaluation is merely to update the project sequencing and develop a more realistic implementation schedule for the initial set of CERP projects to be constructed.
- The Integrated Delivery Schedule must acknowledge the Federal and State agency commitment to complete implementation of key ongoing projects before initiating construction of new CERP projects. These include the "Foundation Projects" (i.e. Modified Water Deliveries to Everglade National Park, Kissimmee River Restoration, C-111 South Dade, C51/STA-1East, etc.) and other projects for which the Federal and State agencies have committed to accelerate implementation.
- Other projects and programs that will require significant continued resources from State and/or Federal agencies include Herbert Hoover Dike Rehabilitation, the State's Northern Everglades Plan, and the Long-Term Plan for Achieving Water Quality Goals in the Everglades Protection Area, but these will be accomplished with separate funding sources.
- Projects should be implemented in a sequence that achieves restoration objectives at earliest possible time, consistent with funding constraints.

- As appropriate, projects should be broken into multiple Project Implementation Reports to facilitate the Incremental Adaptive Restoration (IAR) approach recommended by the National Academy of Science
- The Integrated Delivery Schedule will be the basis for the updated MISP for CERP as currently required by the Programmatic Regulations
- As appropriate, physical dependencies should drive order of projects
- As appropriate, the Interim Goals and Targets should be used to measure restoration progress
- Key points in implementation will be defined by new system operating manuals

### **Workshop Strategy**

The strategy is primarily composed of a series of workshops and stakeholder meetings, which together, will provide significant stakeholder and agency input to the Corps, SFWMD, DOI, and FDEP as they develop the Integrated Delivery Schedule. The first workshop is scheduled to take place during the 27-28 February 2008 Task Force meeting. The desired outcomes for this workshop are:

- Develop a common understanding of guiding principles for IDS development.
- Receive input on the list of projects and how each project contributes to achieving the Everglades restoration objectives.
- Develop a common understanding of projects and project components for which there is an existing Federal and/or State authorization and commitment to complete construction, along with the Federal and State funding requirements to complete these projects.
- Receive input regarding the pros and cons of spreading available funding across all of the obligated projects (and prolonging the schedule for completing all projects) v. focusing available funding to complete a subset of these projects, then moving on to focus available funds toward completing another subset of the projects.
- Receive input from individual Task Force members regarding their top 2 or 3 priorities, issues or concerns as related to the Integrated Delivery Schedule.

After the Task Force Workshop, the WRAC will be provided with a summary of key feedback received from the Task Force for consideration prior to engaging in discussion on the same set of concepts. Based on input received from the Task Force and WRAC, agency staff will continue the IDS development process which will include but not be limited to draft schedules for discussion purposes, at least one additional meeting with the Task Force and one with the WRAC, and additional opportunities for public comment.

### **Read-Ahead Background Materials**

To facilitate discussion of complex concepts such as Incremental Adaptive Restoration, as well as purpose and benefits of individual restoration projects, a packet of supporting documents will be provided to participants in advance as “read ahead” materials before the first workshop. The following materials will be provided as read ahead materials:

- NAS Committee Report on Everglades Restoration Progress– Executive Summary and Chapter 6
- Yellow Book – an excerpt from Section 10 – “Implementation Plan”

- 2005 MISP – Main Report and Appendices A and B
- GAO Report May 2007 – Cover and Executive Summary
- CERP 2005 Report To Congress – List of Components
- Workshop Process Paper (this paper)
- Matrix of project/project component and restoration objectives

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