

*Approved Meeting Minutes  
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force  
West Palm Beach, FL  
February 27, 2008*

**Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Mr. Mike Sole called the meeting called to order at 1:15 PM and announced that he would chair the meeting since Ms. Onley is on maternity leave. He noted that Mr. Rock Salt would serve as Vice Chair and thanked the Corps and the Task Force staff for the Lake Okeechobee field trip. He stressed the importance of Congressional funding as well as continued support from everyone for the Herbert Hoover Dike project. Mr. Sole introduced Towson Fraser, Deputy Chief of Staff, who will represent the Governor's Office on the Task Force and he said Eric Eikenberg is now the Chief of Staff for Governor Christ. The meeting minutes were presented and Mr. Roman Gastesi made a motion to approve which was seconded by Mr. Peter Ortner. The minutes were approved without objection.

*Michael Sole, Vice Chair, Department of Environmental Protection  
Rock Salt for Kameran Onley, U.S. Department of the Interior  
Becky Allenbach for Benjamin Grumbles, Assistant Administrator Office of Water, U.S.  
Environmental Protection Agency  
George Dunlop for J.P. Woodley, U.S. Department of the Army  
Towson Fraser, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor  
Roman Gastesi for Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Commissioner, Miami Dade County  
John Giordano for Ron Tenpas, Acting Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice  
Joette Lorion for Dexter Lehtinen for Miccosukee Tribe of Indians  
Peter Ortner for Timothy Keeney, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, U.S.  
Department of Commerce  
Patty Power for Jim Shore, Seminole Tribe of Florida  
Kari Smith for Gary Mast, Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, U.S.  
Department of Agriculture  
Carol Wehle, Executive Director, South Florida Water Management District  
Michael Collins, Chair, Water Resources Advisory Committee*

Mr. Rock Salt reported Ms. Onley expects to be back in about a month. He said that Interior was pleased with the President's Budget for FY 09. He noted that it included funding to initiate construction for the CERP projects, which are also of the highest priority for Secretary Kempthorne, and a significant increase in funding for the Herbert Hoover Dike. Mr. George Dunlop said everyone here in Florida and on this Task Force is working together and is sending a clear message that you are ready to do what needs to be done. He said that the Corps is also pleased with the FY09 budget noting the funding for the Herbert Hoover Dike represents a 40% increase. He added that the restoration accomplishments in Florida over the past decade have set the model for other efforts around the country.

Mr. Towson Fraser said he looks forward to working with everyone and said this effort is important not just to Florida but to the nation. Ms. Carol Wehle thanked the Task Force staff for the read-ahead material which was received well ahead of the meeting. Ms.

Joette Lorion said Mr. Lehtinen will arrive later in the day and she reported on an 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals decision where the court agreed with the Miccosukee Tribe that EPA should have given the Tribe the documents requested and that there is no FOIA exemption. The Tribe is also sorry to see a bridge option before this group which will end up costing a lot more money. Ms. Lorion said Congress is not impressed and the Tribe is unhappy that they have been unable to get any projects done including Modified Water Deliveries (MWD).

Mr. Peter Ortner, representing Tim Keeney, announced that although he is officially retired Tim asked him to help out. He said Commerce was also pleased with the President's Budget noting that it is higher than last year's enacted budget. It includes funding for the integrated coastal observing system activities. While there is an increase in funding for capital infrastructure which is used for ships, boats and satellites; research dollars are flat and they would like to an increase. Ms. Kari Smith, representing Gary Mast, reported that USDA has a new Secretary, Ed Schafer, a two-term Governor from North Dakota. She noted the current 2002 Farm Bill is set to expire this year and the new Farm Bill has been passed by the House and Senate and is in the Conference process.

Ms. Carol Wehle recognized Commissioner Michael DiTerlizzi from Martin County. She noted support with the Indian River Lagoon project and she recognized USDA for their support in using WRP funding for the Indian River Lagoon project as well. Mr. John Giordano, attending for Mr. Ron Tenpas, said DOJ is looking forward to participating in today's meeting. Ms. Becky Allenbach, attending for Mr. Ben Grumbles, said she participated in the tour that morning and is looking forward to participating in today's discussion.

Mr. Roman Gastesi, representing Mayor Diaz, noted the mayor was unable to attend this meeting since he is in Tallahassee. He thanked the Task Force staff for the read-ahead material and the follow-up calls. He reported that Miami Dade County has updated its flood maps and 1/3 of the homeowners will get lower rate. Information is available on the web. Mr. Mike Collins announced the WRAC recommended that the Governing Board transmit the Northern Everglades Plan to the Legislature. WRAC is working on a couple of rule updates including year round water restrictions and will be working on the environmental resource permit.

### **Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS)**

Mr. Stu Appelbaum provided a presentation noting the Task Force and WRAC interest in being more engaged in the development of the IDS. He referred to a three page concept paper in the read-ahead material laying out the development process. He said he would declare it a good day if they achieved a common vision for the IDS. He said the Working Group and WRAC will also be engaged and the intent is to have closure at the May Task Force meeting. He noted the genesis of sequencing goes back to the Yellow Book where a detailed implementation plan for CERP only projects was laid out. Mr. Collins asked how they would integrate lessons learned, particularly with their ability to deliver projects. Mr. Sole said that as they take the MISP and try to integrate all of Everglades

restoration into a cohesive picture, all of the challenges will be depicted, but clearly this effort should not be viewed as the mechanism to solve the problems.

Mr. Collins said that in order to put together a valid sequencing plan, they need to have valid timeframes and he is receiving input that they need to pick projects you can actually get done. Ms. Lorion said this was done as part of an EIS and this would have to be done as part of the NEPA process. Ms. Patty Power suggested they look at what has stayed the same rather than what has changed adding that there is no other ecosystem restoration effort that has made the progress that this effort has made.

Ms. Wehle said everyone needs to acknowledge what the true funding constraints are and what their limitations are.. Mr. Sole requested they go through the effort and look at the lessons learned, the realities and look at what it is they can accomplish. Commissioner DiTerlizzi said this is about what can be done now and show some results and the IDS is all about getting projects on the ground now.

Mr. Appelbaum reviewed the Yellow Book sequencing plan, the 2005 Master Implementation Sequencing Plan (MISP) and the five year banding process. He reviewed the Guiding Principles which state that no CERP projects would be taken off the table and this is not an attempt to shorten the list and they acknowledge the commitments made. He stressed that physical dependencies will drive the sequencing as well as the use of pilot projects.

Ms. Lorion noted her concern that the foundation projects are not getting done and the other projects are lagging. Mr. Appelbaum said this is about the sequencing and not about restoration. Mr. Sole said this effort is to coordinate and integrate implementation because CERP by itself does not do it.

*Guiding Principles Discussion:*

*First Bullet*

Mr. Dunlop said they were looking at the full range of activities. There was a tendency to 'smokestack' these activities and are now looking at them differently. Ms. Sole said they are not trying to change CERP and no projects will be taken off the table.

*Second Bullet*

Mr. Sole noted commitments and investments made while Mr. Appelbaum said it's 'finish what's on your plate'. He also said there has to be enough planning and design so the next set of projects are ready to go. Mr. Collins noted there were a series of assumptions in CERP - that MWD and DECOMP would be done. He supports picking projects they can complete but they have to include those moving parts and what will happen after MWD is done since it does not fit in with what is upstream.

Ms. Power noted that it is important to keep everyone on the train to maintain the political support that will be required over time. She said that the Seminole Tribe's voice was not well heard and has been left at the end. There are still C&SF projects for the benefit of the Tribe that will never get done.

Ms. Wehle said the budget will be limited next year and suggested several options - revenue generated in Collier County can go to Picayune Strand or take the money to finish Lake Trafford or take the money and do a little bit of each project. When they start picking projects they have to tell people that they cannot do their project. Mr. Sole made a motion to strike the last line from the second bullet "before initiating construction ..."

Ms. Barbara Miedema (WRAC member) asked what was meant by consensus. Mr. Sole explained that they have consensus to complete MWD for example and noted the complete list of projects is helpful. Ms. Jodi Thomas (Nature Conservancy) asked whether Picayune Strand should be on the list. Mr. Sole said it is a CERP project so it was already contemplated.

#### *Third Bullet*

Mr. Sole noted this deals with those projects with separate funding sources. Herbert Hoover Dike is an example of a separate project that needs to be tracked. Mr. Appelbaum said they made a conscious effort not to include projects like the Long Term Water Quality Plan and the Northern Everglades Plan. Mr. Collins stated that the WMD gets their guidance from the Legislature and should not be included in these discussions.

Mr. Dunlop said he could argue in favor of including the Herbert Hoover Dike. But Ms. Lorion noted that the HHD project deals with public safety project and is not a restoration project and she would be concerned that if it was included it could look as if CERP costs were increasing even more. Mr. Sole said these projects do have an effect on CERP and the foundation projects and he would be concerned if they were removed since it may affect their decision making. He suggested possibly re-wording something like 'IDS should consider those projects outside of the scope... and the impacts those projects may have on restoration...'.

#### *Fourth Bullet*

Mr. Scott noted there is often a lag between the water quality improvement occurring and the response of the natural system. If they were putting no phosphorus into lake it would take 60 years to see the responses. There is a desire to see benefits and success but they have to look at the magnitude of the benefit.

Mr. Patrick Hayes noted a lot has changed since 1999 and at this point they have spent 80% of the money with minimal benefits.

#### *Fifth Bullet*

Ms. Lorion noted her NEPA concern adding that it looks like projects are being segmented. Mr. Appelbaum said all of CERP is covered by the programmatic EIS and they will do specific NEPA on the individual elements. Mr. Collins said this could be a solution for a lot of problems and may work for MWD where there is a second half. Ms. Lorion said a legal opinion is needed. Mr. Salt said the IAR concept helps address uncertainties that are holding them up but it needs to be implemented carefully. Mr. Collins said they could have done MWD this way and done much more, although he recognized it could be abused.

Ms. Miedema said they should articulate what they expect to get from an ecological standpoint from the investment they are making. Mr. Sole agreed the PIRs need to stand alone and in some cases two PIRs may have to be done.

*Sixth Bullet*

Ms. Miedema noted that if it is broader than CERP, then this bullet should be made consistent. Mr. Sole said this is saying the MISIP is a subset of projects.

*Seventh Bullet*

Mr. Sole noted that they would schedule projects when they are ready. Mr. Salt said there is a sequence that is driven by the physical nature of things. Mr. Appelbaum said they do get requests to do certain things first when it is physically not possible. Mr. Sole suggested editing the language in less technical terms.

*Eighth Bullet*

Mr. Appelbaum noted interim goals and targets would be used when appropriate. Ms. Lorion said the Miccosukee Tribe does not agree with all of them. Mr. Appelbaum noted that work done in the Central Everglades would not affect certain other projects. Ms. Miedema noted that there is a lot that they don't know and they may not have the science to support some of the interim goals. Mr. Sole noted RECOVER is trying to find those missing links as part of its efforts. Mr. Salt said the Interim Goals and Targets are broader statements. He acknowledged a lot of uncertainty and the intent is to include any new science if they have it.

*Ninth Bullet*

Mr. Sole noted there were no comments or concerns.

Mr. Appelbaum reviewed the project matrix noting projects were grouped alphabetically under different colored bands representing commitments, for example the green band indicates the foundation projects. He explained that commitment is the best rough guess.

*Sequencing Discussion:*

Mr. Appelbaum noted there are many approaches which include concentrating resources on fewer projects to get them done or spread the funds around. Mr. Collins said there is a danger in picking a few projects that have political support without taking care of the rest of the projects and you need to tell people how and when their project will be done.

Ms. Power said you want to see benefits achieved as quickly as possible and someone is going to have to make a decision and live by it. They must also respect the decades of work that has gone into getting everyone's buy-in. The Everglades has been a top priority for the last two administrations and she fears the day they get bumped. Mr. Sole said this is the synchronized schedule that they are working collectively on and will move forward with.

Ms. Lorion questioned why Seepage Management and the C-111 Spreader Canal are listed as re-establishing sheetflow to the Everglades when they are not. Mr. Appelbaum

said they help by keeping water in the system and they needed to categorize it somewhere. Mr. Sole said they should be able to help provide a sequencing plan to take to ask Congress for what you need.

Ms. Miedema noted the \$3.4 billion over ten years is more because they have to fix the levy which is key to making CERP work. They have to have that comprehensive picture as they move the plan forward and include those 'gorillas' as they move their plan forward.

Ms. Jodi Thomas noted there were challenges with development pressures and land prices. She said now was a window of opportunity where people are flocking to the doors of those that buy land. She suggested the Task Force direct as much resources as possible to these identified projects. She also noted while Florida Forever is out of money, there is a movement to double the funding to \$600 million and she urged everyone who is able to ensure this happens.

Mr. Appelbaum provided the members with the opportunity to provide their issues, concerns and priorities.

### **Next Steps**

Mr. Appelbaum noted he will take this to the Working Group and WRAC and come back to the Task Force at its May meeting.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. John Arthur Marshall said he thought they could simplify the guiding principles and suggested eliminating the entire bullet 'consistent with funding and physical constraints' since you need to consider both at the same time. He noted his concern with using Interim Goals and Objectives as guidance for IDS suggesting there should be consideration for the CERP goals and objectives in the Yellow Book.

Mr. Diterlizzi said he would be willing to put off his project if he had a definitive date of when it would get done - but unfortunately it is a moving target. He thought the IDS was about projects that are permitted and ready to go and he was not sure if all the projects were at those stages and the number of projects could be reduced if they look at those projects that are ready to go. Congress wants to see projects built that produce results.

### **Modified Water Deliveries**

Mr. Appelbaum provided a presentation on the Tentatively Selected Plan for Tamiami Trail. He reviewed the project background and project goals. He reviewed the swale pilot project that will be conducted at two locations and used to determine their effectiveness adding there is currently a wide range of opinions as to whether they will work or not. Mr. Appelbaum reviewed the Limited Re-Evaluation Report which includes 27 alternatives as well as the total cost estimate. Mr. Appelbaum reviewed how the alternatives were screened adding that those with costs greater than \$300 million are beyond what is do-able. He reviewed the no action and final four alternatives noting they

all have an L-29 Canal Stage of 8.0 feet explaining that at 8.5 feet you have more costs for road improvement.

Mr. Collins said why not go for the larger goal and go for the additional funding. Ms. Wehle asked if they could engage DOT. Ms. Salt said there will be real estate impacts as well. Mr. Collins suggested they talk about the land interests and raising the camps. Ms. Lorion said the Tribe's position is that they clean out the culverts, lower the conservation area by 1.28 feet and move on to DECOMP.

Mr. Appelbaum reviewed the potential cost savings including additional temporary easements for bridge alternatives and reducing bridge clearing. The Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) is 2.2.2.a utilizing the eastern one mile bridge alignment - a reduction of the plan originally recommended in 2005. The total project cost for the TSP is now down to \$190 million by removing the swales; applying the new FDOT criteria and moving the construction start date up. He reviewed the next steps noting it is due to Congress on July 1, 2008. He added the goal is to begin the bridge construction in the fall of 2008 so a lot has to happen to get the construction start.

Ms. Wehle asked whether an alternative funding source has been identified. There was no answer. Ms. Wehle said she would like the opportunity to see if there isn't an inexpensive option to bring the road from 8.0 to 8.5 feet. She hopes the LRR acknowledges that while this is a good incremental step forward that they need additional improvements to Tamiami Trail in order to move forward with DECOMP and manage expectations. The full project and raising the road to 9.7 feet would have resulted in raising one more camp which would have been a federal responsibility and it would be the preference of the state that any alterations would remain a federal responsibility. She would like the opportunity to discuss the test spreader being 3,000 feet rather than 1,000 feet. Prior to construction they would like to work out the access issue for Operation and Maintenance. She noted a lot of the similarities with the assumptions in the Yellow Book and a parallel conversation needs to occur about the terms in the Settlement Agreement which were based on different assumptions.

Ms. Lorion stated the Miccosukee Tribe is disappointed that their alternative to clean out the culverts was not considered. They have had three Tamiami Trail EIS' and three dead end excursions and Congress has made it clear that they cannot do DECOMP if MWD is not done and they cannot wait until 2012. The Tribe does support the pilot effort and suggested they do as much as they can under MWD and declare it done.

Mr. Collins asked if they had assurance that they will get the easements required by the park in that time frame. Mr. Dan Kimball said they have the Highway Easement Deed so the road could be moved into the park and a Special Use Permit to do the side by side construction. He said they are trying to weave it into the LRR and use that document to have the NEPA coverage so they can make the schedule.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Jonathan Ullman (Sierra Club) said the one mile bridge will not deliver the 4000 cfs or add any meaningful amount of water to Northeast Shark River Slough. If they were looking for a cheap plan the Blue Shanty was great and it avoided Osceola Camp and had the support of the environmental groups. The Blue Shanty Plan was thrown out because of the Corps' costing methods. He said the ultimate goal is to bridge most of this road which is critical to the flora and fauna and critical to keep sea level rise from engulfing the Everglades. He urged them not to let this be the 'Yazoo Bridge' and urged them to come up with a plan now because they can't wait. He urged this group to try harder and restore the faith of the public.

Ms. Sara Fain (NPCA) said her goal is for the Everglades to be restored and although everyone wanted more they have a one mile bridge and bridging is good. She recommended they re-prioritize DECOMP especially if they don't do what they set out to do in MWD. She noted the availability of one million dollars to do a Skyway Feasibility Study and she urged everyone to look at this as a possible next step.

Ms. Jacquie Weisblum (Audubon of Florida) added that Florida Bay is suffering and MWD, DECOMP and C-111 are all essential to restoring the health of the bay. The TSP as it is now is not going to achieve the benefits that Florida Bay needs and she supports some sort of road project. Ms. Weisblum also commented on the Northern Everglades Plan noting they are pleased to see the storage goals conform to the numbers Audubon of Florida had asked for and they will continue to work with Tom Teets as the plan moves forward.

Mr. Sole thanked members of the WRAC and the public and he encouraged everyone to stay engaged.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 PM.

*Approved Meeting Minutes  
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force  
West Palm Beach, Florida  
February 28, 2008*

**Welcome and Administrative Items**

Mr. Sole called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM.

Mr. John Marshall noted the Loxahatchee Administrative Building was destroyed during hurricanes and he encouraged everyone to buy a brick for posterity. He had brochures and noted the Foundation benefits in no way. Mike Sole suggested that they move up the reports due in 2008 presentation in the agenda sequence.

**Northern Everglades Plan**

Mr. Tom Teets reviewed the specific requirements in the 2007 Legislation which include building on existing plans and developing a technical plan to identify water quality treatment projects and water storage requirements for the Lake Okeechobee Watershed by February 1, 2008. The River Watershed Plans for the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie are due to the Legislature by January 2009. He reviewed the numerous opportunities provided for technical and public participation. He noted the key objectives include meeting the TMDLs and managing the water levels within an ecologically desirable range. There were four alternatives that were looked at as well as a hybrid of alternatives. The modified version of Alternative 4 includes additional water quality projects necessary to meet the Lake Okeechobee TMDL for total phosphorus. The preferred plan builds on existing plans. He reviewed the basis for the preferred plan which includes trying to minimize land acquisition efforts by maximizing use of state owned lands and promoting storage and treatment on privately owned lands. The Plan implementation strategy calls for the plan to be implemented in multiple stages with the initial implementation to include projects initiated from 2008 – 2010 followed by a mid-term implementation stage and a long-term implementation stage. Costs for the initial stage include \$260 – \$320 million for non-CERP and \$1 – 1.4 billion for CERP related costs within the Lake Okeechobee watershed project. CERP costs can be cost shared 50/50. Additional information is available on the web at:

[www.sfwmd.gov/northerneverglades](http://www.sfwmd.gov/northerneverglades)

Mr. Gene Duncan noted 514 tons of phosphorus are going into the lake and asked how far this alternative gets you to removing the remaining 409 tons. Mr. Sole replied they are 90% there. Mr. Sole said that if that reduction is achieved as they update the reports every year they will know whether the target is good or needs improvement. Ms. Wehle added that the loading is artificially low because of the drought and lack of inflows, but the goal is phenomenal and will have a positive impact on the environment.

Mr. Duncan asked whether the Army has determined if these projects are eligible for a 50/50 cost share. Mr. Appelbaum noted that Mr. Woodley has replied to the General Riley Memo with his determination and the policy lays out a framework for how projects would be cost shared. The Army could recommend Congress authorize a 50/50 cost

share but ultimately it will be up to Congress and this will be reviewed on a case by case determination.

### **The Year Ahead – Reports due in 2008**

Mr. May noted that the even years are the heavy reporting years for the Task Force. Currently the members report on 211 projects which span a 46 year period. He reviewed the role of the Task Force which is strategic coordination of all these projects and programs. He reviewed the purpose and milestones for each of the reports including the Strategy and Biennial Report (Volume 1), the Integrated Financial Plan (Volume 2), the Plan for Coordinating Science and the Land Acquisition Strategy. Mr. May also reviewed the milestones for 2008 and the opportunities for Task Force review and comments.

### **Assessing and Communicating System-wide Indicators**

Mr. Salt said this effort integrates science with management taking a huge amount of science and making it useful to managers. He reminded the Task Force that they directed the Science Coordination Group (SCG) in 2004 develop a small set of system-wide indicators for restoration. He reviewed the 11 ecological and 3 compatibility indicators as well as the process used to develop the indicators. He said the Task Force had approved the indicators for inclusion in the 2006 Strategy. He said the challenge for 2008 is how to integrate and communicate the assessments of the indicators.

Mr. Salt introduced Dr. Bob Doren, Dr. Joel Trexler and Dr. Joe Boyer who are three key scientist working on this effort. He said the scientific information had been organized into a standard format in three tiers. Tier three consists of the detailed research and includes hundreds of data sheets that are then synthesized into an assessment at tier two. Tier two information is then reported into a set of tier one stoplight assessments. He recommended an approach for extracting and linking this information to the 2008 Biennial Report assessments.

Ms. Allenbach asked whether they are planning to use the same baseline year for each of the indicators. Mr. Salt said it would depend on the indicator. Dr. Bob Doren added that each indicator will have a different reference period.

Mr. Sole thanked Mr. Salt, the SCG Chair Mr. Haddad, Dr. Doren and others for developing this approach. He reminded everyone that that these indicators are not regulatory tools but rather an important means of measuring success and communicating how they are doing.

### **Plan for Coordinating Science (PCS)**

Mr. May provided a presentation reviewing the purpose, major milestones and current status of the PCS. He explained that the Task Force approved its first PCS in December 2004. He reviewed the four major sections of the plan and said most of the discussion has centered on the science needs and gaps. He reviewed the actions the Task Force approved in May 2007 to complete the current draft of the PCS which include member edits and independent review.

He explained that Ms. Wehle and Secretary Sole had provided edits to the plan's executive summary. He introduced Dr. Jeff Jordan who is a Professor at the University of Georgia. Dr. Jordan explained that the panel was asked to review the PCS and develop a process for further prioritizing the gaps. He then reviewed the process developed and used by the panelists to prioritize the gaps.

Mr. Collins said there are research projects underway but it was not clear in the report when there is a total gap versus a partial gap. He was concerned that will create a false impression adding that a gap needs to be more clearly defined. Dr. Jordan explained that the gaps were not developed by the panel but that they were asked to prioritize them. Mr. Sole asked if the current language could be made clearer. Mr. Ortner agreed there are a number of scientific actions underway and the gaps are two years old. Mr. Collins said he thought they were going to be told what they needed to know in order to make good decisions but this appeared more like a wish list. He suggested there is a fundamental flaw in the process. Mr. Duncan said he agreed with Mr. Collins and said they know enough to build projects. Ms. Wehle said it would be useful to her to look at the science currently underway and determine if there is a 'deal killer' that will seriously flaw how a project is being built so that they don't regret the decisions they are making. There are limited dollars and they have to be deliberative and judicious in their allocation of dollars. Mr. Salt noted this is intended to be a coordination document and that it is different from an implementing document. The SCG was tasked to identify needs and gaps and the gaps are the uncertainties they need to deal with. Mr. Collins said the National Academy of Science gave them good advice on how to use Independent Adaptive Restoration (IAR) but his concern is that this document without the caveats could be problematic. Mr. May said that the work the scientists and Dr. Jordan's panel has raised questions and forced us to think about the highest and best use of our time. He also said that some scientific uncertainties could be addressed empirically by building the projects with IAR principles.

Ms. Power stated that this was one of the best discussions on this topic. She said it was comforting to have all this science supporting these projects since they have the fiscal responsibility to make sure they are doing it right.

Dr. Doren said the current thinking is to answer what is the critical science needed to support the things that will indicate what is successful restoration is. This concept could be fully explored in the 2010 PCS. Mr. Collins and Ms. Wehle agreed. Mr. May recommended they re-craft the 2008 report to reflect this discussion with emphasis on IAR while including the gap analysis as an appendix and Dr. Doren's recommendation to focus on the system-wide indicators.

Ms. Wehle said the current draft needs to be put in context noting that it does answer the original question that was asked. They have identified additional needs that include IAR, indicator species and the new science and the outcome would be to give the managers the opportunity to see where the gaps are. Mr. Sole concluded by saying they need to clarify the current draft for the purpose of approving it this year and then move towards full development of the 2010 document.

## Public Comment

Ms. Martha Musgrove (Decision Makers Forum) reported on the forum held regarding Lake Okeechobee. She stated that of the 200 people who attended, approximately 160 were local residents, public officials and local business owners. It was clear that they can't be overly optimistic about the recovery and yet they need a recovered lake and she encouraged everyone to set realistic targets. She urged the Task Force to continue its focus and work on MWD and Northern Everglades. She recognized that it won't be a good fiscal year and added that she has never seen a good year for environmental budgeting.

## Closing Comments

Mr. Sole summarized by saying they need to move forward with the MWD LRR. He said that he is looking forward to a groundbreaking during this calendar year. He said that more work that needs to be done and that the state and federal government will continue to show their support even in lean funding years. Ms. Wehle said she appreciated the great opportunity to engage in the discussions and was very happy with this meeting. Mr. May thanked the Chair and Vice Chair for their leadership and guidance and recognized the many contributions by the members. He thanked the Task Force staff for their work.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM.

Enclosures:

1. Administrative Items
  - a. Agenda
  - b. Draft Meeting Minutes, December 2007
  - c. 2008 Meeting Schedule
2. Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS) Workshop
  - a. Concept Paper
  - b. Project Matrix
  - c. Excerpt from the Programmatic Regulations (MISP)
  - d. Excerpt from the Programmatic Regulations (Adaptive Management)
  - e. 2005 Master Implementation Sequencing Plan
  - f. 2005 Report to Congress
  - g. Excerpt from the National Academies' report *Progress Toward Restoring the Everglades Biennial Review, 2006 (Incremental Adaptive Restoration)*
  - h. May 2007 GAO Report, *Restoration is Moving Forward but is facing significant delays, Implementation Challenges, and Rising Costs (Project Sequencing)*
3. Modified Water Deliveries (MWD)
  - a. Limited Reevaluation Report TSP Briefing
4. Northern Everglades Plan – River Watershed Protection Plan Development Process
  - a. Lake Okeechobee Phase II Technical Plan Presentation
  - b. Executive Summary, Phase II Technical Plan

5. Assessing and Communicating System-wide Indicators
6. Plan to Coordinate Science (PCS)
  - a. Requirements and Next Steps Presentation
  - b. Member Edits to the Executive Summary
  - c. Independent Review Presentation
  - d. Report of the Independent Panel Concerning Prioritizing Science Gaps
7. The Year Ahead – Reports due in 2008
  - a. Presentation
8. Next Steps and Evaluations
  - a. December 2007 Evaluation Summary