

COMPREHENSIVE EVERGLADES RESTORATION PLAN (CERP)

LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECT (LOWRP)

Presented to the Task Force by:
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October 29, 2019



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COMPREHENSIVE EVERGLADES RESTORATION PLAN

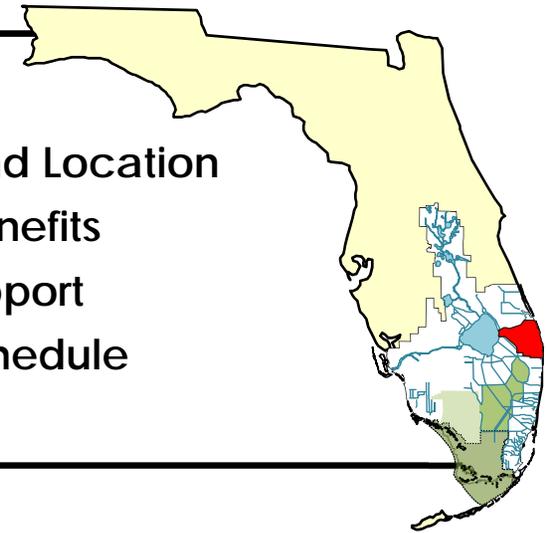
LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECT (LOWRP)

PRESENTATION PURPOSE

- Update the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force on progress made to complete the required Project Implementation Report (PIR) for agency approval and submission to Congress for authorization.

AGENDA

- Purpose and Location
- TSP and Benefits
- Project Support
- Current Schedule



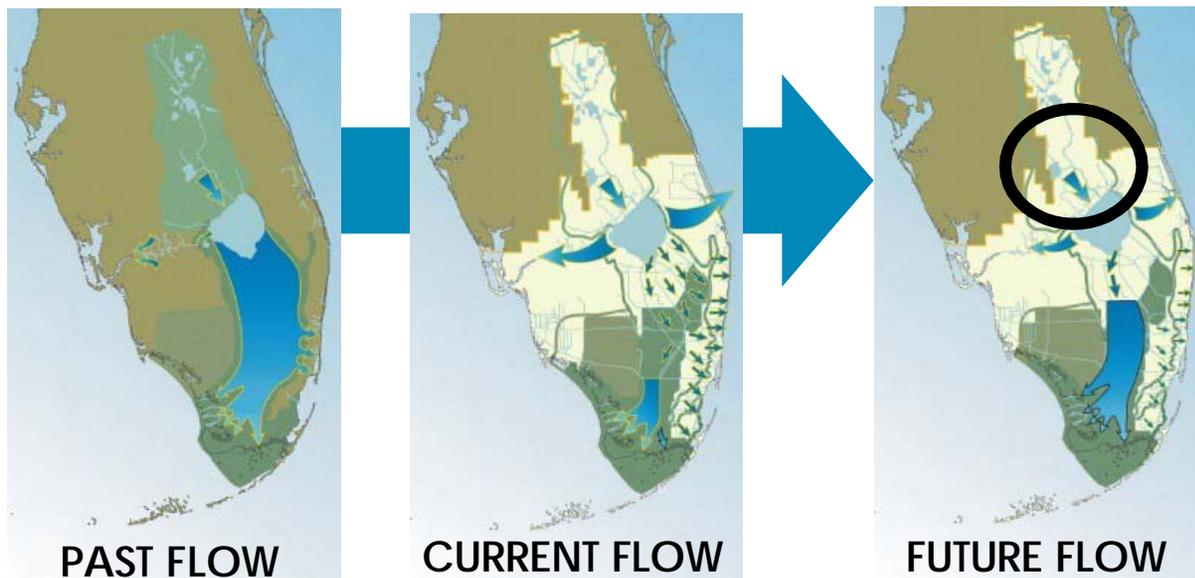
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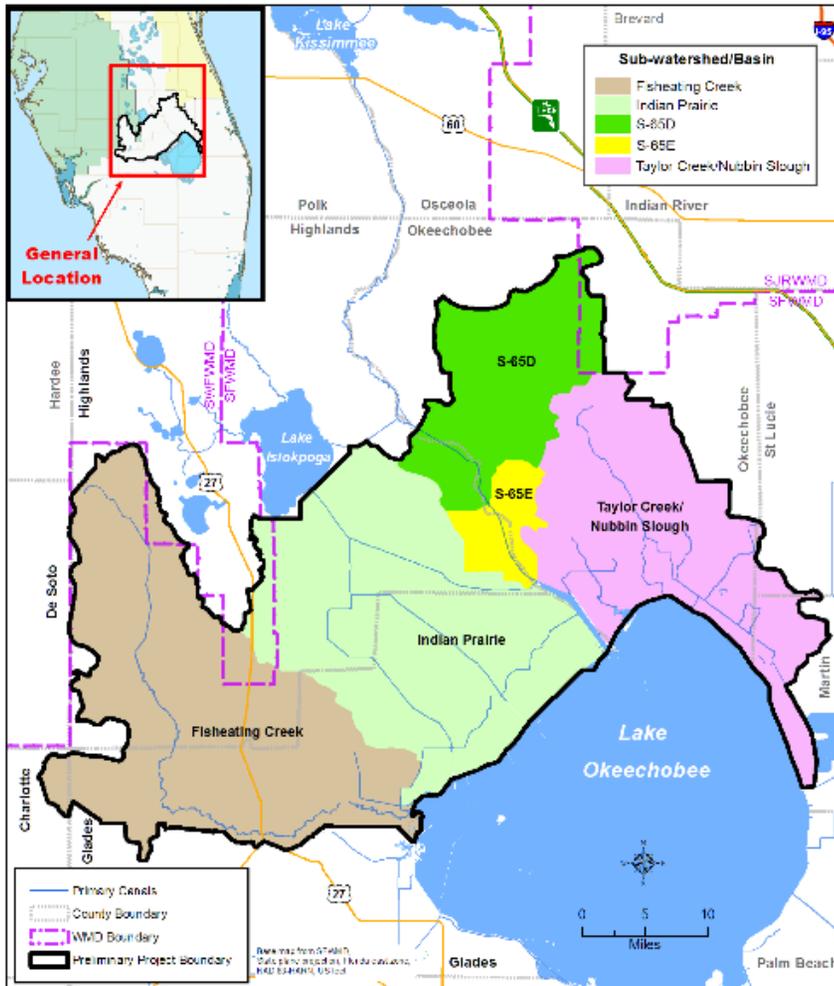
LOWRP AND CERP OVERVIEW



- C&SF eliminated much of the floodplain storage and changed conveyance from slow overland flow to rapid canal flow.
- CERP components are intended to restore those functions.
- LOWRP is the only CERP project that influences the timing and distribution of water entering Lake Okeechobee, which is key to Everglades restoration, estuary protection, and water supply.



LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECT (LOWRP) PROJECT AREA, PROBLEMS, AND OBJECTIVES



PROBLEMS

NORTHERN ESTUARIES: High volume freshwater releases from Lake Okeechobee are associated with environmental and economic impacts

LAKE OKEECHOBEE: Frequent and prolonged high and low water levels affect lake ecology

WETLANDS: Loss of wetland habitat throughout the study area

WATER SUPPLY: Drainage of the watershed and the associated loss in storage has impacted water supply

OBJECTIVES

Reduce high volume freshwater releases to the estuaries from Lake Okeechobee to improve habitats in the Northern Estuaries-**ACHIEVED**

Improve flows into Lake Okeechobee to increase the amount of time stages are within ecologically preferred levels -**ACHIEVED**

Increase the spatial extent and functionality of aquatic and wildlife habitat-**ACHIEVED**

Increase availability of the water supply to the existing legal water users of Lake Okeechobee commensurate with improving Lake Okeechobee ecology-**ACHIEVED**



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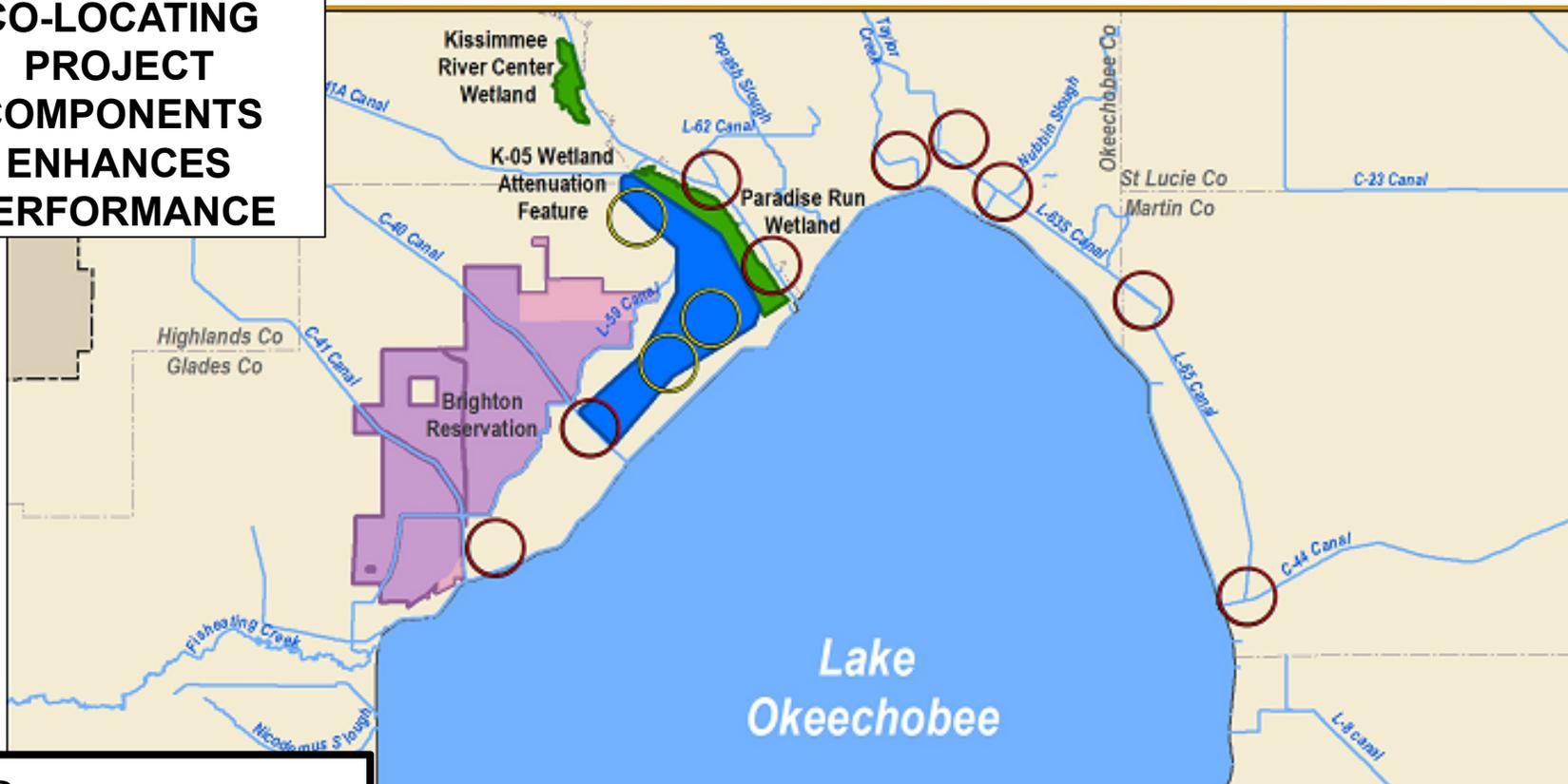


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LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECT (LOWRP)

TENTATIVELY SELECTED PLAN (TSP) - ALTERNATIVE 1BWR

**CO-LOCATING
PROJECT
COMPONENTS
ENHANCES
PERFORMANCE**



LEGEND

- Wetland Attenuation Feature
- Wetland Restoration
- Tribal Trust Lands
- Tribal Owned Lands
- ASR Well Cluster
- Wetland Attenuation ASR Well Cluster

SHALLOW STORAGE

- K-05 WAF
~ 13,600 acres
- 46,000 acre-feet storage

AQUIFER, STORAGE & RECOVERY

- 80 ASR wells
- 448,000 acre-feet of storage per year (400 MG/Day)

WETLAND RESTORATION

- KRC: ~1,200 acres
- PR: ~3,500 acres



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LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECT (LOWRP)

TENTATIVELY SELECTED PLAN (TSP): ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS



NORTHERN ESTUARIES

- Reduces high volume freshwater releases by 16% to St Lucie and 14% to Caloosahatchee
- Increases the resiliency and health of the Northern Estuaries for submerged aquatic vegetation, fisheries and oysters



LAKE OKEECHOBEE

- Improves the lake stage levels and habitat for aquatic and emergent vegetation, fish, and wading birds
- Reduces the rate of spread of invasive/exotic species



WETLAND BENEFITS

- Restores ~4,800 acres of historic Kissimmee River channel and floodplain wetlands
- Provides habitat for a diverse population of plant and animal species

WATER SUPPLY BENEFITS

- Reduces water supply cutback volume to the Lake Okeechobee Service Area (LOSA) by 24%
- Reduces frequency and severity of water restrictions to LOSA



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LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECT (LOWRP)
SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT COMMENTS

WRITTEN LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR DRAFT REPORT

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Department of Interior (DOI)
- South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC)
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)

SUMMARY OF AGENCY/TRIBAL/PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Broad support for storage north of Lake Okeechobee
- Seminole Tribe of Florida (STOF) objects to the TSP
- More water storage is needed
- Include water quality features (STAs)
- Mixed support for ASR wells
- Expand study area further north
- Maximize use of public lands
- Acquire land from willing sellers
- Wetland restoration is supported
- Concern of displacement of listed species
- Dam safety concerns
- Water quality concerns
- Support for recreational features



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LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECT (LOWRP) SCHEDULE

SMART PLANNING PROCESS

LOWRP IS HERE



MILESTONE DESCRIPTION	BASELINE APPROVED MILESTONE SCHEDULE	CURRENT APPROVED MILESTONE SCHEDULE
Study Initiation	25 JUL 2016	25 JUL 2016 [A]
Alternatives Milestone	03 NOV 2016	03 NOV 2016 [A]
Tentatively Selected Plan Milestone	25 JAN 2018	04 MAY 2018 [A]
Release Draft Report	23 FEB 2018	06 JUL 2018 [A]
Agency Decision Milestone	16 JUN 2018	14 MAR 2019 (A)
Senior Leaders Panel	19 APR 2019	6 FEB 2020
Chief's Report	25 JUL 2019	25 MAY 2020

LOWRP IS HERE



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