

Approved Minutes
Joint Meeting of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group
and the Science Coordination Group
Coral Springs, Florida
October 18, 2007

Welcome and Introductions

Ken Ammon called meeting to order at 1:20 PM and reminded everyone the meeting is being webcast. The agenda (Encl. 1) was presented and he suggested they swap the Strategic Goals agenda item with the 2005 REMAP effort. Ken Haddad welcomed everyone and noted the importance of both groups meeting jointly when appropriate. The July Working Group meeting minutes (Encl. 2) were provided for review.

Working Group Members	Oct 18	Oct 19	Alternates Attending
Ken Ammon, Chair – South Florida Water Management District	√	√	
Dan Kimball, Vice Chair NPS - Everglades National Park & Dry Tortugas	√		
Stu Appelbaum - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	√	√	
Billy Causey – NOAA, FL Keys Nat'l Marine Sanctuary	-	-	Dave Score
Alex Chester – NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service	-	-	Bonnie Ponwith
Sheri Coven - Department of Community Affairs	√	√	
Bob Crim - FL Dept. of Transportation	-	-	
Wayne Daltry – Southwest FL Regional Planning Council	√	√	
Gene Duncan – Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of FL	-	-	Joette Lorion
Joe Frank – Bureau of Indian Affairs	√	-	Mary Umholtz
Roman Gastesi, Miami Dade County	-		
George Hadley – U.S. Dept of Transportation	-	-	
Veronica Harrell-James - U.S. Attorney's Office	√	√	
Eric Hughes – Environmental Protection Agency			
Greg Knecht - FL Dept of Environmental Protection	√	√	
Vacant – Office of the Governor of Florida			
W. Ray Scott - FL Dept of Agriculture and Consumer Services	-	-	
Paul Souza – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	√	√	
Craig Tepper – Seminole Tribe of Florida			
Kenneth S. Todd – Palm Beach County Water Resources Manager	-	-	
Joe Walsh – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	√	-	
Jess D. Weaver – U.S.G.S.	-	-	
Rick Wilkins - Broward County Department of Natural Resource Protection	-		
Ed Wright – U.S. Department of Agriculture	-	-	
Greg May, Special Advisor	√	√	

Science Coordination Group Members

Ken Haddad, Chair, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	√	
Calvin Arnold, U.S. Department of Agriculture	√	
Lisa Beever, Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program	√	
Joan Browder, NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service	√	
Bob Doren, Department of Interior	√	
Chad Kennedy, FL Dept of Environmental Protection	√	√
Cherise Maples, Seminole Tribe of Florida	√	
Susan Markley, Department of Environmental Resource Management	√	√
John Ogden, South Florida Water Management District	√	
Bill Reck, U.S. Department of Agriculture	√	
Terry Rice, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians	√	√
Rock Salt, Department of Interior	√	√
Dan Scheidt, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	√	
Deborah Shafer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	√	√

Whiparound

Rock Salt reported the GEER Conference is scheduled to take place 28 – August 1, 2008 in Naples, Florida. A portion of the agenda is intended to engage management and policymakers. Dan Kimball recognized the Miami Dade Climate Change Task Force, the Governor’s Climate Change Summit in July, and the USGS’ briefing held on Sep 28. He noted that USGS has agreed to participate in a two-day event focused on south Florida to include sea level rise, changes in temperature and also discussing how it may affect the performance of CERP. Stu Appelbaum recognized that Dennis Duke has retired and he has taken over his position. He said they are in the 60-day public comment period for the revised Final Draft Guidance Memoranda and the document can be downloaded through their website.

Joe Walsh reported that FWC has re-prioritized how they deal with south Florida ecosystem activities and everyone will be seeing some new faces. Paul Souza said FWS held its 75th Duck Stamp contest which concluded the prior week and the program has helped to protect about five million acres of water fowl habitat. Joan Browder said the Florida Bay synthesis is a published document and available. She noted that since then there have been a lot of new studies and suggested that it is time for a new synthesis. Sheri Coven said Governor Christ signed three Executive Orders at the Climate Change Summit and the last one created a Governor’s Action Team on Energy and Climate Change and their first set of recommendations are due in November. The team has been tasked with developing a Plan on the linkage between land use and transportations and its impact on climate change. Additional information is available at: www.dep.state.fl.us. She also reported that DCA will be considering drafting legislation that will address Everglades protection through the Growth Management Act.

Joette Lorion expressed the Miccosukee Tribe’s concerns over the lack of water quality as reported in the SFWMD’s Draft Environmental Report for 2008 as well as the EPA report. Some of the water going into Everglades National Park at 11.1 ppb and is coming out of the STAs at 56 ppb which is higher than the interim goal. The Tribe had expected that they would be meeting the 10 ppb by December 31, 2006 and the Tribe believes that Congress expected the same thing and they cannot restore the Everglades with dirty water. The Tribe is also concerned with FWS’ proposed rule for the Cape Sable Seaside

Sparrow (CSSS) habitat which will prevent restoration of natural flows and Modified Water Deliveries (MWD) flows from moving forward. The modeling shows that the rule, if passed, will put unnatural water levels for subpopulation A of the Sparrow and prevent natural water flows from going through the Everglades. MWD continues to be delayed and the Tribe hopes the agencies will just clean out the culverts, do the swales and move as much water as is practicable so they can move on with CERP and DECOMP. The Tribe has seen the new park plan which will require a new EIS and delay MWDs. The Tribe urges the Working Group to look into this issue and come up with some sensible ideas. The Miccosukee Tribe is also concerned about the Lake Okeechobee Regulations Schedule and the impacts it will have on the Everglades, the estuaries and the future of CERP. Terri Rice echoed the comments. Veronica Harrell James reported the Department of Justice continues to move forward on the East Everglades litigation.

Dave Score discussed the persistent algal blooms in Central Florida Bay and the sponge die offs. He announced the Sanctuary along with the park and FWS will hold a synthesis workshop to discuss what they know about Florida Bay to include causation or lack thereof. John Ogden said he is trying to organize the GEER Conference session to link managers and decision makers with some of the big science issues and they will be looking to both these groups to help form that session which will be held using a coffee house format. Terry Rice said that back in 1992 they had Congressional Hearings and everyone agreed the main reason for the algal blooms were fresh water to Florida Bay and eighteen years later we still don't have MWD and C-111. Lisa Beever reported the SWRRT is working on its Charter, expand membership and mission statement and will be bringing that back to the Working Group. At its last meeting the team voted to urge that the Feasibility Study be kept whole and that the Caloosahatchee Basin not be pulled from it. Team also has concerns with reduction in monitoring budgets and the elimination of macro-invertebrate monitoring in the Picayune Strand and the elimination of fisheries independent monitoring in the Caloosahatchee.

Greg May reported the next Task Force meeting will be held in December at the Miami Hyatt Regency and the field trip will focus on Biscayne Bay. Information from the September Task Force meeting as well as logistical information on the December meeting will be available at www.sfrestore.org. Ken Ammon reported that the SFWMD had negotiated with FDOT to build a \$20 million bridge along the improved section of U.S. 1 for the C-111 Spreader Canal project. The bridge location would be where they would re-divert water underneath US 1 from the west to the east to re-hydrate wetlands. He said the project has changed to address environmental concerns raised by NGOs and the results of additional modeling done based on those concerns. The modeling shows that if they were to put water in the quantities discussed they would impact areas as far north as southern Miami. The SFWMD has relieved FDOT from their obligation of building that bridge and there will be a box culvert instead which will allow some drainage. For the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands project, the Governing Board identified an area along the coastal fringe that would be protected for Everglades restoration and no ERP permits would be entertained in that area. He commended the Governing Board and said it was a tremendous first step.

Long Term Restoration Issues

Ecological Indicators

Bob Doren reminded the group that the Task Force asked the SCG to develop a small set of system-wide indicators for measuring and assessing restoration. He introduced Joel Trexler and Joe Boyer who are scientists at FIU. He provided a Power Point (Encl. 3a) on the ecological and compatibility indicators. He reviewed the four steps used to develop the indicators. He reviewed the eleven ecological indicators which cover Goals 1 and 2 as well as the three compatibility indicators (water volume, salinity intrusion in the Biscayne Aquifer and flood protection south Dade agriculture) for Goal 3. He noted the SCG recognized the concept of communicating the indicators was just as critical as the indicators. He said the SCG identified three tiers of information and reviewed examples (Encl. 3b, 3c, 3d) and how each one would be used. Bob said that the stoplight key findings report is intended for a policy making audience such as the Task Force and he provided an in depth review of two indicators (algal blooms and fish). He clarified that there is no one indicator that covers the entire system biologically and they will synthesize whenever possible. They will have 11 reports, one for each of the ecological indicators as well as a synthesis report on what the data collectively tells them.

Sheri Coven asked why there were gaps in the indicators for Goal 3 and when they would be addressed. Bob Doren noted the SCG is made up mostly of biologists who don't know much about built system hydrologic indicators. Greg May added this challenge was much more difficult than they had originally thought and they had been working with Jim Murley and his group on how best to get the compatibility snapshots. Greg May asked Bob how things beyond our control will be addressed by the ecological indicators report. Bob Doren agreed being able to distinguish between what we do and what the natural system does is important. He noted there are millions of things going on that they are not measuring and may never measure but they need to make the assumption that many things going on in the environment are reflected in the chosen indicators. The key relationships such as water depth, timing and how people manipulate water and how nature manipulates water are key elements they can start separating.

Joette Lorion said the IOP keeps the park unnaturally dry and Dr. Wiley Kitchens found that the dry downs are interfering with snail kite nesting so there are areas of the system where you can see how people are affecting the system. Bob Doren said we need to be able to say how our manipulation of water is affecting the system. Paul Souza asked how they can tease out the effects of drought versus the effects of water management. Joel Trexler said this is explicitly what he did in his report and noted that they had data from 1996 to the end of 1999 which was a pre-IOP period and they were able to project into the post IOP years and generate a prediction of higher water depths and fewer dry down frequencies. Joe Boyer noted that the presentations represent two extreme ranges of the indicators in term of what kind of information goes into them. For example, with chlorophyll they take a water sample and that is all they have. They do not have a functioning hydro-dynamic model or water quality model in the bay and they need to get the Florida Bay and Florida Keys Feasibility Study moving. Bob Doren reviewed the next steps which include the publishing of all eleven of the indicators in a special issue of *Ecological Indicators* in the Sep–Oct 2008.

2005 Everglades REMAP

Peter Kalla provided a Power Point (Encl. 4) that reviewed the history of the EMAP design which is widely used by EPA throughout the country. Initially used to measure acid rain it is now used for many types of ecosystems. They took samples from wherever they could safely land a helicopter and have samples for every habitat type. Peter noted that random samples allow you to make estimates with known confidence. Dan Scheidt reviewed the amount of phosphorus in the canal system both during the dry and the wet season. He noted that as of today they have sampled 1,145 different locations since 1995 and the project cost to date is \$6 million. The project data has been used extensively to include but is not limited to helping to establish the Pre-CERP baseline, fill monitoring and assessment gaps and provide input to CERP conceptual models. He reviewed the program since its inception noting it has grown and they are now focusing on the marsh rather than the canals. He also reviewed the field techniques and the massive amount of collaboration which went into the effort as well as some of the major findings on phosphorus, mercury, sulfur, soil thickness and subsidence and sulfur enrichment.

Joette Lorion asked about the percentage of increase in the soil phosphorus. Dan Scheidt acknowledged there has been an increase and referred Ms. Lorion to page 3 and 62 of the Executive Summary. Ms. Lorion asked whether the samples were taken from the same locations and Dan Scheidt said they were random samples taken from the same place. Ken Ammon said you can say that the trend is upwards because you are not taking samples at the same station. Dan Scheidt said he would not call this trend analysis because they do not have enough data points and it is more like change detection. It is a snapshot and they are able to make an overall statement about the system. There is a higher percentage of the area that had a concentration above 500 mg/kg in soil phosphorus. The conclusions are that contamination of water, soil and fish is extensive; ecological conditions vary with location, mercury in mosquitofish has declined and phosphorus in soil has increased and there is no change in soil thickness. Further analysis is ongoing and journal publications are forthcoming. The report is available on the EPA website under the Region 4 publications section.

Public Comment

Ms. Juanita Greene (Friends of the Everglades) said they have been concerned about water quality in the Everglades for the past 25 years. The EPA report along with recent revelations about compliance measures in the Everglades Agricultural Area reveal that what they feared is already happening. Fifty percent of the soil is now contaminated with phosphorus and 25% is now reported to be impacted by phosphorus. This Everglades can't take anymore and cattails are a sure sign of water pollution and they are expanding in the Everglades. She urged the Working Group to 'not put their heads in the sand' and said extreme measures are needed. She thanked EPA for their excellent and helpful report.

Mr. Richard Grosso (Everglades Law Center) commented that this is telling us that the ecosystem is still in trouble and getting worse. When they talk about development north of the lake or about how much land they need in the EAA for storage and STAs it has to be based on the ecological responses. He hoped the group would take the report and look

at how they need to do things differently especially since CERP assumed the water would be clean. Mr. Ken Ammon said this is not just a state issue and they have over \$1 billion in STAs another \$700 million in the EAA, Phase I Reservoir, they have taken 60,000 acres out of agriculture for the construction of the STAs and they have just embarked on the Northern Everglades initiative. The state and the district are committed to continuing to work through this.

Ms. Sara Fein (National Parks Conservation Assoc.) underscored Ms. Greene's and Mr. Grosso's comments. She noted that the same day the EPA report was released was the same day the de-listing of ENP as an endangered site off the World Heritage list was being discussed. The de-listing is saying the Everglades is doing okay when it is actually worse. They are going to need to look at more storage and treatment if they are going to succeed.

Mr. Patrick Hayes (Martine County Soil and Water) noted both reports were concentrated below the lake and did not include their northern estuaries and hoped the study areas will be expanded. Peter Kalla said EPA is doing the National Coastal Assessment in partnership with the State of Florida and all the estuaries are being surveyed on a periodic basis.

Avian Ecology Workshop

Paul Souza provided a Power Point (Encl. 5) on the workshop noting the importance of advancing in the face of adversity and recovering these species as quickly as possible in concert with restoration. He reviewed the findings the original Avian Ecology Workshop which was held in 2003 that said that there were strong indications that restoration will benefit the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow, Snail Kite, Wood Stork and the Roseate Spoonbill. The other finding was that there are uncertainties because of the habitat changes. He reviewed the charge of the Sustainable Ecosystems Institute which was to conduct an independent review of the best available science in an open forum and prepare recommendations and have peer review. He reviewed the diverse array of expertise among the panel of scientists. The workshop was held at FIU in August 2007 and was well attended with about 100 people in attendance and many others participating via the web cast. The panel will provide a scientific report in December 2007 which synthesizes the information and will be presented to the Task Force at its December meeting. The information will be further refined and then submitted for peer review.

Miccosukee View of the Avian Ecology Workshop

Joette Lorion provided a handout (Encl. 6) and read quotes from the handout. She noted that the workshop was held because there is a conflict between restoration flows and what FWS thinks the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow needs under IOP. The FWS proposed rule which they may adopt has a hydrological management objective that will keep water unnaturally low and could impede any restoration of natural flows from Modified Water Deliveries (MWD) and CERP. She noted that they are keeping water lower than NSM and they have actually moved away from restoration and sub population A of the sparrow has less nesting days available. We have caused tree island destruction in WCA 3A and caused problems for the endangered snail kite. The FWS Biological Opinion states that

IOP stages will result in the degradation of 184,320 acres of snail kite critical habitat over the next four years when stages exceed 10.5 feet.

Dr. Wiley Kitchens and Dr. Phil Darby presented their research which shows the habitat in WCA 3A has changed dramatically and is becoming a lake. They also show that the snail kite has declined 50% since 2000 and Dr. Kitchens said he expects extirpation in the next 20 years. She noted the Tribe's concern that the Report from the Avian Ecology Workshop will come out after the FWS rule will be adopted. The Tribe does not believe restoration conflicts with the sparrow. The Tribe's concerns with the FWS rule is that in order to create these unnatural conditions, they will have to put in more levies to dry out the area. The Working Group and Science Coordination Group need to look at these issues and she suggested having presentations on the snail kite, apple snail, WCA 3-A, the hydrology and how the park is being affected by being kept unnaturally dry. The multi species recovery plan is a top priority but unfortunately they have been doing single species management over the last nine years. She also read an excerpt from a 2000 e-mail from Steve Forsythe to Sam Hamilton. She commended Paul Souza as being the first person from FWS to openly admit there is a conflict and an issue and the Tribe hopes he is brave enough to say that FWS cannot do this rule because it will stop CERP and CSOP. She closed by saying that the workshop was too little and possibly too late.

Paul Souza said there is a wealth of science on these issues and they are collectively asking the right questions now which include asking what could be done during this period of transition. Do they need to think about captive breeding, translocation, active management to help expedite the change and the answer is yes in order to get to restoration and recovery. FWS is under a court order to complete the critical habitat rule and they had two robust public comment periods and Paul offered to provide a presentation on their decision.

Ken Ammon agreed it would be helpful to have that briefing at the next meeting. He also asked whether the group wanted to deliberate some of the impacts due to the operational schedules that have been in place. Greg May noted that the next time the group meets they will have both the FWS decision and the Avian Ecology Workshop report. Joette Lorion said there is important research going on that should be brought to this group such as the work being done by Dr. Wiley Kitchens and others. Paul Souza suggested they first have a chance to hear the results from the workshop and then consider how to proceed. Susan Markley said she found the workshop to be illuminating and said the individual members need to take it upon themselves to get the information. John Ogden said the FWS decision on critical habitat and the Avian Ecology Report may require us sitting down to determine what the impacts are which may be large or small. He added that he sees the potential for a serious conflict. Joette Lorion agreed and added they need to work within the Endangered Species Act in order to move forward. Ken Ammon said Paul Souza could provide his report at the next meeting and then follow-on discussions at a subsequent meeting. Rock Salt clarified it is the Secretary of Interior's decision not Paul Souza's.

Strategic Goals and Objectives Overview

Greg May reiterated that the Task Force asked the Working Group to review the sub-goals and objectives at its March meeting. The purpose of the strategy is to document the coordination role of the TF/WG/SCG and implementation role of the member organizations. He provided a Power Point (Encl. 7) so that the WG could review each of the current objectives with recommended changes if any.

Objective 1-A.1: Wayne Daltry said the word ‘additional’ is missing and asked about the base year. He noted they went from acre feet to gallons per day and suggested using one unit of measure throughout. Wayne said he wants to see 1.4 million. Rock Salt said the number Wayne is referring to is the ASR capability (in Objective 1-A.2). Wayne asked that the narrative state what this is trying to achieve. Greg May said that the ASR pilot projects and regional studies will provide a lot of new information. He noted that overall the single biggest question they heard from the public and members during this review was if these objectives are achieved, then does that mean they will have achieved the goal. He reported that they are closer to achieving that condition for Goal 1 and less so for Goal 2 and 3. For Goal 2 for example the optimum mix of biological, chemical and mechanical treatment is not known at this time. He said the ultimate goal is to answer the question for all three of the Goals. He also noted the narratives for each sub goal should include a description of all the major programs and projects that contribute to achieving the goals, even if it didn’t have a quantifiable unit of measurement (necessary for establishing an objective). Joe Frank asked if they should target a recovery rate for ASR. Greg May said that during the development of CERP two recovery rates were used and Terry Rice said it was 70 % recovery rate.

Objective 1-B.2: Greg Knecht noted they have more TMDLs than those required by 2011 and they have water quality programs other than TMDLs that can be included. Susan Markley said it does not get to the whole range of issues and they need to think about it. Greg May said he hopes all of the programs are captured in the narrative. Greg Knecht said the objective is okay for now.

Objective 2-A.2: Deborah Shafer asked why coral reefs were singled out and there was no mention of other habitat types such as seagrasses and mangroves. Rock Salt said they were looking for an objective and coral reef was selected at the time and someone raised their hand to provide a project sheet. Greg May asked that the other habitat types were included in the narrative. Dave Score said it is the system itself they want to capture in the narrative and he said that NOAA may revisit the objective in a subsequent plan.

Objective 2-A.3: John Ogden said the objective doesn’t reflect restoration. Ken Ammon added that it may take fifty years to achieve restoration and they need to preserve in the meantime. Joe Walsh said so much of this seems centered on CERP. He said the projects in the SW Florida Feasibility Study need to be included. He asked if they are they looking at how mitigation banks and parks are certified for habitat restoration noting that was much bigger than CERP. Greg May reminded everyone that this is a coordination document while agreeing that mitigation banks need to be included in the narrative. He confirmed that the geographical scope of the strategy was larger than

CERP and included important projects like Kissimmee and MWD. Ken Ammon added they need to recognize and include ongoing studies.

Objective 2-B.1: Bob Doren explained that the proposed 180,000 acres of treatment are based on the amount of existing resources available to chemically treat exotic plants. Greg May clarified the reference to management plans will be retained in the narrative.

Objective 2-B.2: Rock Salt noted the impressive efforts underway to control Melaleuca and Brazilian Pepper, but he was not sure if there was a way to get at a number. Susan Markley said they should not be afraid to put goals and objectives even if they don't meet them. Bob Doren said they are now trying to take what has been learned over the last twenty years for Melaleuca and apply it. Ken Ammon asked about the difference between 2-B.1 and 2-B.2. Bob Doren noted it is very complicated and it is intended to show those things that are quantifiable. Joe Walsh recommended combining 1 and 2. Bob Doren noted that they are not necessarily the same thing. Rock Salt explained that for those species where they achieved maintenance control the first objective is the amount of treatment they need to sustain that and the second objective is for those species where they have not achieved that maintenance control.

Objective 2-B.3: Greg May explained this would be a new objective to deal with exotic animals.

Objective 3-A.1: Sheri Coven said the proposed objective sounded redundant. Ken Ammon suggested changing to 'land use analysis for compatibility with selected restoration projects'. Sheri Coven agreed it was a good change. Greg May noted the current objective would be moved and replaced with 'prepare a land use analysis for selected restoration projects'.

Objective 3-A.3: Greg May noted they will spell out the specific programs that are most applicable for south Florida

Public Comment

Mr. Richard Grosso said he appreciates the recommendations on the land use items. He said the federal resource agencies have the technical authority to make their voice known clearly when they are entertaining development approval and comprehensive plan amendments. It is not about taking legal authority you don't have but it is about providing the technical and scientific information with which to base their decisions. He also said that federal agencies should engage in comprehensive environmental analysis when federal permits are being requested. He encouraged the members to try to change the culture as soon as you can. Greg May asked Richard if he knew how useful the Corps statewide GIS data and information would be. Richard responded that whatever information the federal resource agencies have needs to be provided to DCA since they do not do their own analysis and comprehensive plan amendments are based on available data.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

*Approved Meeting Minutes
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group
Coral Springs, Florida
October 19, 2007*

Administrative Items

Ken Ammon called the regular meeting to order at 8:50 AM. He noted there are edits to the July meeting minutes. Page 2 – second line change to ‘which will result in enhancing...’ and page 6 paragraph 4 ‘Yellow Book, the flowway may...’. Wayne Daltry made a motion to approve the minutes as amended which was seconded by Greg Knecht and minutes were approved as amended.

Executive Director’s Report

Greg May announced that resolution and handouts from the September Task Force meeting are available at: sfrestore.org along with information for the December meeting. He asked for feedback on the draft 2008 meeting calendar which will be provided it via e-mail.

Quarter in Review and Quarter Ahead

Biscayne Bay Regional Restoration Coordination Team (BBRRCT)

Greg May recalled Evan Skornick’s presentation on behalf of the team at the July meeting. Because of the extensive nature of the proposed changes to the charter the Working Group deferred action until the October meeting (Encl. 8). One recommendation is that the team elects its chair and creates a co-chair position. Greg explained that the last three chairs have been appointed by the Working Group and Evan Skornick was appointed interim Chair when Audrey Ordines left. He said that a compromise position could be to have the Working Group appoint the Chair and have the team elect their Vice Chair.

Wayne Daltry made a motion to accept the four recommendations from the team which was seconded by Bonnie Ponwith. Ken Ammon said that since this team reports to the Working Group the Working Group should appoint the Chair and the team elect their Vice Chair. Paul Souza agreed it would be wise and made a motion to appoint Evan Skornick as Chair. Wayne Daltry accepted a friendly amendment. Wayne moved for the recommendation presented by the team to let the team elect its Chair and Sheri Coven seconded motion.

Paul Souza clarified his motion is that they elect Evan Skornick as Chair team and have the team itself elect a Vice Chair. Greg Knecht seconded motion. Sheri Coven clarified the motion is that the Working Group will always select the Chair and subsequently nominates Evan Skornick as the Chair of the BBRRCT. The motion passed unanimously. Evan Skornick noted the team has not yet had discussions as to who would serve as Vice Chair. Wayne Daltry asked to see the membership list. Ken Ammon agreed it would be ideal to bring entire list to the next meeting as well as recommendations for missing NGOs and/or agencies so that the Working Group could ratify the list.

Litigation Update

Veronica Harrell-James reviewed the handout (Encl. 9) with a list of south Florida/Everglades litigation cases in federal court which was compiled by Mark Brown. The list provides a status update on eighteen ongoing cases including the East Everglades litigation. Joette Lorion commented that it is a self serving report and leaves out a lot of things and doesn't mention the Miccosukee Tribe as a party to some of the cases. She noted the Tribe also appealed against EPA regarding FOIA records and that has been left out. Veronica explained the purpose is to identify cases and provide an overview of the case and it is not intended to be self serving. Ken Ammon said it would be useful to include a qualifier at the top of the document and possibly have updates from other parties around the table at future meetings. Terry Rice said the original intent was for everyone's perspective to be included and the update could be provided by a neutral person. Ken Ammon said future updates could include just the facts and the Working Group could later decide to have three-party update. Veronica will take those recommendations to Mark Brown.

Consultation

Melaleuca Eradication and other exotic plants

John Morgan provided a Power Point (Encl. 10) noted the project purpose is to manage Melaleuca and other exotic plants threatening the south Florida ecosystem by increasing the effectiveness of biological control technologies. Shauna Allen reviewed the project details noting and pointed to the fact that this is a reaffirmation PIR. The project was in the Yellow Book and the needs and objectives have not changed. They reviewed how biological control agents are evaluated and approved noting that four have been approved for Melaleuca and two are in the process of being approved. They reviewed the extent of exotic plant invasion and the strategies they are using to get these controls out into the field. John Morgan reviewed the alternatives that were evaluated and the screening criteria which were used. The final array of alternatives (3, 5, 9 and 16) was reviewed as well as a cost comparison of all four alternatives.

Stu Appelbaum complemented John, Shauna and the rest of the team for their work. He suggested they read the National Academy of Science report on IAR and include some explicit learning objectives and make the case for an IAR approach. Greg Knecht agreed they have done a tremendous job and asked if they could include what 'a no action' approach would cost. Shauna Allen replied that they have identified a cost and all the agencies work together to track that but the impacts are disturbing since they continue to grow.

Ken Ammon noted there was no public comment and the Working Group would report to the Task Force at its December meeting that it is fully supportive of this effort and encouraged the inclusion of IAR per the NAS' recommendations.

Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands – Information Update

Matt Morrison provided a Power Point (Encl. 11) reviewing the project objectives, plan formulation and how the TSP was formulated. He reported the final array included four alternative plans (No action, Alt M, Alt O and Alt Q) and the team selected Alternative O

as the tentatively selected plan. It is the only alternative that is both cost effective and a best buy for all the habitat eco-zones. Matt reviewed the major features and the risks and uncertainties associated with the TSP which include modeling data uncertainty and land availability and cost due to development pressure. It will be a phased implementation which will provide for early construction and benefits and utilizes available water now. The first PIR is a subset of Alternative O and will include all the Deering Estate features, over half of the Cutler Wetlands features, a quarter of the L-31E Flow Way features and all of the Acceler8 features. The total cost for the first PIR is \$218 million and represents about 44% of the total cost for Alternative O. Final PIR/NEPA Report is expected in December 2008 and the Chief's Report is planned for March 2009.

Joette Lorion asked what the benefits would be of separating into increments. Matt Morrison replied that by moving forward with first increment they will be able to see the effect of the features and have a feedback loop. They are confident they will see ecological benefits. Joette Lorion also asked about FPL and the two nuclear power plants. Matt noted that water is a limited commodity and FPL is going to have to go to some alternative type of water source or cooling and are looking at different technologies to include using saltwater. They have met with FPL and are working with them to ensure whatever they do is a success. Matt noted the Governing Board identified a priority one area adjacent to Biscayne National Park that is off limits to further development. Ken Ammon added that the existing canal system is used mostly for cooling and FPL has expressed a desire to feed the expansion portion with Miami Dade County's reuse. So we will have to be careful how this proceeds and where they go for their alternative water supply. Ken Ammon asked about the footprint. Matt clarified it is a smaller footprint than the Yellow Book but Alternative O includes the entire footprint and not a reduced footprint. Ken said they want to make sure the entire footprint is there to guide the federal, state and local government to protect those lands to the maximum extent possible.

Greg May asked if this was the first PIR to use the IAR approach. Stu Appelbaum said they haven't changed the benefit stream and are not comfortable going beyond the first phase for now. The question is whether to recommend the entire TSP with phased implementation or to get the whole thing authorized. For now they are phased for implementation. Matt Morrison added that Alternative O is based on the habitat units, so it is the TSP. Ken Ammon noted the importance of the process because they made the policy decision several months ago to phase certain PIRs such as C-111, Biscayne Bay and EAA to make sure they could match up sub elements during construction with Acceler8. Susan Markley noted the team has worked hard and with the wording and future phases and team believes all the components to be important. Miami Dade County is committed to moving forward with re-use and it is very important for the Working Group and PDT to continue sending the message that there is a TSP for the entire project and it is important to keep the entire footprint but they want to move forward to get early benefits. Paul Souza noting how critical water availability is asked whether they are looking beyond reuse. Matt replied it would not be evaluated by the team adding that evaluation needs to take place from programmatic standpoint. The team will look at potential opportunities to optimize water management but it is not the responsibility of

the team to find more water. Ken Ammon noted the GMs will provide guidance for a system-wide operating manual to try to achieve the maximum benefits from the projects that are constructed.

Public Comment

Jacqui Cohen (Audubon of Florida) said this project is integral to restoring the health of the Biscayne Bay area and the Governing Board recently directed staff to refrain from issuing Environmental Resource Permits in the BBCW area and it is an important first step. It is important to look at water storage and there are concerns with L-31. They requested that all meetings are publicly noticed so that they can be involved in the entire process.

Modified Water Deliveries (MWD)

Stu Appelbaum reported they are nearing completion with construction of the 8.5 square mile area. The language in the conference report about Tamiami Trail calls for providing 1400 cfs and references 4,000 cfs as the ultimate goal. Congress requires a report in July 2008. They have a Limited Re-Evaluation Report underway and none of the alternatives being looked at are new with the exception of the one suggested by ENP to have them look at one mile bridge on the west with the addition of the north south levy to confine the flows to the western side of the trail and not impact the eastern side. ENP has agreed to pursue a pilot project for the swales and they will try to implement it as soon as possible. Monitoring will be included as part of the pilot projects. Terry Rice said he would like to see this done correctly and the Tribe would like to see one of the pilot projects take everything out. Those culverts have never been maintained and you have sediment, trees and vegetation that provide a resistance to flow and they need to use pilot projects effectively.

Joette Lorion said the Tribe is concerned with the discussions about bridges again and continued delays. Stu said they will look at a full range of alternatives that will lay out the costs, benefits and time delay. Ken Ammon said he doesn't understand why they don't take the IAR approach and get the culverts cleaned and he implored the federal government to consider that.

Strategic Goals and Objectives Overview - Continued

Greg May resumed his presentation of the proposed changes to the remaining objectives.

Objective 3-B.1: Wayne Daltry noted his concern that rehydration requires raising the water table and he is concerned that as they move forward they will be adversely affecting flood protection. Greg asked if he had an estimated time on when the three counties could report back on their analysis. Wayne said that might not be possible. Greg asked what it was about the language that was concerning him. The Working Group discussed several options and Wayne said he liked the revised language.

Objective 3-B.2: Herbert Hoover Dike new flood protection recommendation.

Objective 3-C.1: Sherri Coven said thought there was a desire to address the issue of balancing the human and natural system. Ken Ammon said the local governments need to plan and expand their sources of water. Greg said that achieving the subgoal is a team effort and should be reflected in the narrative. Wayne Daltry said the rate necessary would be determined by MFLs, for example. Ken Ammon said this should say something like 'not impact the natural system'.

Greg May noted the next steps include a final presentation to the WRAC at their Nov. 8 meeting. He proposed the Working Group finish as much as it can over the next week and include that work in the Phase 1 recommendations. Everything else would be worked on during subsequent Phase 2 recommendations. Ken Ammon suggested they work via e-mail the following week.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 AM.

Enclosures:

1. Agenda
2. Draft Meeting Minutes, July 2007
3. System-wide Ecological Indicators
 - a. Power Point
 - b. Florida Bay Southern Estuaries Systems' Status Report for RECOVER
 - c. Stoplight Report Card on Algal Blooms
 - d. Stoplight Report Card on Fish
4. 2005 Everglades REMAP Power Point
5. Avian Ecology Workshop Power Point
6. Miccosukee Tribe View of the Avian Ecology Workshop
 - a. Everglades Hydrology and Avian Ecology
 - b. Hydrological Peer Review
7. Initial Strategy Recommendations Power Point
8. BRRCT Power Point
9. Litigation Update
10. Consultation Workshop
 - a. Melaleuca Eradication Power Point
 - b. Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Power Point