Approved Joint Meeting Minutes
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group
and Science Coordination Group
West Palm Beach, Florida
July 15, 2009

Opening Remarks and Administrative Items

Dan Kimball called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM and welcomed the members to the joint meeting. He reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast. The Working Group minutes for the January meeting and the summary notes for the April workshop were presented for approval. They were both approved without objection.

In Attendance:	Joint Mtg	Regular Mtg	
Working Group (WG) Members	July 15	July 16	Alternates
Dan Kimball - Chair - NPS - ENP & Dry Tortugas	√	√	
Greg Knecht - Vice Chair - FL Dept of Environmental Protection	√	√	
Ken Ammon - South Florida Water Management District	-		Tom Teets
Stu Appelbaum - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	√	√	
Billy Causey - NOAA, FL Keys Nat'l Marine Sanctuary	-		
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	√	√	
Joe Frank - Bureau of Indian Affairs	√	√	
Roman Gastesi - Local Government	-		
George Hadley - U.S. Dept of Transportation	-		
Veronica Harrell - James - U.S. Attorney's Office	√	√	
Eric Hughes - Environmental Protection Agency	√	√	
Bonnie Ponwith - NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service	-	-	Theo Brainerd
Barry Rosen - United States Geological Survey	√	-	Stephanie Romanach
W. Ray Scott - FL Dept of Agriculture and Consumer Services	-		
Paul Souza - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	-	√	Pam Repp
Jon Steverson - Office of the Governor of Florida	-		
Craig Tepper - Seminole Tribe of Florida	-	√	
Kenneth Todd - Palm Beach County Water Resources Manager	-		
Joe Walsh - Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	-	√	
Vacant - Broward County Department of Natural Resource Protection	-		
Ed Wright - U.S. Department of Agriculture	-	-	Bill Reck
Greg May - Special Advisor	√	√	

Science Coordination Group (SCG) Members			
Ken Haddad - Chair - Science Coordination Group	-		
Vacant - Vice Chair – Science Coordination Group	-		
Calvin Arnold - U.S. Department of Agriculture	-		
John Baldwin - Florida Atlantic University	√		
Ronnie Best - United States Geological Survey	-		Stephanie Romanach
Joan Browder - NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service	√	NA	
Todd Hopkins - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	-	NA	Lorraine Heisler
Bob Johnson - Everglades National Park	√	NA	
Libby Johns - NOAA, AOML	√	NA	
Chad Kennedy - FL Dept of Environmental Protection	√	NA	
Cherise Maples - Seminole Tribe of Florida	-	NA	
Susan Markley - Department of Environmental Resource Management	√	√	
Bill Reck - U.S. Department of Agriculture	√	NA	
Garth Redfield - South Florida Water Management District	-	NA	Susan Gray
Terry Rice - Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of FL	-	NA	
Debra Shafer - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	-	NA	

Follow-Up from Task Force Meeting

Greg May reported that the first Task Force meeting with representatives from the Obama Administration was held on June 24 in Washington, DC. Secretary Salazar participated in portions of the meeting. He emphasized his personal commitment to Everglades restoration and announced that he is recommending the Everglades go back on the World Heritage endangered list. Tom Strickland, Assistant Secretary for Fish Wildlife and Parks chaired the meeting along with Vice Chair Mike Sole. Tom Strickland also emphasized his commitment to Everglades restoration and to investing the time and resources needed to make it a reality. Greg reviewed the status of the transition process for the other federal principals. He noted that other special meeting participants included Senator Bill Nelson and Larry Echo Hawk, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs. Greg summarized the agenda and encouraged everyone to review the presentations from the meeting which are available on the web (sfrestore.org). The Task Force made three assignments to the Working Group (WG) and Science Coordination Group (SCG) which will be discussed in more detail. He announced that the next Task Force meeting may be held on September 30 – October 1 since the original dates will not work.

Greg May announced that Ken Haddad, the SCG Chair, has announced his retirement effective at the end of the year and he noted that the Task Force will need to appoint a new SCG Chair as well as Vice Chair. He reported that Bob Doren who was the Senior Science Advisor on the Task Force staff has retired and his position is being advertised and is currently listed on the USA jobs website. Matt Harwell reported announced that the Ecological Indicators (Stoplight Reports) have been peer reviewed in a special edition of the journal ***Ecological Indicators***. He noted it is a great accomplishment and achievement. Greg May thanked the scientists for their incredible work adding that they now have a system of ecological indicators that have been accepted and adopted by the Task Force and reported to Congress noting that the peer review lends additional credibility to the science behind this policy and management reporting tool.

Working Group and Science Coordination Group Assignments
Greg May reviewed a power point (Encl. 4) summarizing the three Task Force tasks to the WG and SCG: Invasive Exotic Animals Plan; Climate Change Overview; and Summary of New Science. He thanked the members of both the WG and SCG for submitting over thirty summaries of their activities related o these assignments. The groups have been asked to report back at the September Task Force meeting. Greg explained that they want to make sure they define the key issues for each of these tasks and perhaps identify which agencies have the "centers of influence" on these issues. He emphasized that the target audience for the assignments is a senior level policy executive. Greg reviewed a series of questions that could be used to help guide the development of the format for the assignments and the type of information to be conveyed. The intent is to have a final draft product by September 1st for WG and SCG review.

Greg Knecht said he thought that providing the Task Force with a one-pager on these topics was very ambitious. Greg May agreed and added they need to stay within the scope of the assignment. Dan Kimball noted that the SCG started to discuss the new science assignment that morning. He suggested that they identify what the framework and format should be and identify who would do the work. He said that public comment would be taken after each topic.

Invasive Exotic Animals
Dan Kimball reviewed the purpose of the assignment which is to prepare an intergovernmental plan that will identify key species and actions necessary to help control invasive exotic animals. He noted they received eleven submissions for this topic and he asked that they be discussed.

Art Roybal explained that the Everglades Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (ECISMA) includes federal and state agencies as well as counties. He reviewed the boundary area and noted that it is a cooperative effort to control invasive plants and animals. The ECISMA is the leader for the other CISMAs forming across the state. They are hoping to finalize the draft Early Detection and Rapid Response Control Plan and are in the process of prioritizing their own list of invasive plant and animal species. Matt Harwell clarified that his comments are specific to the Loxahatchee Refuge but there are other refuges that get together to talk about these issues and they could be involved as well. Susan Markley reported that Miami Dade manages 20,000 acres of natural systems that have been acquired and there are ongoing efforts to implement management strategies in dealing with these issues.

Tom Teet provided a power point (Encl. 5) on the South Florid Water Management District (SFWMD) efforts. Historically the SFWMD has been focused on invasive plants with animals as a secondary area of emphasis. Recently they have been focusing on Burmese pythons, Purple swamp hens, and apple snails. He reviewed the research that is ongoing as well as the work the SFWMD is doing on education, outreach and interagency coordination.

Barry Rosen presented a power point (Encl. 6) on USGS efforts on exotics such as pythons, tilapia and lion fish. Stephanie Romanach added USGS provided summaries on two research projects: mercury bioaccumulation in pythons and habitat use diet.

Joan Browder noted Tom Jackson represents NOAA on several national and local boards working on exotic issues. He does a great deal of outreach on the problem and has found 5 of the 8 lion fish that were sent to the NOAA Research Group in Norfolk, VA. He has found an exotic pacific shark off of West Palm Beach and warns of the Wobegone shark which has been known to bite lobster divers in Australia. He contributed to the exotic species discussions in the "Life after Humans" series currently on the History Channel.

Greg May noted the Florida Invasive Animal Task Team (FIATT) and ECISMA are two of the key centers of influence, with FIATT doing a lot of the initial coordination work and the momentum now moving to the ECISMA. He suggested they spend some time discussing the key strategic issues for this particular task. Craig Tepper said he remembers ECISMA in its infancy and asked how the effort is now organized and functions adding that early efforts were closer to "passing the hat". He also asked whether the effort will be recognized by the Working Group. LeRoy Rogers reported that the MOU between the agencies does not commit funds on an interagency basis. Greg May said that ECISMA could eventually be the vehicle and eventually recognized by the Task Force but it is premature at this time.

John Baldwin said preventing species from being released in the first place needs to be addressed and asked whose task it is to keep these pests out of the ecosystem. Greg May noted that *Weeds Wont Wait*, the intergovernmental strategy dealing with invasive plants, has a number of elements related to prevention and he thought this strategy was applicable to animals as well. He noted that at the local level rapid response and control are being used to help control invasive exotic animals. Dan Kimball said the WG should address prevention such as a 'Don't let it lose' campaign. He also observed there are some "high tech" tools that have not been mentioned. For example, the Corps is working on unmanned aerial vehicles to remotely identify where these species are located. They need to identify strategic issues and decide what would be the most helpful to the Task Force. Art Roybal said he modified the framework used for the *Weeds Won't Wait* so that it could be used for animals. It lays out a number of concepts and breaks out actions in a logical format and may provide a way to lay out a plan of action for invasive animals. The final editing could be completed by FIATT and then turned over to ECISMA who could be the implementing group.

Public Comment
Len Barry noted this is no one person's full time job and if this problem is as serious as the media is saying then it should be. There should be a 'focused attack' on this issue rather than 'friendly cooperation'.

Next steps
Greg May noted they already have a lot of good work and enough information to put together a summary of key species and initial actions. Given the target audience it may be

helpful to have a format that can be digested in 2-5 minutes such as a 1 – 2 page fact sheet with graphics that lays out the challenges and the "so what" factor. A web based version could allow people to get to more detailed information. They need to identify the organizations working on these issues and ask whether ECISMA is the 'center of influence' to develop the comprehensive intergovernmental strategy. The strategy will need to include: education, early detection, rapid response education, outreach, control and prevention. The WG can provide the prioritized list of animals, the early detection and rapid response plan, as well as the information from all the work that has already been done on the pythons and Gambian pouch rat. He said that the summaries provided by the agencies will be posted on the web within the next week. A small committee will be formed to put together an outline which will be sent out for review in August. A final draft will be sent out by September 1st for review.

Climate Change Coordination

Dan Kimball reviewed the purpose of the assignment which is to provide a broad picture of the climate change research and actions (communication, mitigation and adaptation) that are being planned or conducted by the various agencies relevant to the restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem and noted they received sixteen submissions.

Bob Johnson stated that Everglades National Park's (ENP) primary focus is on sea level rise and a lot of the work is focused on changes in the coastal vegetation communities and the loss of a lot of the endemic species. The have just completed a technical report on climate change impacts to south Florida's natural resources. The report is at the government printing office and currently available online. Eric Hughes said he anticipates there will be a ramping up of resources and focus related to EPA's future investment in climate change. He announced that the third National Ecosystem Restoration Conference is being held the following week in Los Angeles and climate change is one of the major topics. He encouraged those interested to review the abstracts which have been posted on the web. Dan Kimball noted this issue was presented to the Task Force and Secretary Sole recommended they focus on the adaptation and communication parts of this issue and not spend a lot of time on how the individual agencies are dealing with mitigation.

Len Berry presented a power point (Encl.7) on Florida Atlantic University's work on climate change. He and Jim Murley are developing a white paper and a strategic plan is underway. They are trying to have an integrated landscape approach and develop a clear action plan focused on adaptation. A workshop is planned for December that will be hosted by the Harbor Branch. He offered their assistance with the coordination role noting the university is able to do what at times the agencies cannot.

Pam Repp reported on an effort between USGS, FWS and MIT to develop alternative futures. The research on alternative futures can be used in planning for refuge management and the scope has been narrowed to the greater Everglades, primarily national wildlife refuges. This is a two year program that will include some visual efforts that will be helpful not only in management and planning but also in education and outreach. Stephanie Romanach added there was a recent MIT workshop with USGS to

develop the scenarios and it was attended by a lot of agencies. They should see the results of this workshop soon. Matt Harwell said Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge is also participating in the MIT study. The coastal refuges in Florida have similar issues to ENP and the refuges strategic planning efforts, the Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCPs) are requiring components that tackle climate change issues and planning. The first one that captured that issue was the Archie Carr Refuge CCP.

Susan Markley reminded the group that the Miami Dade County Board of County Commission established a Climate Change Advisory Task Force several years ago. Although much of the activities are focused on energy conservation, the subcommittees are focusing on science issues and natural systems adaptation. The process is still in the planning phase but it is getting closer to implementation. They are looking to participate more collaboratively in a vital signs type monitoring program similar to the ones initiated by the Park Service. They also want to develop terrain models and some draft maps have been created. These maps will be improved with better GIS data and coordination with ENP.

Tom Teets presented a power point (Encl. 8) on the WMD's work on climate change and noted they take the information on what may change and determine how it will impact their mission. Saltwater intrusion is a real concern and they have some coastal utilities currently at risk. The WMD has an inter-departmental climate change team that reviews technical information and is trying to better understand historical data and climate change projections. Externally they are coordinating with all the local, state and federal agencies. Dan Kimball reminded the group that the NAS' report talks about the increase in intensity of hurricanes because of climate change and asked if the SFWMD was folding that into their evaluations. Jayantha Obeysekera said the jury is still out on that and they are trying to analyze the data. The general consensus is that the intensity will be higher but not necessarily the frequency. Gene Duncan said it seems the SFWMD is focused on what to do about sea level rise rather than on the debate of whether it is man induced. Jayantha stated the SFWMD has done some limited modeling on the impact of climate change on ecosystem restoration. Their focus next year will be on understanding the uncertainties and historical trends. He said he said they should let the Task Force know about the unique nature of south Florida and noted the importance of having a common set of data they all can use for restoration planning purposes. Tom Teets said they are currently compiling a list of everyone who is working on something related to this, but the list is not yet available.

Stu Appelbaum said Glen Landers is heading up the Corps effort in Jacksonville and he noted that guidance was issued on July 1st for incorporating sea level change considerations and the new guidance is more reflective of the current thinking. He said the Yellow Book did include one model run on climate change. The Corps has been talking about going back to RECOVER because they need a more holistic look at climate change and the initial report on sensitivities is expected before Christmas.

Bill Reck said most of USDA's work is green house gas reduction and they have research centers working on plant varieties that are native species for coastal restoration projects as well as having plant material ready after catastrophic events.

Barry Rosen provided a power point (Encl. 9) on USGS climate change efforts and he highlighted the Florida Integrated Science Center (FISC). They are looking at salt water intrusion and have found that management actions more than sea level rise have caused inward movement of the saltwater barrier. He reviewed several ongoing projects including the Integrated Everglades Coastal Sea Level Rise which is currently looking at the 10,000 Islands area as well as a project on coral reefs. Stephanie Romanach added there are 300 or so people working on work related to climate change. She reviewed some of the ongoing projects that include studies on how some of the species are being impacted by the rise in sea level.

Joan Browder reported that NOAA has just created a National Climate Service that will integrate information from the national weather center as well as oceanic information. South Florida emphasis will be on ocean acidification and sea level rise. She suggested that could be a source of data and a way of collaborating and developing common data sets. She added they are taking advantage of a federal program called Fisheries and the Environment (FATE) to get some funding to study the connections between the fisheries and the Tortugas and stocks of juvenile pink shrimp in Florida Bay. They probably have the longest data set in south Florida on pink shrimp in Florida Bay and many years of information will be integrated to better understand the movement of pink shrimp from the bay to the Tortugas.

Greg Knecht explained the Governor's Climate Change panel chaired by Secretary Sole has been geared to mitigation. It is helpful to see what everyone is doing so that they won't have duplication. He is hopeful that they will get to the agreed upon scenario that they can use for CERP planning. Jayantha said they need to look at other possibilities since there is much they don't know (E.g. effect of ice sheets) and added that many of the models have half of Florida underwater because of the scale of the model. Dan Kimball added that even the peer review literature has numbers that are all over the place and those will keep changing. It is important to have a common framework in place adding he gets asked all the time whether restoration is still worth doing in light of climate change.

Greg May asked about the Engineering Circular and its three planning scenarios: low, medium and high. Stu Appelbaum said they want a range rather than a number like they have had in the past. Glen Landers reiterated this is new guidance and follows previous guidance based on the 1987 NRC report where they suggested using scenario planning and they provided three different curves (low, medium and high). For example, the low range is the historic sea level rise in one particular area. Barry Rosen added that it is not just sea level rise but also how much sediment is accumulating as a result of Hurricanes. He said that it is very important that they discuss the potential impacts across all the disciplines if they pick a specific numeric scenario. Len Berry said it is going to be a gradual change that can be planned and adjusted for.

Glen Landers said they neglected to mention that the State of Florida, with support from FEMA, has flown LIDAR along the entire coast of Florida and this will be useful information for sea level rise impacts along the coast. Jayantha Obeysekera explained some of the sea level rise could be linked to land use changes so they have to be careful what they attribute to global warming. In terms of strategies, other parts of the country are looking at the 'no regret strategies' and is something they could be looking at as well.

Dan Kimball reminded everyone of a carbon sequestration project that Ronnie Best has mentioned to the group on previous occasions and the idea is to manage Everglades restoration with carbon farming. Barry Rosen added that USGS has not identified a funding source to see whether the research done in California is viable.

Public Comment
Scott Roberts (Audubon of Florida) agreed with the Chair that climate change should be considered as a reason to proceed with CERP and for it not to be put off any longer. The ecosystem's ability to adapt to climate change should be incorporated into every agency's decision making process. He reiterated the need and importance for more information on this topic in order to effectively plan and anticipate national system adaptation measures.

John Arthur Marshall (Arthur R. Marshall Foundation) added that the refuge is involved in the Atlantic Coast Joint Venture effort led by the FWS looking at the effect of sea level rise on the entire Atlantic coast and refuges. The foundation has proposed a plenary session on this topic at the next Everglades Coalition meeting. The foundation has planted over 100,000 trees over the last 4 or 5 years and he said that is the best way to sequester carbon and restore the Everglades. He recognized the summer interns who were present at the meeting.

Next steps
Greg May said the first step is to synthesize what is going on and not simply provide a laundry list of what is being done. Dan Kimball added they need to think about how they coordinate their efforts and it seems the USGS hubs and application sites are an interagency platform for coordination. They also need to think about how they communicate the message in light of the changes in sea level rise, precipitation, temperature and hurricanes. He agreed it needs to be more than a list of what everyone is doing.

Glen Landers, Tom Teets, Len Barry and Barry Rosen and others agreed to work on this task. Dan Kimball said it would be helpful to distill the range of things being done and lay out some of the challenges and opportunities. Bob Johnson suggested they include the carbon dioxide flux monitoring and Florida has a number of sites that are in this international network and the loss of mangroves has to be included.

New Science
Dan Kimball reviewed the purpose of the assignment which is to provide a plain language summary of the new scientific concepts that have evolved since the CERP was authorized in 2000.

Bob Johnson clarified that this is new science that affects their long term plans for CERP such as the new science on the Everglades being wetter and incorporating this into the NSM. Also, they have known for years which tree island species are the least and most susceptible to flooding. They have collected information on tree species on 70 tree islands around the Everglades and have been able to map where the most sensitive and least sensitive areas are. For example, NE Shark Slough and WCA 3B, areas cut off from flow are still dominated by flood tolerant species. Flow as well as volumes, direction and continuity of flow are all very important and USGS has done outstanding work both in the field and in the lab. Greg May asked if anyone addressed the LILA research in their submissions. Susan Grey said there is information already available. Bob Johnson said it may be too detailed for this task.

Eric Hughes reported that EPA has been involved in an interagency effort called the Everglades EMAP program. It is a significant effort where they can look at trends analysis over large areas. Findings include good news in terms of mercury and not so good news on spread of phosphorus in soils. It should be viewed as a complimentary program to the CERP Monitoring and Assessment Plan. They may need to add something that addresses the monitoring and research and the trophic state conditions for Lake Okeechobee and EPA would like to work with SFWMD and DEP to address this point.

Matt Harwell said they have been able to connect the dots from water being moved in structures into the canal system, into the wetlands, changing the chemistry in the wetland and connecting those changes to ecological effects at Loxahatchee. This is relevant for operational type management decisions and hydropattern restoration. Most of the STAs were put in after 2000 and they have a huge amount of information in terms of the ability to treat water and what it can and can't treat and that information will be brought to the River of Grass (ROG) initiative. He also reported on the extensive effort for exotics control including great efforts being made for Lygodium which have brought to bear a lot of new information. A prescribed fire program has been reinitiated and they are working towards leveraging other people's information in a "burn and learn" type concept.

Susan Markley explained that the draft model she spoke about in climate change is intended to understand the linkages between surface and ground water flow and aquifer and coastal estuaries. There are ongoing monitoring programs that Miami Dade participates in focusing on the southern estuaries, water quality and submerged aquatic vegetation. Since 2000 Miami Dade has increased their understanding of the linkages between the estuaries and the mangroves and these aquatic systems.

Susan Grey provided a presentation (Enclosure 10) reviewing some of the work on Lake Okeechobee with the focus water management and noted that the extreme low levels are having a significant impact on apple snails. She reviewed the work being done along the coastal areas concentrating on nursery areas, the work to restore wildlife habitat in nutrient impacted areas of the Everglades and the work being done to restore Florida Bay.

Barry Rosen highlighted the work USGS is doing to study carbon which causes arsenic when water is pumped down into a well as well as the work being done to better their understanding of mercury. Pam Repp noted the some of the research they have funded and offered to provide more information regarding the findings and key recommendations from that research.

Joan Browder highlighted a new program called MARES which will be focusing on south Florida's marine ecosystem. Stu Appelbaum reported that RECOVER is preparing a paper that will be an inventory on new science since the Yellow Book was completed in 1999.

Greg May noted Dexter Lehtinen's request at the Task Force meeting to update the WCA 3A tree island map information. Fred Sklar replied the SFWMD is updating the tree island map based on 2007 imagery and they expect to finish by the end of this year. They have started doing the same mapping technique for Shark River Slough in ENP going back to 1945 to see if the trends for degradation are similar or completely different. They are also consulting with DECOMP and that should be done by the end of next fiscal year.

Next Steps

Susan Markley added that the SCG spent most of the morning talking about this topic and they tried to focus on the charge to consolidate a lot of the technical/scientific information for the Task Force/decision-makers and synthesize this into overarching themes such as hydrology and ecology, focusing on the linkages that have occurred since 2000. There is better understanding that the historic system was wetter than understood when CERP was done in 2000. The simpler the product the more constructive it would be given the time frame. Greg May reiterated his request for volunteers to work on the assignments. Dan Kimball reiterated that the SCG spent quite some time on this issue and the amount of work put into the materials provided has been helpful.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

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West Palm Beach, Florida
July 16, 2009

Whip around

Dan Kimball called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Eric Hughes announced that Pete Silva is the new Assistant Administrator for Water and should hopefully attend the September Task Force meeting. Stephanie Romanach announced that USGS will co-host the National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration in Los Angeles the following week. Stu Appelbaum said they are awaiting Ms. Darcy's confirmation and he announced the change of command at the end of the month where COL Grosskruger will be retiring and COL Alfred A. Pantano will assume command. He also announced the new South Atlantic Division Commander effective May 1st. Finally he noted there is a team working on the Master Agreement and they are hoping to resolve those issues.

Gene Duncan reported the Chairman asked that a 900-acres area known as the triangle be re-hydrated. The tribe got all the permits and the SFWMD funded the project. Water is now beginning to stack up and they will be monitoring for the next several years to see if they can re-establish a wetland in an area that was previously provided with flood protection. Veronica Harrell James reported they are winding up all the land condemnation trials for the East Everglades expansion area and the 8.5 Square Mile Area. Paul Souza announced that Sam Hamilton has been nominated to be the Director of FWS adding that it is terrific news. The Habitat Conservation Plan was recently finalized and it calls for a privately funded panther crossing east of Immokalee in eastern Collier County. Craig Tepper stated that the tribe's basic need is housing and the tribe is working to solve NEPA issues associated with building those homes. Tribe is also working with the Department of Energy on a carbon sequestration project and they continue to be vigilant about protecting their federal water rights.

Joe Walsh reported his agency is working on a draft eradication plan for exotics snakes and the green iguana adding it will be the first invasive exotic management plan that has a component for private citizens to participate. Susan Markley stated that even with the Miami Herald's front page article on the county's dire budget situation, the endangered lands program continues to function and that funding source is intact. Bill Reck reported the new Farm Bill is up and running and has provisions for specialty crops that are grown in south Florida. The new team is in place and their new Chief has been confirmed. Joe Frank said they also have the new head of BIA and they hope to bring him to the next meeting. Dan Kimball announced John Jarvis has been nominated to lead the NPS. ENP has been successful in working with FWS to clean out the non-native vegetation in the culverts and they expect to begin within the next three weeks. They are working on eradication of exotics species program similar to the state and although hunting is prohibited in ENP they can use authorized agents.

Update on Programmatic Regulations (Pro Regs)
Stu Appelbaum provided a power point (Encl. 11) on the progress made to update the Pro Regs. He reviewed the purposes of the Pro Regs which include ensuring that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved and new information is integrated. The current Pro Regs were promulgated in 2003 and in 2008 they began the process to update them. The same rule-making process that was used to promulgate them in 2003 must be followed to revise them. They will also require the concurrence of the Secretaries of the Army and Interior and the Governor of Florida. Comments were received during the public scoping process and a summary of the comments was provided. The scoping process dovetailed with the Governor's announcement of the River of Grass (ROG) land acquisition and there was concern with how it would fit into CERP. He reviewed some of the things that are wrong with the existing regulations including the PIR requirements being burdensome and the implementation process taking too long as the ecosystem continues to decline.

A team has been formed to review the regulations and develop revisions. Team will look at concepts and those concepts will be refined for agency review. There will be opportunity for stakeholder input throughout the process. Formal rulemaking will begin in January and it is hoped to have worked out things in advance. They will come back with a complete document and substitute the old regulations rather than have a strike-through/underline format. They are trying to go back to basics and the Plan should be the central focus of CERP and the PIRs the implementing arm. The existing regulations have five sub parts and the new regulations will have four sub parts that deal with general provisions, program goals and responsibilities, program implementation and project implementation. He reviewed the revised PIR requirements which eliminate the requirement to justify individual projects, states that habitat units is an inappropriate metric for individual projects. They continue to believe that adaptive management is essential to the success of the program and Incremental Adaptive Restoration (IAR) needs to be incorporated into the overall adaptive management process. Sequencing needs to include non-CERP projects into the planning process such as the foundation projects and other projects that have impact on the program.

He noted the current regulation calls for six Guidance Memoranda (GM) but they have never gotten them over the finish line in terms of the approval process. The question is whether they still need the six GM and could some of it be incorporated into the Pro Regs. GMs 3 and 4 (savings clause and identification of water to be reserved) will most likely still retain the need for the guidance memoranda. Interim Goals are required by WRDA 2000 and Interim Targets which deal with services to the human sector are not a statutory requirement. Team is contemplating two approaches (current and alternative) with the alternative approach being more dynamic and including both CERP and non CERP projects. Comprehensive Plan Modification Report is still necessary to update the Plan but the five year update of CERP is not helpful and the team is suggesting this be eliminated. The bottom line is that while revising and simplifying the Pro Regs is important, the regulations are not the sole reason for delays in CERP implementation and he reminded the group of the case studies that were reviewed last fall. The role of

RECOVER will be reviewed as well as the consultation provisions and recreation requirements. Formal rulemaking process will begin in January.

Gene Duncan said they have seen almost ten years of process and almost no progress. He said it was discouraging to see them walk away and abandon CERP and now they have also walked away from Acceler8. He reported on the SFWMD briefing in D.C. last week where project by project they talked about transferring responsibility to the Corps of Engineers. At the last Governing Board meeting they were discussing the possibility of sending a letter because they cannot come to an agreement on cost sharing with the feds. CERP has been dead for quite awhile yet Congress still thinks CERP is being built. The PIRs have been started and stopped and the contracts have been cancelled in mid construction. Now they are going to re-invent the regulations. They need to build what's in the Yellow Book which is what they took to Congress. He said he is very discouraged and feels like he has wasted a good number of years in this process. The Everglades is worth it and they need to build projects to save what's left.

Joe Walsh asked how they would determine when an update needs to occur. Stu said there is discretion with the implementing agencies as events warrant. As the River of Grass acquisition continues to advance that will need to be incorporated. Joe also said that recreation has always been dealt with as a side benefit and they don't take into account that this area attracts many duck hunters for example from across the country and they don't quantify the economic value of recreation in CERP projects. Stu said they did get a lot of comments and the Pro Regs are about process and procedure and not about directing an outcome. They are trying to take a system-wide view of the impact on recreation.

Paul Souza asked when the first full draft would be available for this group to review. Stu replied they should have that in the fall adding that Susan Kaynor is leading this effort. It's one thing to agree on the concepts but quite something else to figure out how these will work on paper. Greg Knecht said the state is committed to the partnership associated with CERP. Tom Teets added the Governing Board was frustrated but are now thrilled with the funding the USACE is getting. Greg Knecht asked about the status of the Principles and Guidelines (P&Gs). Stu said that Terry Brayman with CEQ will be heading up this effort and they may end up going to the Principles and Standards which were in place prior to the P&Gs.

Public Comment

John Marshall (Arthur R. Marshall Foundation) commented on the third slide of Stu's presentation and noted that justifying environmental benefits is left vague and benefit-cost justification is the key. The National Research Council convened a study on economic benefits by looking at ecosystem services values and all the agency representatives who bought-in on this approach yet that is thrown out in that third slide. There is a huge projection of costs for the River of Grass project but no clarification of what the economic benefits will be over the next 40 – 50 years. The benefit cost analysis in the Pro Regs should not be thrown to the wind and they should look at what the National Academy has put out.

Consultation

Schedule

Brian Files presented a power point (Encl.12) with an updated consultation schedule for the remainder of 2009. The consultation schedule for 2010 will be provided at the next meeting.

Master Recreation Plan (MRP)

Shauna Allen thanked Dennis Duke, Stu Appelbaum, Paul Stevenson, Jerry Krenz as well as other team members for their tireless work on this effort over the last several years. She provided a power point (Encl. 13) noting that the purpose of the Plan is to provide a comprehensive plan addressing the recreation needs within the C&SF project. The MRP is intended to be a living document and intended to provide recreation planning guidance for CERP. It does not establish policy but relies on existing policies, guidance and rules. The MRP has several mandates which include the mandate to provide restoration compatible recreation and to compensate for CERP project impacts to recreation on a regional basis. Cost-sharing is an issue because although the project is a 50/50 cost share for construction it will be a 100% non federal sponsor responsibility for operation and maintenance. She reviewed the timeline for the MRP noting it is almost complete and the draft MRP is now undergoing internal agency review. Public involvement efforts of the MRP exceed that of most of the PIRs and exceeded the level of effort put into the development of the CERP. Recreation is a multi billion dollar industry in south Florida. One of the products of the MRP is the Ethnographic Study. The study team interviewed 34 Gladesmen and evaluated thirteen properties for eligibility as traditional cultural properties. This study will identify historic and traditional recreation uses and provides information for NEPA level analysis of social impacts to the Gladesmen. Schedule includes public review from August to October and Task Force consultation in September with release of the final MRP scheduled in November 2009.

Craig Tepper asked if the tribes were briefed. Shauna said they are briefing the Miccosukee Tribe next week and working with their tribal coordinator to schedule a briefing with the Seminole Tribe. Craig asked why the Indian people are not represented in the ethnographic study. Tribal people hunted and fished extensively in the Everglades historically. The tribe has certain hunting and fishing rights in WCA 3A under public law that is not reflected in this document and he would like to have those rights noted in the MRP. Paul Souza said his intuition tells him that as this effort was moving forward the some of the Gladesmen raised this issue as a real need. They want to ensure they have access to places that have been part of their culture for generations. He asked if this is in the right place, procedurally or if should be ‘spun off’ and affect broader PIR efforts and maybe the Yellow Book. He agreed that briefing the tribes was very important.

Dan Kimball said he had similar comments and asked what the outcome of identification of traditional cultural properties meant and whether it was just something on a map or if it went further with some expected level of management. Shauna replied that under the NEPA process the PDT has to assess potential impacts to those properties when the project is being developed.

Public Comment
Pete Quasas (Collier Audubon) stated that although they may have stakeholder meetings they don't have those people present from those visiting from outside the area. They don't capture and quantify the economic value of the tourism value of these natural resources like Ding Darling NWR. These facilities will draw people in, however, if the water quality and the infrastructure isn't there, they will not attract these tourists.

John Marshall (Arthur Marshall Foundation) said the foundation has been working to reestablish the custard apple and pond apple forest on Torry Island as an amenity for the folks in Belle Glade.

Biscayne Bay Regional Restoration Coordination Team (BBRRCT)
Theresa Woody reported the team has asked the Working Group to appoint Dick Frost as Chair of the team. She noted that the team has elected Chad Kennedy as the Vice Chair. Susan Markley as a member of the team noted Dick has the perfect set of skills and technical knowledge to Chair the team. The WG agreed without objection. Dan Kimball requested a report from Dick Frost on those issues facing the team at the next WG meeting.

Land Acquisition Strategy
Theresa Woody presented the July 2nd draft (Encl. 14) of the Strategy and asked for comments to be provided by July 30th. Strategy is scheduled to go before the Task Force for acceptance at its September meeting. Dan Kimball asked if there was any component of climate change in this document. Theresa said there is not because their task is to track acquisition of lands that contribute to the three goals of the Task Force.

Public Comment
John Arthur Marshall (Arthur R. Marshall Foundation) said that economic evaluation of ecosystem services. Ronnie Best and Barry Rosen have been involved in conferences on this topic. He illustrated the case of NYC choosing to restore the Catskill wetlands as opposed to a $4 billion plant to furnish treated water to NYC. He noted that cost avoidance is part of the cost benefit equation and $4 billion versus $660 million to actually restore the Catskills the benefit cost ratio is actually a little over 6. There is significant benefit to restoring the natural system. He distributed his written comment (Encl.15) that he also provided to the Governing Board and he suggested the WG and SCG take a closer look at this issue as part of their needs and gaps.

Closing Comments
Dan Kimball thanked everyone for working through all the issues raised during the joint session. The volunteers were also thanked for their willingness to further this effort. Greg May committed to put together a document for Working Group review with the goal of having a final draft product ready to submit to the Task Force at its September meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05.

Enclosures:

1. Agenda
2. Meeting Minutes, January 2009
3. Workshop Summary, April 2009
4. WG and SCG Assignments Power Point
5. Invasive Exotic Animal Plan Power Point (SFWMD)
6. Wildlife Monitoring and Population Ecology in the Everglades Power Point (USGS)
7. Climate Change Science & Adaptation at FAU Power Point
8. Climate Change, SFWMD Power Point
9. Florida Integrated Science Center (FISC), USGS Power Point
10. New Science, SFWMD Power Point
11. Pro Regs Power Point
12. Consultation Schedule Power Point
13. Master Recreation Plan Power Point
14. Draft Land Acquisition Strategy
15. John Marshall Comments