

**South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force**

**South Florida Ecosystem Restoration  
Land Acquisition Strategy**

**Draft for the Working Group  
August 24, 2010**

Text in red is either new text or text that will be updated in the final 2010 Land Acquisition Strategy

Comments due by August 31, 2010  
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*This strategy document is for planning purposes only, is subject to modification, and is not legally binding on any of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) members. Each Task Force member and the interest they represent retain all of their sovereign rights, authorities, and jurisdictions for implementation of the projects contained in this document.*

*Acceptance of the report by the Task Force does not imply that the Task Force or the individual Task Force members endorse each land acquisition project described in the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy.*

*Land acquisition needs of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration continue to evolve as project footprints and land acquisition program needs are refined. Moreover, the land cost estimates contained in the body of this report are preliminary planning estimates that are not intended as, and do not reflect, fair market valuations of any individual parcel of land. Acceptance of this report, therefore, does not constitute an endorsement by any Task Force member as to any parcel or land valuation.*

*For multiple reasons, summary numbers change from one year to another, minimizing the ability to make simple comparisons between editions of the Land Acquisition Strategy. Differences in numbers may be due to such factors as the refinement of reporting techniques or changes in the number or size of projects, rather than the acquisition or disposition of land.*

*The Land Acquisition Strategy represents a united effort by 23 governmental entities working together with non-profit partners to leverage their collective resources to achieve the conservation land acquisition goals of the South Florida Ecosystem Task Force. These synergistic partnerships have produced an unprecedented level of achievement as evidenced by the map in Appendix D that illustrates all the lands protected in the South Florida Ecosystem.*

*The work of the Land Acquisition Task Team embodies the type of partnerships and innovative programs described in President Obama's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Strategy for America's Great Outdoors.*

*This document is updated on an annual basis. The reporting period for this information is July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010 unless otherwise noted.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Glossary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Abbreviations and Acronyms .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Acquisition Status by Strategic Goal .....	10
Goal 1: Get the Water Right .....	11
Goal 2: Restore, Preserve, and Protect Natural Habitats and Species .....	11
Goal 3: Foster Compatibility of the Built and Natural System .....	12
Acquisition Efforts by Initiative .....	12
The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).....	13
Expedited Projects.....	13
Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program (NEEPP) .....	14
Local Contributions.....	14
Accomplishments.....	14
<b>Strategy Purpose and Background.....</b>	<b>16</b>
Introduction .....	16
Purpose.....	17
The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force .....	17
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Needs .....	18
<b>Acquisition Strategy .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Acquisition Efforts by Strategic Goal .....	20
Goal 1: Get the Water Right .....	20
Goal 2: Restore, Preserve, and Protect Natural Habitats and Species .....	22
Goal 3: Foster Compatibility of the Built and Natural System .....	25
Acquisition Efforts by Initiative .....	27
CERP.....	27
Expedited Projects.....	28
Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program .....	29
Local Contributions.....	29
<b>Acquisition Partnerships and Mechanisms .....</b>	<b>30</b>
Federal/State/Local Acquisition Partnerships.....	30
Florida Forever Program /Federal Partnerships.....	31
Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 Partnership .....	32
The Land and Water Conservation Fund .....	32
CERP Partnerships .....	32
Leveraging Limited Funds .....	32
Conservation Banks .....	32
Conservation Easements .....	33
Dispersed Water <b>Management</b> and Treatment Agreements/Projects on Public, Private and Tribal Lands.....	34
Engineering Cost-to-Cure Acquisitions .....	34
Florida Ranchlands and Environmental Services Program .....	35

Habitat Conservation Plans .....	35
Mitigation Funds .....	36
Mitigation Lands .....	36
Multi-year Payout Agreements .....	37
Rural Land Stewardship Program .....	37
Surplus/Exchange Lands .....	38
Mitigating the Loss of Tax Revenue .....	39
Division of Forestry Payment to Counties .....	39
Payment in Lieu of Taxes Programs .....	39
Refuge Revenue Sharing Program .....	40
Tools to Identify Strategic Acquisitions .....	40
Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project.....	40
Florida Natural Areas Inventory <a href="#">Web Resources</a> .....	40
<a href="#">Florida's Wildlife Action Plan</a> .....	41
Florida Wildlife Conservation Guide .....	42
Natural Lands Report .....	42
Office of Greenways and Trails Recreational Prioritization Maps.....	43
USFWS South Florida Multi-Species Recovery Plan.....	43
Wildlife Habitat Planning Manual.....	44
<b>Major Acquisition Accomplishments .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>47</b>
Appendix A: Strategic Goals and Objectives of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force	49
Appendix B: Federal and Joint Federal/State Projects Maps and Descriptions .....	53
Appendix C: Project Profiles and Summary Table .....	59
Appendix D: Land Acquisition Update Map and State/Federal Cost Share Table .....	63
Appendix F: County Land Acquisitions, Florida's Greenways and Trails Program .....	71
Appendix H: Land Protected through Mitigation Map and Description .....	81
Appendix I: Land Acquisition Task Team Directive .....	85

# Glossary

**Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP):** The Plan approved as a framework for modification and operations changes to the Central and Southern Florida Project needed to restore, preserve, and protect the South Florida ecosystem, while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection. CERP was authorized by Congress in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000.

**Conservation Banks:** Permanently protected privately or publically owned lands that are managed for endangered, threatened, and other at-risk species.

**Conservation Easement:** A legal agreement between a landowner and a government agency or nonprofit organization to protect the natural resources of a property permanently or for some designated period of time. The property still belongs to the landowner, but restrictions are placed both on the current landowner and subsequent landowners.

**Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL):** Florida created this land acquisition program in 1979 to acquire lands to conserve and protect unique natural areas, endangered species, unusual geologic features, wetlands, and significant archaeological and historical sites. CARL projects were funded by the CARL Trust Fund and Preservation 2000. The Florida Forever - Board of Trustees program is CARL's successor.

**Critical Restoration Projects (CRP):** The 1996 Water Resources Development Act authorized these Everglades and South Florida (E & SF) projects, where were chosen based upon their ability to produce immediate, independent, and substantial restoration benefits. During the planning phase of CERP project, these projects are assumed to be complete.

**Expedited Projects:** The initial list of *Acceler8* projects expanded over time to include project supporting other restoration and water quality initiatives underway in the Northern and Southern reaches of South Florida's interconnected ecosystem.

**Fee simple acquisition:** The outright purchase of all property rights.

**Florida Forever:** The 10-year, \$3 billion program established in 2000 by the Florida Legislature to conserve environmentally sensitive land, restore waterways, and preserve important cultural and historical resources. Florida Forever is the successor to Preservation 2000. The 2008 Legislature authorized an additional \$3 billion through 2020.

**Goal:** Something to be achieved. Goals can be established for outcomes (results) or outputs (efforts).

**"Graham Map":** The 1999 Everglades Ecosystem Land Acquisition State-Federal Cost Share Map requested by former Florida Senator Bob Graham. This map was produced by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force.

**Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS):** The schedule incorporates both federal and state initiatives to provide a comprehensive sequencing of construction for projects in the South Florida ecosystem restoration program. It includes the CERP and non-CERP projects such as: Kissimmee River Restoration, Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park, Herbert Hoover Dike rehabilitation, West Palm Beach Canal, and C-111 South Dade; as well as State and South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) projects such as: the Northern Everglades Plan and the Long-Term Plan for Achieving Water Quality Goals in the Everglades Protection Area.

**Less-than-fee simple:** The acquisition of limited property rights. The right to conserve and protect resources on the property is purchased at a lesser cost to taxpayers, while keeping the land in private ownership and on the tax role.

**Mitigation:** An action or series of actions that offset the adverse environmental impact of a permitted activity.

**Multi-Species Recovery Plan (MSRP):** Plan developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that contains information on the biology, ecology, status, trends, management, and recovery actions for 68 federally listed species found in South Florida, as well as the ecology and restoration needs of 23 natural communities in the region.

**Multi-Year Acquisition Agreement:** An agreement that allows acquisition costs to be paid out over a number of years.

**Northern Everglades:** Ecosystem within the SFWMD boundary encompassing the Lake Okeechobee, Caloosahatchee River, and St. Lucie River basins. Key features include Kissimmee area lakes and rivers, Lake Okeechobee, and the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie rivers and estuaries.

**Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program (NEEPP):** In 2007 the Florida Legislature expanded the Lake Okeechobee Protection Act to strengthen protection for the Northern Everglades by restoring and preserving Lake Okeechobee and the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie rivers and estuaries. The program expands the use of the Save Our Everglades Trust Fund to include the Northern Everglades restoration and extends it through 2020.

**Objective:** A goal expressed in specific, directly quantifiable terms.

**Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT):** Federal or state payments to local governments that help offset losses in property taxes due to nontaxable government owned lands within their boundaries.

**Preservation 2000 ( P-2000):** A ten year program, initiated by the State of Florida in 1990, that raised \$300 million per year for a total of \$3 billion for environmental land acquisition.

**Refuge Revenue Sharing Program:** A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service program that authorizes payments to offset the loss of tax revenue in counties in which USFWS lands are located. These payments are funded and administered separately from other federal revenue sharing measures such as those made under the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Act.

**Regional Planning Councils (RPCs):** Florida planning and public policy agencies that work with public and private leadership on regional issues.

**Restudy:** Colloquial expression for the Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study, authorized in 1992.

**Rural Lands Stewardship Program (RLSA):** Florida's program to direct development in rural lands to preserve agriculture and protect the environment.

**Save Our Everglades Trust Fund (SOETF):** A trust fund established in 2000 under provision of Florida's Everglades Restoration Investment Act to provide funds to implement CERP. In 2007, legislation authorized the use of the Trust Fund to implement the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program.

**Save Our Rivers (SOR):** This 1981 Florida program created the Water Management Lands Trust Fund. The Trust Fund can be used for the purposes of land management, maintenance, and capital improvements of land titled to the Water Management Districts, payments in lieu of taxes, debt service, preacquisition costs associated with land purchases and cost associated with administration of the fund. Save Our Rivers projects can be jointly funded through the Water Management Lands Trust Fund and P-2000/Florida Forever.

**South Florida Ecosystem:** An area consisting of the lands and waters within the boundaries of the South Florida Water Management District and the Multi-Species Recovery Plan, including the Kissimmee Basin, Lake Okeechobee, Everglades, the Florida Keys, and the contiguous nearshore coastal waters.

**Southern Everglades:** Ecosystem within the SFWMD boundary south of the Lake Okeechobee, Caloosahatchee River, and St. Lucie River basins. Key features include the Water Conservation Areas, Big Cypress National Preserve, Everglades National Park, Florida Bay, and the coastal bays and estuaries south of Lake Okeechobee.

**Sustainability:** The state of having the needs of the present met without endangering the ability of future generations to be able to meet their own needs.

**Vision:** An aspiration of future conditions; in this case, the results that the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force members intend to achieve in terms of ecosystem health and quality of life for South Florida residents and visitors.

**Water Resources Development Act (WRDA):** The federal authorizing legislation for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' water resource projects.

# Abbreviations and Acronyms

**1996 Farm Bill** Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996

**2002 Farm Bill** Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002

**2008 Farm Bill** Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008

**ARC** Acquisition and Restoration Council

**ASR** Aquifer Storage and Recovery

**BBCW** Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands

**C&SF Project** Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project

**CARL** Conservation and Recreation Lands

**CERP** Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan

**CLIP** Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project

**CRP** Critical Restoration Projects

**CREW** Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed

**DCA** Florida Department of Community Affairs

**DOD** Department of Defense

**DOF** Florida Division of Forestry

**DSL** Florida Division of State Lands

**E&SF** Everglades and South Florida

**EAA** Everglades Agricultural Area

**ECP** Everglades Construction Project

**EEL** Environmentally Endangered Lands

**EIS** Environmental Impact Statement

**ESA** Endangered Species Act

**FCT** Florida Communities Trust

**FDACS** Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

**FDEP** Florida Department of Environmental Protection

**FF** Florida Forever

**FNAI** Florida Natural Areas Inventory

**FRESP** Farm and Ranchlands Environmental Services Project

**FRPP** Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

**FWC** Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

**FY** Fiscal Year

**GAO** Government Accountability Office (formerly the General Accounting Office)

**GARC** Geographic Area Rate Cap

**GIS** Geographic Information System

**HCP** Habitat Conservation Plans

**IDS** Integrated Delivery Schedule

**IFAS** Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

**IRL** Indian River Lagoon

**LAS** Land Acquisition Strategy

**LATT** Land Acquisition Task Team

**LWCF** Land and Water Conservation Fund

**MOU** Memorandum of Understanding

**MSRP** Multi-Species Recovery Plan

**NEEPP** Northern Everglades and Estuary Protection Program

**NLR** Natural Lands Report

**NPS** National Park Service

**NRCS** Natural Resources Conservation Service

**NWR** National Wildlife Refuge

**NOAA** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**OED** Office of the Executive Director

**OGT** Office of Greenways and Trails

**P2000** Preservation 2000

**PES** Payment for Environmental Services

**PIR** Project Implementation Report

**PILT** Payment in Lieu of Taxes

**REPI** Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative

**Restudy** C&SF Project Comprehensive Review Study

**RLSA** Rural Land Stewardship Area

**SCG** Science Coordination Group  
**SFWM** South Florida Water Management District  
**SOETF** Save Our Everglades Trust Fund  
**SOR** Save Our Rivers  
**STA** Stormwater Treatment Area  
**Task Force** South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force  
**TNC** The Nature Conservancy  
**USACE** United States Army Corps of Engineers  
**USDA** United States Department of Agriculture

**USDO**I United States Department of the Interior  
**USFWS** United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
**WCA** Water Conservation Area  
**WMA** Water Management Alternatives  
**WPA** Water Preserve Areas  
**WRAC** Water Resources Advisory Commission  
**WRDA** Water Resources Development Act  
**WREP** Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program  
**WRP** Wetlands Reserve Program  
**WWF** World Wildlife Fund

# Executive Summary

Land acquisition is critical to South Florida Ecosystem restoration efforts. Land is needed to preserve habitat for native plants and animals, to act as a buffer between development and existing natural areas, and to provide opportunities for recreational pursuits. Land is also needed for water quality treatment areas, water storage reservoirs, and aquifer recharge areas that will help restore the natural hydrology of the ecosystem.

The purpose of the *South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy* (LAS) is to describe the land acquisition needed for ecosystem restoration projects that are either federally funded or jointly funded by federal and non-federal agencies and, with its appendices, provide a broad picture of all land acquisition initiatives that contribute to the restoration. This document updates and replaces the LAS accepted by the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) in **September 2009**.

The LAS addresses land acquisition needed to achieve the three strategic goals for South Florida Ecosystem restoration as adopted by the Task Force:

Goal 1: Get the water right

Goal 2: Restore, preserve, and protect habitats and species

Goal 3: Foster compatibility of the built and natural systems

The LAS provides an update on how these restoration goals will be accomplished through the use of land acquisition strategies designed to ensure that only those private property rights necessary to accomplish the restoration goals will be acquired. It also measures and reports the acquisition of identified lands. The LAS presents an overall land acquisition picture for those responsible for South Florida Ecosystem restoration activities and funding. It also provides cooperating agencies with a perspective on how their current and potential land acquisition projects relate and contribute to the vision of the Task Force.

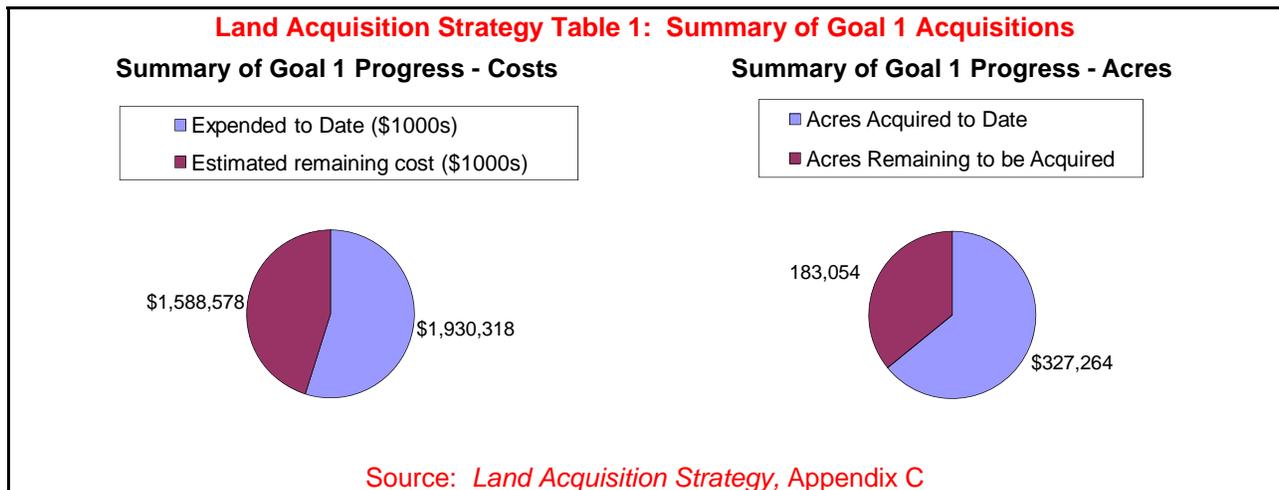
This edition of the LAS includes data from **July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, thus updating all totals through June 30, 2010**. The Task Force's Land Acquisition Task Team (LATT) updates the LAS annually to track land acquisition progress and foster cooperation among member agencies on this important component of South Florida Ecosystem restoration.

## Acquisition Status by Strategic Goal

The LAS summarizes land acquisition projects identified as necessary for accomplishing the Task Force's strategic goals. Land acquisition is also summarized for a few key restoration initiatives, including the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). A summary of the estimated lands needed to accomplish the strategic goals and other South Florida Ecosystem restoration initiatives follows.

## **Goal 1: Get the Water Right**

There are **45 projects** identified for acquisition to achieve Goal 1. This goal area includes projects needed to restore the quality, quantity, distribution, and timing of water within the ecosystem. Therefore, this goal area includes lands needed for CERP, other projects modifying the current Central and Southern Florida (C&SF) water distribution system, and water quality improvements. Land acquisition estimates for the Goal 1 projects total **510,318 acres with 337,264 acres (64 percent)** acquired to date. The total estimated cost of these lands is **\$3,518,897,000 with an estimated \$1,588,578,000** needed to complete acquisition of these parcels<sup>1</sup> (see Table 1).



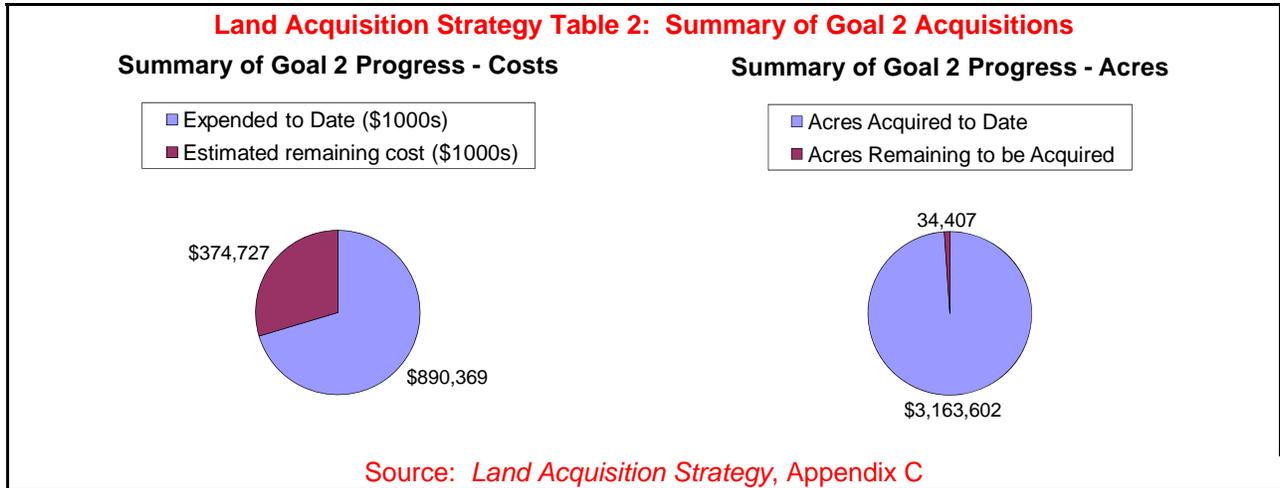
## **Goal 2: Restore, Preserve, and Protect Natural Habitats and Species**

There are **26 projects** identified for acquisition to achieve Goal 2. Achievement of this goal includes acquisition of lands needed for CERP and other habitat improvement projects that supplement and complement the existing network of publicly held parks, preserves, and refuges.

To date, **3,198,009 acres** are estimated to be needed to achieve the targets established for this goal with **3,163,602 acres acquired (99 percent)**. The total estimated cost of

<sup>1</sup> Cost estimates for remaining acres for the Modified Water Deliveries projects are the estimated fair market value. The Kissimmee River restoration estimates are 2010 estimates to close all contracts and include engineering solutions in lieu of acquisition. For those CERP projects with either a Final Feasibility Study or Project Implementation Report, the Real Estate Plan estimates in those documents have been adjusted to 2009 dollars using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent. For CERP projects that do not have an authorization document, the 1999 Restudy real estate estimates have been adjusted to 2009 dollars using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent.

these lands is approximately \$1,265,096,000 with an estimated \$374,727,000 needed to complete acquisition of these parcels<sup>2</sup> (see Table 2).



### **Goal 3: Foster Compatibility of the Built and Natural System**

The Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) authorized several programs that provide financial incentives to private landowners to restore or enhance wetlands and improve wildlife habitat while protecting working farms or retiring marginal land from agricultural production. Two of the six programs in the 2008 Farm Bill support efforts to achieve Goal 3 land acquisition objectives through permanent conservation easements – the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) and the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP). **During this reporting period, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) obligated \$23.5 million to secure WRP easements on 3,990 acres and \$1.2 million for FRPP easements on 85 acres.**

The Broward County Secondary Canal System, South Miami-Dade Wastewater Reuse and West Miami-Dade Wastewater Reuse CERP projects also contribute to this goal.

### **Acquisition Efforts by Initiative**

Key ecosystem restoration initiatives like CERP, Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program (NEEPP), and the Expedited Projects provide significant contributions toward achieving the Task Force’s three strategic goals. Additionally,

<sup>2</sup> Cost estimates for remaining acquisitions for National Wildlife Refuges and National Parks projects are based on estimated fair market value. The FDEP uses tax assessment values to estimate land costs for the Indian River Lagoon Blueway. The cost estimate for remaining acres for the Strazzulla Wetlands Water Preserve Area Project is the Real Estate Plan estimate in the October 2001 Water Preserve Area Feasibility Study adjusted to 2009 dollars using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent. For those CERP projects with either a Final Feasibility Study or Project Implementation Report, the Real Estate Plan estimates in those documents have been adjusted to 2009 dollars using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent. For CERP projects that do not have an authorization document, the 1999 Restudy real estate estimates have been adjusted to 2009 dollars using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent.

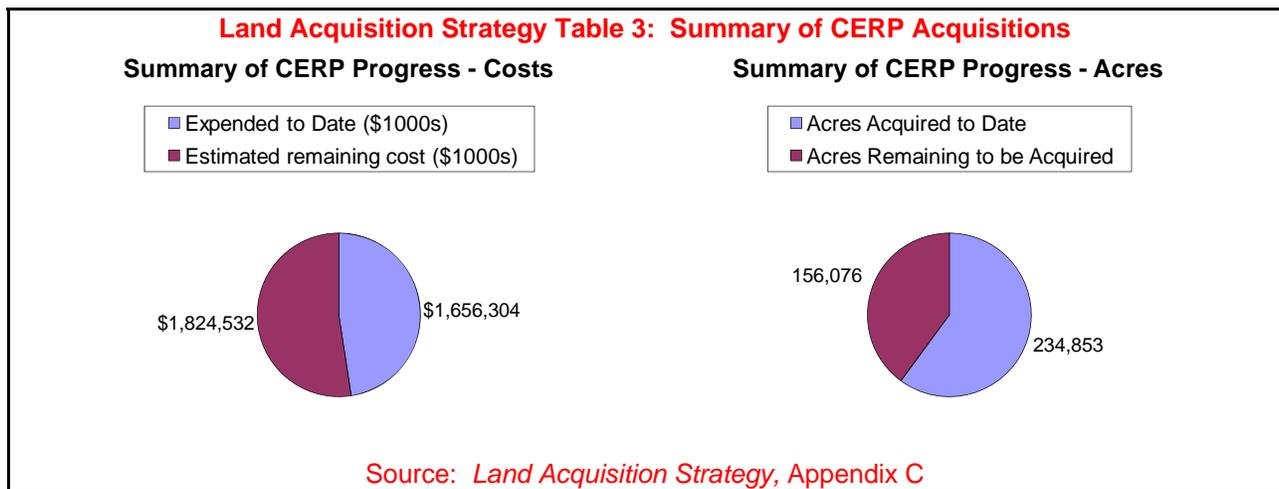
many local governments within the region have land acquisition programs that significantly contribute to ecosystem restoration. The following is a discussion of these programs and associated land acquisition.

**The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP)**

The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2000 authorized the implementation of the CERP. Implementation of the CERP is one of the highest priorities for the Task Force because of its significant contribution to the restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem.

CERP land acquisition is ahead of schedule as compared to the **Integrated Delivery Schedule**. This is a result of the state acquiring acreage at the earliest possible time which has prevented these lands needed for restoration from being developed.

Land acquisition estimates for CERP projects **total 390,929 acres<sup>3</sup>**. Approximately **224,853 (60 percent)** of the acquisition acres have been acquired to date and **156,076 acres** remain to be acquired. **The total estimated cost of these lands is \$3,477,704,000 with an estimated \$1,824,532,000 needed to complete acquisition for CERP<sup>4</sup>** (see Table 3).



**Expedited Projects**

The **State of Florida** is accelerating **the design and construction of a suite of projects** selected for the immediate benefits they can provide to the Everglades and the South Florida Ecosystem. The majority of the expedited projects **now are or are expected to**

<sup>3</sup> Source: **June 30, 2010** SFWMD CERP Master. This figure includes **3,771** acres of tribal land, and **15,412 acres** of publicly owned lands, including lands owned by utilities.

<sup>4</sup> Source: **June 30, 2010** SFWMD CERP Master. The estimated costs for remaining acres for CERP projects with either a Final Feasibility Study or Project Implementation Report is based on the Real Estate Plan estimates which have been adjusted to **2009** dollars **using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent**. For CERP projects that do not have an authorization document, the 1999 Restudy real estate estimates have been adjusted to **2009** dollars **using the average yearly inflation factor of 4 percent**.

become components of the CERP projects. Most of the lands for these projects are already in public ownership and were acquired with a combination of federal and state funds.

Land acquisition estimates for these expedited projects total 126,492 acres of which approximately 3,726 acres are publicly-owned lands, including lands owned by utilities. Letters of agreement are in place for 1,390 of these acres and will be sought for the remaining 2,346 acres needed; it is not anticipated that the publicly owned lands, including lands owned by the utilities, will need to be purchased. Approximately 125,840 (99 percent) of the non-publically owned acres have been acquired to date, with an estimated 652 acres remaining to be acquired for these projects. Expenditures to date total \$760,780,308<sup>5</sup>.

### **Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program (NEEPP)**

The Florida Legislature in 2007 amended the Lake Okeechobee Protection Act to include the protection of the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River watersheds. The Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program (NEEPP) promotes a comprehensive, interconnected watershed approach to protecting these water bodies. The NEEPP includes the Lake Okeechobee Protection Program as well as the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Watershed Protection Programs.

Land will be acquired for NEEPP projects designed to improve hydrology, water quality and aquatic habitats in these watersheds with a specific focus on targeting those lands that can be used to build Plan components needed for restoration. NEEPP land acquisition may also cover those lands needed for CERP project components included in the various Protection Plans.

### **Local Contributions**

Local governments also have made significant land acquisition contributions to the South Florida Ecosystem restoration goals:

- Goal 1: Local governments have contributed over \$111 million for CERP land acquisition.
- Goal 2: Local governments have contributed over \$600 million for the natural habitat lands identified in Appendix D.
- Goal 3: Counties hold title to more than 156,000 acres of lands that contribute towards the park, recreation, and open space objective of Goal 3 as detailed in Appendix F.

## **Accomplishments**

Progress continues on land acquisition in support of South Florida Ecosystem restoration. Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of this progress is the continuation of

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<sup>5</sup> Source: June 30, 2010 CERP Master. The CERP Master totals for Expedited Projects are only for those projects with federal involvement.

strong partnerships at the federal, state, **tribal**, and local levels to achieve restoration goals. As a result of innovative partnerships and creative approaches, several major acquisitions have been accomplished during the reporting period:

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) acquired a total of 2,535 acres in fee simple at a cost of \$28 million.

- A total of 1,706 acres were acquired in fee simple.
- A total of 829 acres were acquired in less-than fee.

Notable SFWMD acquisitions:

- 56 acres were acquired within the Southern Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) Critical Restoration Project.
- The State of Florida granted an easement covering 727 acres for the Herbert Hoover Dike Rehabilitation Project.

Of particular note are the 1,743 acres acquired in support of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands (BBCW) CERP project:

- The 129-acre Cutler Bay property was acquired for the Cutler Wetland C-1 Flowway feature.
- Letters of agreement were executed between SFWMD and Miami-Dade County covering 90 acres for the Deering Estate Flowway.
- Miami-Dade County acquired 1,524 acres within the footprint of the BBCW project.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) acquired a total of 461 acres in fee simple at a cost of \$22 million.

Notable FDEP acquisitions:

- 32 acres in the North Key Largo Hammocks Florida Forever project.
- Working with Florida Communities Trust (FCT) and using additional funds appropriated by the Legislature, 384 acres were acquired in the Indian River Lagoon Blueway Florida Forever project for Harbor Branch with FDEP acquiring 136 acres and FCT acquiring the additional 248 acres.
- Continued acquisition for the Picayune Strand Restoration CERP project with 85 parcels within 69 different eminent domain cases were brought to a close through stipulated judgments.

Notable USDA – NRCS major acquisitions:

- 3,900 acres in easements on agricultural lands were enrolled in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) WRP.
- 85 acres in easements were enrolled in the USDA's FRPP.

# Strategy Purpose and Background

## Introduction

The South Florida Ecosystem is an 18,000 square mile region that includes all or part of sixteen counties and has more than six million human inhabitants. The watershed stretches from the Kissimmee River Basin-Lake Okeechobee system in the north to the coral reefs in the south. This water-dominated system encompasses a myriad of interconnected rivers, lakes, marshes, prairies, forests, and estuaries and spans the state between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico.

In 1948, the ongoing efforts to drain the Everglades, protect the region from hurricanes, and make the region habitable culminated in Congressional authorization of the C&SF Project, a flood control project jointly built and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the SFWMD. The primary project goal was to provide water and flood control for urban and agricultural lands. Other goals were to improve habitat for fish and wildlife, ensure a water supply for Everglades National Park, and provide for agricultural, industrial, and recreational uses.

Historically, most rainwater soaked into the region's wetlands. The C&SF Project significantly altered the region's hydrology (quantity, timing, and distribution of water). By the 1970s, the constructed C&SF canal system included over 1,800 miles of canals and levees and 200 water control structures. This immense system diverted an average of 1.7 billion gallons of water per day (5,217 acre-feet per day) into the ocean and Gulf of Mexico.

The desirability of south Florida's climate, geographic location, cultural and social setting, and thriving economic opportunities have contributed to significant population growth since the C&SF Project was completed. While the historic Everglades has been reduced to about half of its original size, the current population in the region is predicted to double by the year 2050<sup>6</sup>. Consequently, the sustainability of the South Florida Ecosystem is in jeopardy. In response to this situation, the federal, state, regional and local governments and two Native American Indian Tribes have committed to support the restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem.

Land acquisition is critical to South Florida Ecosystem restoration efforts. Land is needed to preserve habitat for native plants and animals, act as a buffer between development and existing natural areas, and provide opportunities for recreational pursuits. Land is also needed for water quality treatment areas, water storage

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<sup>6</sup> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, *Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement*, April 1999.

reservoirs, and aquifer recharge areas that will help restore the region's natural hydrology.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the LAS is to describe the land identified jointly by Federal and State agencies for ecosystem restoration and, with its appendices, provide a broad picture of all land acquisition initiatives that contribute to the restoration. The LATT updates the LAS annually for the Task Force. The LATT's Directive is found within Appendix I.

In April 2000, a General Accounting Office (now called the Government Accountability Office or GAO) report recommended that the Task Force develop a land acquisition plan to coordinate member agencies' land acquisition activities. In response to this recommendation, the LAS includes:

- An assessment of the lands needed to accomplish each of the goals of restoration.
- A description of the purpose for which the lands will be acquired and how they will be managed.
- An estimate of the cost of these lands.
- An estimate of when the lands will be needed for related restoration projects.
- The agencies responsible for acquiring the lands.

The LAS does not propose to acquire the amount of land necessary to restore or recreate the historic Everglades—many of those lands are irretrievably lost. The restored Everglades will be smaller and of a different configuration than the original, but will mimic the historic functions of the Everglades.

## **The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force**

Six federal departments (twelve federal agencies), seven Florida state agencies, two American Indian tribes, sixteen counties, scores of municipal governments, and interested groups and businesses from throughout south Florida participate in the restoration effort. Given the large geographic area, the diverse missions of these agencies, and the need to maximize the resources available for this effort, coordination among these entities is essential to the restoration effort.

The WRDA 1996 established the intergovernmental Task Force. It consists of fourteen members from four sovereign entities: seven federal agency representatives at the Assistant Secretary or equivalent level, five state representatives, and two Native American Indian representatives. Among other duties, WRDA 1996 requires the Task Force to:

- Coordinate the development of consistent strategies, policies, projects, and programs to address the restoration, preservation, and protection of the South Florida Ecosystem.
- Exchange information on Everglades restoration efforts.

- Coordinate scientific research.
- Facilitate the resolution of interagency and intergovernmental disputes.
- Facilitate public participation by the public.

The role of the Task Force is to facilitate the coordination of conservation and restoration efforts implemented through a combination of federal, state, local, and tribal initiatives in South Florida. The Task Force provides a forum for the participating entities to share information about their restoration projects and resolve conflicts, and report on progress. Congress and the public are particularly interested in how each individual member's efforts contribute to the larger framework of total ecosystem restoration. The Task Force *Land Acquisition Strategy* is a critical vehicle for sharing information.

Providing a forum for consensus building and issue engagement is a collaborative role, not one in which the Task Force dictates to its members. Because on-the-ground restoration is accomplished through the efforts of the individual Task Force members, they are the ones that are ultimately responsible for their particular programs, projects, and associated funding. This is an important distinction. Each member is accountable individually to its appropriate authorities and to each other for the success of the restoration. The Task Force has no overriding authority to direct its members. Instead the Task Force role of coordination complements the implementation roles of its members. The Task Force also provides opportunities to improve cohesion among public interest groups on the disparate elements and programs of the South Florida Ecosystem restoration (land acquisition and conservation, water quality improvement, water infrastructure development, and habitat protection).

A Working Group and Science Coordination Group (SCG) have been established to assist the Task Force in accomplishing its duties in general. Advisory groups such as the Water Resources Advisory Commission (WRAC) provide the Task Force with recommendations on specific issues.

The intergovernmental Task Force is the only forum that provides strategic coordination and a system-wide perspective to guide the separate restoration efforts being planned and implemented in South Florida. The Task Force members share a vision of a healthy South Florida Ecosystem that supports diverse and sustainable communities of plants, animals, and people. Three goals have been set to achieve this vision:

- Goal 1: Get the water right.
- Goal 2: Restore, preserve, and protect natural habitats and species.
- Goal 3: Foster compatibility of the built and natural systems.

Land acquisition is an essential part of achieving these ecosystem restoration goals.

## **South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Needs**

The members of the Task Force have been engaged in the protection and restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem for many years prior to the formation of the Task Force.

Acquisition of land to provide water for south Florida's human population and to protect natural resources has been an ongoing priority in ecosystem restoration.

In 1947, the federal government acquired land to establish Everglades National Park with the substantial contribution of 903,931 acres from the State of Florida. This noteworthy event has been followed and enhanced by numerous programs aimed at protecting and conserving South Florida's natural lands. State and federal agencies currently manage 4.9 million acres of land important for the protection of natural habitat and species in south Florida (see Appendix D).

By the mid-1980s, a consensus was developing that water management in the region needed to be improved for natural habitats to respond. In 1989 and 1992 respectively, Congress authorized the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park and the Kissimmee River Restoration projects. These projects added new land acquisition requirements as part of the improved water management system.

In 1992, Congress authorized the C&SF Comprehensive Review Study (Restudy) to take a system-wide look at the water management system and recommend changes to benefit the remaining Everglades while meeting other water related needs of the region. The Restudy is the foundation of the CERP.

The WRDA 2000 authorized the CERP, perhaps the most ambitious ecological restoration program ever undertaken. CERP provides a framework for modifications and operational changes that are needed to restore, preserve, and protect the South Florida Ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection. The authorization of the CERP added new land acquisition requirements for the restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem.

In 2007, the Northern Everglades Initiative was signed into law, expanding the NEAPP to the entire Northern Everglades system, including the Lake Okeechobee watershed as well as the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie rivers and estuaries. As part of the plan to improve the health of the northern Everglades, Florida will set aside land, construct treatment wetlands, and identify water storage areas needed to improve the quality, timing, and distribution of water in the natural system and will add new ecosystem restoration land acquisition requirements to complement the CERP.

# Acquisition Strategy

The strategy for land acquisition within the South Florida Ecosystem is to pursue acquisition of lands identified as necessary for restoration in a coordinated and timely manner. These include lands needed to fulfill Task Force goals and objectives (Appendix A) and implement ecosystem restoration initiatives such as CERP. Local government initiatives also contribute to ecosystem-wide restoration. The following is a discussion of land acquisition efforts by goal and initiative to date. Further discussion regarding existing and potential partnerships and mechanisms for land acquisition may be found in the next section.

## Acquisition Efforts by Strategic Goal

The Task Force's guiding document, *Coordinating Success: Strategy for Restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem*, identifies projects needed for ecosystem restoration. Projects with land acquisition requirements are included in the following analysis. Specific project information is located within Appendix C.

### **Goal 1: Get the Water Right**

Land acquisition for Goal 1 includes lands needed for CERP and other authorized modifications to the C&SF System including the Kissimmee River Restoration and Headwaters Revitalization Project, the C-111 Canal Project, the Critical Projects authorized in WRDA 1996, and Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park. Other water quality improvement projects, such as the 100 percent federally funded Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) 1-East component of the SFWMD's Everglades Construction Project (ECP), are also needed to fulfill this goal. A discussion of the state-purchased STAs is in Appendix E.

There are **45 projects** identified for acquisition to help achieve Goal 1. Land acquisition estimates for these projects **total 510,318 acres with 337,264 acres (64 percent) acquired to date**. The total estimated cost of these lands is **\$3,518,897,000 with an estimated \$1,588,578,000 needed to complete acquisition**<sup>7</sup> (see Table 4).

### **Identification of Lands to be Acquired**

The acreage estimated on the project profile sheets in Appendix C reflects the best available information as of June 30, **2010**. Non-CERP project land requirements are identified through General Design Memorandums. The Restudy estimated the total lands needed for CERP based on preliminary conceptual project designs. These estimates have been updated for projects with a completed Project Implementation

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<sup>7</sup> Cost estimates for remaining acres for the Modified Water Deliveries projects are the estimated fair market value. The Kissimmee River restoration estimates are **2010** estimates to close all contracts and include engineering solutions in lieu of acquisition. For those CERP projects with either a Final Feasibility Study or Project Implementation Report, the Real Estate Plan estimates in those documents have been adjusted to **2009** dollars **using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent**. For CERP projects that do not have an authorization document, the 1999 Restudy real estate estimates have been adjusted to **2009** dollars **using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent**.

Report (PIR) as required by CERP and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. **The final project size or location has not been determined for those projects without a final PIR.**

### **Strategic Acquisitions**

Failure to obtain parcels in a timely manner can result in construction delays and reconfiguration not just of one project, but for other related projects as well. Delays in acquiring project lands lessen the possibility that the necessary lands will be acquired and may also increase the cost of land. **The Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS) prioritizes and schedules the construction of both CERP and non-CERP restoration projects in South Florida, thus helping to prioritize land acquisition.** In addition, the SFWMD has pursued a strategy of early land acquisition to secure lands **anticipated to be needed** for future CERP projects. Appendix B identifies all the **federal projects and joint federal/state projects like CERP** with continued land acquisition needs.

### **Cost Estimates of Real Estate**

Real estate cost estimates for non-CERP projects are based on actual expenditures and the estimated **cost** for remaining land acquisition.

For those CERP projects with either a final Feasibility Study or PIR, the Real Estate Plan estimates in those documents have been adjusted to **2009** dollars **using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent.** For CERP projects that do not have an authorization document, the 1999 Restudy real estate estimates have been adjusted to **2009** dollars **using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent.**

### **Funding Sources**

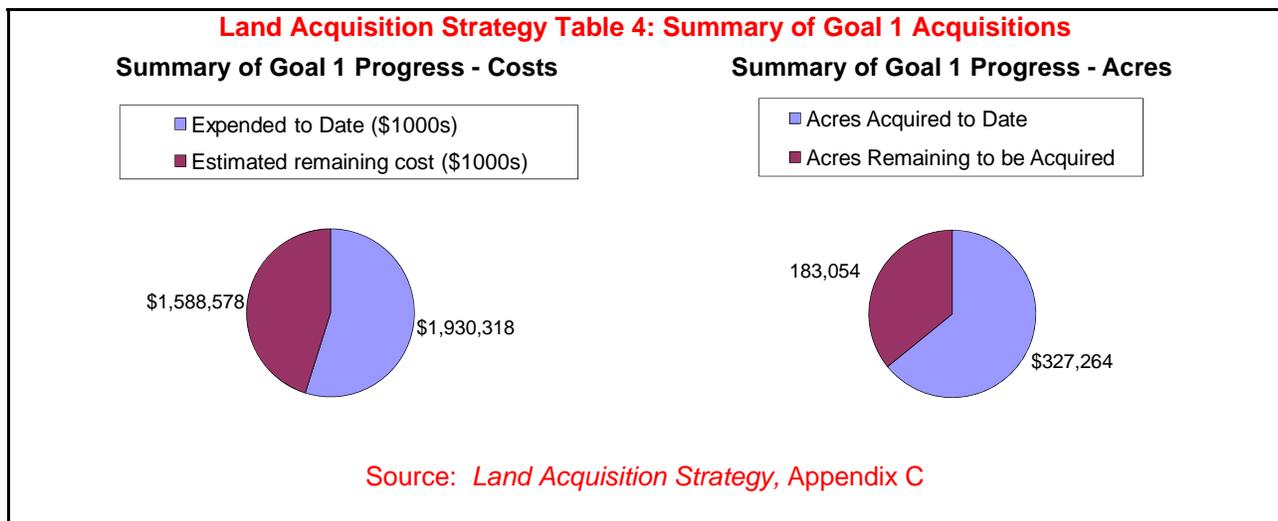
These funding sources have been used to acquire Goal 1 lands:

- U.S. Department of the Interior (USDOI) Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- USDA WRP.
- Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Farm Bill) Section 390.
- Florida Forever – Board of Trustees Program.
- State of Florida Conservation and Recreational Lands (CARL).
- State of Florida (FDEP) Save Our Everglades Trust Fund (SOETF).
- Florida Forever/Save Our Rivers (formerly Preservation 2000).
- Broward County Safe Parks and Land Preservation Bond Program.
- Conservation Collier.
- SFWMD Ad Valorem Taxes.
- Special State Appropriations.
- Lee County Conservation 20/20.
- Martin County Lands for Healthy Rivers.
- Miami-Dade County Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program.
- Palm Beach County Land Acquisition Program for Conservation Purposes.
- St. Lucie County Environmentally Significant Lands Program.
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

The State of Florida's 2000 Everglades Restoration and Investment Act, Section 373.470 F.S., established a full and equal partnership between the State and Federal governments for the implementation of the CERP. The Act established the Save Our Everglades Trust Fund to fund the State's cost share of implementing the CERP. Legislation was passed in 2007 to authorize use of these funds for NEEPP.

Florida's Fiscal Year (FY) 2010-2011 appropriation for the Save Our Everglades Trust Fund (SOETF) include \$10 million for Everglades restoration. These funds are provided for the design, engineering, and construction of the CERP, the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan, the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Watershed Protection Plan Components, and for the acquisition of lands for projects included in these plans. Additionally, \$1 million of the 2010-2011 appropriation is provided to the Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services (FDACS) for implementation of the agricultural nonpoint source controls in the Northern Everglades watershed.

An additional \$40 million is appropriated for FY 2010-2011 SOETF contingent upon Florida being eligible to receive federal funds, based on the state's Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage, in excess of the February 2010 official Social Services Estimating Conference. Of these funds, \$2 million is provided to the FDACS for implementation of agricultural nonpoint source controls in the Okeechobee, Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie watersheds.



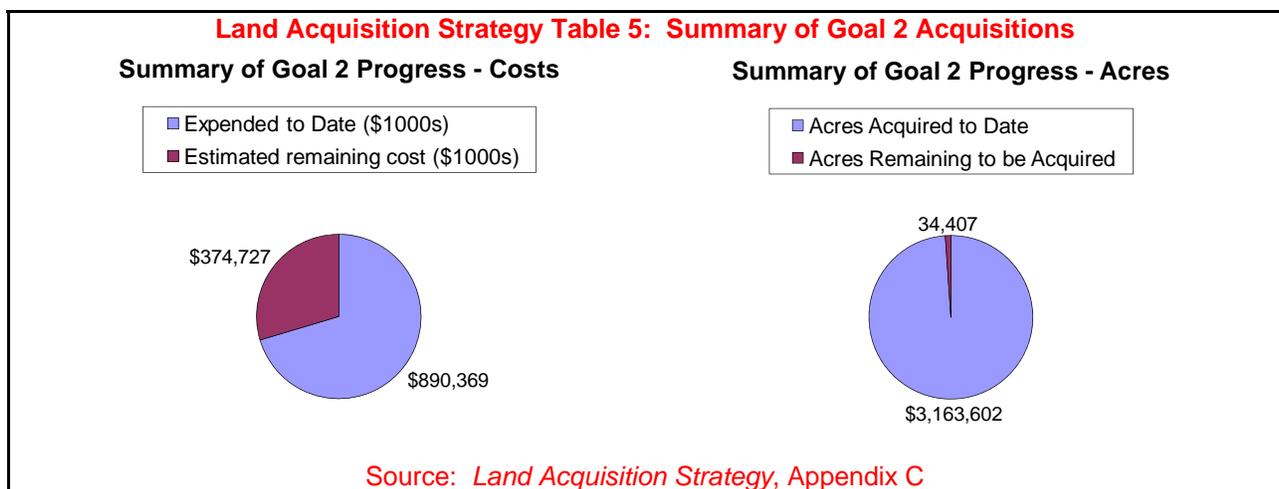
**Goal 2: Restore, Preserve, and Protect Natural Habitats and Species**

Habitat and species protection goals are met primarily through large public holdings such as parks and wildlife refuges. The LAS tracks the land acquisition needs of the three national parks and preserves, 16 wildlife refuges, and nine CERP wetland restoration projects that contribute to this goal.

There are 26 projects identified for acquisition to achieve Goal 2. To date, 3,198,009 acres are estimated to be needed to achieve the targets established for this goal with

3,163,602 (99 percent) acres acquired. The total estimated cost of these lands is approximately \$1,265,096,000 with an estimated \$374,727,000 needed to complete acquisition of these parcels<sup>8</sup> (see Table 5).

The habitat and species table in Appendix D lists all the Goal 2 land acquisition projects, regardless of federal funding involvement. These projects are on the state’s Florida Forever/Save Our Rivers (FF/SOR) project list. FF/SOR projects have been in transition over the last decade. As a precursor to the Critical Restoration Projects (CRP) and the CERP initiatives, several FF/SOR projects included lands to be used for the construction of facilities, such as reservoirs and impoundments. The table in Appendix D has been revised to reflect acres of natural lands only, as opposed to those obtained for construction projects.



### Identification of Lands to be Acquired

Any major boundary revisions to existing units of the national park system must be established by an act of Congress. Likewise, national wildlife refuge land acquisitions must be consistent with existing Congressional authorization. Land acquisition needs for CERP wetland restoration projects are identified in the Picayune Strand Restoration Project (Southern Golden Gate Estates) PIR, the Water Preserve Area (WPA) Feasibility Study (Strazzulla Wetlands), and the Henderson Creek/Belle Meade conceptual plan.

<sup>8</sup> Cost estimates for remaining acquisitions for National Wildlife Refuges and National Parks projects are based on estimated fair market value. The FDEP uses tax assessment values to estimate land costs for the Indian River Lagoon Blueway. The cost estimate for remaining acres for the Strazzulla Wetlands Water Preserve Area Project is the Real Estate Plan estimate in the October 2001 Water Preserve Area Feasibility Study adjusted to 2009 dollars using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent. For those CERP projects with either a Final Feasibility Study or Project Implementation Report, the Real Estate Plan estimates in those documents have been adjusted to 2009 dollars using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent. For those CERP projects that do not have an authorization document, the 1999 Restudy real estate estimates have been adjusted to 2009 dollars using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent

## **Strategic Acquisitions**

Land acquisition to complete park and refuge boundaries is a multi-year process and can span decades. The goal is to acquire lands before natural resources are destroyed.

The Picayune Strand Restoration Project is centrally located among several nature preserves, wildlife refuges, and other wildlife areas in Collier County, one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. The acquisition of lands for this project will protect over 2.3 million contiguous acres of wildlife habitat.

The acquisition of the Strazzulla wetlands, immediately adjacent to the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), will increase the spatial extent of wetlands and will provide habitat connectivity for species that require large, unfragmented tracts of land for survival. This unique and endangered habitat contains the only remaining cypress habitat in the eastern Everglades and one of the few remaining sawgrass marshes adjacent to the coastal ridge.

## **Cost Estimates of Real Estate**

The National Park Service (NPS) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) cost estimates for land acquisitions for national parks and national wildlife refuges are based on fair market value and appraisals that meet State and Federal standards. The FDEP, as the acquisition agent for Picayune Strand and Henderson Creek/Belle Meade projects, uses tax assessment values to estimate land costs. The cost estimate for the Strazzulla Wetlands CERP project is based on the 2001 Water Preserve Area Feasibility Study and has been adjusted to 2009 dollars using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent.

## **Funding Sources**

These funding sources have been used to acquire Goal 2 lands:

- USDOJ Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- CARL.
- SFWMD Ad Valorem Taxes.
- Florida Forever – Board of Trustees Program.
- FF/SOR (formerly Preservation 2000).
- City of Sanibel.
- Conservation Collier.
- Miami-Dade County EEL.
- Monroe County Land Authority.
- The Conservation Fund.
- The Nature Conservancy.
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program.

### **Goal 3: Foster Compatibility of the Built and Natural System**

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (2002 Farm Bill) and the recently enacted Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) authorized several USDA administered programs to provide financial incentives to private landowners to restore or enhance wetlands and improve wildlife habitat while protecting working farms or retiring marginal land from agricultural production. The LAS tracks the WRP and FRPP efforts to achieve Goal 3 land acquisition objectives through permanent and 30-year conservation easements. These acquisitions include lands needed for CERP Projects.

The Broward County Secondary Canal System, South Miami-Dade Wastewater Reuse, and West Miami-Dade Wastewater Reuse CERP projects also contribute to this goal.

Other state and local acquisitions that contribute to this goal are discussed in Appendix F. Below is a discussion of the WRP and FRPP provisions in the 2008 Farm Bill.

The WRP is a voluntary program to assist landowners in restoring wetlands that have had wetlands functions reduced or eliminated by agricultural production practices. Priority is given to those lands that will maximize wildlife habitat. Permanent and 30-year conservation easements provide financial incentives for wetlands enhancement in exchange for retiring marginal agricultural lands. NRCS has obligated **\$106.4 million** to secure WRP easements on **40,035 acres** since 2002.

The FRPP provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and rangeland in agricultural uses. The USDA partners with State and local governments, Tribes, and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements from landowners. The USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market value of the conservation easement. **Since the passage of the 2002 Farm Bill, 5,582 acres in south Florida have been enrolled through the FRPP at a cost of \$7 million.**

#### **Identification of Lands to be Acquired**

To be eligible for the WRP, land must be restorable and suitable for wildlife benefits. This includes:

- Wetlands farmed under natural conditions.
- Farmed wetlands.
- Prior converted cropland.
- Farmed wetland pasture.
- Farmland that has become a wetland as a result of flooding.
- Range land, pasture, or production forest land where the hydrology has been significantly degraded and can be restored.
- Riparian areas which link protected wetlands.
- Lands adjacent to protected wetlands that contribute significantly to wetland functions and values.
- Previously restored wetlands that need long-term protection.

To qualify for the FRPP, farmland must:

- Be part of a pending offer from a State, Tribe, or local farmland protection program.
- Be privately owned.
- Have a conservation plan for highly erodible land.
- Be large enough to sustain agricultural production.
- Be accessible to markets for what the land produces.
- Have adequate infrastructure and agricultural support services.
- Have surrounding parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production.

### **Strategic Acquisitions**

For the WRP, the USDA's Natural NRCS places priority on the enrollment of those lands that will maximize wildlife values, especially related to enhancing habitat for migratory birds. The priority ranking factors for the WRP are:

- Habitat.
- Location.
- Hydrology.
- Wildlife species.
- Operation and maintenance.
- Likelihood of success.

All sites within the South Florida Ecosystem restoration area receive an automatic 25 points in the NRCS priority ranking to encourage enrollment and increase the WRP contribution to the habitat restoration goals of the Task Force.

There are no special South Florida enrollment incentives for the FRPP. The State Conservationist, with advice from the State Technical Committee, establishes a weighted ranking system. Priority is given to easements that protect the nation's most threatened prime, unique, and important farmland or historical and archeological sites on farm and ranch lands. In evaluation of proposals and parcels, at least 50 percent of the weight is based on the national criteria. The remaining weight is based on state criteria contained in the state FRPP plan.

### **Cost Estimates of Real Estate**

The WRP Geographic Area Rate Cap (GARC) is based on the following:

- University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences' (IFAS) annual *Florida Land Value Study* and the appraised improved pasture land value.
- An analysis of easement compensation of prior year WRP acquisitions.

The South Florida GARC is \$5,897 per acre for a permanent easement and \$4,422 per acre for a 30-year easement.

The value of a FRPP conservation easement is determined through a professional appraisal. A qualified appraiser assesses the difference between the fair market value

of a property, often using comparable sales, and its restricted valuation under the easement.

### **Available Funding Sources**

The State Conservationist requests funds annually to fund WRP easements. WRP applications are funded from the priority list until all funds are obligated. It is important to note that funds obligated in one year cannot be used to fund applications in a different year and all unused funds for a fiscal year must be returned to the USDA.

The FRPP is funded through the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation. The FRPP share of the conservation easement cost must not exceed 50 percent of the appraised fair market value of the conservation easement. As part of its share of the cost of purchasing a conservation easement, a state or local government, tribe, or non-governmental organization may include a charitable donation by the landowner of up to 25 percent of the appraised fair market value of the conservation easement. At a minimum, a cooperating entity must provide, in cash, 25 percent of the appraised fair market value or 50 percent of the purchase price of the conservation easement.

### **Acquisition Efforts by Initiative**

Key ecosystem restoration initiatives like CERP and the sSate's expedited projects provide significant contributions toward achieving the Task Force's three strategic goals. Additionally, many local governments within the region have land acquisition programs that significantly contribute to ecosystem restoration. The following is a discussion of these programs and associated land acquisition.

#### **CERP**

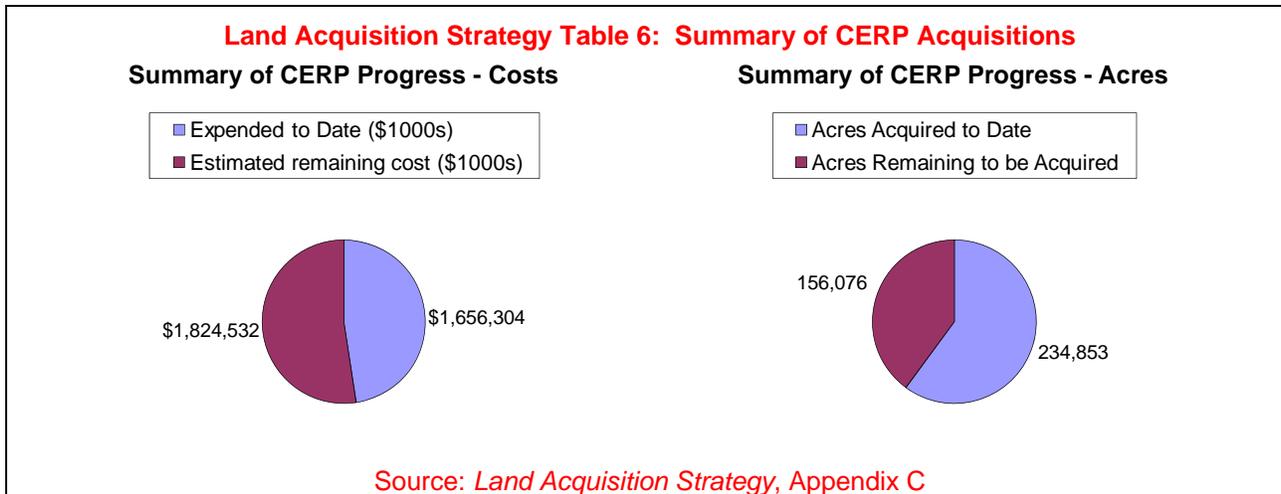
The WRDA 2000 authorized implementation of the CERP. Implementation of the CERP is one of the highest priorities for the Task Force because of its significant contribution to the restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem.

The State has proceeded with land acquisition for CERP projects in advance of project authorization, and thus land acquisition is ahead of scheduled as compared to the construction dates listed in the IDS. As a result of acquiring acreage at the earliest possible time, the state has precluded development of these lands needed for restoration.

With the 2000 passage of the Everglades Restoration Investment Act and subsequent amendments, the state appropriated funds which are disbursed to the SFWMD for land acquisition, design and construction and technical planning needed to implement CERP and NEEPP.

For those projects with either a final Feasibility Study or PIR, the Real Estate Plan estimates in those documents have been adjusted to 2009 dollars. For those projects that do not have an authorization document, the 1999 Restudy real estate estimates have been adjusted to 2009 dollars using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent.

Land acquisition estimates for CERP projects total 390,929 acres with 224,853 acres (60 percent) acquired to date. The total estimated cost of these lands is \$3,447,704,000, with an estimated \$1,824,532,000 needed to complete acquisition for CERP<sup>9</sup> (see Table 6).



### **Expedited Projects**

In October 2004, the State of Florida announced its commitment to accelerate the design and construction of projects selected for the immediate benefits they can provide to the Everglades and the South Florida Ecosystem. The majority of these **projects are or are expected to be identified as** projects or portions of projects in the CERP. Most of the lands for these projects are already in public ownership and were acquired with a combination of federal and state funds.

Over time, the SFWMD expanded this initial list of projects to also support a number of other restoration and water quality initiatives now under way in both the Northern and Southern reaches of South Florida’s interconnected ecosystem. The SFWMD’s continued commitment to design and build projects to benefit the environment is now referred to as “expedited projects.” More detailed information is available at [www.sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov).

Land acquisition estimates for the expedited projects total 126,492 acres of which approximately 3,726 acres are publicly-owned lands, including land owned by utilities. Letters of agreement are in place for 1,390 of these acres and will be sought for the remaining 2,346 acres needed; it is not anticipated that publicly-owned lands, including lands owned by utilities, will need to be purchased. Approximately 125,840 (99 percent) have been acquired to date or are covered under a letter of agreement, with an

<sup>9</sup> Source: **June 30, 2010 SFWMD CERP Master**. The estimated cost for remaining acres for CERP projects with either a Final Feasibility Study or Project Implementation Report is based on the Real Estate Plan estimates which have been adjusted to 2009 dollars **using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent**. For CERP projects that do not have an authorization document, the 1999 Restudy real estate estimates have been adjusted to 2009 dollars **using a yearly inflation factor of 4 percent**.

estimated 652 acres remaining to be acquired for these projects. Expenditures to date total \$760,780,308<sup>10</sup>

### **Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program**

In 2007, the Florida legislature amended the Lake Okeechobee Protection Act to include the protection of the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River watersheds. The program is known as the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Program (NEEPP), promotes a comprehensive, interconnected watershed approach to protecting these water bodies. The NEEPP contains the Lake Okeechobee Protection program, now named the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program and the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River Watershed Protection Programs. These programs address the reduction of pollutant loadings, restoration of natural hydrology, and compliance with applicable state water quality standards.

Land acquisition for NEEPP will be done for projects (stormwater treatment areas/water quality treatment areas, reservoirs, etc.) identified in the Plans to improve hydrology, water quality and aquatic habitats. Land acquisition under NEEPP has a specific focus on those lands that can be used to build the plan components for restoration. It should also be noted that the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River Watershed Plans, and the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project Phase 2 Technical Plan, included components of the CERP projects (C-43 West Reservoir, Indian River Lagoon - South and Lake Okeechobee Watershed projects, respectively). Hence, NEEPP land acquisition may also cover those CERP lands needed for project components in the various protection plans.

### **Local Contributions**

Local governments have also made significant land acquisition contributions to South Florida Ecosystem restoration goals:

- Goal 1: Local governments have contributed over \$111 million for CERP land acquisition.
- Goal 2: Local governments have contributed over \$600 million for the natural habitat lands identified in Appendix D.
- Goal 3: Counties hold title to over 156,000 acres of lands that contribute towards the park, recreation, and open space objective of Goal 3 as described in Appendix F.

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<sup>10</sup> Source: June 30, 2009 SFWMD CERP Master. The CERP Master total for expedited projects is only for those projects with federal involvement.

# Acquisition Partnerships and Mechanisms

Over 50 funding sources that could potentially be utilized in support of South Florida Ecosystem restoration are identified in Appendix G. These include federal, state, and local government programs as well as non-governmental organizations. Fifteen have been used to date in support of South Florida Ecosystem restoration goals and land acquisition. Many of the programs provide opportunities to match or leverage funding available through other sources for land acquisition, conservation, or restoration. Further discussion of several of these partnerships and mechanisms follows.

## Federal/State/Local Acquisition Partnerships

In many ways South Florida Ecosystem restoration began with the federal/state partnership to establish Everglades National Park. Continued cooperation and coordination between federal, state, and local partners in Everglades restoration has maximized the resources available for land acquisition.

The State of Florida's strong commitment to funding acquisition of environmental lands is the foundation of these partnerships. Florida Forever is Florida's premier conservation and recreation lands acquisition program, a blueprint for conserving natural resources and renewing Florida's commitment to conserve the state's natural and cultural heritage. Florida Forever replaces Preservation 2000 (P2000), the largest public land acquisition program of its kind in the United States. With a total of 3.8 million acres of conservation land purchased in Florida, 2.4 million acres were purchased under the Florida Forever and P2000 programs. Florida spent \$3 billion during the ten years of P2000 and another \$2.7 billion of Florida Forever as of June 30, 2010. This commitment was renewed by the passage of Florida Forever legislation in April 2008, with an additional \$3 billion investment through 2020. The current distribution of funds was changed by:

- Allocating 3.5 percent to the FDACS to support the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program for the acquisition of agricultural lands through perpetual easements and other perpetual less-than-fee techniques.
- Reducing from 35 percent (\$105 million) to 30 percent (\$90 million) those funds distributed to the water management districts for use in acquiring lands and paying for capital projects related to land preservation and water resource development.
- Allocating 2.5 percent to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for implementation of the Stan Mayfield Working Waterfronts Program.
- Reducing FCT funding from 22 percent to 21 percent.

<b>Land Acquisition Strategy Table 7: Florida Forever Percentage Distribution</b>						
	<b>DISTRIBUTION (2000-01 to 2007-08)</b>		<b>DISTRIBUTION (2008-09)</b>		<b>DISTRIBUTION (2010-11)</b>	
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Fla. Forever percent Distribution</b>	<b>Fla. Forever Appropriations</b>	<b>Fla. Forever percent Distribution</b>	<b>Fla. Forever Appropriations</b>	<b>Fla. Forever percent Distribution</b>	<b>Fla. Forever Appropriations</b>
State Lands	35.0%	\$ 105,000,000	35.0%	\$ 105,000,000	35.0%	\$ 5,250,000
Rec. & Parks	1.5%	\$ 4,500,000	1.5%	\$ 4,500,000	1.5%	\$ 225,000
FWCC	1.5%	\$ 4,500,000	1.5%	\$ 4,500,000	1.5%	\$ 225,000
DACS-DOF	1.5%	\$ 4,500,000	1.5%	\$ 4,500,000	1.5%	\$ 225,000
<i>DACS-Rural and Family Lands</i>			3.5%	\$ 10,500,000	3.5%	\$ 525,000
OGT-R to T	1.5%	\$ 4,500,000	1.5%	\$ 4,500,000	1.5%	\$ 225,000
DCA-FCT	22.0%	\$ 66,000,000	21.0%	\$ 63,000,000	21.0%	\$ 3,150,000
<i>DCA-Working Waterfronts Program</i>			2.5%	\$ 7,500,000	2.5%	\$ 375,000
FRDAP	2.0%	\$ 6,000,000	2.0%	\$ 6,000,000	2.0%	\$ 300,000
WMD*	35.0%	\$ 105,000,000	30.0%	\$ 90,000,000	30.0%	\$ 4,500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 300,000,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 300,000,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 15,000,000</b>
<b>*WMD</b>						
<b>NFWWMD</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>\$ 7,875,000</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>\$ 6,750,000</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>\$ 337,500</b>
<b>SRWMD</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>\$ 7,875,000</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>\$ 6,750,000</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>\$ 337,500</b>
<b>SWFWMD</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>\$ 26,250,000</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>\$ 22,500,000</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>\$ 1,125,000</b>
<b>SJWMD</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>\$ 26,250,000</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>\$ 22,500,000</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>\$ 1,125,000</b>
<b>**SFWMD</b>	<b>35.0%</b>	<b>\$ 36,750,000</b>	<b>35.0%</b>	<b>\$ 31,500,000</b>	<b>35.0%</b>	<b>\$ 1,575,000</b>

\*\*\$25,000,000 of the amount appropriated to the South Florida Water Management District for Bond Series I and II was transferred to the Everglades Trust Fund for Everglades Restoration.

The current distribution of funds is detailed in Table 7. The state's budget did not include debt service to issue a new series of bonds. The FY 2010-2011 state budget included \$15 million for the Florida Forever program, funded by cash from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund (\$8 million) and the Water Management Lands Trust Fund (\$7 million).

It is hoped that as the economy improves, the Florida Forever program will continue to be funded by the Florida Legislature, through the issuance of bonds or through another funding source.

### **Florida Forever Program /Federal Partnerships**

The FDEP Division of State Lands (DSL) coordinates park and refuge land acquisitions with the federal government. Lands purchased under the Florida Forever program are managed under lease agreements by the appropriate Federal park or wildlife refuge where the parcels contribute to the conservation of priority habitats and associated

species. For example, seventy percent of the acres remaining to be acquired for the National Key Deer Refuge are also on DSL's Florida Forever acquisition list. The DSL is cooperating with the NPS on the Big Cypress National Preserve and Big Cypress National Preserve Addition.

### **Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 Partnership**

In 1996, the USDOJ, FDEP, and SFWMD participated in a unique land acquisition partnership thanks to a specific congressional action. The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act (1996 Farm Bill) provided \$200 million to the Secretary of the Interior to fund or conduct restoration activities in the Everglades ecosystem. The 1996 Farm Bill funds, along with state funds, were utilized to purchase lands for CERP projects in the East Coast Buffer/Water Preserve Areas, the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA)/Talisman property, and Picayune Strand Restoration (also known as Southern Golden Gate Estates).

### **The Land and Water Conservation Fund**

The SFWMD has received about \$183 million in land acquisition grant funds from the USDOJ's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) through FY 2010. These funds have been used to acquire lands within the East Coast Buffer/Water Preserve Areas, the EAA, STA-1 East, Southern CREW, Taylor Creek/Nubbin Slough, C-43 Basin Storage (Berry Groves), the Frog Pond area adjacent to Everglades National Park, and the Modified Water Deliveries/East Everglades.

### **CERP Partnerships**

Restoration partners have acquired 60 percent of the necessary CERP lands at a cost of \$1.6 billion, of which \$325 million<sup>11</sup> was provided by the federal government (USDOJ and USDA), \$1.3 billion from the State (SFWMD and FDEP), \$111 million by local governments and Tribal contributions of \$8 million.

### **Leveraging Limited Funds**

Partners at all levels of government recognize the need to both prioritize strategic acquisitions and create additional funding capacity through more coordinated and efficient use of existing programs. Certain mechanisms, such as less-than-fee acquisitions and innovative partnerships, can help maximize the use of limited fiscal resources. Some examples of these mechanisms are described below.

### **Conservation Banks**

The USFWS has added conservation banking to the arsenal of land acquisition options in south Florida. Conservation banks are permanently protected privately or publicly owned lands that are managed for endangered, threatened, and other at-risk species. A conservation bank is like a biological bank account. Instead of money, the bank owner has habitat or species credits to sell. The USFWS approves habitat or species credits based on the natural resource values on the bank lands. In exchange for

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<sup>11</sup> \$325 million has been appropriated by USDOJ and USDA. The SFWMD reports \$256 million are land costs only.

permanently protecting the bank lands and managing them for listed and other at-risk species, conservation bank owners may sell credits to developers or others who need to compensate for the environmental impacts of their projects. Conservation banks, while directed at protecting and enhancing specific endangered species habitat, will also help protect other valuable environmental resources, such as wetlands, aquifer-recharge areas, drinking water supplies, and the habitat of state-listed species. **Currently, four conservation banks (6,553 acres) have been certified to sell credits and certification is pending for a fifth bank (557 acres). An additional 14,877 acres are under review.**

### **Conservation Easements**

Conservation easements involve purchasing a portion of the rights associated with the land to provide some degree of protection to natural resources on the land. There are several advantages of this approach as the land stays on the tax rolls and the private landowner maintains responsibility for managing the property while still allowing some level of continued use. Although the cost could be as low as 25 percent of the cost of fee simple, the price depends on many factors, such as the number of rights purchased, the degree to which the landowner's use of the land is curtailed, and the development pressure on the land. The SFWMD, NRCS, and FDEP all use this tool to protect lands. Currently, conservation easements are contributing to the protection of **193,917** acres.

Some new federal and state initiatives have been enacted recently to make conservation easements more attractive to private landowners. The Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) and Reserved Rights Pilot Program, a new program in the Federal 2008 Farm Bill, provides the added incentive to the private landowner to participate in the WREP as the landowner may reserve grazing rights if the reservation is compatible with restoration goals.

On November 4, 2008, Florida's citizens approved Amendment IV to the Florida Constitution. The new constitutional provision provides an opportunity for private landowners to receive ad valorem or real property tax reductions or exemptions in return for the designation of either short-term or perpetual conservation easements on their lands. The Florida Legislature approved legislation to implement the new conservation easement plan during the 2009 Legislative Session. Once the new program is fully implemented, private landowners seeking to apply for the new conservation easement/tax exemption or reduction will either apply to the respective County Tax Collector's office or the Acquisition and Restoration Council, depending upon the amount of acreage involved. Amendment IV encourages increased conservation efforts by private landowners to conserve Florida's natural resources on privately owned lands.

**Along with other conservation agencies and organizations within Florida, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is working with landowners to inform and assist them on the availability of this new conservation incentive. The agency is developing internal guidelines regarding acceptance of conservation easements donations. Additionally, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) has developed**

guidelines to determine eligibility for tax exemptions on conservation easements 40 acres or less in size.

Palm Beach County has granted conservation easements to the SFWMD and TNC on several of its natural area lands to provide an additional layer of protection. This is a very unusual situation in that the County is granting a degree of control of what occurs on the natural areas to a third party. This provides a substantial obstacle to future county commissioners deciding to use the natural areas for purposes other than conservation.

### **Dispersed Water Management and Treatment Agreements/Projects on Public, Private and Tribal Lands**

A key component of the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Plan involves water management on public, private and tribal lands to increase water retention, detention and/or storage in the watershed. The coordinating agencies for Lake Okeechobee protection and restoration, (SFWMD, FDACS, and FDEP) have executed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to facilitate pursuing a multifaceted approach to reducing phosphorus loads in the watershed through active land-based management programs. **The Dispersed Water Management and Treatment Program includes three approaches: Payment for Environmental Services, Easements, and Cost-Share projects.** The **easement** approach includes the application of pertinent USDA programs that address water quality treatment, preservation, restoration, or creation of wetlands.

Dispersed water **management** and treatment projects include federal, state, and local program efforts along with projects co-sponsored by other entities such as the Florida Ranchlands Environmental Services Project (FRESP). **FRESP is developing a payment for environmental services program that will provide funding to land owners for an increase in the amount of water held and treated on the landscape above and beyond what is required for normal ranching operations.** FRESP is discussed in more detail in the section below.

**Other efforts** involve entering into capital cost-share agreements with public, private, and tribal landowners to implement cost-effective water storage and treatment projects. Landowners utilize the cost-shared facilities to retain and treat stormwater on their properties in accordance with permitted operational plans and special conditions. Estimates of retained water volumes are required to be reported by the SFWMD on an annual basis. These and other similar efforts are designed to assist in meeting the Lake Okeechobee and northern Everglades water resource improvement goals. **Future efforts will include a release a solicitation requesting projects submittal of proposals for storage and treatment.**

### **Engineering Cost-to-Cure Acquisitions**

Engineering solutions can be developed to off-set the need to acquire land in order to implement and operate restoration projects. SFWMD works with private landowners to determine structural solutions that can abate impacts from project construction and minimize the amount of lands needed to execute a project. Cost-to-cure solutions are

complicated and require more time than standard land-only acquisitions. For example, the Kissimmee River Restoration project Grape Hammock Fish Camp transaction included a cost-to-cure feature that protected the current residential mobile home operation and avoided the acquisition of 40 tenant sites and 70 rental recreational vehicle campsites to accommodate the acquisition of fee and permanent flowage easements of approximately 37 acres within the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes.

**Florida Ranchlands and Environmental Services Program**

A coalition that includes World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Florida ranchers, state and federal agencies, and researchers, has been implementing a five-year pilot project to field-test a Payment-for-Environmental Services (PES) program. If expanded in the Northern Everglades, this program would pay eligible cattle ranchers selected into the program for the provision of documented water and phosphorus retention services on their ranches that are above and beyond regulatory requirements. Currently, FRESP collaborators are field-testing program design elements for producing and documenting water and phosphorus retention services through the implementation of water management alternatives (WMA) on eight volunteer ranches in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed.

These eight demonstration WMAs – as well as other FRESP activities – are providing valuable information to demonstrate proof-of-concept and PES program viability; establish roles and responsibilities for implementing on a wider scale; and guide refinement of the PES program, including contracting and pricing of services. Using data collected from the eight demonstration WMA sites, FRESP will be providing analysis of how expanding the number of projects on ranchlands throughout the Northern Everglades can complement existing and planned regional water storage and treatment projects. Table 5 describes the eight demonstration WMAs.

<b>Land Acquisition Strategy Table 8: Florida Ranchlands Environmental Services Project</b>		
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Rafter T Ranch	Highlands County	942
XL Ranch	Highlands County	270
C.M. Payne Ranch	Highlands County	466
Syfrett West Ranch	Glades County	280
Williamson Cattle Company	Okeechobee County	250
Alderman-Deloney Ranch	Okeechobee County	50
Lykes West Waterhole Marsh	Glades County	2,500
Buck Island Ranch	Highlands	2,800
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7,558</b>

Source: WWF and SFWMD. (Table to be updated in August draft)

**Habitat Conservation Plans**

Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) are a tool that can be used to balance the need to conserve the habitat of species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the needs of private and public landowners to make economic use of their own property. While this is a tool that is specifically used to manage federally listed species, it can also

be useful in managing many endemic species within the same habitat. Possible HCP benefits include:

- Shifting the conservation focus from single-species management to multi-species habitat management.
- Engaging private landowners and local governments in conservation planning.
- Protecting unlisted species, thereby reducing the likelihood that listing will be needed.
- Promoting long-term conservation of species and habitats through protection and management.

Charlotte and Highlands Counties as well as the City of Cape Coral are working with the USFWS to craft HCPs for the federally threatened Florida scrub-jay. In addition to the scrub-jay, the Highlands County HCP will include other federally listed plants and animals found in that county. St. Lucie County received an HCP planning grant in 2010 that will allow them to determine if a regional HCP is feasible for their county. On a state-wide level, the USFWS has been working with the FDEP and FWC to develop an HCP for federally listed sea turtles, shore birds, and beach mice.

### **Mitigation Funds**

The SFWMD no longer accepts mitigation funds from developers. However, over \$2 million is available to the District's land acquisition program for use in the CREW and Shingle Creek projects.

In addition, the Lakebelt Mitigation program in Miami-Dade County has raised \$31 million for land acquisition, restoration and long-term management since 2000 for the wetland resources lost to mining activities in this area.

### **Mitigation Lands**

The strategic use of mitigation programs also contributes to the environmental restoration effort in south Florida. If a proposed project will result in negative impacts to wetlands, those impacts must be mitigated by the creation or enhancement of wetlands either on-site or off-site. Mitigation can be required as a condition of a federal, state, or local permit.

Various options exist to permanently protect mitigation lands. A private owner can retain fee title ownership of the land, with a permanent conservation easement on the land assigned to a governmental entity or a private, non-profit conservation organization. Another option is for a governmental entity or private non-profit conservation organization to hold fee title to the land, and the land also has a conservation easement on it held by another entity. A third alternative is for the fee simple title to be held by a government entity or private non-profit conservation organization. Mitigation lands can also be protected through federal, state, or local regulatory instruments with the title held by a private entity. Table 6 provides acreage for selected mitigation lands in south Florida falling under these categories. More than 147,000 acres are being protected through various mitigation programs. Appendix H provides a map and additional information on south Florida mitigation lands.

<b>Land Acquisition Strategy Table 9: Selected Mitigation Lands in South Florida</b>	
<b>TYPE/PROJECT NAME</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
Mitigation lands with a conservation easement, with the fee title held by a private entity (excluding private non-profit conservation organizations)	106,718
Mitigation lands with a conservation easement, with the fee title held by government or a private non-profit conservation organization	24,545
Mitigation lands with no conservation easement, with fee simple title held by government or a private non-profit conservation organization	12,190
Mitigation lands protected through Federal, State, or local regulatory instruments with the title held by a private entity	3,758 <sup>12</sup>
<b>Total acres all categories</b>	<b>147,210</b>

Source: SFWMD, FDEP, Florida Natural Areas Inventory, USFWS, Collier County, Lee County, Miami-Dade County, Palm Beach County, St. Lucie County, and TNC.

### **Multi-year Payout Agreements**

Another alternative to the traditional fee simple purchase contract is the multi-year payout agreement used by the SFWMD. The agreements allow properties to be secured today and taken off the development market. At the same time, these options provide ample due diligence review time for the SFWMD, and allow purchase of property over multiple years. Approximately 14,613 acres have been contracted for acquisition through these agreements.

### **Rural Land Stewardship Program**

In 2001, Florida created the Rural Lands Stewardship Program (RLSA). The program provided authority for counties to designate rural land stewardship areas, to include all or portions of lands classified in the future land use plans as predominately agricultural, rural open, open-rural, or substantively equivalent land use. Within these areas, planning and economic incentives encourage the implementation of innovative and flexible planning and development strategies and created land use planning techniques.

The DCA adopted rules to implement the RLSA optional planning program in October 2009.

Currently, only St. Lucie County has adopted a RLSA program. However, the RLSA has not been implemented and the County is re-evaluating the RLSA and undertaking a comprehensive Western Lands Study.

Collier County's RLSA was adopted in 2002 in response to a Final Order of the Administrative Commission in 1999 and is not subject to the specific requirements of the RLSA statute. The county has recently completed an evaluation of their program.

<sup>12</sup> This figure includes 3,758 acres of lands in private ownership in Miami-Dade County that are protected either by covenants or through local, State, and/or Federal permits that require conservation in perpetuity as mitigation. Not all acres listed may have protection at this time due to the multi-year sequencing of some mitigation projects.

## **Surplus/Exchange Lands**

The SFWMD may sell or exchange surplus lands, including easements and other legal interests in real property not required for present or future use. Surplus lands are determined not necessary for any identified project by a formal SFWMD routing and approval process. As further justification, some of these lands were acquired as remainder parcels, that is, the portions of acquisition parcels falling outside the approved project boundary. Acquisition staff creatively use these surplus lands in lieu of cash and as further incentive for landowners to make a negotiated deal and avoid costly condemnation proceedings.

### *Examples of surplus/exchange transactions*

- C-44 Reservoir surplus and exchange transactions were performed to relocate the drainage and canal system located within the project boundary; completion of these transactions was critical for moving forward with design and construction of the project.
- A C-43 Reservoir exchange, an outstanding transaction for several years, was completed in September 2007. This exchange completed the land acquisition requirements consistent with the PIR design of the C-43 West Reservoir.
- A 1,357 acres conservation easement and a 2.69 acres access easement was conveyed to the USDA's Wetlands Reserve Program for \$5 million as part of the Indian River Lagoon (IRL) - South, Allapattah Complex Natural Storage and Water Quality Area project.
- SFWMD surplused and conveyed 1,360 acres of real estate interests to the USDA's Wetlands Reserve Program receiving \$5 million to offset the SFWMD's cost of acquiring lands within the Pal-Mar and J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area Hydropattern Restoration, a component of the North Palm Beach County project.

## **The Nature Conservancy's Northern Everglades Program**

The Northern Everglades Program, lead by TNC, is an ambitious effort to leverage many programs and partnerships to protect one of the last large-scale conservation areas in peninsular Florida.

The Conservancy's goals include:

- Protect and connect high quality habitats on private lands through fee acquisition of key parcels and conservation easements on ranches that will sustain the biological diversity of the landscape.
- Restore natural wetland hydrology on selected ranches that provide the greatest contribution to the restoration of the Everglades ecosystem.
- Sustain the northern Everglades working cattle ranches using conservation easements, payments for ecosystem services, and other financial incentives.

Five components of the Action Plan for the Northern Everglades with federal involvement, USFWS, USDA – NRCS, USACE, and the Department of Defense (DOD), are:

1. Focus NRCS Farm Bill programs in places that provide the greatest contribution to the restoration of the Everglades ecosystem.
2. Designate the Greater Everglades systems – including the northern Everglades – as a National Treasured Landscape. This concept was announced by Interior Secretary Ken Salazar in February 2009.
3. Establish a new Northern Everglades National Wildlife Refuge in the Upper Kissimmee Basin. This would be the first wildlife refuge established to conserve lands in anticipation of species and habitat migration north in response to climate change effect in the southern Everglades landscape.
4. Focus DOD funds on rangeland around the Avon Park Air Force Range through the use of Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI) funds to acquire conservation easements around the 106,000-acre base.
5. Increase the wetland restoration targets in the CERP Lake Okeechobee Watershed Project to be in line with the 2004 USFWS recommendation of 90,000 acres.

Recently, the USDA announced \$89 million in financial assistance for a special Florida project in the national Wetlands Reserve Program. The project, located in the Fisheating Creek watershed, which is part of the Northern Everglades watershed, will acquire conservation easements on almost 26,000 acres of critical wetland habitat within the greater Everglades ecosystem. This will be one of the largest contiguous easement purchases in the history of the program.

## **Mitigating the Loss of Tax Revenue**

Land acquisition for ecosystem restoration removes lands from the tax rolls. Both the federal and state governments have programs to offset the loss of tax revenues to counties that contain federal or state tax-exempt lands.

### **Division of Forestry Payment to Counties**

The state Division of Forestry (DOF) makes annual payments to county school boards for State Forests within their boundaries. For revenue collected during FY 2008-2009, DOF paid \$11,759.91 to Collier County for the Okaloacoochee Slough and Picayune Strand State Forests. Hendry County received \$2,421.49 for the Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest.

### **Payment in Lieu of Taxes Programs**

Florida's Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program is limited to counties with a population of 150,000 or less with conservation lands removed from the tax rolls through the P-2000 and Florida Forever acquisition programs. Once eligibility has been established, the governmental entity shall receive consecutive annual payments for each tax loss until the county or local government exceeds the population threshold of 150,000 and a determination of no further eligibility shall be made during that period.

For FY 2009 - 2010, the FDEP paid \$497,841 to school boards, counties, and other units of government in six counties on 134,287 acres in south Florida. During FY 2009,

the SFWMD made the **fifth** payment of \$57,803.06 to Hendry County for 8,513 acres purchased for STAs 5 and 6. Also during FY **2009**, the SFWMD made the **fifth** payment in PILT of \$2,766.60 to Highlands County for **358.69** acres purchased for the Kissimmee River Restoration project. **In response to a new request, the SFWMD paid the first PILT to Glades County in the amount of \$42,530 for 917 acres located in the Caloosahatchee River Water Basin.**

In south Florida, the U.S. Federal Government compensates jurisdictions with tax-exempt federal lands. In FY 2009, a payment of \$3,087,681 was made to eight counties for 1,313,144 acres of federal holdings through its PILT program. The payments are for all federal lands that are eligible, including those managed by the NPS, the USFWS, and the USACE.

### **Refuge Revenue Sharing Program**

The USFWS makes annual payments to counties or other units of local government through its Refuge Revenue Sharing program. For FY **2010**, the USFWS paid **\$682,806** on **78,400** acres that the Service administers in South Florida.

## **Tools to Identify Strategic Acquisitions**

Several federal and state agencies participating in South Florida Ecosystem restoration have analyzed potential land acquisitions in order to protect habitat for Florida's rarest plant and animal species. Several tools have been developed to assist conservation land acquisition agents in identifying strategic land acquisitions within their area of concern. The following is a discussion of some of those tools.

### **Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project**

The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) collaborated with the University of Florida's GeoPlan Center and the FWC on a Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project (CLIP) for the state's Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida. CLIP is a **scientifically-based statewide landscape tool that identifies Florida's important lands and critical green infrastructure. The goal of CLIP is to provide the best available planning tool to assist citizens and decision-makers to envision and ensure a sustainable future.**

Further information is available at

<http://www.collinscenter.org/?page=ReschProjectsOvrview&hhSearchTerms=Critical=Lands=and=Waters=identification#CLIP>.

### **Florida Natural Areas Inventory [Web Resources](#)**

FNAI has developed or compiled statewide natural resource data to inform the Florida Forever conservation land acquisition program. These data are available as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data files at [www.fnai.org/flforever.cfm](http://www.fnai.org/flforever.cfm).

Additional tools are available on the FNAI website ([www.fnai.org](http://www.fnai.org)):

- Searchable rare species tracking list.
- **[Guide to the Natural Communities of Florida – 2010 Edition.](#)**
- Conservation lands map server.

- **Florida Forever Board of Trustees Project Map Server.**
- Online field guides to rare species.
- Invasive species GIS data.
- Biodiversity Matrix Map Server - a screening tool that provides immediate, free access to rare species occurrence information statewide.
- **Reference Natural Communities Map Server.**

The LandScope Florida website draws together maps, reliable data and compelling information about the environment from many sources and presents them in dynamic and accessible formats. The website features a state-of-the-art online map viewer with a wealth of information including FNAI's conservation lands, conservation priorities, threats, plants and animals, and ecosystems.

LandScope Florida provides:

- A wide-ranging set of useful tools for conservation planning and priority setting.
- A user-friendly site that integrates multimedia information with scientifically-vetted conservation data.
- An interactive experience for sharing conservation initiatives and inspiring action.

LandScope can be accessed at <http://www.landscape.org/florida>.

### **Florida's Wildlife Action Plan**

FWC is the lead entity for the development of **Florida's Wildlife Action Plan**. This plan uses a habitat-based approach to identify threats to Florida's fish and wildlife and the actions needed to address them. To support this effort, the FWC established Florida's Wildlife Legacy Initiative in 2004.

Major statewide conservation issues identified in the FWC Strategy include:

- Habitat loss and fragmentation.
- Degradation of water resources.
- Incompatible fire management.
- Invasive plants and animals.
- Management of the physical environment (i.e., dredging and shoreline hardening activities, etc.).

Several habitat types are recognized for their unique importance within south Florida's natural ecosystem:

- Sandhill.
- Scrub.
- Submerged aquatic vegetation (seagrass).
- Coral reef.
- Pine Rockland.
- Freshwater Marsh.
- Wet Prairie.
- Mangrove Swamp with a very high threat of coastal development.

The Initiative's priorities also include the Cooperative Conservation Blueprint, a statewide geographic information and decision support system for long-term land use planning. The Blueprint will identify Florida's critical lands and waters and incorporate broad input from citizens, agencies, landowners, and businesses to create a common 50 to 100 year vision for Florida's land use. More information can be found at [http://www.myfws.com/WILDLIFEHABITATS/Legacy\\_index.htm](http://www.myfws.com/WILDLIFEHABITATS/Legacy_index.htm).

### **Florida Wildlife Conservation Guide**

The Florida Wildlife Conservation Guide, which was published online in 2009, is a partnership project between the FWC, USFWS, and FNAI. The Guide is intended to enhance the technical assistance capabilities of these agencies by engaging the land use decision-making community as a partner in fish and wildlife conservation early in land use and project planning.

The Guide is designed to assist the user in identifying those landscape elements that support many common species of wildlife and identifying important history details, survey protocols, management considerations, and population monitoring guidelines for rare or imperiled fish and wildlife species. Finally, the Guide provides information on regulatory requirements where they exist and land use planning alternatives. The FWC solicited input from all levels of government as well as landowners, researchers, developers, and non-profit organizations to ensure that the Guide would be user friendly. The Guide is available at <http://myfwc.com/CONSERVATION/fwgc.htm>.

### **Natural Lands Report**

In 2006, a subgroup of the Task Force's LATT produced the *Natural Lands Report* (NLR) in response to a request from the U.S. House of Representatives' Interior Appropriations Sub-Committee. It identifies and prioritizes the natural attributes of lands necessary to achieve natural system restoration goals for the South Florida Ecosystem for these projects:

- Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands.
- C-111 Spreader Canal.
- Indian River Lagoon – South.
- Lake Okeechobee Watershed.

The report with project descriptions and natural lands maps was submitted to Congress by the USDOJ in March 2007 and is available at [www.sfrestore.org/issueteams/latt/documents/index.html](http://www.sfrestore.org/issueteams/latt/documents/index.html).

The WREP and Reserved Rights Pilot Program, a new program in the 2008 Farm Bill, has the potential to protect the 90,000 acres identified in the NLR in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed through easement acquisition and wetland restoration. Under this program, the USDA and non-federal partners can target watersheds of special significance to carry out easement acquisition and wetland restoration using the WRP model with the added incentive of retention of grazing rights by the landowner if this use is compatible with restoration goals.

### **Office of Greenways and Trails Recreational Prioritization Maps**

The FDEP's Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) Recreational Trail Prioritization Maps and the Florida Ecological Greenways Network data were updated in 2008. Both the Trails and Ecological Greenways data layers represent the areas that are appropriate for establishment of a statewide greenways and trails system. These are planning areas and represent more than just existing trails and greenways, instead providing an overall vision of a comprehensive statewide network of greenways and trails to serve as a guide for local, State, regional, and Federal entities. All Florida Trail and Ecological Greenway data is available at [http://www.floridatrailsnetwork.com/view\\_maps.html](http://www.floridatrailsnetwork.com/view_maps.html).

### **Optimal Boundary Development Tool**

The Optimal Boundary Development Tool was developed by the FWC to help designate optimal planning boundaries, a required element of the State's conservation lands management plans. The Optimal Boundary Development Tool is designed to aid in implementing a comprehensive and proactive approach to long-term conservation planning and actions in and around protected lands. Advantages of this tiered approach include:

- Closes conservation planning gaps with a resource-based approach.
- Aids in development of habitat conservation and restoration opportunities.
- Promotes proactive, long-term conservation planning, acquisition, and management.
- Provides comprehensive agency-wide and stakeholder input.
- Enhances consistency with the Florida Forever and ARC recommendations.
- Eliminates gaps between qualifying Florida Forever criteria and timely acquisitions.
- Aides in identifying and conserving other important natural and cultural resources not previously identified.
- Results in the creation of a Conservation Action Strategy unique to each conservation area.

Although the Optimal Boundary Development Tool was developed primarily for use in the FWC's conservation planning and management unit, this new conservation planning tool can be used in a wide variety of conservation and land use planning settings.

### **USFWS South Florida Multi-Species Recovery Plan**

The USFWS' South Florida Multi-Species Recovery Plan (MSRP) contains information on the biology, ecology, status, trends, management, and recovery actions for 68 federally listed species found in South Florida, as well as the ecology and restoration needs of 23 natural communities in the region. Acquisition-related recovery tasks are included in the MSRP implementation schedule which was published on March 26, 2007. The MSRP and the implementation schedule are available at [www.fws.gov/verobeach](http://www.fws.gov/verobeach).

### **Wildlife Habitat Planning Manual**

FWC, in partnership with several other agencies and foundations, funded 1000 Friends of Florida to develop a document addressing “Wildlife Habitat Planning and Best Management Practices for Florida Communities and Landowners.” The manual provides a framework and related background information along with descriptions of practical land planning and management actions that can be directed toward habitat and wildlife conservation. It is targeted to community planners, landscape architects, landowners, developers and active citizens. The manual documents the opportunities that exist to further wildlife habitat conservation, restoration and habitat connectivity through use of local or inter-local planning strategies, design features and best management practices. Presently, the document can be accessed online at: <http://www.floridahabitat.org/Technical%20Committee%20and%20Draft%20Manual>. The printed version is available from 1000 Friends of Florida.

# Major Acquisition Accomplishments

As a result of innovative partnerships and creative approaches, several major acquisitions have been accomplished during this reporting period.

## Fee Simple Acquisitions

The SFWMD acquired a total of 1,706 acres in fee simple during the reporting cycle. The FDEP, working with FCT, acquired an additional 461 acres through fee simple.

*Examples of fee simple acquisitions:*

- The SFWMD completed the 129-acre Cutler Bay Properties acquisition at a total cost of \$24.5 million for the Cutler Wetland C-1 Flowway feature of the BBCW CERP project.
- 56 acres were acquired by the SFWMD within the Southern CREW Critical Restoration Project.
- 1,034 acres were acquired by Miami-Dade County within the footprint of the BBCW CERP project.
- The FDEP acquired an additional 32 acres within the North Key Largo Hammocks Florida Forever project.
- The FDEP and FCT together acquired 384 acres in the Indian River Lagoon Blueway Florida Forever project for Harbor Branch, supporting Indian River Lagoon research and expanding St. Lucie County's 880-acre Indrio Greenway.
- Continued acquisition for the Picayune Strand Restoration CERP project with 85 parcels within 69 different eminent domain cases brought to a close through stipulated judgments.

## Less-than-Fee Acquisitions

The SFWMD acquired a total of 829 acres in less-than-fee simple acquisitions during the reporting cycle.

*Examples of less-than-fee simple acquisitions:*

- 727 acres in easement granted by the State of Florida for the Herbert Hoover Dike Project.
- 90 acres in easement granted by Miami-Dade County for the Deering Estate Flowway feature of the BBCW CERP project.
- 3,900 acres in easements on agricultural lands were acquired through USDA's WRP.
- 85 acres in easement through the USDA's FRPP.

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# Appendices

- Appendix A: Strategic Goals and Objectives of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force
- Appendix B: Federal and Joint Federal/State Projects Maps and Descriptions and Descriptions
- Appendix C: Project Profiles and Summary Table
- Appendix D: Land Acquisition Update Map and State/Federal Cost Share Table
- Appendix E: Stormwater Treatment Areas
- Appendix F: County Land Acquisitions and Florida's Greenways and Trails Program
- Appendix G: Potential Funding Sources in Support of Restoration
- Appendix H: Land Protected through Mitigation Map and Description
- Appendix I: Land Acquisition Task Team Directive

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**Appendix A: Strategic Goals and Objectives of the  
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force**

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**Strategic Goals and Objectives of the  
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force  
Revised December 2007**

**GOAL 1: GET THE WATER RIGHT**

*Subgoal 1-A: Get the hydrology right*

- Objective 1-A.1: Provide 1.8 million acre-feet of surface water storage by 2036
- Objective 1-A.2: Develop aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) systems capable of storing 1.7 billion gallons per day by 2030
- Objective 1-A.3: Modify 361 miles of impediments to flow by 2020

*Subgoal 1-B: Get the water quality right*

- Objective 1-B.1: Construct 96,010 acres of stormwater treatment areas by 2035
- Objective 1-B.2: Prepare locally-based plans to reduce pollutants as determined necessary by the total maximum daily loads by 2011

**GOAL 2: RESTORE, PRESERVE, AND PROTECT NATURAL HABITATS & SPECIES**

*Subgoal 2-A: Restore, preserve, and protect natural habitats*

- Objective 2-A.1: Complete acquisition of 5.7 million acres of land identified for habitat protection by 2020
- Objective 2-A.2: Protect 20 percent of the coral reefs by 2010
- Objective 2-A.3: Improve habitat quality for 2.4 million acres of natural areas in South Florida

*Subgoal 2-B: Control invasive exotic plants and animals*

- Objective 2-B.1: Achieve maintenance control of Brazilian pepper, melaleuca, Australian pine, and Old World Climbing Fern on South Florida's public conservation lands by 2020
- Objective 2-B.2: Release 2 biological control insects per year for the control of invasive exotic plants
- Objective 2-B.3: Achieve eradication of Gambian pouch rat by 2012

**GOAL 3: FOSTER COMPATIBILITY OF THE BUILT AND NATURAL SYSTEMS**

*Subgoal 3-A: Use and manage land in a manner compatible with ecosystem restoration*

- Objective 3-A.1: Prepare a land use analysis for selected restoration projects
- Objective 3-A.2: Designate or acquire an additional 10,000 acres of lands needed for parks, recreation, and open space to complement South Florida Ecosystem Restoration through local, state, and federal programs by 2015
- Objective 3-A.3: Increase participation by 350,000 acres in the Grassland Reserve Program, Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program, Wetlands Reserve Program, and the Environmental Quality Incentive Program to promote compatibility between agricultural production and South Florida Ecosystem Restoration by 2014
- Objective 3-A.4: Increase the number of local governments that adopt into their comprehensive plans (goals, objectives, policies, and related strategies) – concepts compatible with South Florida Ecosystem Restoration
- Objective 3-A.5: Increase the use of educational programs and initiatives to further the publics' and local Governments' understanding of the benefits of South Florida Ecosystem Restoration

*Subgoal 3-B: Maintain or improve flood protection in a manner compatible with ecosystem restoration*

- Objective 3-B.1: Maintain or improve existing levels of flood protection for the urban, agricultural, and natural environments
- Objective 3-B.2: Rehabilitate the Herbert Hoover Dike to provide adequate levels of flood protection to the communities and lands surrounding Lake Okeechobee

*Subgoal 3-C: Provide sufficient water resources for built and natural systems*

- Objective 3-C.1: Plan for regional water supply needs
- Objective 3-C.2: Increase volumes of reuse on a regional basis
- Objective 3-C.3: Increase water made available through the State's Water Protection and Sustainability Program SFWMD Alternative Water Supply Development Program

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**Appendix B: Federal and Joint Federal/State Projects Maps and  
Descriptions**

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## **Federal and Joint Federal/State Projects Maps and Descriptions**

### **The Federal Projects and Joint Federal/State Projects Map**

The Project Profiles in Appendix C are represented on the attached/following map. For this map and for the LAS in general, the term “State” includes the State of Florida, the SFWMD, and participating local governments. Each of the projects on the map is labeled with a circled number or a name. Five types of projects are illustrated: CERP projects, expedited projects, USFWS and NPS projects, other federal acquisition projects, and joint federal/state acquisition projects.

Existing conservation lands throughout the South Florida Ecosystem (as of June 30, 2010), regardless of funding source, are shown in light gray to provide context for the Federal and joint federal/state projects. Some of these lands are less-than-fee simple acquisitions.

Project data layers (CERP, expedited projects, USFWS or NPS, other federal, and joint federal/state acquisition projects) depict the full extent of the acquisition project boundaries, including any lands that have already been purchased (acquired lands are colored gray within the project boundaries). Some projects are greater than 90 percent complete; in many of these cases, the remaining inholdings within the project boundaries are too small to be shown on this map.

The Joint Federal/State Acquisition Projects data layer (pink cross-hatching) is composed of Florida Forever Board of Trustees projects and Save Our Rivers projects that have federal involvement.

The SFWMD provided digital data for CERP, expedited and Florida Forever/Save Our Rivers projects with the disclaimer that any information, including but not limited to software and data, received from the SFWMD in fulfillment of a request is provided “AS IS” without warranty, including but not limited to merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. For SFWMD projects, this map is a conceptual tool utilized for project development only. This map is not self-executing or binding on the SFWMD.

The conservation lands data layer was compiled by FNAI using data received from many different sources including federal, state, and local managing agencies and private conservation organizations.

### **Map Key to CERP and Expedited Projects**

The CERP and expedited project boundaries are general boundaries and will be refined after further analysis. The majority of the CERP and expedited projects are indicated by a circled number on the map; the rest are labeled by name. The accompanying map key to CERP and expedited projects lists all projects by map label, the project component name, the CERP project ID number, and project name.

## Map Key to CERP and Expedited Projects

MAP LABEL	PROJECT COMPONENT NAME	CERP ID NO.	PROJECT NAME
1	Lake Okeechobee Watershed (no boundary)	01	LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED
1B	Taylor Creek/Nubbin Slough	01B	LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED
3	Lake Okeechobee ASR (no boundary)	03	LAKE OKEECHOBEE ASR
1C1	Lake Okeechobee Watershed Water Quality Treatment Facility- Lakeside Ranch STA -expedited	01C	LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED
1C2	Lake Okeechobee Watershed Water Quality Treatment Facility – Brady Ranch STA -expedited	01C	LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED
4	C-43 Basin Storage Reservoir Part 1 & C-43 Basin ASR Part 2	04	C-43 BASIN STORAGE RESERVOIR
4A	C-43 Basin Storage Reservoir Part 1 & C-43 Basin ASR Part 2--expedited	04A	C-43 RESERVOIR WEST
7A1	IRL – C-44 Reservoir	07A01	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7A1	IRL – C-44 Reservoir – expedited	07A01	C-44 RESERVOIR & STA
7A2	IRL – C-44 West STA	07A02	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7A2	IRL – C-44 West STA – expedited	07A02	C-44 RESERVOIR & STA
7A3	IRL – C-44 East STA	07A03	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7A3	IRL – C-44 East STA –expedited	07A03	C-44 RESERVOIR & STA
7A4	IRL – PALMAR Complex Natural Storage and Water Quality Area	07A04	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7B5	IRL – C23/24 North Reservoir	07B05	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7B6	IRL – C23/24 South Reservoir	07B06	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7B7	IRL – C23/24 STA	07B07	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7B9	IRL – Allapattah Complex Natural Storage and Water Quality Area	07B09	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7B10	IRL – Cypress Creek/Trail Ridge Complex Natural Storage and Water Quality Area	07B10	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7B13	IRL – Southfork Natural Storage & Water Quality	07B13	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7C12	IRL – C-25 STA	07C12	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
7C14	IRL – Northfork Floodplain Restoration	07C14	INDIAN RIVER LAGOON – SOUTH
8	Everglades Agricultural Area Storage Reservoir – Phase 1	08	EVERGLADES AGRICULTURAL AREA STORAGE RESERVOIR – PHASE 1
8A	Everglades Agricultural Area Storage Reservoir – Phase 1 – expedited	08	EVERGLADES AGRICULTURAL AREA STORAGE RESERVOIR – PHASE 1
8A1	EAA Reservoir – L-16 Cross Canal - expedited	08	EVERGLADES AGRICULTURAL AREA STORAGE RESERVOIR – PHASE 1
8A2	EAA Reservoir – L-21 Bolles Canal – expedited	08	EVERGLADES AGRICULTURAL AREA STORAGE RESERVIOR – PHASE 1
8B	EAA Compartment B – expedited	08	EVERGLADES AGRICULTURAL AREA STORMWATER TREATMENT AREA EXPANSION
8C	EAA Compartment C – expedited	08	EVERGLADES AGRICULTURAL AREA STORMWATER TREATMENT AREA EXPANSION
11B	Flow to NW & Central WCA 3	11B	FLOW TO NW & CENTRAL WCA 3

MAP LABEL	PROJECT COMPONENT NAME	CERP ID NO.	PROJECT NAME
12	WCA 3 Decompartmentalization & Sheetflow Enhancement – Part 1 (S-351)	12	WCA DECOMP & SHEETFLOW ENHANCEMENT – PART 1
14	Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge Internal Canal Structures	14	LOXAHATCHEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE INTERNAL CANAL STRUCTURES
15	Modify Holey Land Wildlife Management Area Hydropattern Restoration	15	MODIFY HOLEY LAND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA OPERATION PLAN
16	Modify Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area Operation Plan	16	MODIFY ROTENBERGER WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA OPERATION
17A	Pal-Mar and J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area Hydropattern Restoration	17	NORTH PALM BEACH COUNTY – PART 1
17C	C-51 and L-8 Reservoir	17	NORTH PALM BEACH COUNTY – PART 1
17D	Lake Worth Lagoon Restoration (no boundary)	17	NORTH PALM BEACH COUNTY – PART 1
17E	C-17 Backfilling and Treatment	17	NORTH PALM BEACH COUNTY – PART 1
17F	C-51 Backpumping and Treatment	17	NORTH PALM BEACH COUNTY – PART 1
18A	C-51 Regional Groundwater ASR (no boundary)	18	NORTH PALM BEACH COUNTY – PART 2
20	PBC Agricultural Reserve Reservoir & ASR	20	PBC AGRICULTURAL RESERVE RESERVOIR – PART 1
22	Fran Reich Preserve (Site 1 Impoundment) & Hillsboro ASR Pilot	22	HILLSBORO SITE 1 IMPOUNDMENT & ASR
22	Fran Reich Preserve (Site 1 Impoundment) – expedited	22	WATER PRESERVE AREAS
24	Broward County Secondary Canal System	24	BROWARD COUNTY SECONDARY CANAL SYSTEM
25A	Lakebelt Inground Reservoir Technology Pilot	25A	LAKEBELT INGROUND RESERVOIR TECHNOLOGY PILOT
25B	North Lakebelt Storage Area	25B	NORTH LAKEBELT STORAGE AREA
26A	Central Lakebelt Storage Area	26A	CENTRAL LAKEBELT STORAGE
27B	S-356 Structures	27B	EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK SEEPAGE MANAGEMENT
28	Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands	28	BISCAYNE BAY COASTAL WETLANDS
28A	Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands-expedited	28A	BISCAYNE BAY COASTAL WETLANDS
29	C-111 Spreader Canal – Phase 2	29	C-111 SPREADER CANAL
29A	C-111 Spreader Canal – Phase 1–expedited	29A	C-111 SPREADER CANAL
30	Southern Golden Gate Estates Hydrologic Restoration	30	PICAYUNE STRAND
30	Southern Golden Gate Estates - expedited	30	PICAYUNE STRAND
31	Florida Keys Tidal Restoration (no	31	FLORIDA KEYS TIDAL

MAP LABEL	PROJECT COMPONENT NAME	CERP ID NO.	PROJECT NAME
	boundary)		RESTORATION
33	Caloosahatchee (C-43) River ASR Pilot	33	CALOOSAHATCHEE (C-43) RIVER ASR PILOT
36	L31N Seepage Management Pilot	36	EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK SEEPAGE MANAGEMENT
38	Acme Basin B Discharge	38	ACME BASIN B DISCHARGE
38	Acme Basin B Discharge – expedited	38	WATER PRESERVE AREAS
39	Strazzulla Wetlands	39	STRAZZULLA WETLANDS
43	Bird Drive Recharge Area	43	EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK SEEPAGE MANAGEMENT
45A	3A/3B Seepage Management	45A	BROWARD COUNTY WPAs
45A	3A/3B Seepage Management – expedited	45A	WATER PRESERVE AREAS
45B	C-11 Impoundment	45B	BROWARD COUNTY WPAs
45B	C-11 Impoundment – expedited	45B	WATER PRESERVE AREAS
45C	C-9 Impoundment	45C	BROWARD COUNTY WPA
45C	C-9 Impoundment – expedited	45C	WATER PRESERVE AREAS
48A	WCA 2B Flows to Central Lakebelt Storage Area	48A	WCA 2B FLOWS TO EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK (ENP)
48B	L-30 Canal Upgrade	48B	WCA 2B FLOWS TO ENP
49	Dade-Broward Levee & Canal	49	WPA CONVEYANCE
90	Miccosukee Water Management Plan	90	MICCOSUKEE WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN
91	Winsberg Farm Wetland Restoration	91	WINSBERG FARM WETLANDS RESTORATION
92	Restoration of Pineland & Hardwood Hammocks in the C-111 Basin	92	RESTORATION OF PINELAND & HARDWOOD HAMMOCKS IN THE C-111 BASIN
93	Henderson Creek/Belle Meade Restoration	93	HENDERSON CREEK/BELLE MEADE RESTORATION
94	Lakes Park Restoration	94	LAKES PARK RESTORATION
96	Seminole Tribe Big Cypress Reservation Water Conservation Plan	96	SEMINOLE TRIBE BIG CYPRESS RESERVATION WATER CONSERVATION PLAN
97	West Miami-Dade Reuse	97	WEST MIAMI-DADE REUSE
98	South Miami-Dade Reuse & Wastewater Reuse Technology Pilot	98	SOUTH MIAMI-DADE REUSE

## **Appendix C: Project Profiles and Summary Table**

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## South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Strategy Project Profiles

The project profile sheets list the following information for the projects on the map located in Appendix C:

- Project Name.
- Project Name Synonym: Additional name(s) for a project used by other programs or initiatives.
- Project ID (Map Label): CERP and expedited project numbers are on the Map Key in Appendix B.
- Overlapping Project: Name of project (if any) that has an overlapping land acquisition boundary with this project. A geographic area's land cost, funding, and acreage are counted only once within the LAS. For each project, this field also indicates if the project is in the Northern Everglades or the Southern Everglades.
- Primary SFER-related Objective: The goals and objectives of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration (SFER) are listed in Appendix A.
- Project Synopsis.
- Project Sponsorship.
- Land Acquisition Funding Type.
- Land Acquisition Funding Source.
- Agency Responsible for Acquiring the Land.
- Land Acquisition Program.
- Land Managing Agency.
- Funding Partners (if applicable).
- Land Acquisition Schedule: includes the date acquisition was/will be initiated, the date acquisition will be concluded, and the date the project is needed for restoration.
- Project Acreage/Progress: includes the total size of the project, the acres acquired in the previous year, the acres acquired all years, and the acres remaining to be acquired. Acres acquired are those lands to which the agency has title as of June 30, 2010 and not those encumbered under contract through a multi-year option agreement.
- Estimated Project Requirements: includes the estimated cost of the land acquisition project, the cost of land closed through June 30, 2010, the estimated cost of the remaining acres, and the cost of real estate and associated costs. Any multi-year payout agreement payments are listed as future year costs (when applicable). Construction or restoration project requirements are not included in the estimate.
- Land Cost Estimation Method.
- Degree of Ownership Desired.
- Comments.
- Hyperlink: Website of source for further information.
- Contact.
- Update: Date of project profile sheet update; name and agency of person providing the updated information.

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**Appendix D: Land Acquisition Update Map and  
State/Federal Cost Share Table**

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## Land Acquisition Update Map and State/Federal Cost Share Table

### The Land Acquisition Update Map

The Land Acquisition Update Map illustrates all planned and accomplished land acquisitions identified for ecosystem restoration regardless of funding source.

The DSL and FNAI collaborated to update the 1999 Everglades Ecosystem Land Acquisition State-Federal Cost Share Map, known as the “Graham Map,” to produce the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Land Acquisition Update Map.

Data layers depicting acquired conservation lands were compiled by FNAI using data received from many different sources including federal, state, and local managing agencies and private conservation organizations. Lands acquired through June 30, 2010 are depicted on the map. Symbols represent funding splits; in some cases, interest acquired is less-than-fee simple.

Planned acquisitions are also indicated on the map. Project boundaries indicate areas that are desired for acquisition (includes intended less-than-fee acquisitions). Some areas within these boundaries have been acquired; these acquired areas are denoted with the various “Acquired” shadings (see map legend).

The Florida Forever Board of Trustees project data layer represents projects on their acquisition list as of June 30, 2010. Boundaries were digitized by FNAI staff using paper maps provided by the FDEP Office of Environmental Services.

The SFWMD provided digital data for CERP and Save Our Rivers projects with the disclaimer that any information, including but not limited to software and data, received from the SFWMD in fulfillment of a request is provided “AS IS” without warranty, including but not limited to merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. For the SFWMD projects, this map is a conceptual tool utilized for project development only. This map is not self-executing or binding on the SFWMD.

Lands labeled “Acquired – 100% State” and “Acquired – Predominately State” include all lands purchased by either the State of Florida or the SFWMD. For the purpose of this map, “predominately” means greater than 50 percent. Some local funds may have been used as well. County land acquisitions are reflected on this map; however, due to the map scale, many county project boundaries are too small to be visible on the map. For information on local projects, see Appendix F.

### The State/Federal Cost Share Table

The DSL produces the companion table listing all the projects that contribute to natural habitat and species protection and the Federal/State/local cost share of the projects illustrated on the map. Projects listed on the table are identified by name on the Land Acquisition Update Map. These projects are on the state’s Florida Forever/Save Our Rivers (FF/SOR) project list. FF/SOR projects have been in transition over the last decade. The table in Appendix D has been revised to reflect acres of natural lands only, as opposed to those obtained for construction projects.

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## **Appendix E: Stormwater Treatment Areas**

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## Stormwater Treatment Areas

A primary component of the Everglades Construction Project (ECP) is the six Stormwater Treatment Areas, referred to as STAs. Lands for STA-1 W, STA-2, STA-3/4, STA-5, and STA-6 were acquired by the SFWMD. Land for the sixth ECP STA, STA-1E, was acquired by the USACE and the SFWMD. These STAs are large constructed wetlands that are designed to treat approximately 1.5 million acre-foot (on an average annual basis) of stormwater runoff from the Everglades Agricultural Area, adjacent watersheds and regulatory releases from Lake Okeechobee. (One acre-foot of water is 325,828 gallons.) The STAs treat incoming water through naturally occurring biological and physical processes to remove excess nutrients, with a primary emphasis on phosphorus. The STAs currently comprise a total project footprint area of approximately 48,000 acres. Treated waters from the STAs is directed to the Everglades Protection Area (including the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, Water Conservation Areas 2A and 3A) to improve water flow, timing, quantity, and quality. Treated water is also directed to the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation, and to the Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area, which is an Everglades remnant.

STA-1E, which was constructed by the USACE, is operated in concert with STA-1W to reduce the total phosphorus in runoff from both the C-51 and S-5A Basins prior to discharge to the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (Water Conservation Area 1).

The SFWMD is currently constructing the EAA STA Expansions (i.e. the Compartment B and C Build-outs) as part of the District's expedited projects, to expand and enhance the performance of the existing ECP Stormwater Treatment Areas. These expansions will add approximately 18,000 acres to the existing STAs.

STAs are not only important for improving water quality, they also provide habitat for wildlife, particularly for birds and alligators. STA-1 W and STA-5 are on the Great Florida Birding Trail. The submerged aquatic vegetation attracts waterfowl and has made the STAs a destination for sportsmen throughout Florida and the nation.

Below is a summary of the lands acquired and dollars expended for these STAs.

<b>Land Acquisition Strategy Table 10: Stormwater Treatment Areas</b>				
PROJECT NAME	PROJECT SIZE	ACRES ACQUIRED	EXPENDITURES	FUNDING SOURCE
STA-1W,2,3/4,5,6	41,089	41,043	\$126,772,412	State/SFWMD
STA-1E/C-51	6,503	6,503	\$48,991,000	Federal/ SFWMD
EAA STA Expansions	18,477	18,477	52,207,000	Federal/State/ SFWMD
<b>Totals</b>	66,069	66,023	\$227,970,412.00	

Source: South Florida Water Management District.

*Individual project profiles for STA 1-E and the EAA Stormwater Treatment Expansion Areas are in Appendix C. The acres and dollars for all STAs are included in this Appendix to provide a complete accounting of this restoration element.*

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**Appendix F: County Land Acquisitions,  
Florida's Greenways and Trails Program**

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## County Land Acquisitions and Florida's Greenways and Trails Program

This appendix provides information regarding progress made toward Goal Three of the strategic plan for South Florida Ecosystem restoration.

### **Greenways and Trails**

The FDEP OGT is working to establish a statewide system of greenways and trails, a “green infrastructure” that connects Florida’s communities with the nature that surrounds them. To meet this goal, OGT administers the annual \$4.5 million Florida Greenways and Trails Land Acquisition Program under the Florida Forever Act. OGT also provides technical assistance and grants for the development of both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects through the federally funded Recreational Trail Program.

Currently, over 4,000 miles of trails on Florida’s public lands provide a variety of recreation opportunities, including hiking, biking, inline skating, horseback riding, paddling, and wildlife viewing. Some trails meander through state and local parks and conservation areas, while others provide convenient access to playgrounds and urban shopping areas. In addition to providing fitness and recreation opportunities, greenways provide a glimpse into natural Florida.

Local counties partner with the state for designation and funding for greenways and trails. The FDEP reports that 298,826 acres plus an additional 147 linear miles of greenways and trails lands in the sixteen-county area are part of the State’s system.

### **Local Acquisition of Lands for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

Counties with conservation land acquisition programs provided a summary of their programs. Broward, Charlotte, Collier, Highlands, Lee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Polk, and St. Lucie counties provided this information. The smaller rural counties of Hendry, Glades, and Okeechobee do not have conservation land acquisition programs. Conservation lands in these counties are acquired through the State or the SFWMD. For this edition of the LAS, the LATT collected county-wide information, although parts of Orange, Osceola, Highlands, Polk, and Charlotte counties are outside the boundary of the SFWMD.

The counties were asked to list only those land acquisitions that are titled to the county on a summary table and provide a map illustrating those properties. It is important to note that county conservation land acquisitions can contribute to more than one ecosystem restoration objective. The counties determined which objective a particular land acquisition project addressed and reflected that information on the summary table. For this document, all county land acquisitions were credited towards meeting this objective. Currently, counties hold title to over **156,000 acres** of lands that contribute towards the park, recreation, and open space objective.

These efforts specifically support Objective 3-A.2 of the Task Force’s Strategic Plan: *Designate or acquire an additional 10,000 acres of lands needed for parks, recreation, and open space to complement South Florida Ecosystem Restoration through local, state, and federal programs by 2015.*

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## **Appendix G: Potential Funding Sources in Support of Restoration**

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## Potential Funding Sources in Support of the Restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem

Program	Purpose
<b>FEDERAL</b>	
<b>DOI</b>	
<b>Federal land acquisition programs</b>	
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – Federal Land Acquisition	Acquisition for various federal agencies (FWS, NPS, BLM, and USDA Forest Service).
Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (FWS)	Receipts in this account allow FWS to acquire important migratory breeding areas, migration resting places, and wintering areas. Areas acquired become part of the refuge system.
<b>Grant programs strictly for land acquisition by non-Federal entities</b>	
Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund Act Program (FWS)	To provide grants to States for Recovery Land Acquisition. (There is additional funding for Habitat Conservation Fund Land Acquisition Grants.)
<b>Grant programs that may be used for land acquisition and other purposes by non-Federal agencies</b>	
State and Tribal Wildlife Grants (FWS)	To help States and Tribes to implement comprehensive wildlife conservation plans and activities.
LWCF State Grant Program (NPS)	To provide matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.
Sport Fish Restoration – Grants to States (FWS)	To provide funding for fisheries recreation and conservation efforts in the United States. Non-competitive apportionment based program.
Federal Aid and Wildlife Restoration – Grants to States	This program apportions funds to States and territories for use in restoring and protecting wildlife.
<b>Grant programs that may be used for land acquisition and other purposes by Federal and non-Federal agencies</b>	
North American Wetlands Conservation Act (FWS)	May fund the acquisition of habitat for waterfowl and migrating birds in support of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.
Sport Fish Restoration –Coastal Wetlands Grants (FWS)	To acquire, restore and enhance wetlands in coastal states (DEP/TNC used this program for a project in Hendry Creek to buffer Estero Bay).
Federal Aid Wetlands Conservation (FWS)	May fund the acquisition of habitat for waterfowl and migrating birds in support of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.
<b>Other partnership programs supporting non-land acquisition conservation activities</b>	
Private Stewardship Grants Program (FWS)	To provide grants for on-the-ground conservation projects on private lands benefiting federally listed, threatened, endangered species or other at-risk species.
Landowner Incentive Program (FWS)	Establish or supplement existing landowner incentive programs that provide technical or financial assistance, including habitat protection and restoration, to private landowners to benefit species at risk.
Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (FWS)	To provide assistance to landowners to voluntarily restore wetlands, streams, grasslands, woodlands, and other important habitat that support fish and wildlife.
Coastal Program	To work with coastal communities and other partners to focus and leverage resources on high-priority coastal habitat issues by providing important technical and financial support to our existing and new partners, including the Everglades/South Florida Ecosystem.

Programs that have been used to acquire lands in CERP project areas are shaded in yellow.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
NPS Challenge Cost Share	To increase the participation of neighboring communities and qualified partners in preserving and improving the cultural, natural, and recreational resources for which the Service is responsible.
FWS Challenge Cost Share	Foster innovative and creative cooperative efforts to restore natural resources and establish or expand wildlife habitat, with an emphasis on Federal lands and resources.
BLM Challenge Cost Share	To leverage federal dollars with private and state funding for conservation efforts, benefiting resources on BLM administered public lands. The program solicits partnerships and partnership funding through a variety of resource management programs, including fisheries, wildlife, threatened and endangered species, cultural resources and recreation.
<b>DOT</b>	
National Scenic Byways Program	To provide grants in support of eligible projects, including protection of natural resources in an area adjacent to a scenic byway.
Federal Lands Highway Program	To provide financial resources and technical assistance for a coordinated program of public roads that service the transportation needs of Federal and Indian lands.
Alternative Transportation Program	To award grants or enter into an agreement to carry out qualified projects that would enhance the protection of national parks and public lands and increase the enjoyment of those visiting the parks and public lands.
Transportation Enhancements	To provide reimbursement for 12 eligible activities that enhance the transportation experience, including acquisition of scenic easements and sites.
<b>USDA</b>	
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	To remove marginal agricultural lands from production and establish conservation practices to improve water quality and create wildlife habitat.
Forest Legacy Program	To help states acquire fee or easements for perpetual forest preservation.
Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) and Reserved Rights Pilot Program	To assist landowners in restoring wetlands and wetlands functions and allows grazing rights to be reserved to the landowner. This pilot program is a provision in the 2008 Farm Bill.
Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)	To assist landowners in restoring wetlands and wetland functions.
Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)	To purchase easements on farm and ranch lands that will remain in agricultural production.
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)	To encourage the creation of high quality wildlife habitats that support wildlife populations on wetland, riparian, upland and aquatic habitat on Ag Lands.
Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Farm Bill) Section 390	To provide \$200 million to the Secretary of the Interior to conduct restoration activities in the Everglades ecosystem in South Florida, including the acquisition of real property.
<b>NOAA</b>	
Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP)	To provide matching funds to states to acquire land or easements to protect or restore coastal areas that have considerable conservation, recreation, ecological, or economic value and are threatened by conversion from their natural state to other uses or could be managed or restored to effectively conserve, enhance or restore ecological function.

Programs that have been used to acquire lands in CERP project areas are shaded in yellow.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>STATE</b>	
Florida Forever Program/Board of Trustees (FDEP)	To fund the acquisition and restoration of environmentally sensitive lands, lands to protect water resource development and supply, to increase public access, public lands management and maintenance, and increase protection of land by acquisition of conservation easements. Florida Forever is the umbrella funding source for the state programs listed below.
Florida Forever Program Water Management Districts (FDEP)	To fund the acquisition of lands and capital project expenditures necessary to implement the water management districts' priority lists.
Florida Communities Trust (FCT) (DCA)	To fund the state's land acquisition grant program for local governments and non-profits to acquire lands that promote outdoor recreation and natural resource protection needs identified in local government comprehensive plans.
Florida Forever Program Inholdings and Additions Programs (FDEP)	To acquire inholdings and additions to existing conservation lands.
Rural and Family Lands Protection Act	To acquire agricultural lands, through perpetual easements and other perpetual less-than-fee techniques.
Working Waterfronts	To acquire property to preserve working waterfronts used for commercial harvest of marine organisms or for promotion or education of the public about Florida's traditional working waterfronts.
Florida Greenways and Trails (FDEP)	To fund the statewide initiative to create a system of greenways and trails connecting communities and conservation areas.
FL Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) (FDEP)	To fund the acquisition or development of land for public outdoor recreation and the acquisition of inholdings and additions for state parks.
Save Our Everglades Trust Fund (FDEP)	To implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and the Northern Everglades Estuaries Protection Program (NEEPP).
<b>COUNTIES</b>	
Broward Safe Parks and Land Preservation Bond Program	To protect the remaining natural lands in Broward County not currently managed for preservation.
Conservation Charlotte	To purchase and conserve environmentally sensitive lands.
Conservation Collier	To acquire, preserve, restore and manage environmentally significant lands.
Lee County Conservation Lands Program (Conservation 20/20)	To acquire, restore and manage lands important to wildlife, water supply, flooding, water quality, and resource oriented public uses.
Martin County Lands for Healthy Rivers and Natural Resource Protection (Healthy Rivers) and Lands for You	Healthy Rivers: to acquire lands for river restoration, provide matching funds for state and federal land acquisition programs for conservation and protection of natural resources and provide for municipal infrastructure. Lands for You: to preserve and protect environmental resources and cultural history while providing expanded outdoor recreational opportunities.
Miami-Dade County Environmentally Endangered Lands	To acquire, preserve, enhance, restore, conserve, and maintain environmentally endangered lands for the benefit of the present and future generations.
Monroe County Land Authority	To acquire land for recreation, affordable housing, environmental protection, and the protection of private property rights.
Orange County Green PLACE	To preserve conservation and water resource lands.

Programs that have been used to acquire lands in CERP project areas are shaded in yellow.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>COUNTIES CONTINUED</b>	
Osceola County S.A.V.E Osceola	To acquire lands to protect open space and water quality, preserve natural areas, protect endangered or threatened animals or plants and provide passive recreation such as trails.
Palm Beach County Land Acquisition Program for Conservation Purposes	To acquire additional environmentally sensitive lands for perpetual preservation and to acquire agricultural lands to preserve agriculture in the County's Ag Reserve.
Polk County Environmental Lands Program	To acquire, preserve, manage and restore endangered and environmentally sensitive lands, water resources and important wildlife habit.
St. Lucie County Environmentally Significant Lands Program	To preserve native ecosystems and meet County Comprehensive Plan open space requirements.
<b>NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS</b>	
Conservancy of Southwest Florida	For the preservation and stewardship of the land and water resources in and around the 60,000-acres Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW).
CREW Trust	For the preservation and stewardship of the land and water resources in and around the 60,000 acre Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed.
Florida Keys Land and Sea Trust	For the preservation, conservation and the restoration of rare and endangered areas of the Florida Keys.
Green Horizon Land Trust, Inc.	To preserve environmentally valuable or sensitive lands and open space areas in and around the Central Florida Ridge for the benefit of the general public, and to educate the public as to the importance of such lands and their preservation.
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	To award challenge grants that address priority actions promoting fish and wildlife conservation and the habitats on which they depend; work proactively to involve other conservation and community interests; leverage available funding; and evaluate project outcomes.
National Park Foundation	The South Florida National Parks Trust seeks to create a new tradition of philanthropy in support of Biscayne, Dry Tortugas and Everglades National Parks.
The Conservation Fund	To forge partnerships to preserve our nation's outdoor heritage, American's legacy of wildlife habitat, working landscapes and community open space.
The Nature Conservancy (TNC)	To preserve plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth. TNC works to increase public funding at the local, state and federal level and works with landowners to craft innovative land protection projects.
Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation	Dedicated to preserving natural resources and wildlife habitat on and around Sanibel and Captiva islands.
Treasured Lands Foundation	To forge partnerships to purchase environmentally vital lands, reopen closed parks, streamline operating costs and maintain the programs that benefit so many children, seniors and families in Martin County.
Trust for Public Lands (TPL)	To help agencies and communities create a vision for conservation, raise funds for conservation and complete conservation real estate transactions. TPL raises public as well as private funds and packages projects to funders and agencies.

Programs that have been used to acquire lands in CERP project areas are shaded in yellow.

## **Appendix H: Land Protected through Mitigation Map and Description**

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## Selected Mitigation Lands in South Florida

TYPE/PROJECT NAME	ACRES
<b>Mitigation lands with a conservation easement, with the fee title held by a private entity (excluding private non-profit conservation organizations)</b>	
Big Cypress Mitigation Bank	1,101
Bluefield Ranch Mitigation Bank	2,693
Collier County Rural Land Stewardship Area	27,823
Disney Wilderness Preserve	98
Everglades Mitigation Bank	13,512
Florida Mitigation Bank	1,585
Florida Panther Conservation Bank Conservation Easement	1,931
Greater Orlando Aviation Authority - Water Conservation	1,742
Lee County	1,032
Panther Island Mitigation Bank	2,821
R.G. Reserve Mitigation Bank	658
Reedy Creek Mitigation Bank	4,100
St. Lucie County Mitigation Lands	1,748
Scrub Conservation Bank	31
Winding Cypress Conservation Easement	1,301
Other SFWMD Mitigation Projects	<u>44,541</u>
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>106,718</b>
<b>Mitigation lands with a conservation easement, with the fee title held by government or a private non-profit conservation organization</b>	
Bear Point Mitigation Bank	327
Corkscrew Regional Mitigation Bank	644
Disney Wilderness Preserve	11,603
Imperial Marsh/Flint Pen System	6,958
Loxahatchee Mitigation Bank	1,539
Palm Beach County	2,283
Palm Beach County-area SFWMD mitigation projects	340
Pembroke Pines/Florida WetlandsBank Mitigation Bank	459
St. Lucie County Mitigation Lands	22
Other SFWMD Mitigation Projects	<u>370</u>
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>24,545</b>
<b>Mitigation lands with fee simple title held by government or a private non-profit conservation organization</b>	
CREW	915
Disney Wilderness Preserve	268
East Coast Buffer - cell 15 mitigation lands	39
East Coast Buffer - cells 17, 18 DOT I-75 mitigation lands	384
Hole in the Donut Mitigation Bank	6,032
Lakes by the Bay Park - Miami-Dade Co.	51

Pennsucco Wetlands - East Coast Buffer	2,026
Platt's Creek Mitigation Bank	100
Shingle Creek	1,324
Split Oak Forest Mitigation Bank	<u>1,050</u>
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>12,190</b>

**Mitigation lands protected through federal, state or local regulatory instruments with the title held by a private entity**

Mitigation for Card Sound Quarry-Lake D	1191
Mitigation for Cutler Cay project	79
Mitigation for Florida City Rock Mine	341
Mitigation for Homestead Speedway	465
Other mitigation projects	<u>1,682</u>
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>3,758*</b>

***Total acres all categories*** **147,210**

\* As reported by Miami-Dade County. The acreage reflects current lands in private ownership in Miami-Dade County that are protected either by covenants or through local, State, and/or Federal permits that require conservation in perpetuity as mitigation.

**Not all acres listed may have protection at this time due to the multi-year sequencing of some mitigation projects.**

Source: SFWMD, FDEP, FNAI, USFWS, Collier County, Lee County, Miami-Dade County, Palm Beach County, St. Lucie County, and TNC.

**Appendix I: Land Acquisition Task Team  
Directive**

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## Land Acquisition Strategy Task Team Directive

**BACKGROUND:** Land acquisition is critical to South Florida ecosystem restoration efforts. Land is needed to preserve habitat for native plants and animals and to act as a buffer to existing natural areas. Land is also needed for water quality treatment areas, water storage reservoirs, and aquifer recharge areas that will help restore natural hydrology. Land acquisition efforts are often complemented by less-than-fee acquisition and other conservation programs that provide permanent and long-term easements such as provided in USDA's Wetland Reserve Program and the Conservation Reserve Program.

Several planning efforts related to land acquisition have recently been accomplished. In December 1999, an ecosystem-wide acquisition map (the "Graham Map") was developed. In April 2000, The U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) issued a report entitled, "South Florida Ecosystem Restoration: A Land Acquisition Plan Would Help Identify Lands That Need to Be Acquired." Subsequently, the Task Force strategy document, "Coordinating Success: Strategy for Restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem," was delivered to Congress. This strategy document provided information on numerous land acquisition projects undertaken for ecosystem restoration. In February 2003, the Task Force accepted the South Florida Ecosystem Land Acquisition Strategy prepared by the Land Acquisition Task Team. This Strategy built on the information in "Coordinating Success" and the "Graham Map," updating and adding information as necessary. The Task Force decided to produce an annual update.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the Task Team is to develop the annual updates to the land acquisition strategy originally accepted by the Task Force in March 2003. It describes the lands identified jointly by federal and state agencies for ecosystem restoration, and with its appendices, provides a broad picture of all land acquisition initiatives that contribute to the restoration. The annual updates will report land acquisition data from July 1 through June 30 each year.

### MEMBERS:

Marsha Bansee (OED)	Janice McCarthy (Highlands County)
Hansler Bealyer (USACE)	Sylvia Pelizza (USFWS) – Co-Chair
Don Burgess (Broward County)	John Outland (FDEP) – Co-Chair
Sherry Burroughs (Osceola County)	Frank Razem (SFWMD)
Wanda Caffie-Simpson (SFWMD)	Gary Roderick (Martin County)
Sarah Catala (Hendry County)	March Rosch (Monroe County)
Gary Cochran (FWC)	Gaye Sharpe (Polk County)
Brian Coleman (NPS)	Andy Stevens (Charlotte County)
Darrell Enfinger (Okeechobee County)	Alexandra Sulecki (Collier County)
Grant Gelhart (DCS)	Lynda Thompson (Lee County)
Cynthia Guerra (Miami-Dade County)	Susan Trokey (Ding Darling NWR)
Larry Hilton (Glades County)	Diana Waite (St. Lucie County)
Beth Jackson (Orange County)	Rich Walesky (Palm Beach County)
Sheryl Jones (FDEP)	Edward Wright (USDA – NRCS)
Sally Jue (FNAI)	Theresa Woody (OED- Task Force)

Revised July 2010

**GUIDANCE:**

1. The strategy will focus on acquisition efforts for lands where there is a federal or joint interest, including:
  - a) an assessment of the lands with both joint state and federal interest needed to accomplish each of the goals of the restoration,
  - b) a description of the purpose for which the lands will be acquired and how they will be managed,
  - c) an estimate of the cost of these lands,
  - d) an estimate of when the lands will be needed for related restoration projects, and
  - e) the agencies responsible for acquiring the lands.
2. The strategy will focus on those federal or joint requirements supportive of the three goals of the Task Force: Goal 1 (Get the Water Right), Goal 2 (Restore, Preserve, and Protect Natural Habitats and Species), Goal 3 (Foster Compatibility of the Built and Natural Systems).
3. The strategy will be limited to those lands that will be acquired with federal funds or as part of a federally cost shared project.
4. The strategy will be updated to reflect changes and additions to the restoration initiative's land acquisition needs.
5. The strategy will not infringe on existing missions, authorities or jurisdictions of the participating agencies.
6. The strategy should include other related state, district, local government, or non-governmental organization land acquisition projects in an appendix as appropriate.

**DELIVERABLES:**

The team shall produce the following interim and final deliverables for review and approval of the Working Group:

1. First draft for Working Group, LATT members and interested parties (includes a subset of WRAC) for review and comment (July)
2. Second draft for Working Group, LATT and interested parties (includes a subset of WRAC) for review and comment (August)
3. WRAC briefing (September)
4. Revised draft for Working Group, Task Force, and interested parties (September)
5. Task Force approval of Land Acquisition Strategy (September/October)

**ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. All team meetings will be open to the public, and if appropriate, time will be included in the agenda for public comment. Meetings will be advertised in accordance with the Pilot Public Affairs Procedures developed by the Working Group.

2. The representative from the OED will serve as the Public Affairs representative for the team and will be responsible for providing public notice of meetings, facilitating public comment, and providing a brief meeting summary for each meeting that is suitable for publication on the Task Force Web Site.
3. The OED will provide contract staff support, as needed, to assist the team in drafting and producing its proposed plan.

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