Approved Minutes of the
Joint Meeting of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration
Working Group and Science Coordination Groups
Coral Springs, FL 33076
September 15, 2010

Opening Remarks

Dan Kimball called the joint meeting to order at 1:05PM. The agenda (Encl. 1) was provided as well as the draft minutes from the March 2010 (Encl. 2) and July 2010 (Encl. 3) meetings. Members were asked to review the minutes which were scheduled for approval the following morning.

In Attendance:	Day 1	Day 2	
Working Group (WG) Members			Alternates
Dan Kimball - Chair - NPS - ENP & Dry Tortugas	√	√	
Greg Knecht - Vice Chair - FL Dept of Environmental	-	-	
Ken Ammon – South Florida Water Management	√	√	
Sean Morton – NOAA, FL Keys Nat'l Marine Sanctuary	-	-	
Sheri Coven – Department of Community Affairs	-	-	
Roman Gastesi – Local Government	-	-	
George Hadley – U.S. Dept of Transportation	-	-	
Veronica Harrell-James – U.S. Attorney's Office	√	√	
Eric Hughes – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	√	√	
Jon Mitchell – Office of the Governor of Florida	-	-	
Keith Neves - Bureau of Indian Affairs	-	-	
Fred Noble - FL Dept. of Transportation	-	-	
COL Pantano - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	√	√	
Bonnie Ponwith – NOAA, National Marine Fisheries	-	-	
Terry Rice - Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of FL	-	-	
Barry Rosen - United States Geological Survey	√	√	
W. Ray Scott - FL Dept of Agriculture and Consumer	-	-	
Paul Souza – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	-	√	Bob Pace
Craig Tepper – Seminole Tribe of Florida	-	-	
Kenneth Todd - Palm Beach County Water Resources	-	-	
Joe Walsh – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation	-	-	Bob Glazer
Vacant - Broward County Department of Natural	-	-	
Ed Wright – U.S. Department of Agriculture	√	√	
Greg May – Special Advisor	√	√	
Science Coordination Group (SCG) Members			
Susan Markley – Interim Chair – Miami Dade County	√	√	
Vacant – Vice Chair – Science Coordination Group	-	-	
Calvin Arnold - U.S. Department of Agriculture, ARS	-	-	
John Baldwin – Florida Atlantic University	-	-	
Lisa Beever – Charlotte Harbor National Estuary	√	-	

Ronnie Best - United States Geological Survey	√	-	
Joan Browder - NOAA, National Marine Fisheries	√	-	
James Erskine - Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of FL	√	√	
Susan Gray - South Florida Water Management	√	-	
Todd Hopkins - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	-	-	Matt Harwell
Chris Kelble - NOAA, AOML	√	-	
Chad Kennedy - FL Dept of Environmental Protection	√	√	
Dan Kimball - NPS - ENP & Dry Tortugas	√	√	
Cherise Maples - Seminole Tribe of Florida	-	-	
Gil McRae – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation	-	-	
Bill Reck - U.S. Department of Agriculture	-	-	
Dan Scheidt – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	-	-	
David Tipple - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	√	√	

Member Whiparound and Current Events

COL Pantano reported on some good news, IRL South PPA was signed between the Corps and the SFWMD the prior week. There is $412 million worth of credit in that project and without that PPA he said he was not sure what they would be doing as it relates to CERP. The most important thing that has happened in awhile and it buys several good years to continue with the program. The contract for Melaleuca will be awarded on September 23rd and that will wrap up the stimulus awards for the Jacksonville District under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). A total of $2.8 million funded out of that and although it is small in terms of dollars it is big in terms of what it will do for invasive species. That wraps up $140 million stimulus execution for the fourth quarter, total program for the Jacksonville District was $340 million total (for Puerto Rico and Florida). The state of Florida did well and received money from other places that were not able to execute. Site 1 Ground Breaking scheduled for Oct 29, 2010 in conjunction with the Task Force meeting. Five year Report to Congress currently underway and the NAS report expected to be released later this month.

James Erskine, newly appointed Miccosukee Tribe representative on the SCG said he looks forward to the future. Chad Kennedy announced that Mimi Drew made the permanent Secretary for DEP as of the prior day. DEP has been busy dealing with the most recent document related to Judge Gold's ruling. Eric Hughes announced that Region IV got its new regional administrator, Gwen Keys Fleming, had her first all hands meeting last Tuesday. Former District Attorney in Atlanta and she is very committed to Environmental Justice issues and children's environmental health issues. On Sep 3rd the federal government provided an amended determination to Judge Gold and the hearing before Judge Gold is scheduled for Oct 7, 2010.

Bob Pace reported that the America's Great Outdoors Initiative took place several weeks ago. It was modeled after something similar that took place in 1908 when Theodore Roosevelt, after he established Pelican Island, went around the country asking for input on outdoor recreation and included a youth session. He also reported that a preliminary project proposal was approved for expanding refuge lands, general area from Lake Wales Ridge down to Fisheating Creek to southwest Florida, generalized

boundary within which they can begin talking to land owners. Gives them an opportunity to connect areas where the Florida panther is found. Ronnie Best reported that 16 coastal gauging stations are under threat of being discontinued on October 1st, flow and stage, and he welcomed ideas on possible solutions. Over 630 people attended the Everglades Conference and the Invasive Species Summit contributed to the increased participation. Matt Harwell for Todd Hopkins announced they are looking to fill three critical positions, two in Vero and one in Loxahatchee.

Ken Ammon noted the Governing Board approved the FY11 budget at its last meeting, approximately $1 billion, and the Governor approved the budget as well. On Oct 8 there will be a special Governing Board meeting on finalization of the River of Grass (ROG) acquisition, 27,000 acres, with the option to purchase 150,000 acres on top of that. There was also a large debate at the meeting on the Caloosahatchee River and adaptive protocols and delivering more water out of Lake Okeechobee. MFL has not been met and the Governing Board gave a sense to the staff that they were in favor of what is known as option 5.5, probably the most environmentally beneficial delivery to the Caloosahatchee. Staff now has the guidance to make releases when they did not have the authority before. Ongoing with their reservation rule development process for the Caloosahatchee, Governing Board approved it last December, they have had a slow start but they expect to have an update at the next WRAC meeting. Reservation needs to be in place before the Caloosahatchee West Reservoir can be constructed and looking at it as a priority for the next WRDA. He also informed the members of a Tropical Audubon meeting this Saturday and he will be down to address them.

Chris Kelble reported the marine and estuary goal setting program will deliver the draft integrated conceptual ecological model for the Florida Keys, similar to the models for the Everglades, but one of the key differences is that it considers the human system in conjunction with the ecological system in order to look at trade-offs, he will send it out to everyone. Ed Wright noted they are in the process of trying to obligate the last $33 million of $132 million on the WRP program in south Florida. They have done some staff reorganization and all the easements are under him and all the cost share programs are under Jeff Woods.

Dan Kimball noted he was assigned for 4 1/2 months to the Florida Peninsula command post in response to the Deepwater Horizon BP oil spill. They worked a lot with the Coast Guard, state of Florida, BP and he represented Interior. They needed help and he reached out to the Everglades family. He thanked COL Pantano, the Corps of Engineers, SFWMD, DEP and many others from the Everglades family who stepped up to help. They had a lot working in their favor and as far as the peninsula was concerned they did well. Lessons learned from all this, the work they do on inventory and monitoring, the incredible science base and knowledge of how the system works, loop current for example, worked in their favor. They need to restore the ecosystem so that it will be more resilient to climate change as well as oil spills. He encouraged everyone to look at the Mabus Report which will be out in a week or so. Restoring the gulf is about the entire Gulf from Texas/Louisiana to the Dry Tortugas. Restoring the Caloosahatchee is important to the Gulf of Mexico and he encouraged the group to think about how they can relate it to Everglades restoration. He also thanked Dave Score, captain of a NOAA ship.

Executive Director's Report

Greg May reported on the June 24th Task Force meeting held in Miami. He noted that although Tom Strickland was very involved with the oil spill response, that he still found it important to come to south Florida for the Task Force meeting because Everglades restoration is also a priority. He reviewed the assignments given to the WG and SCG by the Task Force. First, the climate change information brief related to Everglades restoration was provided to the Task Force. The next assignment from the Task Force is to put together a conceptual model for climate change related to Everglades restoration. The conceptual model was selected because it has been used successfully in the past to organize and prioritize thinking about complex issues. Barry Rosen is the project manager for this effort and will share his latest analysis later in the day. Second, the Task Force asked the WG/SCG to identify next step recommendations for dealing with invasive exotic species. The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for Oct 28, 2010 in Miami in conjunction with the Site 1 Ground Breaking Ceremony. Third, the Task Force also asked for recommendations regarding the Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS). The IDS is incredibly complex and the goal is to come up with the three or four things, the highest and best recommendation they can provide to the Task Force at this time. He suggested the group come up with ways of framing the most important issues for the Task Force so it is more manageable. Fourth, the reports they have been working on this year will be presented for Task Force approval. He thanked everyone for their active engagement in the development of the reports this year. Fifth, Carol Wehle asked for ideas on programs for financial assistance to the Glades communities that could be affected by the ROG. Phil Bacon from the Collins Center will provide information on their ongoing initiative. He asked the members to provide information on any programs their agency may have so they can report back to Carol at the Oct TF meeting. Finally, he noted COL Pantano gave a moving presentation about the public discourse and the difficult decisions he had to make regarding releases from Lake Okeechobee into the northern estuaries and he suggested a Lake Okeechobee Summit to take these issues and concerns to the next level. Greg May noted he has been working with the Corps, SFWMD, NGOs and others on this concept and he welcomed any thoughts or ideas to help deal with the situation.

Susan Gray noted that when they originally developed the adaptive protocols document in 2003, they had a semi-annual public meeting where they would review the environmental and hydrologic conditions of the past six months as well as looking ahead six months. She noted a meeting scheduled for October and she suggested this may be the venue that could be put to a broader purpose. COL Pantano said that was great and added that what he heard from the people and elected officials is that they want to establish a common understanding of the problem and establish a common understanding of the solutions. There is another part of educating and informing since there is a lot of misinformation. They are looking for tools to achieve shared adversity. Ken Ammon said he totally agreed with the misinformation part or the lack of information in some cases. One of the things that really frustrate people is that whenever a government agency sets up a path forward, Caloosahatchee as an example, then either that plan is not implemented in a timely way or something happens to interrupt the implementation, such as another initiative or priority. He said they need a venue to talk about the

strategy and re-instituting this operational meeting could also be used two-fold as a long term strategy meeting. There has to be a combination of local, state and federal participation.

Ed Wright suggested it would be good for the members to keep an eye out for the report on the President's Initiative on America's Great Outdoors due out in November. Greg May said it was a great idea and suggested they highlight the wetlands reserve success story by USDA and the SFWMD at the October Task Force meeting.

Task Force Assignments

Climate Change Conceptual Ecological Model (CEM)

Barry Rosen noted the SCG enlisted his help to help put together a climate change conceptual ecological model (CEM). He provided the members with a Power Point (Encl. 4) reviewing the format used for developing CEMs. In December 2005, twelve CEMs were published in *Wetlands*. There's a small amount in the existing ecological models on climate change but it is not specific to climate change and sea level rise. They now know climate change may include increases or decreases in precipitation, changes in species and many other things that they did not think about back in 2005. If they were to address climate change, they need to think about the climate change drivers such as sea level rise, temperature changes, increased storm intensity, precipitation and water management, and elevated carbon dioxide levels. They also have sub drivers, for example, if sea level rises then they have salination of freshwater marshes that affects submergence of mangroves. He clarified that what he presented is not a finished product and there are new things such as publications and the work going on in Charlotte Harbor. They need to convene a group to come up with a better suite of drivers and sub drivers. He noted that it's not just about ecological models, when they have sea level rise, it will not just affect the ecology but there will be loss of property and flooding. The human aspect of climate change is the domain of the WG so as the SCG tries to move forward he asked whether the WG wants the SCG to broaden that and consider the built environment.

Susan Markley noted the SCG has had discussions on this topic on two occasions and see a way forward. Those same drivers and stressors will affect salt water intrusion in well fields and how well the flood control system works in the future. It may be useful to look at those issues as part of this effort or as a companion effort. The SCG will form a focus group and she encouraged the participation of those who are interested in helping.

Ken Ammon said they have to ask the question, when CERP was formulated, did the original plan consider protections. Although it may not have been implicitly, WRDA 2000 did provide for protection of existing legal sources and existing levels of flood protection. He did not know how they could analyze one without incorporating the others and said it needs to be dealt with collectively. Barry Rosen agreed adding that the salt water intrusion that affects the marsh will also affect the well field.

Susan Markley noted that at the recent Climate Change Listening Session, Commissioner Sorensen made a comment on the importance of ecosystem restoration and said they need to fight water with water. Susan acknowledged the task will be more complicated but it will help people working on climate

change to also think about the built system. Ronnie Best added that in the context of ecosystem restoration, water supply and flood control are an integral part and they need to look at all of it.

Chad Kennedy asked whether this was the right group or should they create a linkage with an existing group and let them focus on the urban system and keep this group focused on the natural system. Greg May said this provides the means of organizing, coordinating and structuring the thinking. The idea is to come up with a conceptual model that will make it easy for people to quickly understand the dynamics of climate change related to Everglades restoration and they will have links to tie into these other ongoing efforts such as MARES and the coastal estuarine work they are doing in south Florida.

Susan Markley added these are the initial steps with a focused group of experts from the organizations that will set the foundation for the scope of what they want to do and then there will be more detailed work with workshops, facilitators, other experts. Chris Kelble said they are still dealing with the science aspect and how it will affect the built environment and when you get to that point they will need to bring those experts. Barry Rosen noted these models are flat and they are thinking that a lot of these will have hyperlinks for bodies of information such as a series of publications and the models will be more dynamic than what was previously produced. Greg May said the members can expect an e-mail on when the small group will get together and everyone who wants to can participate.

Public Comment

John Arthur Marshall (ARM Foundation) reported the summer interns are back in school. Their poster paper was displayed at the GEER conference and explained how restoring the River of Grass (ROG) would result in a $90 billion benefit relative to cost. He said he appreciated the presentation on the CEMs, still missing the CEM for the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA), the real northern Everglades. Given the River of Grass (ROG) evolution he said it is an appropriate time to address this deficiency. The Marshall Foundation is working with Frank Mazzotti and some people from the University of Florida to address the EAA CEM. The EAA was the area of the original pond apple forest south of the lake, as well as cypress and an elderberry forest. He noted he would not be present the following day for the LORI presentation and wanted to mention that the Marshall Foundation has put over $1 million into tree restoration in Belle Glade. Eighty percent of that has gone to the local economy by buying trees from local nurseries and engaging the local folks to help plant the trees. They ran out of tree money in 2008 and are looking to continue that effort. There is also an idea for a nature center somewhere in the future which will fit in nicely with the LORI initiative. He will provide Phil Bacon will some of his ideas. Finally, Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods*, will be at a major event in March 2011 sponsored by the Marshall Foundation, Palm Beach County and others. It will be a great opportunity to hear the impacts of not getting the kids in the woods. He reported that their Executive Director participated at the America's Great Outdoors event in Orlando and looked forward to more participation in the future.

Barry Heimlich (FAU, Center for Environmental Studies) said it is important to consider the built and natural environment together because of the tremendous interaction between those two systems. The rainfall on the urban area of southeast Florida is approximately a billion gallons per year per square mile

and that multiplied by the amount of area between Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties and it adds up to over a trillion gallons of freshwater a year of rainfall. They are using hundreds of millions of gallons a day for municipal water supply and then discharging that to the ocean or underground and they are trying to recover and reuse it. One of the tools they have for fighting the invasion of salt water in the lower Everglades is to fight saltwater with freshwater and they need to think about it as a potential resource. There are a lot of people that are concerned about the built environment and less concerned about the natural environment and if they are informed about the relationship of both it may get their attention and support. He reported on a meeting held in Broward County on August 31st by the four counties of southeast Florida (Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach) who have formed a four county regional compact on climate change. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together all the people who are the most knowledgeable about sea level rise in the southeast region and try to develop a standardized guideline on projecting sea level rise that all the counties in this compact could use. They set the base year at 2000. They took all of the data from 14 stations USGS has been monitoring and did a statistical analysis and determined that for the 14 stations from Mayport to Key West, there is no statistical difference in the rates of sea level rise since about 1920 until now, however there is a slight acceleration factor. Worldwide average sea level rise is 2.0 based on the 2007 IPCC report and there is no difference between sea level rise on the coast of Florida to what is happening globally. They can use the worldwide research as a tool for their own planning. Projections call for 3-6 feet of sea level rise by the end of this century. Six inches of sea level rise which is expected at a minimum within the next 20 years will have a significant effects on salt water intrusion and on the stormwater drainage systems in the urban area and will dramatically increase the risk of flooding in the urban areas. Susan Markley noted that one of the goals the four county compact had was to come to consensus on the planning scenarios. Miami Dade County is working on a sustainability plan and the idea is to have more tools and information available to decision makers.

Invasive Exotics Recommendations

Dan Kimball recognized the groups and individuals who play a role in dealing with invasive exotics. He noted they developed an information brief as part of the information brief series which focused on exotic animals. The Task Force asked the Working Group to come up with targeted recommendations. Actions divided into four themes: national screening; dealing with early detection and rapid response capability; policy changes so they can work more effectively together; and the budget and how they can garner the resources to be more effective at all levels of government, possibly develop a cross cut budget.

Dan Thayer provided a Power Point (Encl. 5) noting that although Florida is overwhelmed by the task of dealing with exotics they do have great people working on this issue. He reviewed the challenge as well as the elements that go into an effective management program. He provided examples of successful invasive species management and highlighted USDA's biological control facility located in Davie. He reviewed the history and primary objectives of the CISMA which is a grassroots coordinating group focused on invasive species management that has become a coordination success story. They want to keep their forward momentum since accomplishments could be reversed, if resources are not

maintained and maximized. He reviewed the recommendations which include promoting federal prevention initiatives, coordinating development of a cross cut budget, establishing an Everglades EDRR Coordinator and dedicated EDRR funding, and promote continued improvements to coordination and ability to react to problems. The Gambian Pouched Rat is considered a success story and is now eradicated from the Keys and it cost less than $350,000.

Dan Kimball added the group has come together and done a lot on an ad hoc basis. Within the Park Service they have Exotic Plant Management Teams around the country and they now have a proposal in to extend it to have an Exotic Wildlife Management Team for the FY12 budget. Early detection, now have a problem at Biscayne National Park with lionfish. They have a couple of interns that are out there and it is being handled in an ad hoc way. They need to pull together and figure out how to get the biggest bang for their buck. Joan Browder asked if this group could take a leadership role in emphasizing this problem at a national level. Many of these species are still being imported and released. If they could explain how much damage, money, resources are being taken up it may get through to people to institute some real legislation. Dan Kimball replied that FWS is working through the Lacy Act. Ronnie Best noted they do not have the funding they need to help address the issue, such as with pythons. Greg May said that anyone familiar with the fight on plants or animals has a better sense for how much funding is dedicated. Resources are an important part of this and they need to know what's dedicated year after year, what's ad hoc, etc. At the state and federal level there are going to be tremendous budget challenges, given that, they may be faced with re-allocating funds to those things that are of the highest and best use.

Ronnie Best noted that by the time they do a cross cut budget they will be a year to a year and a half down the road and they need to respond now. Greg May agreed and recommended they put the prevention at the top of the list followed by the EDRR Coordinator. COL Pantano added that restoration is not complete if we don't deal with this. By doing projects they are creating environments for exotics to thrive and they need to have the resources to deal with this. Back in 2005 they did a special report on invasive species and the recommendation was to develop a Master Plan. Based on today's leadership and on the additional species such as the python and fish issues it is a good time to revisit the Master Plan. They already have the authorization to move forward and the purpose would be more CERP project based. They would try to integrate invasive species throughout the process. Greg May said that given the priorities on water quality they may need to identify other options for cost sharing. Pilot study is all taxa and would feed into the Master Plan so that they would have the right information. It would be approximately $1 million and they want to pull in all the other agencies not just the SFWMD in order to develop an overall plan for dealing with exotics within the greater Everglades. It would be helpful to work with the National Invasive Species Council who is developing a cross cut budget. They want to have a regional approach rather than a species based budget because it is a more holistic way of doing it. They have a person who will be working on the cross cut and they have offered to come down and help them. Dan Kimball said that the Park Service has no base funding and he has had to cobble together entrance fee money from the park but those dollars are not sustainable.

Public Comment

Kristina Serbesoff-King (Nature Conservancy) stated that the Everglades integrated landscape is one of the Nature Conservancy's largest priorities. She thanked the agencies and the people involved in the northern Everglades movement and Fisheating Creek project. She wanted to bring to everyone's attention that they focus on the Everglades CISMA, the poster child of how you can do an incredible amount with very little, but there are actually six CISMAs within the footprint of the greater Everglades. There are a lot of partnerships that are doing a lot with very little. Implications that would come out of the recommendations that were present anything that supports prevention within the entire footprint will support all of these CISMAs. The Nature Conservancy believes they need stronger prevention policies within the US. She strongly recommended this group support prevention policy. There are so many species that they are not looking at and they are losing time. The cross cut budget is called for in the National Invasive Species Council Plan and it would be all the better for the Everglades to be the poster child. The idea of doing clean restoration, it should be second nature that invasive species is something they don't make worse. The success of the partnership is the people involved and it should be part of everyone's job description.

2010 Task Force Reporting Requirements

Greg May noted that the second draft of the Land Acquisition Strategy (Encl. 6a), was distributed for comment. The WRAC provided feedback. All comments received have been incorporated. He asked if there were any concerns on recommending the draft Land Acquisition Strategy to the Task Force for their approval at their October meeting. There were none. The SCG had a detailed discussion on the Plan for Coordinating Science (PCS) (Encl. 6b) the members said the document was in good shape. Once a couple of refinements are made it will be sent out the following week for one final review. There was consensus by the SCG on recommending the document. There were no WG member objections to recommending the PCS to the Task Force at its October meeting. Marsha Bansee presented the Strategy and Biennial Report (Encl. 6c) to the members noting it was the third draft. She noted the goal is to also present the document to the Task Force at its October meeting.

Gene Duncan noted that every year the tribe always comments that the report doesn't contain any of the details and the report consistently avoids controversial issues. The Miccosukee Tribe always ends up having to write a minority report, after all this is going to Congress and they want Congress to know some of the issues and understand the stuff they are grappling with. He said that these reports seem to go out of their way to avoid any discussion of the real substance. When he reads about 'why restoration' there are some timelines and things that aren't in there that the Miccosukee Tribe thinks are significant. Gene said Congress will read a revisionist history of what has been going on down here.

They established CERP and recognized there was a loss of storage in the system and they had to have more storage of water in the system order to restore the glades and since then they have had to lower the Lake Okeechobee regulation schedule by over a foot to armor the dike. There is no discussion of where that extra storage is going to be made up. He asked how they were ever going to do CERP when they don't even have a plan on how they will get that extra storage back. There is no discussion of the

sparrow, single species management, flooding of tree islands and the S-9 lawsuit that went all the way to the US Supreme Court. There is also no discussion of Judge Altonaga and the backpumping into Lake Okeechobee. Tamiami Trail is discussed as part of DECOMP. Congress directed in WRDA 2000 that no appropriation shall be made to construct WCA 3 Decompartmentalization including bridging of Tamiami Trail until Modified Water Deliveries (MWDs) was done. If they put in here that the bridging was done according to MWDs they will hit the ceiling. The truth is the bridging is being done because of the Omnibus bill which said 'not withstanding any other provision of law build the bridge anyway.' There is no discussion about Judge Gold and the EPA determination on water quality and these are big issues. Gene suggested that it is time for the feds and state to work as partners and create one report. For this year he said to go ahead and send them this report and to also include the last two years' worth of South Florida Environmental Report (SFER) so anyone can read it as an attachment. For the next report the feds could bring their data in and include it into the state's report, to fix this recurring problem.

Greg May said they have spent a lot of time analyzing ways to improve and consolidate the reports and progress has been made for this version. He noted feedback that the previous versions of the reports were getting too large and difficult to read. The new approach provides an umbrella document to give people an overview of what is going on and provides links to more detailed information. All the feedback so far has been that this is a step in the right direction. He agreed the SFER is a tremendous report, but that it is responding to state legal requirements while the Task Force is providing an overall restoration strategy in response to a request from Congress. Gene Duncan said he believes that the members of Congress will not get a sense of any of the issues in reading this document. The team should get with the District a produce a quality product that talks about those issues. Greg May said they have the opportunity to improve the 2012 report. He thanked everyone for the feedback and recommendations and asked the members if they had any objections to presenting the report for approval at the October meeting and there were none. Greg asked Gene Duncan to meet with him offline to explore his comments.

Next Steps and Closing Comments

Dan Kimball reminded members to review the two sets of meeting minutes for approval the following day.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM

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September 16, 2010

Opening Remarks
Dan Kimball called the meeting to order at 8:40 AM. The draft meeting minutes from the March and July minutes were approved without objection. COL Pantano noted it was the 82nd anniversary of the second largest disaster at Lake Okeechobee in 1928.

Task Force Assignments Continued
Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS)
Stu Appelbaum provided a presentation (Encl. 7) and reviewed the IDS schedule which is dated as of June 2010. It lays out the game plan between now and 2020 and reminded the members that the basis for this was the September 2008 schedule. They are now two plus years out and with all the policy changes and the things that have happened he asked whether this is this the time to tweak it. There are a number of challenges with the water quality litigation, amended determination, other court activities and River of Grass (ROG) acquisition that will have an impact on the IDS. There are also funding challenges with the state and they are trying to maximize and utilize the credits banked by the SFWMD and the state for land acquisition. Signing the IRL PPA is a big event, allows them to move forward with the C-44 project and also credits the SFWMD. Agrochemical policy challenges came to light as they worked on the C-44 project. Process challenges include the Pro Regs and Guidance Memoranda which are still pending. There have also been changes in priorities and some projects may be either moved up or back.

Graphical depiction of restoration
Stu Appelbaum noted the challenge of translating the IDS chart into something more visual. The Everglades Summit hosted by the Everglades Foundation and their graphics were an inspiration for developing the tool he would present to the group. He showed a visual representation of restoration for several projects such as the Kissimmee River, Picayune Strand, C-111 basin and Tamiami Trail. It illustrates for a lay audience what the project is about. The will create a module for each and every project in the IDS and show where the project is located and what it will do. They will also show different sequencing and mix and match projects. The goal is to have it done in time for the October Task Force meeting.

Ken Ammon said he liked the concept and it would benefit greatly if they could depict through the sequencing if one project is implemented before another, how the ecosystem might be changed for better or for worse. For example, on the Tamiami Trail bridge they are not going to get all that sheet flow from just a bridge. They need something north of that to result in significant benefit to the park and they need to somehow put some sort of logic in this. Stu noted this is the first generation and they are trying to translate this graphically. Beyond the Task Force meeting they need to get to 'what are the

benefits' and that goal is tougher from a technical perspective and will be part of the next generation. Susan Markley said it may be possible to address some of those issues by being careful with the narration. Commissioner Diaz is very concerned with seepage management and implications to the area to the east. Hoped the seepage management features could be included when it is presented at the Task Force meeting. She agreed this is helpful and a great idea. Paul Souza agreed it will be a helpful tool and suggested including some photos of what has happened already or what they expect will happen. Provide before and after photos. Chad Kennedy said it is a powerful tool because it is easy to understand and for the next generation suggested they look at a cross section of stage levels and looking at the earth from the side. Stu said it was a good point for the next generation.

COL Pantano said this graphical representation needs a keeper if it going to be used over a period of time nothing there is a cost associated with it. He asked who would be the audience beyond the Task Force and what outcomes they were trying to achieve. At the end of the day the SFWMD's ability to cost share will drive what the IDS does or not. They are going to be faced with doing some projects because of crediting and at the end of the day money will drive this thing. Ken Ammon said it was a good point and this could be used to effect policy change in some manner. People can understand what constraints are driven by current policy. If they could get a change or flexibility in policy this could help demonstrate the power in changing that policy and the sequencing can get back to 'what gives you the most benefit'. Stu said they will get a lot of utility out of this and an outreach tool that they will make available for anyone to use. COL Pantano said the Corps will be the keeper. Eric Hughes said he liked it, good opportunity to quickly show the relationship of the foundation projects with CERP especially for those people at the HQ level. Dan Kimball added that for local governments they could create modules that show the big picture as well as hone in on people's backyards. James Erskine asked if it would be a video or interactive presentation. Stu said it would be both. For each project they will create a stocked animation and the dynamic part would be to take the individual modules and mix and match and highlight different sequences. James Erskine suggested they have a component to show the boundaries for the reservation lands for the tribes similar to Dan Kimball's suggestion.

Suite of Cost Sharing Issues

Tom Teets provided a Power Point (Encl. 8) and reminded the group that upon signing the CERP Master Agreement the rules for cost sharing were established consistent with WRDA 2000. Only costs of projects with executed Project Partnership Agreements (PPAs) will be considered. The SFWMD may have gone out and done many things but when it comes to cost share it is not there yet. Once they sign the PPA they receive credit for the cost of the land and in kind work on construction. In some cases they have federal money in the land acquisition such as with the C-43 West Reservoir where Farm Bill money was used to acquire a portion of the property. Farm Bill money goes on the federal side of the equation. The SFWMD is provided a credit for all the land involved in a project even before it is totally acquired. Corps can never get ahead of the SFWMD as far as spending. Immediately upon signing a PPA the value of the lands needed for the project and the cost of construction completed prior to the signing of the agreement are credited. The cost of the contract for construction is also credited when the contract is signed. They provide each other with quarterly financial reports and the yearly adjustments are made

to maintain the 50/50 cost share. The design work under the Design Agreement is also on a 50/50 basis. Historically they have done a lot of design and were actually ahead in some cases and have scaled back. Projects that have executed Partnership Agreements are Picayune Strand, L-31 N Pilot, Melaleuca Eradication, Site 1 and IRL. The Corps anticipates funding for design in FY11 for $57 million so the Corps is $35 million ahead of the SFWMD.

The IRL has been split into two pieces (IRL South which are the STAs and reservoirs and IRL natural lands that will be restored back to their natural state and provide passive storage) and that piece has not been executed, the SFWMD has to do some additional work and the PPA will be done. Proposed WRDA projects include the Broward Water Preserve Areas, C-43 W Reservoir, BBCW–Phase 1 and C-111 Spreader Canal. North Palm Beach project which they have identified as a good project to move ahead on provides benefits to the Loxahatchee Slough and River. The Corps working to get that moved up the chain and is a cost share rich project. Other projects that are not lined up yet include DECOMP, ENP Seepage Management, Lake Okeechobee watershed. $1.4 billion in land and construction that is currently not creditable because it is all on proposed WRDAs and other things.

Funding Considerations

Tom Teets reviewed the water quality policies that affect cost sharing. The water quality cost share issue has sidelined the Lake Okeechobee Watershed PIR by over three years. Interpretation could result in making closer to $500 million worth of water quality features not cost-sharable. They are hoping to resolve this issue in the near future. Agrochemicals on project land soils, most of the projects for CERP that relate to storage and treatment will be built on former agricultural lands. Such as the C-44 Reservoir where citrus was grown and copper fungicide was used on the citrus trees. Over time there has been accumulation of copper in the soils and could be problematic if the lands are flooded. Soil needs to be moved off the area so that is won't have adverse effects on apple snails and snail kites. The SFWMD is working closely with FWS and DEP to develop methodologies to deal with these types of situations. The observed copper levels for the C-44 Reservoir are between 0.13 and 457ppm and they have identified ways to scrape the soil off and use it in construction. The question is how to work through that and still attain the cost share. Eric Hughes clarified that the depths typically are at the top 6 to 12 inches of soil. Tom Teets agreed. The currently policy approved by Secretary Darcy may reduce the non-cost sharable portion of the soil management plans for addressing agricultural chemicals. The approved soil management strategy has to be a cost effective approach and the engineering risks need to be adequately addressed. Issues include the lack of criteria that must be met for the management of impacted soils to qualify for cost share. Issues have popped up due to shifting policy. This issue is holding up the C-111 SC and BBCW PIRS from being finalized. Policy and statutory changes that may be needed include changes in Army policy to authorize the Corps to recommend cost share in a PIR for specialized handling of agrochemicals meeting the proposed criteria or CERP specific authorization in WRDA to allow cost share for specialized handling costs.

A cost rather than a cost sharing issue is the wetland mitigation issue. There have been multiple revisions to the manner in which the Corps assesses impacts and benefits to wetlands for CERP projects. For example, when they were doing the A1 Reservoir they were looking at a ledger type approach,

because the state is stepping ahead and implementing projects they run into the typical 404 process as opposed to the Civil Works restoration process. When they started building projects got they hung up on 'are you going to mitigate' when it should be self mitigating as it is in CERP and they are looking for equity in the process. The SFWMD's ability to build restoration projects on property purchased from U.S. Sugar Corporation will be adversely affected by the continued requirement of mitigation for wetland impacts on a project by project basis.

Greg May noted Shannon Estenoz asked for this to be on the October Task Force meeting agenda. He suggested that Tom specify whether the ASA policy memo was a matter of law, policy or interpretation. Paul Souza asked whether the 50/50 cost share was based on law, national policy or the Master Agreement. Stu Appelbaum replied this gets into the Anti Deficiency Act (ADA) if the Corps gets out ahead then they have an ADA problem. Some say it is a policy because it would in effect be spending money they don't have. Paul Souza noted that Everglades restoration is different and will be a 30-year, $20 billion effort. They are going to see many ups and downs and they should have conversations on flexibility. COL Pantano said there have been discussions on the idea of advance crediting as well as having a dedicated funding source similar to the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Tom Teets added they have also talked about having a programmatic south Florida Ecosystem Restoration Program and they could cost share across all of it with one ledger sheet between the Corps and the SFWMD. It would simplify things and make those other things programmatic. Paul Souza noted that with all the uncertainties regarding water quality costs and litigation, it would be powerful for the Task Force to have some scenario projections about revenue streams. They have the IDS based upon some assumptions and he wonders whether they are the right assumptions. It would be helpful for the policy makers to see the impacts of different revenue streams after 2014 when the credit balance could be extinguished. COL Pantano said that Ms. Darcy's challenge is that she has x amount of money in the civil works pot and a growing list of ecosystems of national significance. There is not enough money to attend to all the things within the Corps' current responsibility and authority.

Dan Kimball asked whether the Corps is looking at the policy issues to address the equity and self mitigating issues. COL Pantano said the wetland mitigation issue is not exclusive to the Corps and EPA has a big piece, some may require legislative fixes. Stu Appelbaum said it is a mixture of policy and law. The Corps has been funded generously over the past 3-4 years. The question is how sustainable is that for the next 20 years to implement the program. They all know the federal budget will be constrained and they are going to have to live off the credits for the next several years and the low hanging fruit is to get those PIRs and crediting so they can continue moving. Ken Ammon said they have asked many times to get formal correspondence on either the law or the interpretation to see what is really driving the 50/50. Ken added that they believe there is an interpretation that resulted in policies and there may be some flexibility. He asked whether the ASA can go back and take a hard look at the ADA and see if there is flexibility there.

Decompartmentalization

Stu Appelbaum reviewed the current flow patterns and reminded everyone it is different from what it was historically because of the alteration of the landscape. DECOMP is known as the heart of the

restoration effort to restore the hydrologic patterns in the landscape that make up the Everglades. DECOMP physical model needed because of the technical and scientific uncertainties. First phase is a physical model designed to move water from WCA 3A to 3B and will be initiated in the summer of 2011. Because of the complexity they divide this into phases. There will be three PIRs with part 1 dealing with the Miami Canal and trying to restore connectivity within WCA 3A. Originally in the Yellow Book they were going to make improvements to north New River canal and now the new thinking is that they won't need to do that. Significant cost savings with that. He reviewed the schedule and noted there has been concern over the length of time to implement Phase 1. It has been a complex issue and a lot has been thrown at the team. WRDA 2000 required MWDs to be completed prior to Congress appropriating funds for DECOMP. Team is working through water quality uncertainty tied into the litigation. Team also wrestling with how to determine what the benefits are given the tools they currently have with modeling. Because of the uncertainty this could be a case where they can apply an adaptive management approach. It has taken a long time to get to this point and they have a few more years to go. PIRs 2 and 3 talk about more bridges on Tamiami Trail, if Tamiami Trail next steps is accomplished then those things get taken off the table because they have been done elsewhere. There are still some fundamental issues they need to get through. Tricky thing about DECOMP they can't just remove the features without having the ability to move more water through the system. This is intrinsically tied to other things such as seepage management.

Chad Kennedy asked about the L-31 Seepage pilot project. Stu replied they had intended to implement it using ARRA funding and the bids came in much higher than estimated. They were going to be over the Section 902 limit so they had to cancel the solicitation and give up the $6.5 million because the funds expire on September 30th. They need to either see about getting the 902 limit raised or do this a different way. Susan Markley said she has been on this PDT for a long time and there are a lot of difficult issues such as water quality that require policy guidance. She said she did not think the majority of the people on the team think full backfill is necessary but the closer they are to full backfill the more likely the project will achieve the goals. Team is near consensus that building something sooner rather than later is the best way to go and they want some policy guidance to move forward. Stu Appelbaum said they too are concerned about the difficulty in getting this through the finish line and they are doing a lot more intensive management. Their Chief of Planning, Becky Griffith, has personally invested time to get this thing moving and get it to closure.

Paul Souza asked about the individual milestones. Stu Appelbaum noted the TSP is the major hurdle. Then there will be discussions from a policy perspective, civil works review, peer review, etc. Ken Ammon said that's half the trick, the other half is getting it to the next WRDA and Congressional authorization and appropriation. If they want to see something done in this decade that will be with a physical model similar to what they are doing with the L-28. That could be done in two years versus 5 – 8 years and provide more meaningful results that the theoretical models just can't do. Greg May said there is an issue with DECOMP physical model being completed under the Design Agreement because it must be removed when completed. Stu explained it gets decommissioned because it is a test. Ken Ammon said it is probably necessary because they are cutting gaps through the L-28 but there should be

some flexibility there. Greg May agreed they need to figure out how to retain the benefits. Stu said there are some policy and legal issues they need to grapple with. James Erskine asked to be provided with the GPS locations where this project will be located. Barry Rosen said USGS spends a lot of time working on groundwater flow and offered their assistance adding he was not sure if that would help them with the Section 902 limit. Stu said they looked at legitimately pulling pieces off but it was not enough.

Dan Kimball asked what Plan B was for ENP seepage management if it does not work. Stu clarified they would develop a pilot or do some other kind of demonstration. The Yellow Book laid out an impervious barrier through the levee itself a few feet below ground and a pump back system to re-circulate the seepage water. The pilot project was more of a window approach with a pump. They are going to have to deal with seepage and the pilot project would give them information about technology that would then feed into the PIR that they ultimately need to do. Do they continue with the pilot project and get a 902 fix or reopen the PIR and phase it, no conclusion as to where they need to go. Dan said that everyone knows about the pilot activity the rock miners have ongoing south of the trail and all indications he's getting is that it will likely work. Question is how to work through that and should they explore the shallow seepage barrier. Susan Markley said the county has always been concerned with seepage management, flood protections, water quality, well fields, etc. and historically the county has always objected to permanent barriers and approaches and prefers something that could be turned off and on.

Stu Appelbaum said the goal is to have the first generation graphical IDS tool for the October Task Force meeting as well as Tom's presentation on the cost sharing. They are also working to revise the cash flow tool and add the non federal. Greg May asked for read ahead material to be provided two weeks prior to the meeting. Stu said they will be reviewing the CISRERP Report and will also bring that to the next Task Force meeting.

Public Comment

Megan Tinsley (Audubon of Florida) said that as they are going through this stage in Everglades restoration that feels like a hurricane she reminded them that to take with them what is near and dear to their hearts and for the Everglades that is DECOMP. She urged both agencies to use their brightest to work on this and agreed the team is struggling and policy guidance would be helpful.

Financial Assistance Programs

Greg May noted that at the June Task Force meeting, Carol Wehle asked the WG and SCG to look at their respective agency programs for any initiatives that might be suitable for financial assistance for communities around Lake Okeechobee that could be affected by the ROG initiative. He introduced Phil Bacon from the Collins Center who has agreed to give a presentation on one of their initiatives that's taking place in Lake Okeechobee. He said he was hopeful the presentation would serve as a catalyst to spur everyone think about programs in their agencies.

Phil Bacon provided a Power Point presentation (Encl. 9) on the Lake Okeechobee Regional Initiative (LORI). The Collins Center has been engaged by the SFWMD to convene people around the southern rim of Lake Okeechobee to help them re-imagine their economy in light of the potential that exists there. This area could have a robust and diverse economy. The problems around the lake are well known and very challenging. Unemployment is at 40% in the tri-cities (Pahokee, Belle Glade and South Bay) and they have issues with the schools, most of which are failing. There are significant challenges to bringing economic development into the area. They established a regional framework and developed a regional marketing plan with the hope of developing tourism potential for the area. They made sure the small bus route continues from Belle Glade because it is the only form of transportation. They also wanted to widen the intersection between SR 80 and US 27 because it has one of the highest accident and death rate in the state. FDOT is now in various planning stages to get that done. He reviewed several other examples of initiatives that they have undertaken.

He discussed how agriculture can help stimulate the economy and the urban farm they are setting up to teach young people to be entrepreneurs. He explained that the services and demands are higher in the underserved areas. He discussed the overall goals and objectives of the tourism effort and the planned festivals that will hopefully draw in overnight stays for 2 or 3 evenings. He showed a video that the group developed for marketing tourism and discussed the many ways they have for 'telling the story'. He also reviewed the website which is currently under construction. He explained the challenges associated with telling people about the area and wanted get out front of the predicted shift from urban living to a more relaxed lifestyle.

Ken Ammon asked if Indian town was going to be brought in. Phil said no not to date. Chad Kennedy asked about programs that could be submitted to help this initiative. Greg May said the request will be resent to the members and asked the members to provide their financial assistance programs for inclusion in the matrix. Chad asked about including the sugar companies to set up some kind of tourism to their industry. Phil said the sugar companies have a history of being supportive of the communities. Paul Souza said he was astonished to hear about the 40 percent unemployment rate. Phil said it is related to the sugar industry downsizing and that now the area has a significantly high crime rate.

Ken Ammon asked about the schools and ways to get the information out to residents about what is available to them. Phil said it is on their radar screen. The youth center is a key point for the urban garden project in the area. The community center has been looked at to expand it from being not just a community center but a cultural center where children and adults can participate in it.

Next Steps and Closing Comments

Susan Markley talked about some key topics discussed at the SCG meeting and said she appreciated the attendance of SCG members. Greg went over follow up items and added they would incorporate as best as they can Gene's comments into the Strategy. Dan Kimball thanked everyone for attending and thanked the staff for their work.

Meeting adjourned at 11:44 AM

Enclosures:

1. Agenda
2. Draft meeting minutes, March 2010
3. Draft meeting minutes, July 2010
4. Climate Change Conceptual Model presentation
5. Invasive Exotics Recommendations
6. 2010 Task Force Reporting Requirements
    a. Land Acquisition Strategy
    b. Plan for Coordinating Science
    c. Biennial Report and Strategy
7. Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS)
8. Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS) Cost Sharing
9. Financial Assistance Programs - LORI