

# Review of Restoration Monitoring and Assessments

Everglades restoration programs depend on sound science to evaluate ecosystem health and assess responses to restoration activities. Science informs decision-making and supports adaptation of our restoration efforts.

Long-term monitoring data describes the variability, trends, and patterns in the Everglades, and how restoration projects change the hydrology, water quality, and ecology of the Everglades.

Long-term data is a tool to link planning, construction, and adaptive management to ensure that intended results are achieved (Draft Report to Congress, 2020).

# **RECOVER WG/SCG Review of Monitoring and Assessment Tools**

## **Why Should We Do This Now:**

**The pace of Everglades restoration planning, design, and construction has accelerated, while our CERP programmatic science funding has not kept up.**

**MAP programmatic funding dropped by 48% (\$7.2 million in 2011 to \$3.8 million in 2020). From the initial 30 monitoring projects, six were discontinued after 2012-2014, sixteen were reduced by > 25%, and six were reduced by > 50%. Are we doing the right projects?**

**Non-CERP science funding, or CERP project-level monitoring has provided some short-term coverage, but its generally more localized.**

**We need to assure we can maintain a system-wide science perspective to guide planning, design, construction and operations, so that we can maximize benefits to the natural and built systems.**

# RECOVER WG/SCG Review of Staffing Levels and Succession Planning

Since 2000, many of our restoration scientists have moved on, and were not replaced. A number of our current senior staff are heading toward retirement in the next few years. We need to replace vacant science positions and train new restoration science leaders across the agencies.

## Why this Forum:

The interagency WG/SCG has a key role in managing programs and assigning/overseeing staff to assure that our monitoring and assessment meet two goals:

- Performance Monitoring – are we achieving project objectives (hydrologic, water quality, and ecological outcomes), while ensuring financial accountability?
- Adaptive Monitoring – are we addressing management questions and filling restoration knowledge gaps, that can inform operations or future decision making?