

PEER REVIEW PLAN

TAMIAMI TRAIL LIMITED RE-EVALUATION REPORT

For questions or comments regarding this Peer Review Plan, please forward your comments to:

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1. Purpose and Requirements.

a. This document outlines the peer review plan for Tamiami Trail Limited Re-Evaluation Report (TT LRR). EC 1105-2-408 dated 31 May 2005 “Peer Review of Decision Documents” (1) establishes procedures to ensure the quality and credibility of Corps decision documents by adjusting and supplementing the review process and (2) requires that documents have a peer review plan. The Circular applies to all feasibility studies and reports and any other reports that lead to decision documents that require authorization by Congress. The feasibility level report will lead to Congressional Authorization and is therefore covered by the Circular.

b. The Circular outlines the requirement of the two review approaches (independent technical review (ITR) and external peer review (EPR)) and provides guidance on Corps Planning Centers of Expertise (PCX) involvement in the approaches. This document addresses review of the decision document as it pertains to both approaches and planning coordination with the appropriate Center.

(1) ITR. The relevant National Planning Center of Expertise, in this case for Ecosystem Restoration (ECO-PCX), has ultimate responsibility for accomplishing ITR. ITR is a critical examination by a qualified person or team that was not involved in the day-to-day technical work that supports the decision document. ITR is intended to confirm that such work was done in accordance with clearly established professional principles, practices, codes, and criteria. In addition to technical review, documents should also be reviewed for their compliance with laws and policy. The Circular also requires that DrChecks (<https://www.projnet.org/projnet/>) be used to document all ITR comments, responses, and associated resolution accomplished.

(2) EPR. The Circular added external peer review to the existing Corps review process. This approach does not replace the standard ITR process. The peer review approach applies in special cases where the magnitude and risk of the project are such that a critical examination by a qualified person outside the Corps is necessary. EPR can also be used where the information is based on novel methods, presents complex interpretation challenges, contains precedent-setting methods or models, or is likely to affect policy decisions that have a significant impact. The degree of independence required for technical review increases as the project magnitude and project risk increase. The relevant National Planning Center of Expertise, in this case for Ecosystem Restoration (ECO-PCX), has ultimate responsibility for accomplishing EPR.

(a) Projects with low magnitude and low risk may use a routine ITR.

(b) Projects with either high magnitude/low risk or low magnitude/high risk would require both Corps and outside reviewers on the ITR team to address the portions of the project that cause the project to rate high on the magnitude or risk scale.

(c) Projects with high magnitude and high risk require a routine ITR as well as an EPR.

(d) Supplemental information provided in the March 30, 2007 CECW-CP Memorandum Subject: Peer Review Process stated that in the near term, expensive projects would warrant External Peer Review even if they don't trigger other criteria.

2. Project Description.

a. **Decision Document.** The purpose of the decision document entitled **Tamiami Trail Limited Re-Evaluation Report** is to present the results of a re-evaluation of predominantly existing information presented in previous report efforts and NEPA documentation on this project. The reason for the TT LRR is project cost increases relative to those previous efforts. The report provides planning, engineering, and implementation details of the recommended restoration plan to allow final design and construction to proceed subsequent to the approval of the plan.

b. **General Site Description.** Tamiami Trail is located in South Florida and crosses the peninsula in an east/west orientation. It runs along the northern edge of Everglades National Park and just south of Water Conservation area 3B.

c. **Project Scope.** The scope of this effort is to prepare a decision document that identifies several plans for attaining the ecosystem benefits that Congress intended the project to have while doing this in a cost effective manner. This LRR will take the work done in past reports for this project and will analyze ways to lower the current working cost (c. 2007).

d. **Problems and Opportunities.** Due to the past history in South Florida and specifically to Tamiami Trail, natural water deliveries into the lower Everglades (ENP) have been altered and have reached a level which will not sustain the ecosystem benefits once provided by the natural hydrologic regime. This LRR will attempt to address moving forward in a cost effective manner to restore water deliveries to as close a natural hydrologic regime as is currently practicable, given the modified hydrologic system where this project is being proposed.

e. **Product Delivery Team.** The product delivery team (PDT) is comprised of those individuals directly involved in the development of the decision document. Disciplines are listed below.

Organization	Discipline
Restoration Division	Project Manager
Planning Division	Planning Team Leader
Planning Division	Biologist
Planning Division	Economist
Engineering Division	Engineering Technical Lead
Engineering Division	Civil Engineering Technician

Engineering Division	Civil Engineer
Engineering Division	Cost Estimating
Engineering Division	Hydraulic Engineer
Engineering Division	Geotechnical Engineer
Real Estate	Real Estate Specialist

f. **Vertical Team.** The Vertical Team includes District management, District Support Team (DST) and Review Integration Team (RIT) staff as well as members of the Planning of Community of Practice (PCoP).

Organization	Discipline
CESAJ	Planning and Engineering
CESAD	Chief, Plan Formulation
CECW-SAD	RIT Manager
CECW-PC	Office of Water Project Review Manager
CEMVD	Ecosystem Restoration PCX (ECO-PCX) Director
CEMVD	ECO-PCX Deputy Director
CEMVD	ECO-PCX Technical Director
CEMVR-PM-F	ECO-PCX Action District

3. ITR Plan.

a. **The ECO-PCX** is requested to form an ITR Team, and to conduct ITR of the Draft Report. Also, a Cost Estimating Directory of Expertise (Cost Dx) has been established, at the Corps Walla Walla District. The ECO-PCX is requested, herein, to coordinate cost estimation review with the Cost Dx. The Cost Dx conducted an ITR for Tamiami Trail Modifications Cost Engineering in FY2007. Those ITR Reviewers should be considered for review of this LRR since they have related market, industry and Florida Department of Transportation knowledge.

b. **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Reviews.** The engineering and design for the Tamiami Trail Modifications has been concurrently reviewed by FDOT. SAJ Engineering Division views this review as serving the role of ITR for the project's highway and bridge aspects. FDOT has reviewed all submittals and reports to date and will review all remaining documents through plans and specifications.

c. **ITR Team.** Team composition and expertise should be similar to that of the project team, keeping in mind the scope of the LRR as presented in Item 2, above and, specifically, appropriate to address LRR scoping, alternative screening, sizing, design, and the likelihood of

producing significant ecological output via flow restoration to the ENP habitats. It is noted that the LRR primarily addresses alternatives/components that have been developed and reviewed in previous reports. ITR Team members should be able to consider the “big picture” more so than the usual ITR. Technical disciplines considered to be appropriate for review of the draft LRR, at a minimum, include: plan formulation, economics, ecological benefits, NEPA compliance, hydraulic engineering, geotechnical engineering, cost engineering, and real estate. SAJ and the ECO-PCX will collaborate to produce detailed scopes of work prior to each review.

d. **Communication.** The communication plan for the ITR is as follows:

(1) The team provided comments for consolidation by the ITR manager. The comments and documentation of the review will be provided to the SAJ Planning Team Leader, and considered for response by the PDT.

(2) A revised electronic version of the report and appendices with comments incorporated will be made available to the ITR team during back checking of the comments.

e. **Funding.** A detailed scope of work and cost estimate will be negotiated, between SAJ and the ECO-PCX prior to the review.

f. **Timing and Schedule.** The ITR of the draft report is scheduled for January 25, 2008. The team will be given two weeks time for review and initial comments. It is expected that an additional one week would be required for project team responses and issue resolution, then one week for ITR Team final backchecks, issue resolution, PCX QA and ITR Certification.

4. EPR Plan.

a. **Influential Scientific Information (ISI).** This project is deemed to disseminate ISI because there is significant interagency and stakeholder interest in this project and it meets the cost criteria (high magnitude) for EPR outlined in the EC 1105-2-408. This decision document will not disseminate highly influential scientific information (HISI) as defined in EC 1105-2-408. Additional related EPR assessments follow.

(1) Novel Methods. This decision document does not employ novel methods.

(2) Complex challenges for interpretation. The project does present complex challenges for interpretation because of the methods for conducting trade-offs.

(3) Precedent-setting methods or models. None.

(4) Conclusions of the study are not likely to change prevailing practices.

(5) The project is unlikely to affect policy decisions that have a significant impact.

b. **Project Magnitude.** The magnitude of this project is determined to be high, primarily due to project costs and interagency and stakeholder interests. The first costs of the project are estimated to exceed \$45 million. The project would be implemented over approximately 5 years, from initiation of construction to project close-out. The benefits of the project are relatively large.

c. **Project Risk.** This project is considered low risk overall.

(1) **The potential for failure is low.** Project failure is unlikely to result in risk to human life or health. The project would be constructed in increments, which further reduces project risk. Initial increments would be monitored and lessons-learned would be applied to later increments.

(2) The potential for controversy regarding project implementation is high because of interagency and stakeholder interest.

(3) The uncertainty of predictions and outcomes of the project is low because the methods used for implementation of the project are not novel since the main features are highway modifications with bridges.

(4) The proposed restoration is not irreversible. If needed, water management changes could be implemented to hold water deliveries back and delay their arrival to the ENP.

d. **Coordination with Vertical Team.** The vertical team concurs that this decision document is deemed to disseminate influential scientific information (ISI) because there is significant interagency and stakeholder interest in this project and it meets the cost criteria (high magnitude) for EPR outlined in EC 1105-2-408.

e. **EPR Method.** EPR will be conducted by a panel exterior to the Corps of Engineers, Department of Interior National Park Service (DOI) and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). It is initially envisioned the panel will be composed of 3-6 members. DOI and SFWMD will be offered the opportunity to participate in the EPR process and it is expected that they will offer 1-2 EPR members. The PCX will use contracting instruments to nominate remaining EPR members and manage the EPR process. MVR will manage the EPR contract. The contracted organization will accomplish the EPR for the PCX. Contractor management tasks will include identifying, contacting, and selecting reviewers; preparing scopes of work and procuring contracts with reviewers; compiling review comments, compiling SAJ response to comments and compiling comments and responses into an EPR Report. MVR will follow EC-1105-2-408 in managing the EPR contract.

f. **Proposed ERP Panel Disciplines and Descriptions.**

(1) **Cost Engineering/Construction Management Panel Member.** The Cost Engineering/Construction Management Panel Member should be an Engineer from academia, a department of transportation, a road and bridge related public agency or an Architect-Engineer or Consulting Firm with a minimum 10 years demonstrated

experience in performing cost engineering/construction management for all phases of highway and bridge projects. Active participation in related professional societies is encouraged. Panel member should be familiar with highway and bridge construction industry and practices used in Florida and/or the Southeastern United States. This discipline may require one or two individuals depending upon the availability of individuals with a comprehensive understanding of this discipline.

(2) Planner/Plan Formulation Panel Member. The Planner/Plan Formulation Panel Member should be a professional from academia, a public agency or an Architect-Engineer or Consulting Firm with a minimum 10 years demonstrated experience in evaluating and conducting complex multi-objective public works projects with competing trade-offs. Experience should encompass corridor projects with high public and interagency interests and the corridors are either through or have nearby project impacted sensitive habitats.

(3) Ecological Evaluations Panel Member. The Ecological Evaluations Panel Member should be a scientist from academia, public agency, non-governmental entity, or an Architect-Engineer or Consulting Firm with a minimum 10 years demonstrated experience in evaluating and conducting ecological evaluations for complex multi-objective public works projects with competing trade-offs. Experience should encompass corridor projects with high public and interagency interests and the corridors are either through or have nearby project impacted sensitive habitats.

(4) Hydraulic Engineer Panel Member. Member should be from academia, a department of transportation, a road and bridge related public agency or an Architect-Engineer or Consulting Firm with a minimum 10 years demonstrated experience in hydraulic engineering associated with highway and bridge projects. Active participation in related professional societies is encouraged.

(5) DOI Panel Member Nomination (Reserved)

(6) SFWMD Panel Member Nomination (Reserved)

g. **EPR Charges.** The PDT, DOI and SFWMD should be afforded the opportunity to draft charges for the EPR. There is significant interagency and stakeholder interest in the Tamiami Trail Modifications.

h. **Schedule and Cost.** The EPR will be conducted during early 2007. It is envisioned that each reviewer will be afforded 40 hours review plus 20 hours for coordination. Following is the draft schedule for the EPR:

PCX prepares and submits EPR Plan to Jacksonville District	Jan 2008
Jacksonville District MIPRs EPR funding to PCX	Jan 2008
PCX established contract	Jan 2008
Contracted EPR start date	25 Jan 2008
Draft EPR Report from Contractor to PCX	21 Mar 2008

PCX delivers EPR Report to Jacksonville District	26 Mar 2008
SAJ provides responses to comments	04 Apr 2008
Peer reviewers offered opportunity to respond to SAJ responses	18 Apr 2008
Final issue resolution	25 Apr 2008
MVR/Contactor finalize peer review report and provide to ECO-PCX for transmittal	25 Apr 2008
ECO-PCX transmits EPR report to Jacksonville District	30 Apr 2008
SAJ append final peer review report to the LRR	05 May 2008

5. Model Certification

a. **EN Model**---The engineering model that was used for all the previous documentation for the Tamiami Trail project is the RMA-2 model. While this model is being used in the planning process and has historically been used for the various past reports on Tamiami Trail, the graphical output of GIS mapping based on the output of this model. Also, for the LRR effort, the PDT used a spreadsheet analysis based on past RMA-2 work coupled with empirical gage information in the same model domain to compare various LRR alternatives.

b. **Planning Model**—The planning “model”, or methodology employed to evaluate, compare and select plans consists of assigning values to a variety of performance measures and combined for each alternative, then assigned a habitat unit value score. Full details of the methodology will be provided to the ECO-PCX for review and certification/approval. PCX model review is currently projected for 14 January through 22 February, 2008, or 6 weeks duration: 4 weeks for initial review comments, one week for SAJ responses, and one week for PCX final report and final issue resolution.

6. Public and Agency Review.

a. Public review of the LRR is schedule for March 2008. Public comments received during review of the draft report and EIS, and at any public meetings held during the planning process are included in the Final Report. They will not be available during the ITR and EPR review periods.

b. Public review of the LRR will begin after the completion of the ITR process and policy guidance memo, and following a successful Civil Works Review Board. The period will last 30 days as required by law.

c. The public review of necessary State or Federal permits will also take place during this period.

d. Upon completion of the review period, comments will be consolidated in a matrix and addressed, if needed. A comment resolution meeting will take place if needed to decide upon the best resolution of comments. A summary of the comments and resolutions will be included in the document.

7. PCX coordination. The appropriate PCX for this document is the National Ecosystem Planning Center of Expertise (ECO-PCX) located at MVD. This review plan will be submitted through the PDT District (SAJ) Planning Chief, to the ECO-PCX Director, and PCX Deputies for approval. The PCX assigned a manager from MVR to manage the External Peer Review and Model Assessment. MVR will conduct QA/QC on the ITR. The approved review plan will be posted by SAD and a link posted on the ECO-PCX website.

8. Summary and Consolidated Schedule.

The Jacksonville District and the ECO-PCX will accomplish planning model certification, independent technical review, and external peer review in accordance with this peer review plan. Follow-on detailed scopes of work will be prepared to accomplish these tasks. The following is a consolidated schedule of activities:

PCX planning model review/approval/certification	14 Jan-22 Feb 2008
ITR of Draft LRR	25 Jan-22 Feb 2008
EPR of Draft LRR	25 Jan-30 Apr 2008
Public Review of Draft LRR	26 Feb-30 Apr 2008
Final report submitted to MSC	6 May 2008