

FACT SHEET
CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN FLORIDA PROJECT
Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan
Overview

Construction General (C)

Congressional Districts: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27

1. DESCRIPTION

Section 601 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2000 approved the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP or the Plan) as a framework for the restoration, preservation, and protection of the south Florida natural system, while also providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection. The CERP consists of 68 components grouped into 55 projects with a total estimated cost of \$7.8 billion (1999 price levels). The central goal of the CERP is “getting the water right” in terms of quality, quantity, timing and distribution. The CERP is expected to contribute to restoring the ecological functioning of more than 2.4 million acres of the south Florida ecosystem, while improving regional water quality conditions, providing urban and agricultural water supplies, and maintaining existing levels of flood protection.

The CERP (including operations and maintenance activities) is cost-shared 50-50 with non-federal sponsors. The primary non-federal sponsor is the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). Implementation of the CERP will occur over approximately 40 years. Detailed planning and design studies are submitted in required Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) and other decision documents for Congressional review and authorization.

Implementation of the CERP is a highly complex undertaking due to the large number of technical, environmental, legal and policy requirements to be addressed, as well as the technological and scientific uncertainties inherent in an ecosystem restoration program of this magnitude. Under the oversight of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, over 30 federal, State, local and tribal governmental agencies actively cooperate to implement the CERP. Effective interagency communication, coordination, and collaboration at multiple working levels is essential but remains challenging, given varied agency mission goals, objectives, and policies.

The WRDA of 2007 authorized the following CERP projects: Indian River Lagoon South, Picayune Strand, and Site 1 Impoundment. In addition, new authorized project costs were provided for the Hillsboro and Lake Okeechobee Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) and the Caloosahatchee ASR pilot projects, and a provision was included establishing Section 902 limits for the Programmatic Authority projects.

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four CERP projects for construction: (1) Caloosahatchee River (C-43) West Basin Storage Reservoir; (2) Canal 111 (C-111) Spreader Canal Western; (3) Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Phase 1; and (4) Broward County Water Preserve Areas.

2. **FUNDING**

Estimated Total Authorized Cost	\$10,360,254,000
Estimated Federal Cost	5,034,558,000
Allocation thru FY14	893,485,000
Carry In for FY15	1,532,456
Allocation for FY15	61,001,000
President's Budget FY16	86,115,000

3. **SPONSORS**

South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
2600 Blair Stone Road, MS 3570
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Lee County Board of Commissioners
Post Office Box 398
Ft. Myers, FL 33902-0398

Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department
Post Office Box 16097
West Palm Beach, FL 33416-6097

4. **STATUS**

Program Management: Primary program management tasks include managing and providing direction to program and Project Delivery Teams (PDTs); budgeting, cash flow management and updating program costs, and review of requests for cost-shared credit; preparation of program reports to Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, and to the public; managing and preserving program data, including electronic publication and storage of program information; implementation of the CERP Programmatic Regulations; system-wide coordination efforts of Restoration Coordination and Verification (RECOVER) teams, including adaptive assessment and monitoring activities; outreach activities; Environmental and Economic Equity activities; and operation of an Interagency Modeling Center (IMC).

The FY15 workplan includes: Continued operation of the interagency modeling center, regional modeling to support the CERP Program, and RECOVER, continued program management activities, including updating program and project cost and budget information, continued data management, and collaboration applications, and maintenance of updated program and project schedules.

PROJECTS:

FY 2015 work plans include:

Indian River Lagoon South Project: The plan includes about 170,000 acre-feet (ac-ft) of new water storage in reservoirs (C-44 Reservoir, C-23/24 North/South Reservoirs and C-25 Reservoir) and storm water treatment areas (STAs; C-44 West/East, C-23, C-24, and C-25), additional water storage on about 92,000 acres of natural storage areas (Allapattah, Palmar, and Cypress Creek), removal of 7,900,000 cubic yards of muck from the St. Lucie River and Estuary, and construction of artificial oyster habitat in the lagoon.

The first of three contracts for the construction of the C-44 Reservoir and STA (RSTA) component of the Indian River Lagoon South project was awarded in July 2011 and was completed in 2014. Plans & specifications conversion for the project reservoir construction contract is complete, and the construction contract award is expected in June 2015. The non-federal sponsor has contracted the plans and specifications for the Stormwater Treatment Area and Pump Station which are scheduled for award in Fiscal Year 2015. Detailed design for plans and specifications (P&S) for C-23/24 STA are currently on hold until completion of the C-44 RSTA component.

Picayune Strand Restoration Project: The purpose of this project is to restore and enhance the wetlands back to pre development hydrology in a failed housing development, formerly called Southern Golden Gates Estates, of Picayune Strand. The project includes a combination of pump stations, spreader basins, canal plugs, and road removal. The first two pump stations Merritt and Faka Union Canal were awarded in FY2010 and FY 2011. Construction of the Merritt Pump Station was completed in 2014. Construction of the Faka Union Pump Station is scheduled for completion at the end of Fiscal Year 2015. The Miller Pump Station Contract was awarded in September 2013 and is expected to be physically complete in 2017. Analysis of the affects to the water levels of the adjacent private lands is complete, and features required to maintain current levels of flood protection will be constructed in 2016. A warm water manatee refugium is located south of the Port of the Islands area. The refugium will be affected by the project. A mitigation project is under design and will be constructed by South Florida Water Management District in 2015. Recent cost estimates have projected that the project will exceed the 902 limit. The project team developed a Limited Re-evaluation Report to request a post authorization cost increase. The Report will be submitted to congress in summer 2015.

Site 1 Impoundment Project: The purpose of this project is to supplement water deliveries to the Hillsboro Canal by capturing and storing excess water currently discharged to the Atlantic Intra-coastal Waterway. The 1,660 acre impoundment will store up to 13,280 acre-feet of water. The first construction contract for phase 1 of the project was awarded in October 2010 and terminated in July 2012 with approximately 20 percent of the work completed. A new contract was awarded to Munilla Construction Management d/b/a MCM in January 2013. Completion of this contract is scheduled for FY 2015. Phase 2 of the project is on hold and will require Congressional authorization for a new total project cost.

Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP): The Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) was selected to be formulated as part of the US Army Corps of Engineers National Pilot Program for Feasibility Studies. The pilot initiative for the project will provide an opportunity to test principles that have been outlined in the USACE *Recommendations for Transforming the Current Pre-Authorization Study Process (January 2011)* and associated presentation materials. The purpose of CEPP is to improve the quantity, quality, timing and distribution of water flows to the central Everglades (WCA 3 and ENP). The Final PIR/EIS and Chief of Engineers Report were completed in December 2014. The report is undergoing Administration review and will be transmitted to Congress in Fiscal Year 2015.

C-43 (Caloosahatchee) West Basin Storage Reservoir Project The project is currently awaiting congressional authorization. The recommended plan consists of a 170,000 ac-ft reservoir located at the Berry Grove site in Hendry County, Florida. The Final PIR and Integrated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) were completed September 2007. Local sponsor concerns regarding land valuation and crediting policy for this and other Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan projects delayed completion of a Chief's Report. The land valuation issue was resolved, and a revised Chief's Report was provided to Headquarters for review. The addendum updates all project costs to fiscal year 2010 price levels. The addendum was sent to South Atlantic Division and Headquarters USACE in November 2009. The Chief's report was signed in March 2010 and the ASA (CW) has completed their review. The Record of Decision (ROD) was signed April 13, 2010. The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized the project for construction.

Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project: The project is currently awaiting congressional authorization. The project includes two reservoirs and a seepage management feature in Broward County, Florida. The final PIR was modified to reflect current CERP land valuation guidance and policy updates required. The Chief's Report was signed on May 21, 2012. The Record of Decision was signed and transmitted to Congress on November 2, 2012. The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized the project for construction.

Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project: The project is currently awaiting congressional authorization. The Chief's Report was signed in May 2012 and the Record of Decision (ROD) was signed in September 2012. Portions of this project are

included in South Florida Water Management District's (SFWMD's) Expedited Construction Plan. The SFWMD's Expedited Construction Plan includes the Deering Estates, Cutler Wetlands, and L-31E Flow/North Canal Flowway. The Deering Estate features include spreader canal, plugging of ditches, additional culverts, and weirs that were completed February 2012. Construction of the Cutler Wetland features include 3 pump stations, a 6,000-ft levee, spreader canal, plugging of mosquito ditches, and 3 culverts are currently on hold due to funding (design is complete). The SFWMD portion of L-31E Flowway includes addition of 4 culverts that were completed in June 2010. The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized the project for construction.

C-111 Spreader Canal Project: The project is currently awaiting congressional authorization. The purpose of this project is to modify existing flow of water to more closely resemble that of historical pre-drainage conditions. The proposed modifications will improve deliveries and enhance the connectivity and sheetflow in the Model Lands and Southern Glades areas, reduce wet season flows in C-111, and decrease potential flood risk in the lower south Miami-Dade County area. The Project Implementation Report was completed in early FY 2010, The Chief's Report was signed in January 2012 and the Record of Decision (ROD) was signed in July 2012. The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized the project for construction.

This project is one of the South Florida Water Management District's Expedited Construction Projects (formerly known as Acceler8). The SFWMD broke ground on construction of the recommended plan in January 2010 and completed construction in November 2011. In FY 2009 the Project Delivery Team (PDT) implemented a design test. The design test went into operation in FY 2010 and was completed in FY 2011. The design test yielded data which will help answer decision critical uncertainties regarding how a full size spreader canal would work, where it could be located, and what potential impacts it could have.

Melaleuca Eradication and Other Exotic Plants: This project involves implementing strategies for using biological controls to eradicate or control the spread of undesirable exotic vegetation in south Florida. Final Plans and Specs were completed July 2011 and notification to begin construction of the annex rearing facility was issued August 2011. The project was transferred to the non-Federal sponsor in December 2013 and the project has moved into the operation and maintenance phase.

Water Conservation Area-3 Decompartmentalization and Sheetflow Enhancement Project: The purpose of this project is to restore sheetflow and reduce unnatural discontinuities in the Everglades landscape. The Decomp project includes the modification or removal of levees, canals, and water control structures in WCA 3A located in western Broward County. The team has documented ALL work completed to date for PIR 1. The work completed in the PIR study will be incorporated into the Central Everglades Pilot Program (CEPP). A contract for the DPM was awarded in May

2012. Installation of the Physical Model began in May 2012 and was completed in November 2013. The DPM was successfully operated Nov-Dec 2013 and Nov-Dec 2014. Information gained will be used to guide future restoration efforts.

Southwest Florida Feasibility Study: A Feasibility Cost-Sharing Agreement amendment was approved in FY 2008 increasing the total estimated study cost to \$17,000,000, with a total federal cost of \$8,500,000. The study involves development of a watershed ecosystem restoration plan for portions of Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, Glades, and Monroe counties of Florida. In 2009, the PDT completed the draft Integrated Southwest Florida Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement. Following review of the initial SWFFS Draft Report at the USACE District and Headquarters levels, the Southwest Florida Feasibility Study was returned to the Jacksonville District office with direction to reformat and package as a Comprehensive Watershed Plan. The PDT has worked to repackage the deliverables in a new draft, while keeping historic documentation from the original feasibility study (to include the Conceptual modeling of alternatives, development of Rough Order of Magnitude construction and real estate costs for alternative analysis, and selection of the tentatively selected plan). Completion of the Southwest Florida Comprehensive Watershed Plan and its release to the public is scheduled for FY 2015.

Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration Project: The project includes approximately 753 square miles located in central and northern Palm Beach County. The primary objective of the project is to improve the quantity, quality, timing, and distribution of flows to the Loxahatchee Slough, River and Estuary and the Lake Worth Lagoon. An update to the Project Management Plan (PMP) was completed in FY 2012. This project was put on hold per the request of the non-Fed sponsor. The planning effort was restarted FY2014, and the project will follow the new guidelines for the SMART planning process to complete a feasibility level study and Chief's Report in 36 months. The project will require re-scoping as key storage feature previously identified as part of the project, the L-8 reservoir, is no longer part of the project. The non-Fed sponsor is utilizing the reservoir for other uses. Under the previous planning process, the Project Implementation Report (PIR) work completed through FY 2011, included limited geotechnical field investigations, completion of a Feasibility Scoping Meeting Document (2004), initiation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) efforts, hydrologic modeling and plan formulation activities through the formulation of alternatives, and a proposal tentatively selected plan in June 2010.

Hillsboro AND Lake Okeechobee Aquifer Storage and Recovery Pilot Projects: ASR is a water management technology in which excess surface water is captured during high wet season flows, stored in subsurface permeable zones, then recovered for distribution into the greater Everglades ecosystem. The Pilot Project Design Report (PPDR) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Record of Decision (ROD) were approved in October 2005. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) completed the plans and specifications (P&S) for the Lake Okeechobee sites at Port Mayaca and Kissimmee River in 2007 and 2008, respectively. Construction of the Kissimmee River and Hillsboro Canal ASR systems

were completed in 2008 and four operational tests were conducted for the next four years prior to transferring the facility to the non-federal sponsor in 2013. The operational tests of the Lake Okeechobee ASR facility assessed the local hydrogeological properties of the Hawthorn confining unit and Floridan aquifers and evaluated recovered water treatment requirements. The Lake Okeechobee Pilot Project Technical Data Report (TDR) summarized the testing of aquifer storage and recovery systems and incorporated findings from both the Hillsboro Canal ASR pilot and the Lake Okeechobee pilot project sites. This TDR was certified complete in January 2014. Data and conclusions from the ASR pilot project will be utilized by the ASR Regional Study Team to address uncertainties about regional ASR implementation.

Aquifer Storage and Recovery Regional Study: The purpose of this study is to evaluate the feasibility and potential impacts of CERP ASR features on the regional aquifer system and to identify incremental implementation options for CERP ASR projects. Several scientific and engineering studies are complete and a non-decisional, interim report for the public was published in 2009. The report was completed with participation from multi-agency, multi-disciplinary state and Federal team members.

The Draft Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Regional Study Technical Data Report (TDR) is currently under external peer review by the National Research Council and is expected to be complete in 2015. The Draft TDR was developed with multi-agency, multi-disciplinary state and Federal team participation in 2014. Two types of regional-scale groundwater flow models were calibrated in FY 2009. Regional-scale pumping scenarios were simulated using these flow models in FY 2010. Ecotoxicology studies were conducted at both ASR pilot sites during FY 2009 and FY 2010. Water-quality changes during ASR testing and effects of recovered water on surface water impoundments as well as other technical studies to assess uncertainties in regional-scale implementation of ASR are included in the Draft ASR Regional Study TDR. Findings from the Lake Okeechobee ASR Pilot Project TDR and various hydrogeological, geophysical and geotechnical studies including those that determine the potential for rock fracturing related to pressures during aquifer recharge, microbiological investigations, groundwater modeling, and an ecological risk assessment, are also included in the Draft ASR Regional Study TDR. Additionally, the report includes a response to the questions and concerns identified by the CROGEE and the 1999 ASR Issue Team.