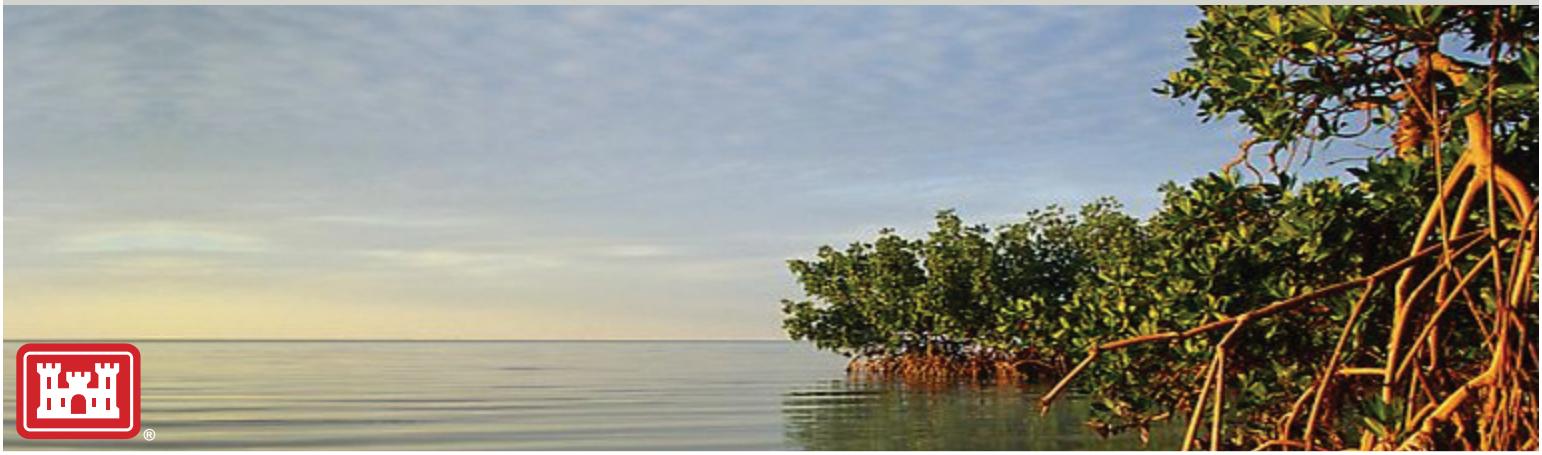
BISCAYNE BAY | Coastal Wetlands Project

FACTS & INFORMATION



MARCH 2016

The Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project is a component of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). The project goal is to improve the ecology of Biscayne Bay, including the freshwater wetlands, tidal creeks and near-shore habitat. This will be accomplished by adjusting the quantity, quality, timing and distribution of freshwater entering the bay and Biscayne National Park.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The intent of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project is to rehydrate coastal wetlands and reduce freshwater point source discharges to Biscayne Bay. In addition, the project will replace lost overland flow and partially compensate for the reduction in groundwater seepage by redistributing available surface water entering the area from regional canals through a spreader canal system.

The proposed redistribution of freshwater flow across a wide area is expected to restore or enhance freshwater wetlands, tidal wetlands and nearshore bay habitat. Sustained lower-than-seawater salinities are required in tidal wetlands and the nearshore bay to provide nursery habitat for fish and shellfish. The project is expected to create conditions that will be conducive to the reestablishment of oysters and other components of the oyster reef community. Diversion of concentrated freshwater canal discharges, so that they are distributed slowly across a wide area of coastal wetlands, is expected to reestablish productive nursery habitat along the shoreline. It will also reduce the abrupt freshwater discharges that are physiologically stressful to fish and benthic invertebrates in the bay near canal outlets.

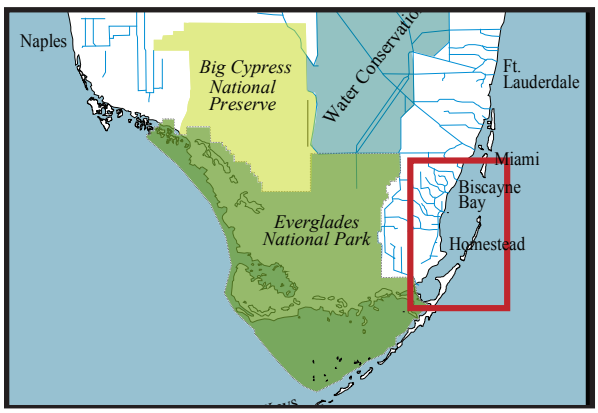
PROJECT STATUS

On June 10, 2014, the project received congressional authorization in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014. Congressional authorization now makes the project eligible for funding during the appropriations process.

In advance of congressional authorization, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) expedited construction of Phase 1 of the project. The SFWMD completed construction of the Deering Estate Flow-way and portions of the L-31E Flow-way in fall 2012 and is operating these components of the project. The SFWMD is scheduled to complete the Cutler Wetlands features in 2020. The Corps is currently designing the remaining L-31E Flow-way components.

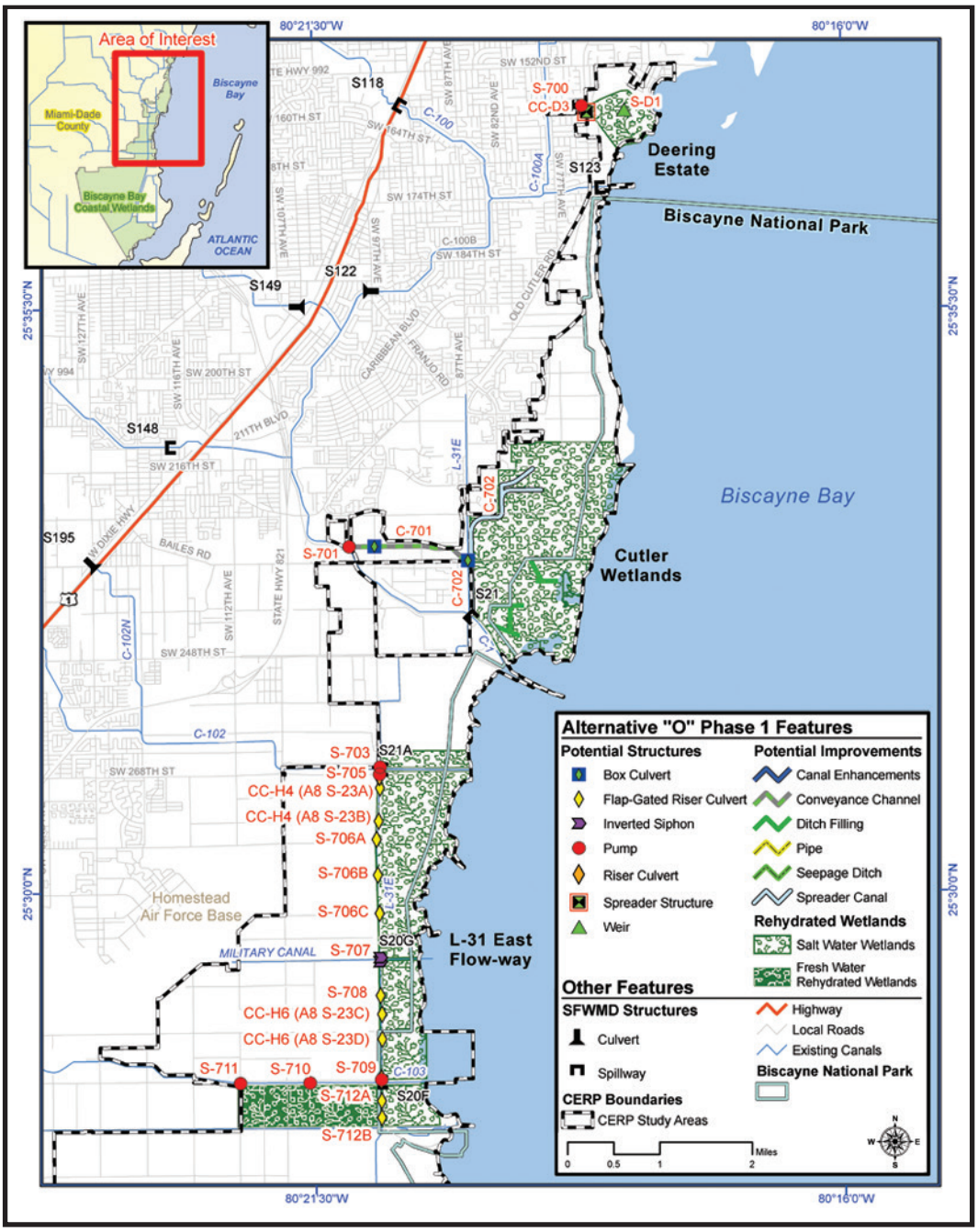
PROJECT LOCATION

The project is located along the lower east coast of Florida in Miami-Dade County. The project area is divided into three geographic sub-regions: Deering Estate, Cutler Wetlands and L-31E Flow-way.



AUTHORIZED PROJECT: PHASE ONE

Phase One of the project incorporates most of the Deering Estate features, including a 100 cubic feet per second (cfs) pump, spreader canal, culverts, and canal improvements. The Cutler Wetlands features include a 400 cfs pump, culverts, a canal and restoration of the Lennar Flow-way. The L-31E Flow-way/North Canal Flow-way features include pumps, a spreader canal and several culvert structures to manage flow between the C-102 Canal, the L-31E Canal, Military Canal, the C-103 Canal and the nearby restoration areas. No construction activities are recommended in the first phase for the Barnes Sound area.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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