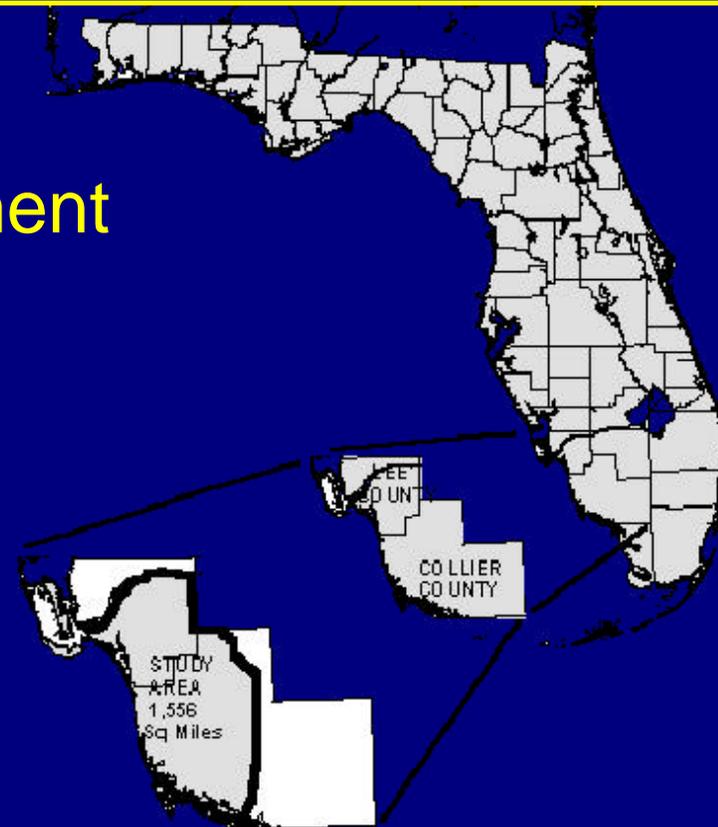


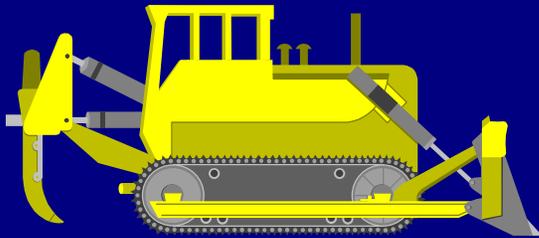


**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Jacksonville District

**Environmental Impact Statement
(EIS)
for Improving the
Regulatory Process in
Southwest Florida.**

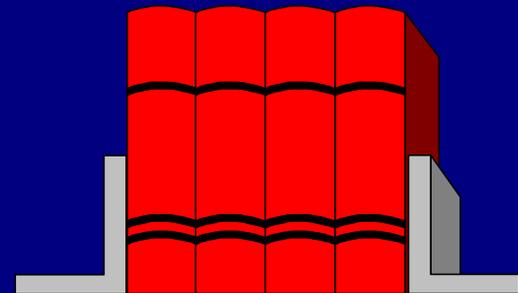


EIS to support future Corps decisions whether or not to issue Department of the Army Permits.



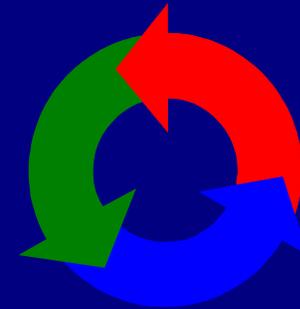
Application must be submitted and Permit issued prior to placement of fill in wetlands or other Waters of U.S.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act applies, as well as the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, and others.



Corps' authority is independent of Florida's Comprehensive Planning process.

Existing Comprehensive Plans make reference and defer to State and Federal wetland permitting.



Corps is independently seeking views of public through EIS process.

Comprehensive Plans designate land use. The Corps does not.



Landowners are free to submit applications requesting a permit to fill wetlands for any use.

Corps has received and must accept applications for uses contrary to Comprehensive Plans.



Corps' decision based on an evaluation and weighing of the effects of the project

Balance of impacts and benefits of many
“Public Interest Factors”.



Each decision must also consider and evaluate alternatives to the proposed project to permit the least damaging practicable alternative.



EIS initiated out of concern the Corps' incremental (permit-by-permit) review may not be adequately addressing the cumulative (total) effects

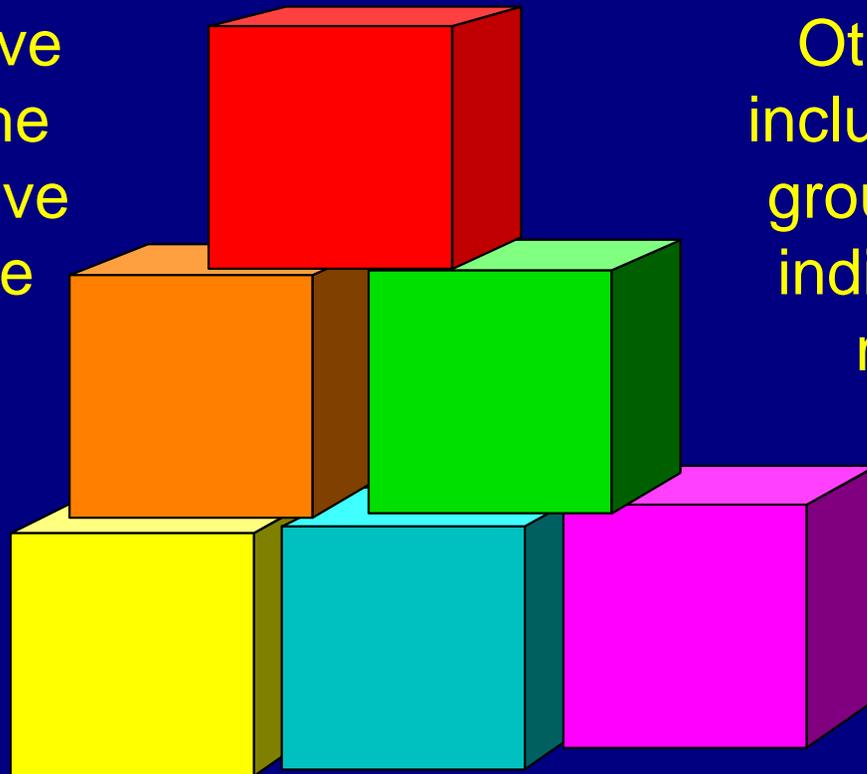
To identify the total effects, the Corps must predict the total set of applications that will be submitted.



Corps asked a group of local citizens and agency representatives (“Alternatives Development Group (ADG)”) to create and evaluate several predictions (“alternatives”).

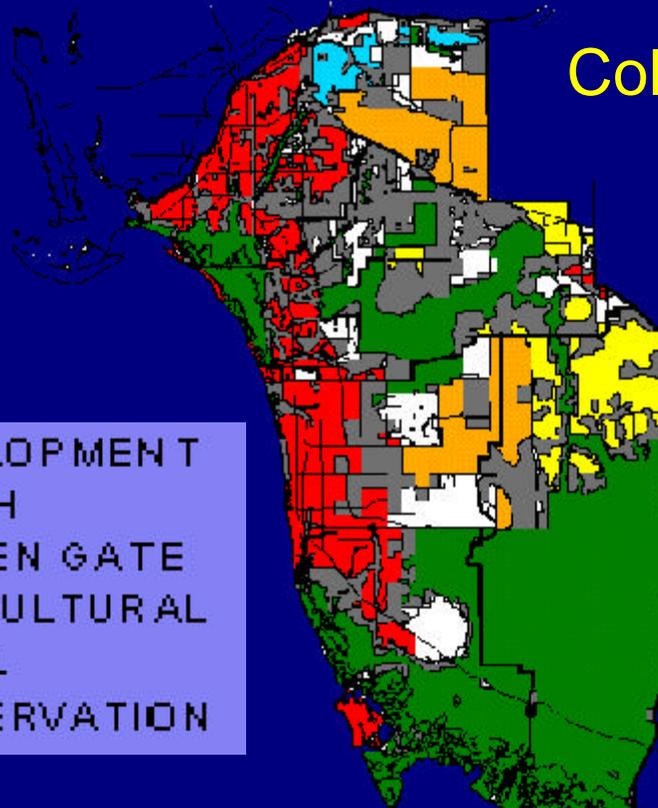
Different maps of future land cover types prepared to provide alternative sets of potential applications and associated effects to be evaluated

One alternative represents the Comprehensive Plans for Lee and Collier Counties.



Other alternatives include ideas that the group collectively or individually thought might occur or would like to see occur.

Overlay of ADG Alternatives shows shared vision of future land cover types for large portion of area



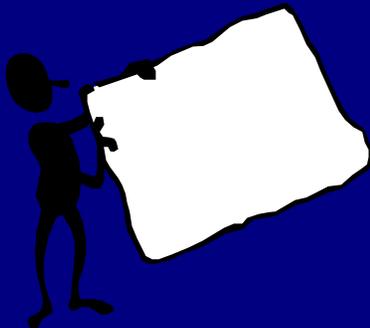
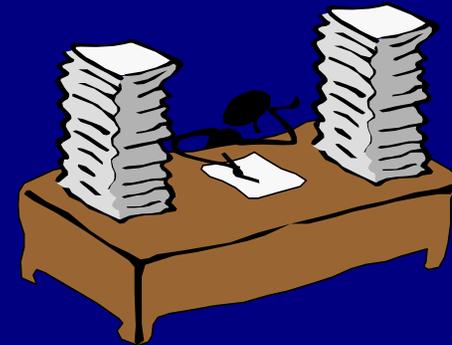
Colored areas: where permitting could be expedited.

Gray areas: where some ADG alternatives envisioned preserve but others expect non-preserve uses.

White areas: where multiple visions presented. Expect challenging permitting.

The EIS will present these alternatives and the evaluations of the effects.

EIS Information will be used to evaluate potential incremental impact of future permit applications.



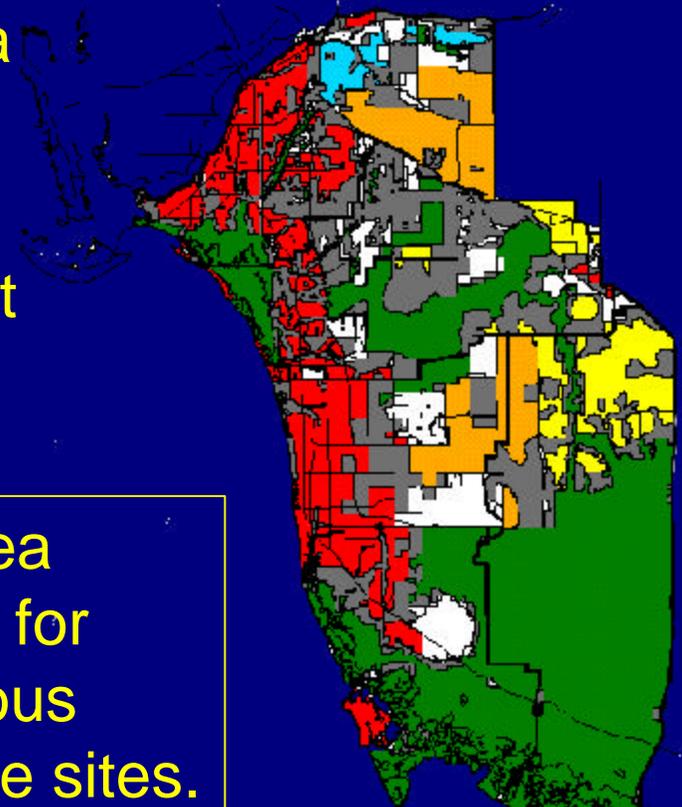
EIS will present draft review criteria (list of questions) that, if adopted (based on comments to EIS), will be used in review of applications.

Criteria keyed to the land cover type on the map.
Review depends on location of project.

Corps is developing / selecting criteria
from those presented by the ADG

Corps will “color in” the gray and
white areas. This is NOT saying what
the Corps will permit, but IS saying
which questions will be asked.

Example: applications in red area
requesting permits to fill wetlands for
housing would receive less rigorous
questioning of availability of alternative sites.



Use of criteria will improve Corps' assessment of cumulative effects in three ways.

1. Increased certainty for applicant.

Know which issues are important to the Corps.



Understand what to expect in application review.

Use for site selection and project design.

Use of criteria will improve Corps' assessment of cumulative effects in three ways.

1. Increased certainty for applicant.
2. Efficient review of permit applications.



Prioritize staff time depending on nature of application (location and impacts).

Increased familiarity with the issues.

Opportunity to link with parallel provisions in Comprehensive Plans and State permitting.

Use of criteria will improve Corps' assessment of cumulative effects in three ways.

1. Increased certainty for applicant.
2. Efficient review of permit applications.
3. Effective resolution of natural resource concerns.



Mitigation (avoidance, minimization, and compensation) that makes sense to region.

Attention focused on “most important”.

Application reviews related to other non-regulatory efforts..



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Jacksonville District

Thank You for Your Support