

WESTERN EVERGLADES RESTORATION PROJECT

INTEGRATED FEASIBILITY STUDY
& ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
SCOPING MEETING

August 16, 2016

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U.S. ARMY



US Army Corps of Engineers
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MEETING AGENDA

WESTERN EVERGLADES RESTORATION PROJECT

- Welcome and Introductions
- Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Overview
- Western Everglades Restoration Project
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Project Planning Process
- Public Comment

Special thanks to the Southwest Florida Conservancy
& the Big Cypress National Preserve for the use of their images.



MEETING PURPOSE

WESTERN EVERGLADES RESTORATION PROJECT

To involve the public in an inclusive, dynamic process designed to ensure an economically, ecologically and socially justified design for improvements to the western Everglades ecosystem



SOUTH FLORIDA ECOSYSTEM PROJECT OVERVIEW

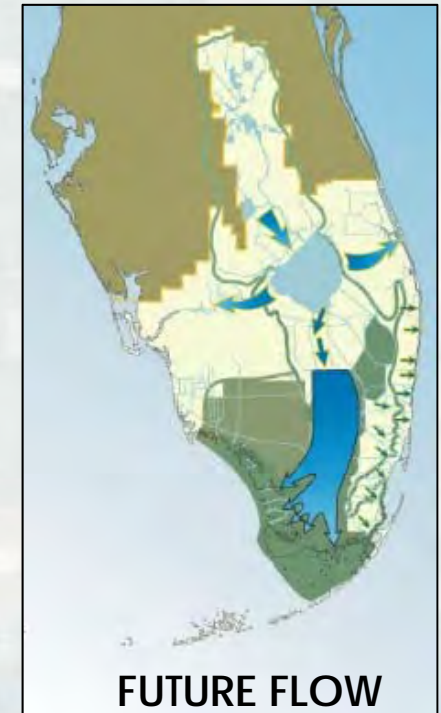
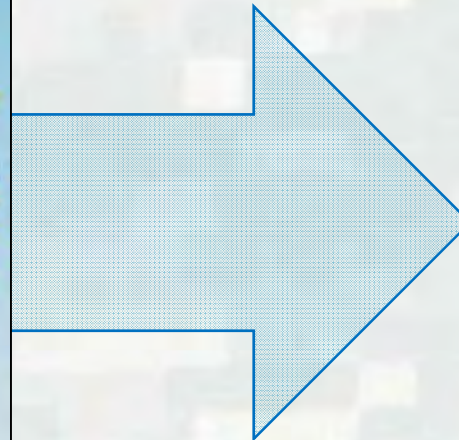
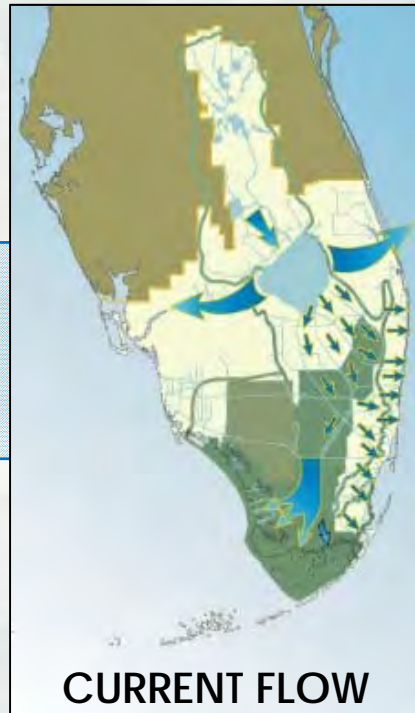
Presenter:

Matt Morrison, Federal Policy Chief,
Everglades Policy & Coordination Chief
South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)



SYSTEM-WIDE PERSPECTIVE

Increased Operational Flexibility = Relief to Estuaries and Restoration of Flows to Everglades



COMPREHENSIVE EVERGLADES RESTORATION PLAN

- Includes 68 components to be implemented over 30+ years
- Features include:



Aquifer Storage & Recovery



Surface Water Storage Reservoirs



STAs for Water Quality



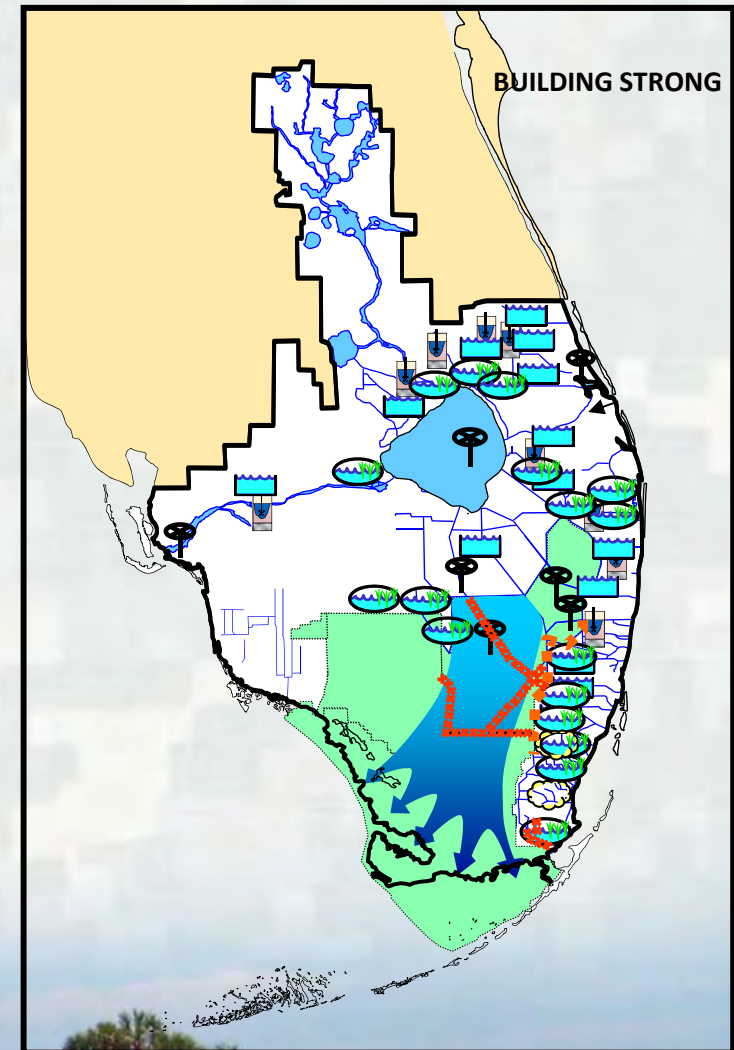
Seepage Management



Removing Barriers to Flow



Revised Operations



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SOUTH FLORIDA ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION



What's
next?

Pre-CERP Foundation Projects

- Kissimmee River Restoration
 - Modified Water Deliveries
 - C-111 South Dade
- } Significant Progress/
Nearing Completion

1st Generation CERP

- Melaleuca Eradication Facility Completed
- IRL-South Under Construction
- Picayune Strand Design

2nd Generation CERP

- C-43 Reservoir
 - Broward County WPA
 - C-111 Spreader Canal Western Features
 - Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands
- } Under Construction
- Operational
- Partially Constructed
& Operational

Completed and Active Planning Studies

- Central Everglades Planning Project Authorization Pending
- Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration Planning Underway
- Lake Okeechobee Watershed Project Planning Underway
- Western Everglades Restoration Project Planning Underway



SYNCHRONIZING PRIORITIES INTEGRATED DELIVERY SCHEDULE (IDS)

Project	Yellow Book Code	FISCAL YEAR													
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026		
Lake Okeechobee Watershed, ASR	A, GG		●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	
Big Cypress/L-28 Interceptor (Western Everglades)	CCC		●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	
EAA Storage & ASR/Decomp Ph2	G, GG								●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	
C-111 Spreader Canal Eastern & BBCW Ph2	WW, FFF								●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	●XXXX	

- Developed through a public process
- Based on technical information
- Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS) was completed in November 2015
- Identifies two upcoming CERP planning efforts

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WESTERN EVERGLADES RESTORATION PROJECT OVERVIEW

Presenter:
Kelly Keefe
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

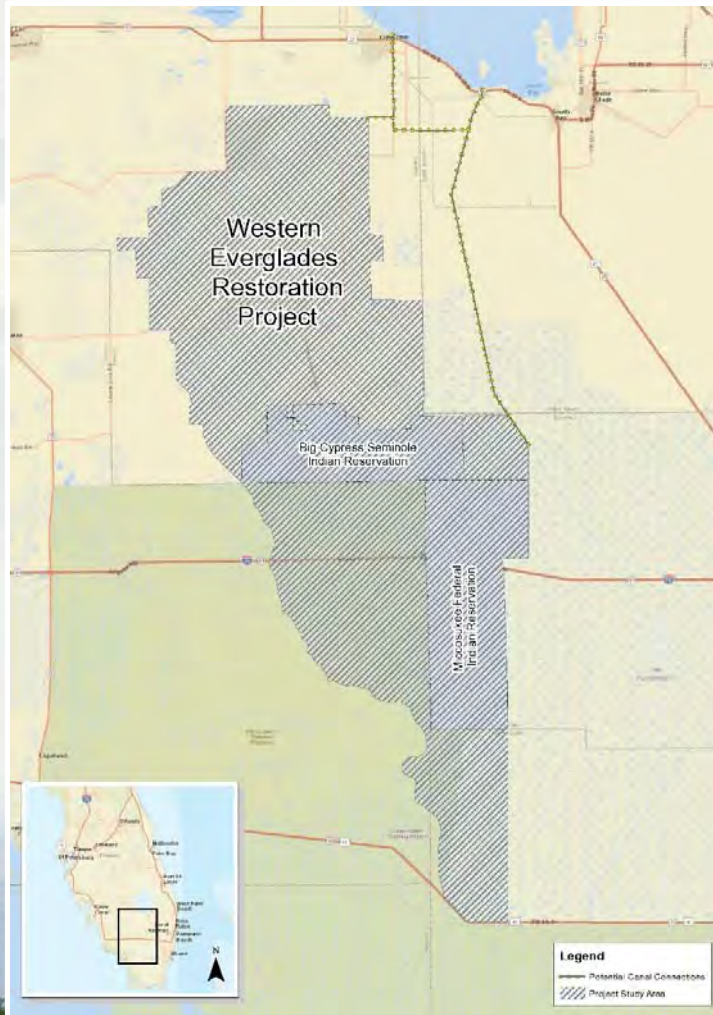
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WESTERN EVERGLADES RESTORATION STUDY PURPOSE



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The purpose of the Western Everglades Restoration Project is to improve the quantity, quality, timing and distribution of water needed to restore and reconnect the western Everglades ecosystem.

**WESTERN EVERGLADES RESTORATION
PROJECT PRELIMINARY STUDY AREA**

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PRELIMINARY PROJECT OBJECTIVES



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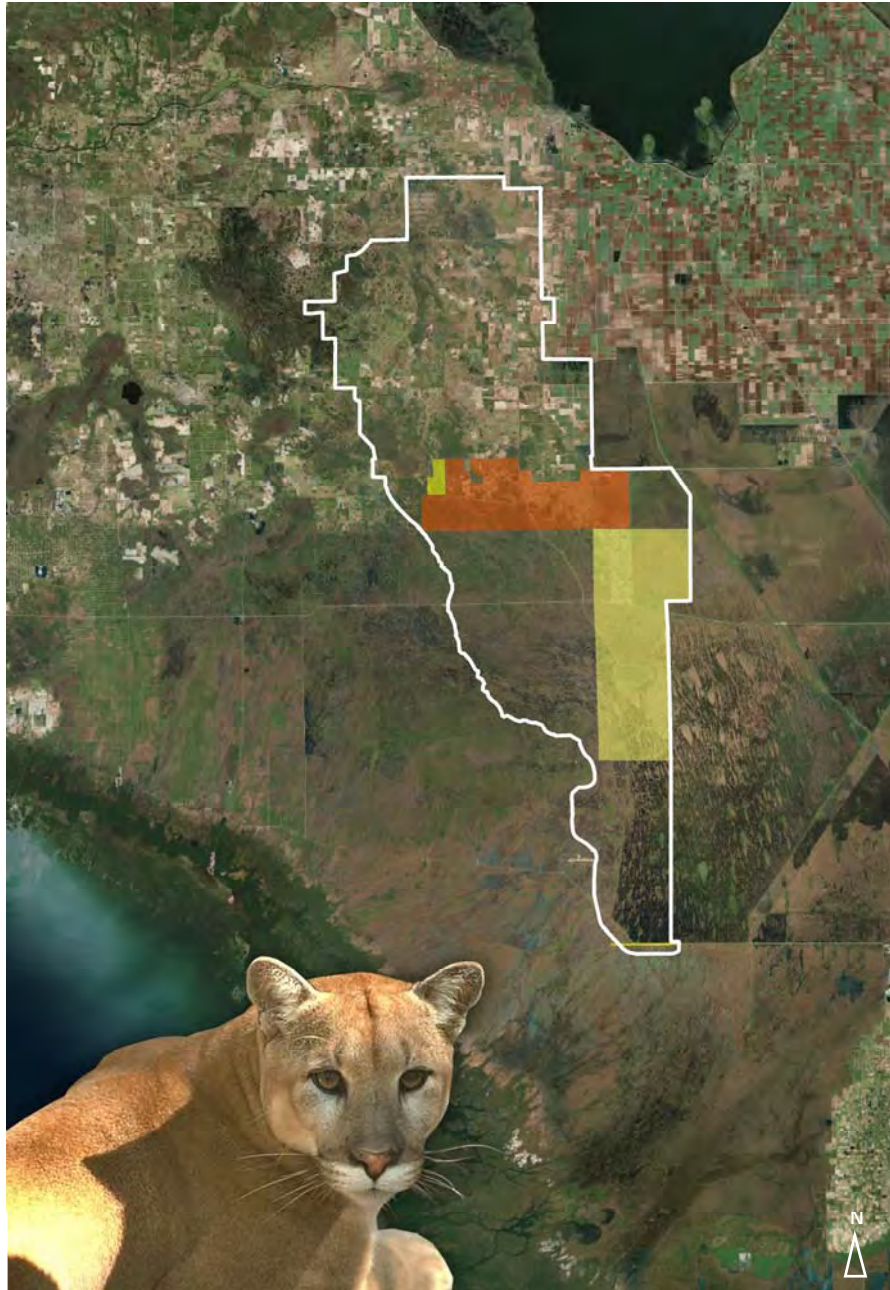
1. Restore and improve seasonal hydroperiods and freshwater distribution to support a natural mosaic of wetland and upland habitat in the western Everglades ecosystem.
2. Reestablish and improve sheetflow patterns, surface water depths, and durations in the study area to reduce soil subsidence and the frequency of damaging peat fires.
3. Reduce water loss out of the natural system to prevent over-drainage and improve ground and surface water elevations.

WESTERN EVERGLADES RESTORATION PROJECT PRELIMINARY STUDY AREA

RESERVATIONS IN PLANNING AREA

- SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA
- MICCOSUKEE TRIBE OF INDIANS OF FLORIDA

- ~589,500 acres (~920 sq. miles)
- Historically dominated by wetlands
- Current land use and land cover include:
 - ▶ Natural Land/ Wetlands
 - ▶ Agriculture
 - ▶ Urban/Infrastructure

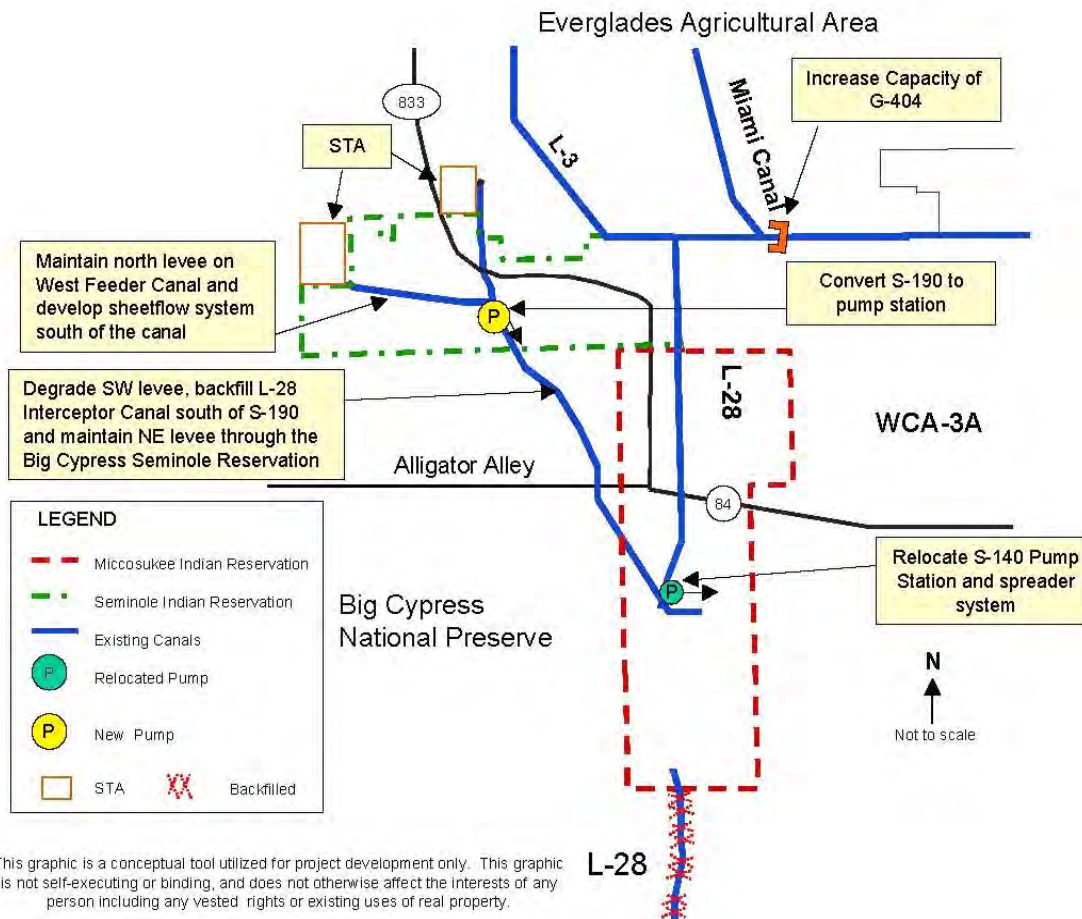




PRELIMINARY OPPORTUNITIES



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This graphic is a conceptual tool utilized for project development only. This graphic is not self-executing or binding, and does not otherwise affect the interests of any person including any vested rights or existing uses of real property.

CONCEPTUAL PAN IN CERP FOR THE BIG CYPRESS/L-28 INTERCEPTOR MODIFICATION PROJECT

- Reconnect and restore fragmented wetlands
- Improve system wide operational flexibility
- Potential ancillary water supply and flood control benefits
- Coordinate with ongoing restoration activities

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NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT AND PLANNING PROCESS

Presenter:

Andrew LoSchiavo,
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

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NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) GOALS



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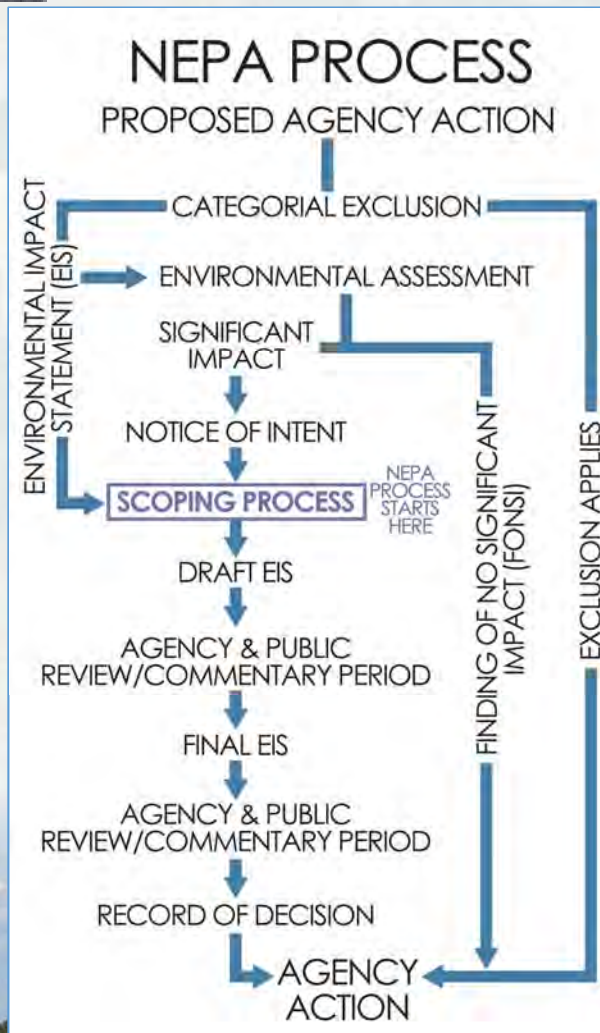
- NEPA is a federal law requiring federal agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a proposed project that are:
 - ▶ Major federal actions that may have a significant affect on the quality of the human environment
- Solicit and consider public views on proposals
- Consult with Tribal, state, and local governments concerning plans
- Provide agencies with a mechanism to coordinate overlapping, jurisdictional responsibilities



NEPA PROCESS & ASSESSMENTS



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- Prepare detailed statements addressing the potential environmental impacts related to a major federal action:
 - Categorical Exclusion (CAT-EX)
 - Environmental Assessment (EA)
 - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)



COMBINED NEPA & PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND PROCESS



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SIX-STEP PLANNING

Step 1: Problems and Opportunities; Goals and Objectives

Step 2: Forecast Existing and Future Conditions

Step 3: Develop Alternatives

Step 4: Evaluate Plans

Step 5: Compare Plans

Step 6: Select Plan

NEPA ASSESSMENT

- Purpose and Need
- Affected Environment, No Action Alternative
- Range of Alternatives
- Environmental Effects
- Conclusions – Consultation and Coordination



WHAT IS NEW IN THE PLANNING PROCESS?



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- 3x3x3 Planning Process: No more than 3 years, 3 million dollars, and efficient/effective coordination among 3 levels of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers governance
- Process and outputs are decision focused, and within the 6-step planning process
- Risk and uncertainty for each decision is acknowledged and appropriate level of details is managed
- Report developed from the beginning of the study, documenting the decisions

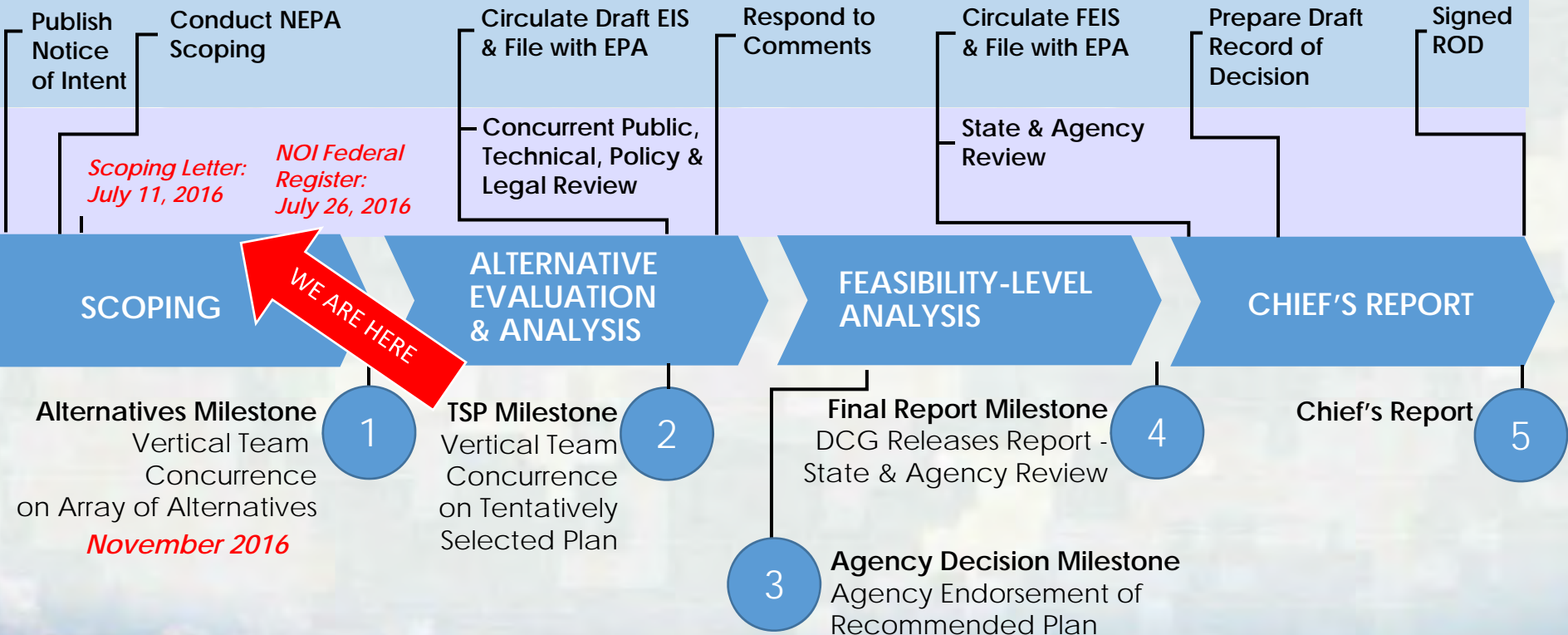


NEPA PROCESS & ESTIMATED PLANNING SCHEDULE



SMART FEASIBILITY STUDY PROCESS

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18-36 MONTHS

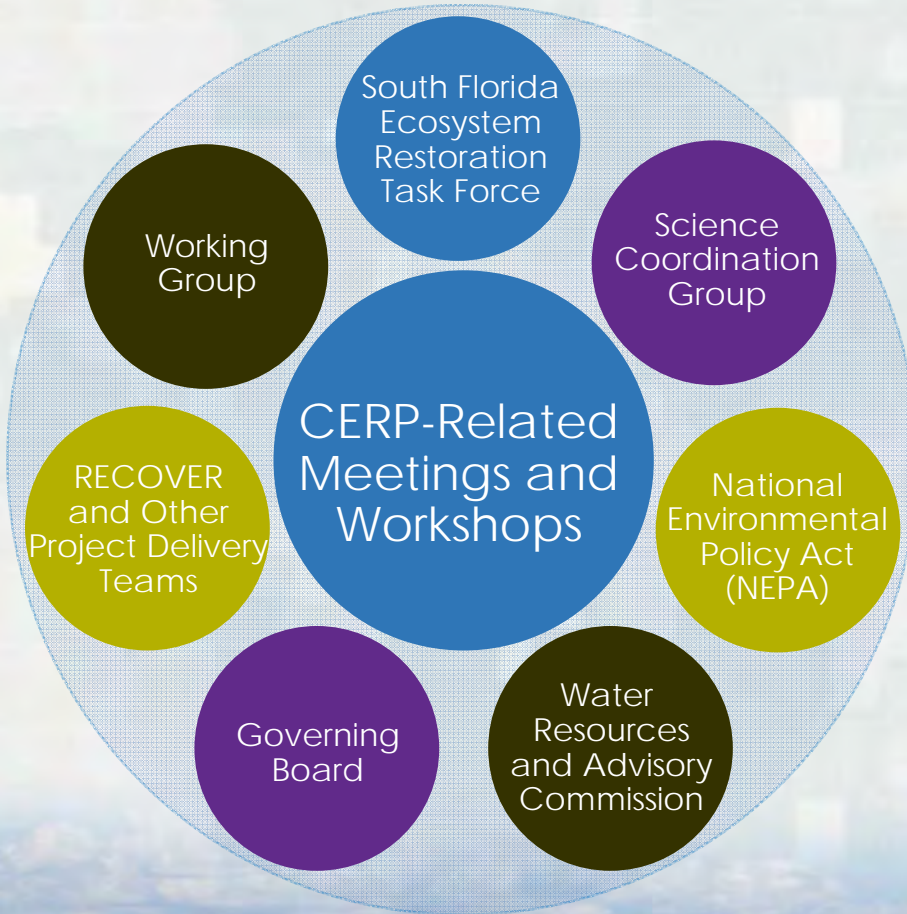




PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS



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- Task Force Hosted Public Engagement August 23rd, 2016 at John Boy Auditorium, Clewiston
- Technical meeting focusing on exchange of information (hydrology, land cover etc.)



ADDITIONAL COMMENT OPPORTUNITIES



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- Public Comment Cards
- Email: Western.Everglades@usace.army.mil
Melissa Nasuti
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 4970
Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019
- Additional Information Available at:
<http://bit.ly/WesternEverglades>
- Scoping comments accepted through August 24, 2016
(extended from August 9)