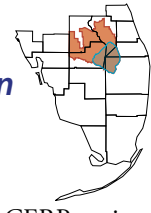


Conceptual Recreation Plan Lake Okeechobee Watershed Region



Recreation Overview and Analysis

The Lake Okeechobee Watershed region contains CERP projects located in Highlands County, Okeechobee County, and Glades County. The projects should generate local and regional recreational usage. The core market area will primarily be residents from Highlands, Okeechobee, and Glades County, with additional users from the east coast counties of St. Lucie, Martin, and Palm Beach. These projects may also draw from Florida's west coast, such as residents of Charlotte County.

The method used for carrying out the program analyses included identification of recreation needs through analysis of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and the public involvement initiative; compatibility analysis of each planned CERP project using GIS mapping results and in-depth project analysis; and, examination of linkage opportunities. The regional conceptual recreation plans serve as a graphic and/or spatial tool which represents a synthesis of the recreation program analyses.

Also, note the caveats, assumptions, and constraints following the descriptions of the process steps.

1 Identifying Recreation Needs

SCORP 2000-projected recreation needs include bicycling and non-boat freshwater fishing. Additional state agency input indicates that hunting and motorboat access are also need areas for the region.

SCORP-projected needs for Lake Okeechobee Watershed



Public-identified recreation needs include hiking, canoeing/kayaking, fishing, hunting, camping, viewing and learning activities. Although they were noted as needs by the public, off-road vehicle (ORV) riding and swimming/beach activities are not permitted on SFWMD-managed land as noted in Rule 40E-7 and Table 3 of the SFWMD Recreation Management and Partnership Plan.

Public-identified needs for Lake Okeechobee Watershed



2 Determining Level of Compatibility of Project with Proposed Recreation

Compatibility between a project's restoration features and a particular recreation activity was analyzed to offer an informed "best guess." The matrix below shows the three different levels of compatibility. Only the highest level of compatibility (represented by the solid green bubble below) is shown on the plan.

CERP PROJECT	RECREATION ACTIVITY											
Lake Okeechobee Watershed ¹	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Taylor Creek / Nubbin Slough	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	○	○

KEY TO MATRIX

- Project analysis and GIS analysis indicate that this project area may be **highly** suitable for this form of recreation, *based on available information.*
- ◐ Project analysis and GIS analysis indicate that this project area **may** be suitable for this form of recreation, *based on available information.*
- Project analysis and GIS analysis indicate that this project area may not be suited to this form of recreation, *based on available information.*

3 Examining Linkages

The study team looked for ways in which CERP recreation areas might be able to connect with other recreation areas, which may be existing or planned.



The linkage symbol appears at the bottom of the project planning callout boxes.

Caveats, Assumptions, and Constraints



In the stormwater treatment areas (STAs), motorboating will be permitted in the exterior canals only. Airboating will not be permitted in the STAs.



On lands where Off-Road-Vehicle (ORV) access was a traditional and legal use, is consistent with any and all applicable laws, statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations, including those of the managing agency, and is not in conflict with hydrological and ecological restoration goals, such ORV access should be considered as a possible future managed use in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, Master Recreation Plan.



Swimming is not a permitted recreational use of CERP project areas cost-shared by the SFWMD during the time this plan was developed.



Reservoirs may be very suitable for hunting waterfowl, depending on factors such as depth and season. Thus, hunting should be an accepted recreational activity on reservoirs, as local regulations permit.



Each project will provide as needed, sufficient parking, bridge and road improvements to allow public access. Project designs may vary when meeting local codes.