

Appendix 1A-1: District Memorandum to the 2005 Peer-Review Panel (February 2006)

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SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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PRO ERM 08

February 10, 2006

Dr. Jeffrey Jordan
University of Georgia
Department of Agricultural & Applied Economics
Georgia Experiment Station
Griffin, GA 30223-1797

Dear Dr. Jordan:

Subject: Responses to the 2006 South Florida Environmental Report Panel Comments

Thank you for your leadership this year as well as representing the Peer Review Panel (Panel) to the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District (District). The South Florida Environmental Report (SFER) Peer-Review Panel's Final Report made useful suggestions for enhancing the *2006 South Florida Environmental Report – Volume I*. I am pleased to provide you with the attached memo to our Governing Board members addressing the Panel's recommendations presented during the District's Governing Board meeting on November 9, 2005. The Volume I project team's responses to the Panel's general recommendations and key suggestions for future SFER chapters are briefly summarized in this memo. The SFER project team will consider and incorporate these recommendations, as appropriate, into this year's planning at the project kickoff meeting for the *2007 South Florida Environmental Report – Volume I*, scheduled this spring.

The District greatly appreciates the Panel's continued support of the SFER, an important milestone in the District's yearly reporting efforts. We look forward to further improvement in the reporting process and believe strongly that many of the changes recommended by the Panel will make this consolidated report even more influential in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Ann Wehle".

Carol Ann Wehle
Executive Director

CAW/se
Enclosure

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Carol Ann Wehle, *Executive Director*

Dr. Jeffrey Jordan
February 10, 2006
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bc: Dee Azeredo, Deputy Department Director, ERA
Terrie Bates, Assistant Deputy Executive Director, WR
Linda Lindstrom, Department Director, ERA
Chip Merriam, Deputy Executive Director, WR
Thomas Olliff, Assistant Executive Director
Garth Redfield, Chief Environmental Scientist, ERA
SFER Panel Members



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board Members

FROM: Carol Ann Wehle, Executive Director *CAW*

DATE: February 10, 2006

SUBJECT: Responses to the 2006 South Florida Environmental Report Panel Comments

Once again this past year, the review Panel's Final Report made useful suggestions for enhancing the 2006 South Florida Environmental Report (SFER). Recommendations were presented by the Panel Chair, Dr. Jeffrey Jordan of the University of Georgia, during the South Florida Water Management District's (District) Governing Board meeting on November 9, 2005. At the meeting, District staff committed to provide responses to the panel's comments. Meeting this commitment, I am pleased to provide you with the attached memo, which responds to the panel's recommendations for the 2006 Report and briefly summarizes key suggestions for future SFER chapters. Looking forward, the SFER project team will consider and incorporate the proposed changes, as appropriate, into this year's planning at the project kickoff meeting for the 2007 South Florida Environmental Report, scheduled this spring.

CAW/se
Enclosure

c: Dee Azeredo, Deputy Department Director, ERA
Terrie Bates, Assistant Deputy Executive Director, WR
Linda Lindstrom, Department Director, ERA
Chip Merriam, Deputy Executive Director, WR
Thomas Olliff, Assistant Executive Director
Garth Redfield, Chief Environmental Scientist, ERA

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Carol Ann Wehle, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Carol Ann Wehle, Executive Director

THROUGH: Linda Lindstrom, Department Director, Environmental Resource Assessment 

FROM: Garth Redfield, Chief Environmental Scientist, Environmental Resource Assessment 
Stacey Efron, Senior Environmental Scientist, Environmental Resource Assessment 

DATE: February 6, 2006

SUBJECT: Responses to 2006 SFER Panel Comments

This memorandum follows up on discussion item 62, Peer Review Panel Findings and Recommendations on the 2006 *South Florida Environmental Report – Volume I* (SFER), at the District's Governing Board meeting on November 9, 2005. In response to the presentation by the SFER Panel Chair, Dr. Jeffrey Jordan of the University of Georgia, the District committed to provide the actions to be taken to address the recommendations in the Panel's Final Report, available on the SFER WebBoard (<http://webboard.sfwmd.gov:8080/~SFER>). The Volume I project team's responses to the Panel's general recommendations and key suggestions for future SFER chapters are provided below.

Responses to General Panel Recommendations (Final Report, p. 2)

Improve and Standardize Chapter Organization and Format

Response: The Panel recommends a standardized chapter format beginning with a brief summary of findings and new results for the reporting year, and using more diagrams and tables throughout the report to link objectives with studies and annual results. These recommendations will be incorporated into this year's planning at the 2007 SFER kickoff meeting in spring 2006.

Add a Synthesis Chapter to the SFER

Response: The Panel also recommends an additional Volume I summary chapter or section that synthesizes key issues across the report. It is not clear how this synthesis would go beyond the well-integrated material in the individual chapters. At a minimum, the authors will cross-reference relevant key subjects (e.g., mercury, phosphorus, sulfur cycling) as material is presented in the individual chapters and appendices. At the 2007

kickoff meeting, the Volume I project team will organize inter-chapter teams to help synthesize information across the report.

Responses to General Suggestions for 2007 SFER (Final Report, pp. 2-7)

Add Cross-cutting Themes

Response: The SFER production staff will review the suggested cross-cutting themes with both agency management and authors when the 2007 production process begins. Better documentation of the structure and function of District monitoring programs is a good suggestion and will be added for hydrological and water quality monitoring in the 2007 SFER.

Institute a Tri-level Review System for the SFER

Response: When the statement of work is developed for the 2007 Peer-Review Panel, the Panel's suggestions for the various levels of review for Volume I sections and chapters of the 2007 report will become part of the assignment matrix for the review process.

Improve Integration and Consistency across Chapters

Response: The SFER production team will review the suggested integration opportunities with both agency management and SFER authors when the 2007 production process begins. As noted above, integrative themes will be a major topic for the upcoming project organizational meeting.

A Final Word – Enhance Communication and Interagency Coordination

Response: While the SFER is a catalyst for communication and cooperation, it is only reporting vehicle. The report itself cannot force cross-agency or cross-department cooperation, but continuing improvements such as those recommended by the Panel will make this consolidated report even more influential in the future.

Responses to Chapter-Specific Suggestions for 2007 SFER (Final Report, pp. 8-50)

Chapter 1: Use metric scales of measurement.

Response: The SFER production team and the authors will make additional effort to be more consistent in the use of units. The SFER will also continue to include a conversion table for metric and U.S. units and will report both forms, when appropriate.

Chapter 2: *Streamline chapter using documented standard methods and annual updates.*

Response: The District will work cooperatively with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to streamline and better document these important water quality sections. The exact reporting format for achieving the phosphorus criterion in the Everglades Protection Area and tracking loading dynamics remains to be determined by the FDEP.

Chapter 3: *Clarify methods used for data collection and calculations.*

Response: The authors will provide additional detail on data sources and calculation methods.

Chapter 4: *Continue to strengthen cross-referencing and integration with other chapters.*

Response: The authors will continue to add meaningful cross-references to the chapter and coordination with other chapters.

Chapter 5: *Refocus/expand hydrological information to match agency goals and performance measures.*

Response: Chapter improvements have been done proactively through a major reorganization and expansion. In the 2007 SFER, this chapter will be moved to the beginning of the report and will be focused on meeting flood control, water supply, and ecosystem expectations.

Chapter 6: *Add additional information on applied research.*

Response: To the extent feasible, authors will add additional tables and figures with the information requested the Panel.

Chapter 7: *Provide additional details on aspects of Everglades restoration.*

Response: The SFER project team anticipates significant additions and modifications to this chapter over the next two to three years and the Panel's thoughts will be given due consideration in future reports.

Chapter 8: *Provide greater detail on the challenges to achieving long-term water quality goals.*

Response: The authors will expand on the remaining challenges to achieving the long-term water quality goals in future reports.

Chapter 9: *Continue to furnish more results on invasive exotic species.*

Response: In future reports, this chapter will provide more species-specific information, including information on exotics in the STAs.

Chapter 10: *Consider the role of other water quality parameters, such as nitrogen and sulfur, in eutrophication of the lake.*

Response: District staff, in cooperation with the FDEP, will summarize and interpret data for additional parameters on the lake in the 2007 SFER. The reporting procedures and format will be developed for consistency with other chapters.

Chapter 11: *Refine the organization and improve integration with other restoration programs.*

Response: The authors will work cooperatively with other chapters to integrate findings from the Kissimmee Restoration to the rest of the Everglades system.

Chapter 12: *Provide a clarifying overview of the District's plans to cohesively manage South Florida's coastal ecosystems.*

Response: An overriding concern was the broad scope of Chapter 12. The Panel suggested that this chapter could be streamlined, with in depth reporting on one or two ecosystems in each annual report and short summaries of the status and trends in the others. Individual estuarine systems would be highlighted on a rotating basis.

GWR/rc

c: Dee Azeredo