

D R A F T
SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION (WRAC)
PRIORITY PLAN UPDATE
June 2006

PLEASE NOTE: Proposed changes to the current WRAC Priority Plan of February 9, 2005 are underlined.

I. COMPREHENSIVE EVERGLADES RESTORATION PLAN (CERP)

SFWMD` Strategic Priority: Expedite Everglades restoration through completion of Acceler8 projects.

GOAL A: Help ensure that the CERP and ongoing Feasibility Studies are successful in restoring the Everglades ecosystem and meeting the other water related needs of the South Florida region

Objectives:

1. Receive briefings about Basis of Design Reports for each Acceler8 project.
2. Receive briefings, as needed, about Preliminary Design reports for each Acceler8 project.
3. Review progress to streamline Project Implementation Reports for each Acceler8 project.
4. Review strategies and plans that identify and protect water for natural systems, while meeting the other water related needs of the region.
5. Review and provide comments on Guidance Memorandums, CERP Interim Goals and Targets and the Initial CERP Update.
6. Review and provide comments regarding CERP Performance Measures as proposed by RECOVER.
7. Review strategies to implement non-accelerated CERP projects.
8. Review progress of ongoing feasibility studies and strategies to implement feasibility study recommendations.

GOAL B: Secure/acquire CERP Lands.

Objective: Review status and strategies for acquiring CERP lands, including the use of less-than-fee simple acquisition strategies.

Outcomes:

1. WRAC/Acceler8 Issues Workshops will be held as needed. Presentations will be made to WRAC for consideration, and WRAC will provide comments to the SFWMD Governing Board.
2. Governing Board Considers Comments.

II. LAKE OKEECHOBEE PROTECTION PLAN AND WATER LEVEL REGULATION SCHEDULE

SFWMD Strategic Priorities: 1). Restore the health of Lake Okeechobee.
2). Minimize impacts of the C&SF system on the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Estuaries.

GOAL A: Help ensure reduction of Lake Okeechobee phosphorous levels through successful implementation of the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan, the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Plan and the Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Recovery Plan (LOER).

Objectives:

1. Review recommendations of the WRAC Lake Okeechobee Committee and forward those agreed upon to the SFWMD Governing Board for consideration.
2. Review and provide input to improve implementation of the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan.
3. Review proposed Lake Okeechobee “Fast Track” capital improvement projects and provide comments to the Governing Board.
4. Review progress and provide comments about the implementation of the Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Recovery Plan and the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Plan
5. Review plans to protect and restore wetlands that have the potential to increase water storage, improve water quality, and provide wildlife habitat in the Kissimmee and Lake Okeechobee watersheds.

GOAL B: Refine and improve the Lake Okeechobee WSE Water Level Regulation Schedule.

Objectives:

1. Review recommendations of the WRAC Lake Okeechobee Committee.
2. Review draft Environmental Impact Statement alternatives, modeling results and other scientific information regarding WSE Schedule revisions.
3. Review proposed refinements to the WSE Schedule and make appropriate comments to improve the water level regulation schedule.
4. Review and provide recommendations about proposed revisions to the Supply Side Management plan, including remedies such as construction of forward pumps, to alleviate water supply shortages in dry periods.

Outcomes:

1. WRAC Lake Okeechobee Committee meetings to consider Lake Okeechobee issues will be held monthly. Recommendations will be made to the WRAC.
2. WRAC Lake Okeechobee Technical Sub-Committee will meet as needed to produce a report on the historic hydrology and water quality of the lake compared to the current hydrology and water quality of the lake.
3. Monthly Lake Okeechobee Committee reports will be made to the WRAC.

4. The WRAC will provide appropriate recommendations and comments to the SFWMD Governing Board.

III. REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY PLAN UPDATES AND ALTERNATIVE WATER SUPPLY PROJECTS:

SFWMD Strategic Priority: Meet the current and future demands of water users and the environment.

GOAL A: By June 2006 review and provide comments on four draft regional water supply plan updates to help ensure the plans address adequate water supply for the environment, and urban and agricultural water users.

Objectives:

1. Conduct Regional Water Supply Plan Update Issues Workshops to review and comment on alternative water supply projects, existing water resource data, projected needs and demands, performance measures for natural systems; and, consumptive uses, and water resource and water development projects.
2. Make comments and recommendations to the WRAC, and from the WRAC to the Governing Board, about each of the Regional Water Supply Plan Updates, and, as needed, alternative water supply projects.
3. Monitor, through periodic presentations, the implementation of strategies and recommendations in the Regional Water Supply Plans.

Outcomes:

1. WRAC Regional Water Supply Plan Update Issues Workshops for the Kissimmee Basin, Upper East Coast, Lower East Coast and Lower West Coast regions will be held throughout the SFWMD to carry out the above objectives.
2. The WRAC will be provided periodic updates about the progress made in the issues workshops, and the draft plan updates will be presented to the WRAC for review and comment.
3. The WRAC will make appropriate comments about each plan update to the SFWMD Governing Board.
4. Governing Board considers WRAC comments.

Goal B: Participate in the development of rules to implement initial reservations of water for protection of fish and wildlife; for proposed minimum flows and levels for priority water bodies; and, for water shortage restrictions and the SFWMD supply side management plan.

Objective:

Conduct WRAC issues workshops to provide input on the development of initial water reservations and rules to implement those requirements; the development

of proposed minimum flows and levels, and water shortage restrictions/supply side management plan.

Outcome: Consensus comments to SFWMD Governing Board regarding initial water reservations rules, and minimum flows and levels.

IV. WATER QUALITY

SFWMD Strategic Priority: Achieve Everglades water quality standards.

GOAL: Review strategies to improve implementation of the SFWMD Long Term Plan to Improve Water Quality, completion of construction, enhancement and operation of the Stormwater Treatment Areas and other projects, including the Everglades Phosphorous Source Control Program.

Objective:

Based on semi-annual presentations to the WRAC, make appropriate comments to the SFWMD Governing Board about achieving Everglades water quality standards.

V. KISSIMMEE RESTORATION

SFWMD Strategic Priority: Integrate Kissimmee watershed management strategies and river restoration.

GOAL: Review strategies to improve the health and sustainability of the Kissimmee River and headwaters, while balancing and minimizing potential adverse impacts to the Upper and Lower Kissimmee Basins, Lake Okeechobee, and estuaries.

Objective:

Through periodic WRAC Issues Workshops and WRAC presentations, make appropriate comments to the SFWMD Governing Board about Kissimmee Basin water resource issues, including those related to successful implementation of the Kissimmee River Restoration and the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes Long Term Management Plan.

Review plans to integrate Kissimmee Basin lake and river water level regulation schedules with the Lake Okeechobee water level regulation schedule.

Outcomes:

WRAC Issues Workshops, quarterly presentations to the WRAC on progress, WRAC input to SFWMD Governing Board and Governing Board consideration of comments.

VI. RECREATIONAL ACCESS AND PUBLIC USE OF SFWMD LANDS:

SFWMD Land Stewardship Goal: To provide natural resource protection, effective land management and reasonable opportunities for appropriate agricultural use, while allowing compatible recreational uses on designated public lands.

GOAL: Provide appropriate recreational access and public use opportunities on SFWMD-owned lands consistent with SFWMD policy and the purpose for which lands have been acquired.

Objective: Through periodic WRAC issues workshops and presentations, make appropriate comments to the SFWMD Governing Board about successful implementation of SFWMD recreational access and public use policy.