



DECEMBER 2011

## PURPOSE

The goal of the Central Everglades Planning Project is to deliver within two years a finalized plan, known as a Project Implementation Report, for a suite of restoration projects in the central Everglades to prepare for congressional authorization as part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

The Central Everglades Planning Project will identify and plan for projects on land already in public ownership to allow more water to be directed south to the central Everglades, Everglades National Park and Florida Bay while protecting coastal estuaries.

Public participation is a major component of this planning effort. A number of public workshops, sponsored by the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force's Working Group, are planned to receive input from the public and keep them informed and engaged as active participants.

## BACKGROUND

While much progress has been made on CERP, efforts to date have mostly been in areas outside of the central Everglades. The heart of the Everglades restoration effort is restoring a more natural quantity, quality, timing and distribution of water to the remaining portions of the "River of Grass."

In October 2011, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), the Secretary of the Interior, the Governor of Florida, the Executive Director of the South Florida Water Management District and other senior principals agreed to initiate the planning effort of the CERP central Everglades components. Due to the desire to expeditiously complete the study, the Central Everglades Planning Project will be included in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers National Pilot Program for Feasibility Studies.

## STUDY APPROACH

The Central Everglades Planning Project will incorporate updated science and technical information gained over the last decade to prepare the recommended plan — called a Project Implementation Report — for congressional authorization of the next generation of CERP components. The planning study process will use clearly defined decision points to make the process more predictable and more efficient while reducing the current CERP planning study process timeline. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is leading this planning effort in partnership with the South Florida Water Management District, which is fully integrated in the technical planning process.

The study will specifically develop the next increment of project components that focus on restoration of more natural flows into and through the central and southern Everglades, re-establishing the hydroperiods and hydropatterns that characterize the "River of Grass" by:

- Increasing storage, treatment and conveyance of water south of Lake Okeechobee
- Removing canals and levees within the central Everglades
- Retaining water within Everglades National Park and protect urban and agricultural areas to the east from flooding



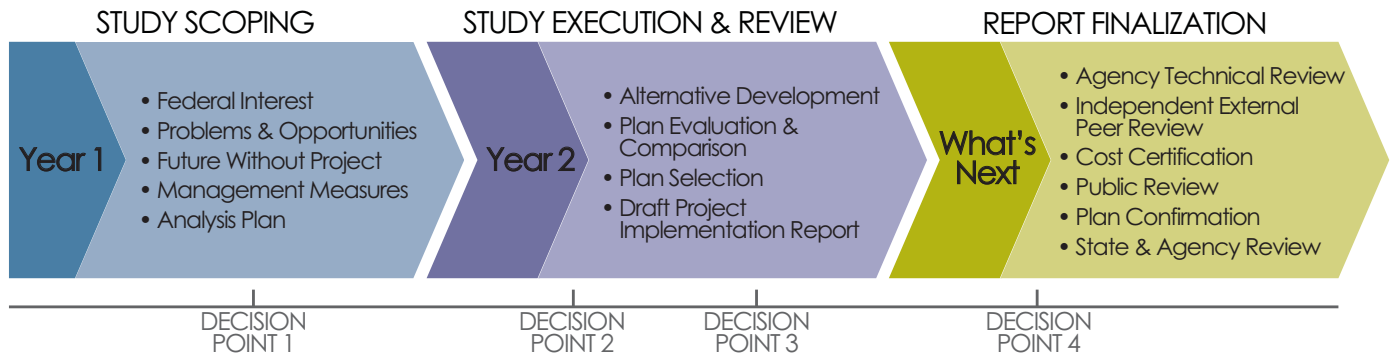
The CERP components identified to accomplish this are included in the following projects: Everglades Agricultural Area Storage Reservoir, Decompartmentalization of Water Conservation Area 3, Everglades National Park Seepage Management and Everglades Rain Driven Operations. These components are highly interdependent features of the plan that must be formulated, optimized and implemented in a comprehensive and integrated manner. They make up the heart of CERP and will set the direction for the next decade of its implementation.



## STUDY SCHEDULE

The schedule for the Central Everglades Planning Project will utilize the approach of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Planning Transformation Process.

### CENTRAL EVERGLADES STUDY PROCESS



## STUDY OUTCOME

Using clearly defined decision points to make the planning process more predictable, more efficient and faster than the current CERP planning study process, the Central Everglades Planning Project is working to deliver within two years a finalized plan for a suite of restoration projects in the central Everglades ready for congressional authorization as part of CERP.

## PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM

The USACE and SFWMD are the principal Federal and Non-Federal sponsors for the CERP, and other environmental restoration efforts. Together, they are holding CERP Project Delivery Team (PDT) meetings for the Central Everglades Planning Project in parallel with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force's Working Group-sponsored public workshops. PDT meetings enable federal, state and local agencies and tribal governments to provide their input into the Central Everglades Planning Project.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Information on upcoming public workshops and related documents are available on the Task Force website at:

[www.sfrestore.org/cepp/cepp.html](http://www.sfrestore.org/cepp/cepp.html)

Information on the Central Everglades Planning Project and related project documents are available online at:

[www.evergladesplan.org](http://www.evergladesplan.org)

