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## South Florida Water Management District

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### GOVERNING BOARD WORKSHOP MINUTES

April 7, 2021

1:00 PM

via Communications Media Technology

[www.SFWMD.gov](http://www.SFWMD.gov)

*This workshop will provide the Governing Board, public, and stakeholders with a current status and overview of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) projects and the program agreements. The Workshop is informative in nature and no final decisions will be made by the Governing Board.*

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Chauncey Goss	Chairman	Present
Ron Bergeron		Present
Charlie Martinez		Remote
Cheryl Meads		Present
Charlette Roman		Present
Jay Steinle		Remote
Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch		Present
Scott Wagner	Vice-Chairman	Remote

1. Call to Order - Chauncey Goss, Chairman, Governing Board  
Chairman Goss called the workshop to order at approximately 1:00 PM and called for a moment of silence in remembrance of Congressman Alcee Hastings, U.S. House of Representatives.
2. Pledge of Allegiance  
Chairman Goss led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. CERP - Jennifer Leeds, Bureau Chief, Ecosystem Restoration Planning, and Leslye Waugh, Section Administrator, Ecosystem Restoration Planning & Project Management

Ms. Leeds provided an overview of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan projects. Items discussed included CERP framework for Everglades restoration; Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2000; federal partnerships with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE); the Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Yellow Book); and, CERP estimated project costs and management.

### **Board Comment**

In response to Chairman Goss' question on slide 2, Ms. Leeds elaborated on the origin of the sixty-eight components of CERP.

#### **A. Understanding the Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS)**

#### **B. Road Map to Implementation**

Ms. Waugh provided a presentation on the CERP IDS and road map to implementation. Items discussed included an overview of CERP IDS and 2020 updates; South Florida Ecosystem Restoration (SFER) and 2020 Central and Southern Florida (C&SF) Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan purpose, investments, project locator map and legend; IDS 2020 planning estimates of total CERP construction costs; non-CERP and foundation projects; CERP Generation 1, WRDA 2007; CERP Generation 2, WRDA 2014; Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP), WRDA 2016; CEPP Everglades Agricultural Area Phase, WRDA 2018; and, IDS planning projects, Yellow Book components, and system operating manuals.

### **Board Comment**

Ms. Roman, Ms. Jacoby, and Ms. Waugh discussed the term *fiscal closeout* on slide 9.

Chairman Goss, Ms. Waugh, and Mr. Mitnik discussed operations & maintenance (O&M) and project implementation construction costs represented on slide 8.

Ms. Thurlow-Lippisch, Ms. Waugh, and Ms. Jacoby discussed the contents on slide 10 regarding the components of the Indian River Lagoon-South (IRL-S) project, and how IDS annual updates were reviewed.

In response to Ms. Roman's question on slides 10 and 11, Ms. Waugh explained the gap in between WRDA 2007 and WRDA 2014. Mr. Mitnik further elaborated on the project life cycle; project implementation report (PIR); federal authorization by Congress; and, project appropriations and construction. Ms. Roman then asked what caused appropriation delays with projects to which Mr. Mitnik stated nationwide competition with federal appropriations to fund other restoration projects. Chairman Goss explained during 2007-2014 there were also federal budget caps causing some authorized top tiered projects to be frozen because there was no funding to start construction.

Vice Chairman Wagner, Mr. Mitnik, and Ms. Reynolds discussed authorizations made by Congress for WRDA 2000, 2007, and 2014; Project Implementation Reports; the authorization timeline for the sixty-eight CERP components; the Yellow Book roadmap and differences between planning and pending represented on slide

15; the state's approved project appropriations process, and the District's financial commitment; legislative budget requests; and, WRDA approval expirations and Post Authorization Change Reports (PACRs). Vice Chairman Wagner suggested staff consider switching the planning and pending columns on slide 15 to assist with clarity; Ms. Reynolds stated a recommendation would be brought to the USACE consideration.

In response to Chairman Goss' question on slide 15 regarding de-authorized projects, Ms. Jacoby explained the state and federal government process to initiate and de-authorize projects.

In response to Mr. Steinle's question regarding how many of the sixty-eight CERP components had been removed or added since its inception in 2000, Ms. Reynolds explained the original CERP instituted in 2000 implemented a suite of projects that would encompass approximately sixty-eight components and elements that would work together in sequence throughout the planning of the project. It was conceptual in design with specific features to create the benefits envisioned within the framework which might cause change within the framework, but it would not change the components. Mr. Steinle then asked if a project was prioritized by ecological need, cost benefit, or public or political interest to which Mr. Bartlett explained how projects were mostly driven by public interest through public engagement. Mr. Steinle and Ms. Waugh continued discussing the percentage of projects from different recovery regions.

In response to Ms. Meads' question regarding state and federal appropriations, Mr. Bartlett explained the state law that passed in 2016 to set aside appropriations for Everglades restoration through documentary stamps in the amount of approximately \$200M. Chairman Goss explained the federal appropriation process.

Ms. Roman commented on Governor DeSantis' Executive Order which provided the Board with a road map to execute priorities with Everglades restoration projects and suggested staff look into advancing these priorities with the USACE, or other partnerships.

Mr. Bergeron stressed the importance of prioritizing projects with federal partnerships and providing updates to the Board on fully operational projects along with projects with obstacles. Also, Mr. Bergeron suggested staff utilize the Everglades Task Force to assist with project obstacles.

Ms. Thurlow-Lippisch and Mr. Mitnik discussed the contents on slide 15 and the top ten initially authorized projects from the 2000 Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Plan (LOWPP). Mr. Mitnik offered to provide a crosswalk of the top ten projects from the 2000 LOWPP to current day for the Board to use as reference. Ms. Thurlow-Lippisch commented on the importance of sharing the history and origin of the Yellow Book road map and preserving the history to share with future staff and Board members.

At the request of Ms. Meads, staff provided the Board a copy of the project constraints map.

This item is recorded at:

<http://sfwmd.igmd.com/Citizens/SplitView.aspx?Mode=Video&MeetingID=2050&Format=Agenda>

4. CERP Program Agreements - Jennifer Leeds, Bureau Chief, Ecosystem Restoration Planning

Ms. Leeds provided a presentation on CERP program agreements. Items discussed included cost share agreements, program level agreements, design agreement, master agreement; project specific agreements, Project Partnership Agreement (PPA), Pre-Partnership Credit Agreement (PPCA); and, CERP planning to implementation process.

**Board Comment**

Ms. Thurlow-Lippisch, Ms. Leeds and Ms. Reynolds discussed the federal new start designation appropriation commitment to finish projects and limit the number of new starts over time related to CERP project commitments.

In response to Mr. Bergeron's question regarding if the District would receive 50/50 cost share after moving forward with the 8.5 square mile area seepage wall project and S-333N structure, Mr. Bartlett explained that since the S-333N structure was part of the authorized Central Everglades project and the current seepage wall under construction was not part of the authorized project it would be considered a state effort.

Several Board members requested staff provide a more fluid running list of the main projects represented in the IDS.

At the request of Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Mitnik provided an overview of project designs and requirements for signed and sealed designs.

This item is recorded at:

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5. Cost Share Ledger - Megan Jacoby, Principal Federal Policy Analyst, Ecosystem Restoration Program Support

Ms. Jacoby provided a presentation on the cost share. Items discussed included the CERP cost share balance; cost share process; cost share timing and review; cost share current balance; and, the State's total cost share investment to date.

**Board Comment**

In response to Chairman Goss' question on line 13 of the State and Federal CERP Cost Share Ledger Credits regarding the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands (BBCW), Ms. Jacoby explained the classification of the BBCW and other projects. Chairman Goss then asked if a request could be made to add costs for projects without a PPA to the cost share ledger. Ms. Jacoby stated with these types of projects costs could be tracked, but temporarily deferred until a PPA was signed.

In response to Ms. Roman's question regarding real estate credits with PPAs, Ms. Jacoby explained instances where the District acquired land in advance of a PPA such as with IRL-S Natural Lands. Ms. Roman then asked if credits could be applied after the PPA to which Ms. Jacoby confirmed it could.

Responding to Chairman Goss' question regarding if the term expended on the cost share ledger was the same as the term outlays, Ms. Reynolds confirmed that it was the same term with the federal government.

Mr. Bergeron and Ms. Jacoby discussed the average time frame it took to have credits applied to the cost share ledger.

The Board continued discussion with staff on the cost share ledger project partnership responsibilities with the USACE and State of Florida; project lead agency determination; real estate land acquisition relocations; and, the PPA approval timeline.

In response to Mr. Bergeron's question on slide 30, Ms. Jacoby confirmed the \$500M in state contract obligations not posted to the cost share ledger (pending expenditure) was part of the \$1.3B of the State's total investment not credited.

The Board and staff discussed opportunities for the District to receive more credit to the cost share.

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6. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

7. Adjourn

Chairman Goss adjourned the workshop at approximately 4:05 PM.



Gina Kamak  
Deputy District Clerk  
South Florida Water Management District