

# **Chapter 1: Introduction to the 2010 South Florida Environmental Report – Volume I**

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This introductory chapter highlights the governmental, scientific, and legal context behind the *2010 South Florida Environmental Report* (SFER). The SFER — a sweeping consolidation of South Florida Water Management District (District or SFWMD) and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) reporting — is essential to support sound, long-term environmental management decisions by the District, the FDEP, and other agencies. The 2010 SFER unifies more than 50 individual reports into a single document, pursuant to Chapter 2005-36, Laws of Florida, and Subsection 373.036(7), Florida Statutes (F.S.). While continuing to provide efficient communication, the annual SFER covers major results and findings, as well as current and projected financial information for those chapters that have specific fiscal reporting requirements. Overall, the information presented in the SFER aids in the implementation of Everglades restoration activities and supports the restoration, management, and protection activities associated with Lake Okeechobee, the Kissimmee Basin, and South Florida's coastal ecosystems.

The *2010 South Florida Environment Report* includes the two-volume main report and the Executive Summary. In 15 chapters, *Volume I, The South Florida Environment*, provides data summaries for all major ecosystems in South Florida during Water Year 2009 (WY2009) (May 1, 2008–April 30, 2009) and highlights the District's financial resources management during Fiscal Year 2009 (FY2009) (October 1, 2008–September 30, 2009). Similar to previous SFERs, this year's Volume I chapters summarize available data and findings associated with South Florida restoration activities. Appendices that comply with various permit requirements and provide data summaries and detailed analyses for the special-interest reader support and enhance these chapters.

*Volume II, District Annual Plans and Reports*, summarizes the FY2009 planning and project status for eight annual reports required under various mandates. Required of all five water management districts in Florida, these reports include the Annual Work Plan Report, Minimum Flows and Levels Priority List and Schedule, Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan, Five-Year Water Resource Development Work Program, Alternative Water Supply Annual Report, Florida Forever Work Plan Annual Update, Land Stewardship Annual Report, and Mitigation Donation Annual Report.

The *2010 South Florida Environmental Report, Executive Summary*, is written for a diverse readership and provides an abstract of both volumes of the main report's key facts and supporting

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<sup>1</sup> *Content of the 2010 South Florida Environmental Report – Volume I section*

information. The summary was developed to highlight key findings to stakeholders and decision makers, particularly regarding regional programs and projects across the District.

In addition to describing the setting of the SFER, this chapter outlines the rest of the content for Volume I. Specifically, the geographic features of the South Florida environment, related District programs, and the comprehensive restoration efforts throughout South Florida are briefly described. The Volume I objectives, including a summary of the numerous legal and reporting requirements and the processes used to create the 2010 report and related peer and public review, are also presented. The first chapter of this year's SFER – Volume II contains a volume-focused introduction similar to this one.

An overview of the 2010 SFER peer-review process is presented in Appendix 1-1. During this process, the public and panel review resulted in many written comments and suggestions to the report's authors. Comments from the peer-review panel on the draft 2010 SFER – Volume I, as posted on the SFER WebBoard 2 ([www.sfwmd.gov/webboards](http://www.sfwmd.gov/webboards)), are provided in Appendix 1-2. Public comments posted to this WebBoard are provided in Appendix 1-3. The authors' responses to these initial comments are provided in Appendix 1-4. Appendix 1-5 contains the 2010 panel's closing comments and recommendations, representing their final report. Advice from the SFER panel and from other reviewers provided guidance to the Volume I authors through revisions while preparing the final 2010 report.

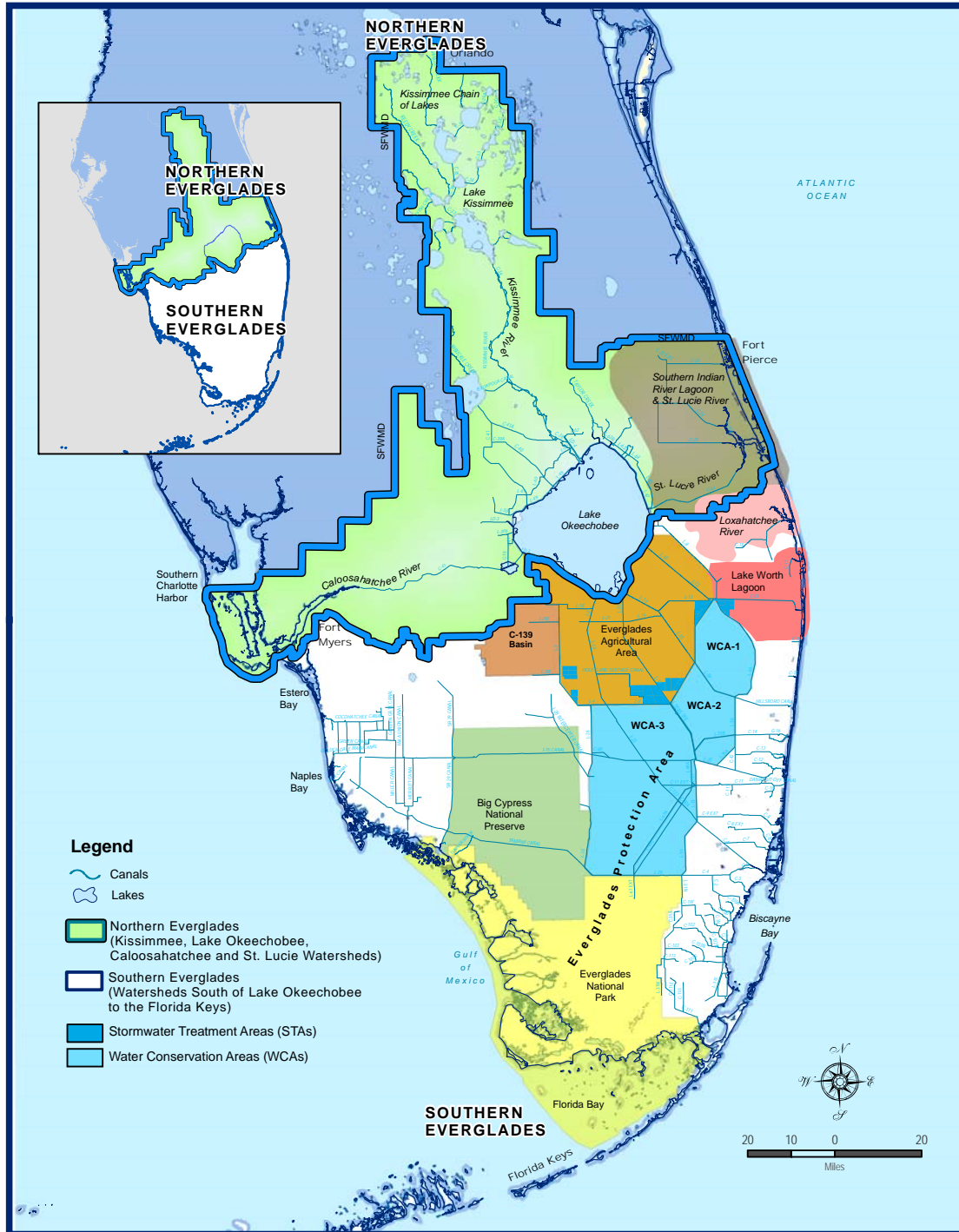
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## THE SOUTH FLORIDA ENVIRONMENT

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### MAJOR GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES

South Florida is characterized by its unique, diverse ecosystems from the Kissimmee Region in the north through the Florida Keys in the south. The major features of the South Florida environment within the District's boundaries are depicted in **Figure 1-1** and summarized on **Table 1-1**. As a product of District-wide initiatives to better manage and report on the many programs and projects throughout South Florida, the area is now categorized into two primary sub-regions — the Northern and Southern Everglades. As depicted in **Figure 1-1**, the Northern and Southern Everglades are delineated across regional watershed boundaries, with the Northern Everglades covering the Kissimmee, Lake Okeechobee, Caloosahatchee, and St. Lucie watersheds, and the Southern Everglades encompassing the watersheds south of Lake Okeechobee through the Florida Keys. The main features in the Northern Everglades include Kissimmee area lakes and rivers, Lake Okeechobee, and the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie rivers and estuaries. Key features in the Southern Everglades include the Water Conservation Areas, Big Cypress National Preserve, Everglades National Park/Florida Bay, and coastal bays and estuaries south of Lake Okeechobee.



**Figure 1-1.** Major geographic features of the South Florida environment within the District's boundaries. [See also Figure 2-1 of this volume for major hydrological features in South Florida.]

**Table 1-1.** Major features of the South Florida environment within District boundaries.

Geographic Area	Area		Description
	(square kilometers)	(square miles)	
<u>Everglades Region</u>			
Everglades Protection Area (EPA)	9,000	3,474	Comprises Water Conservation Areas 1, 2A, 2B, 3A, and 3B; Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge; and Everglades National Park
Water Conservation Area 1 (WCA-1)	566	218	Within the Refuge; managed by USFWS, SFWMD, and USACE; saw grass wetland with many tree islands; receives water primarily from STA-1W, STA-1E, and EAA region
Water Conservation Area 2 (WCA-2)	537	207	Managed by the District with the USACE and FWC; smallest WCA divided into WCA-2A and 2B; saw grass wetland with tree islands; receives water primarily from STA-2, STA-3/4, WCA-1, and EAA region
Water Conservation Area 3 (WCA-3)	2,339	903	Managed by District with the USACE and FWC; largest WCA divided into WCA-3A and 3B; saw grass marsh with tree islands, wet prairies and sloughs; receives water primarily from STA-5, STA-6, WCA-2, Big Cypress National Preserve, and EAA region
Everglades National Park (ENP)	6,107	2,358	Second-largest national park and one of the nation's 10 most endangered parks; established in 1934 to preserve the unique Everglades ecology; managed by USFWS and NPS with USACE and SFWMD; freshwater sloughs, marl-forming marshes, and mangroves
Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA)	2,872	1,109	Highly productive agricultural land containing rich, organic peat or muck soils; 77 percent is in agricultural production; recognized as a major contributor to nutrient enrichment of the region; basin is the subject of a water quality monitoring program and a regulatory Best Management Practices program
Holey Land Wildlife Management Area	140	54	Managed by FWC; lies within the EAA boundaries; heavily used for deer and hog hunting; important for game management, water resource protection, and providing habitat corridors adjacent to the EPA
Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area	96	37	Managed by FWC; lies within the EAA boundaries; heavily used for deer and hog hunting; important for game management, water resource protection, and providing habitat corridors adjacent to the EPA
C-139 Basin	686	265	Agriculture is the dominant land use; discharges into WCA-3A via structures; basin is the subject of a water quality monitoring program and a regulatory Best Management Practices program
Big Cypress National Preserve	2,280	880	Established in 1974 to protect natural and recreational values of the Big Cypress Watershed; land supports hunting, fishing, and oil and gas production; provides an ecological buffer zone and water supply for Everglades National Park

Table 1-1. Continued.

Geographic Area	Area		Description
	(square kilometers)	(square miles)	
<b><u>Lake Okeechobee</u></b>	1,803	696	Large, shallow eutrophic lake and largest body of fresh water in the southeastern U.S.; managed by District with USACE and FWC; watershed covers about 3.5 million acres, or 10,400 square kilometers; provides water supply, flood protection, sport and commercial fishery, and wetland habitat; functions as the central part of a large interconnected aquatic ecosystem in South Florida and is the major surface water body of the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project
<b><u>Kissimmee Basin</u></b>	6,200	2,393	Managed by the District with the USACE and FWC; watershed forms the headwaters to the greater Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades ecosystem and includes the drainage area of Lake Istokpoga, the Kissimmee River and the Upper Basin; the Upper Basin is an important regional water source and diverse natural resource that transitions between warm, temperate and subtropical areas; the Lower Basin includes the historic Kissimmee River and its tributary watersheds between Lake Kissimmee, Lake Okeechobee, and the C-38 flood control canal; the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes consists of 28 prominent lakes that function hydrologically and ecologically as a regional-scale resource, resides within 14 sub-watersheds, and is fed by more than 30 tributaries throughout the region
<b>Upper Basin</b>	4,200	1,621	
<b>Lower Basin</b>	2,000	772	
<b><u>Coastal Ecosystems</u></b>			
<b>Southern Indian River Lagoon</b>	860	332	Designated for special study, protection, and restoration as part of the regional National Estuary Programs; characterized by the greatest species diversity of any estuary in North America; supports fishing, clamming, ecotourism, agriculture, and recreation
<b>St. Lucie River and Estuary</b>	24	9	Part of the Indian River Lagoon estuary system and drained by several creeks and canals that flow into the North or South Fork of the St. Lucie River before entering the lagoon near the St. Lucie Inlet; provides habitat for thousands of plant and animal species and supports commercial, recreational, and educational activities
<b>Loxahatchee River and Estuary</b>	15.4	4	First federally designated National Wild and Scenic River; watershed includes the communities of Hobe Sound, Tequesta, Jupiter, Jupiter Inlet Colony, Jupiter Farms, Juno Beach, and Palm Beach Garden; watershed contains large tracts of undisturbed land, protected parcels, and agricultural land; very diverse habitat includes coastal sand pine scrub, pinelands, xeric oak scrub, hardwood hammock, freshwater marsh, wet prairie, cypress swamps, mangrove swamps, seagrass beds, tidal flats, oyster beds, and coastal dunes

Table 1-1. Continued.

Geographic Area	Area		Description
	(square kilometers)	(square miles)	
<b><u>Coastal Ecosystems (continued)</u></b>			
Lake Worth Lagoon	11	30	Watershed is highly urbanized; lagoon was historically a freshwater lake with occasional brackish conditions and converted to a marine environment since the early 1900s
Biscayne Bay	1,100	428	Subtropical estuary designated as an aquatic preserve and Outstanding Florida Water; bay includes north, central, and south regions; contains a coral reef system, which is the world's third longest and the only one in the world located in close proximity to a large, highly urbanized coastal area; reef is home to more than 200 marine species of fish and is important for fisheries
Florida Bay and Florida Keys	2,200	849	About 80 percent of the bay lies within Everglades National Park; a broad, shallow expanse of brackish-to-salty water that contains numerous small islands, extensive sandbars and grass flats; mangroves and seagrasses provide valuable habitat for many species; keys watershed consists of a limestone island archipelago of about 800 islands extending southwest for over 320 kilometers, or 200 miles
Estero Bay	39	15	Long, narrow, and very shallow water body; several barrier islands separate the bay from the Gulf of Mexico; the bay has five rookery and roosting islands utilized by thousands of native birds
Caloosahatchee River and Estuary	82	32	Large estuary where the Gulf of Mexico mixes with freshwater inflows from the river, sloughs, and overland sheetflows in the basin; lower reaches of the estuary are characterized by a shallow bay, extensive seagrass beds, and sand flat; extensive mangrove forests dominate undeveloped shoreline areas
Southern Charlotte Harbor	336	130	Florida's second-largest open water estuary and one of the state's major environmental features; designated for special study, protection and restoration as part of the regional National Estuary Programs; area contains three national wildlife refuges and four aquatic preserves

District or SFWMD – South Florida Water Management District  
 USACE – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
 FWC – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
 Refuge – Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge

STA – Stormwater Treatment Area  
 USFWS – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 WCA – Water Conservation Area

## SYSTEMWIDE CHALLENGES AND INITIATIVES

Over the past century, South Florida has dramatically changed because of widespread development and increased urbanization, resulting in huge modifications to the hydrology and chemistry of ecosystems throughout the region. Such changes are evident throughout the entire Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades (KOE) and coastal ecosystems, which have been altered fundamentally by changes in spatial extent, hydrology, water quality, and ecology. The Everglades has been reduced to over half of its original extent, and its water supply has been significantly modified in both quantity and quality. Starting in the 1950s, the natural Kissimmee River and its floodplain were channelized for flood control improvements, causing extensive losses of valuable wetland habitats. Runoff from urban and agricultural lands near Lake Okeechobee pose an ongoing challenge to water management, making it difficult to balance issues related to water supply and prevent impacts to downstream ecosystems. Throughout South Florida the quality of surface water inflows is a problem – particularly for the nutrient phosphorus. Also, invasive exotic species are aggressively invading natural habitats and causing displacement of native plants and animals. The far-reaching effects of these issues, along with multifaceted, comprehensive strategies of the SFWMD for restoring the KOE and coastal ecosystems, are addressed throughout this volume. An overview of key District programs and initiatives addressing regional management and restoration efforts is presented in **Table 1-2**.

While regional development (with its associated water management system) has altered the local movement and balance of water, it has not removed the interdependence of sub-regions and the overall north-south movement of water in the South Florida landscape. As water moves from the Upper Kissimmee Basin and other parts of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed at the northern edge of the KOE ecosystem through the Kissimmee River (see Chapter 11) and other tributaries to the lake (**Figure 1-1**), water comes to reflect surrounding land uses and changes quality before entering Lake Okeechobee (see Chapter 10). Like all lakes, the chemistry of Lake Okeechobee reflects the lake's history, and tributary waters are altered greatly as they mix with ambient water in the lake. Water levels in the lake reflect the balance between inflows, rainfall, outflows, and evaporation (see Chapter 2) and are a result of a combination of weather and management operations. Water levels are managed through outflow discharges, determined based on a regulation schedule and an operational decision tree. As water levels exceed various thresholds, outflows may be high enough to produce significant impacts on the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie systems downstream of the lake (see Chapter 12).

From Lake Okeechobee some water moves southward through the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) (see Chapter 4) and through the Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) (see Chapter 5). Outflows from the treatment areas and other tributary basins move into the Everglades Protection Area, which contains remnant Everglades marshes providing vital surface water to sustain the natural and human elements of the southern part of the regional ecosystem (see Chapter 6). The interconnectedness of this massive system is most obvious during climatic extremes, particularly droughts and floods, when water management must actively control the water balance in various parts of the system, especially the lake. Regional-scale models used widely in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) planning process (see Chapter 7A) are able to quantify the cascading influences of water management across the region and demonstrate the systemwide effects of CERP components.

**Table 1-2.** Key District programs addressing management and restoration efforts in South Florida.

Regional Programs	Key Components
<p><b><u>Everglades Program</u></b></p> <p><i>Main 2009 SFER Coverage: Volume I - Chapters 1–9</i></p> <p><i>Key Objective:</i> To restore and protect the Everglades system as a result of adverse changes in water quality and the quantity, distribution and timing of flows</p>	<p>Southern Everglades</p> <p>Everglades Construction Project</p> <p>Stormwater Treatment Areas</p> <p>Phosphorus Source Control Programs</p> <p>Long-Term Plan for Achieving Everglades Water Quality Goals</p> <p>Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP)</p>
<p><b><u>Lake Okeechobee Watershed Protection Program</u></b></p> <p><i>Main 2009 SFER Coverage: Volume I - Chapters 9 &amp; 10</i></p> <p><i>Key Objective:</i> To rehabilitate the lake and enhance its ecosystem while maintaining other project purposes, such as water supply and flood control</p>	<p>Northern Everglades</p> <p>Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan</p> <p>Lake Okeechobee Construction Project</p> <p>Lake Okeechobee Watershed Phosphorus Control Program</p> <p>Lake Okeechobee Research &amp; Water Quality Monitoring Program</p> <p>Lake Okeechobee Exotic Species Control Program</p> <p>Lake Okeechobee Internal Phosphorus Management Program</p>



Table 1-2. Continued.

Regional Programs	Key Components
<p><b><u>Kissimmee River Restoration Program</u></b></p> <p><i>Main 2009 SFER Coverage:</i> <b>Volume I - Chapters 9 &amp; 11</b></p> <p><i>Key Objective:</i> To restore over 40 square miles of river/floodplain ecosystem including 43 miles of meandering river channel and 27,000 acres of wetlands</p>	<p>Northern Everglades</p> <p>Kissimmee River Restoration Project</p> <p>Kissimmee River Restoration Evaluation Program</p> <p>Kissimmee River Headwaters Revitalization Project</p> <p>Kissimmee Chain of Lakes - Long-Term Management Plan</p>
<p><b><u>Coastal Watersheds Program</u></b></p> <p><i>Main 2009 SFER Coverage:</i> <b>Volume I - Chapters 9 &amp; 12</b></p> <p><i>Key Objective:</i> To manage freshwater discharge to South Florida's estuaries in a way that preserves, protects, and where possible, restores essential estuarine resources</p>	<p>Various projects and plans for the following areas:</p> <p>Northern Everglades</p> <p>Southern Indian River Lagoon and St. Lucie River and Estuary</p> <p>Caloosahatchee River and Estuary</p> <p>Southern Charlotte Harbor</p> <p>Southern Everglades</p> <p>Loxahatchee River and Estuary</p> <p>Lake Worth Lagoon</p> <p>Estero Bay</p> <p>Naples Bay</p> <p>Biscayne Bay</p> <p>Florida Bay and Florida Keys</p>

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## **CONTENT OF THE 2010 SOUTH FLORIDA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT – VOLUME I**

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### **REPORT OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT**

The primary objective of the *2010 South Florida Environmental Report – Volume I* is to summarize annual data and findings relating to the District's programs across the South Florida region – the Kissimmee Basin, Lake Okeechobee, the Everglades, and coastal ecosystems. In addition to building on and updating information from earlier consolidated reports, this year's report also satisfies many reporting requirements of multiple federal and state permits. While continuing to provide efficient communication, this annual report focuses on the past year's major results and findings; more routine and background information from earlier consolidated reports is cross-referenced as appropriate.

The topics of this 13-chapter volume are similar to those in the 2009 SFER. The hydrology of South Florida, the subject of Chapter 2, follows the introduction and provides supporting hydrologic information for subsequent chapters. Water quality status and trends for standard Class III parameters in the Everglades Protection Area (EPA) are presented in Chapters 3A and 3B. Chapter 3B specifically covers water quality issues of special concern apart from phosphorus (currently mercury and sulfur), including an update on research and monitoring in support of risk assessment for mercury in South Florida, the role of sulfur with respect to mercury, and other risks of sulfur contamination. An update on the activities under the phosphorus source control programs implementing regional Best Management Practices (BMPs) and the monitoring results are provided in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 highlights the status of STA compliance, performance, and optimization research. The status of ecological research in the Everglades is provided in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 consists of a two-part update on Everglades restoration including Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and Restoration Coordination and Verification (RECOVER) activities. Chapter 7A describes the federal-state partnership to implement CERP and the state initiative to fast-track some initially authorized CERP projects, along with an overview of how these efforts dovetail with other state initiatives across the Northern and Southern Everglades. It also contains appendices with CERP financial information and the progress of CERP implementation in FY2009. Chapter 7B summarizes the ongoing RECOVER activities associated with CERP implementation, including revisions to the Monitoring and Assessment Plan and its integration with the Adaptive Management Program and interim goals and targets. Chapter 8 updates the strategy for achieving long-term water quality goals in the EPA. Chapter 9 summarizes the status of plant and animal invasive exotic species in the South Florida environment.

Similar to previous SFERs, Chapters 10 through 12 provide coverage of Lake Okeechobee, the Kissimmee Basin, and South Florida's coastal ecosystems, respectively. Chapter 10 updates the status of water quality and habitat conditions in Lake Okeechobee and its watershed and lake-related project implementation activities. Chapter 11 summarizes the accomplishments of the Kissimmee River restoration and Upper Kissimmee Basin initiatives, including the design and implementation of the restoration program. Chapter 12 provides an update on the status of the District's estuaries, including reports on freshwater inflows, salinity, water quality, and biological resources. Chapter 12 also highlights the status of the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie rivers' watersheds, with detailed results from monitoring, research, and modeling projects. Detailed financial information on Everglades restoration during FY2009 is included in Chapter 13.

## LEGAL AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The *2010 South Florida Environmental Report* is the product of a consolidation process authorized by the Florida legislature in Chapter 2005-36, Laws of Florida, in May 2005. This legislation directs the South Florida Water Management District to consolidate statutorily mandated plans and reports to the Florida legislature and governor, per Subsection 373.036(7), F.S. Other plans and reporting requirements, such as those required in permits, are also addressed in order to improve coordination, efficiency, and effectiveness as part of this consolidation effort. The annual March 1 deadline has been implemented in lieu of statutory deadlines for the submission of certain District plans and reports, including the Everglades Consolidated Report, the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program Annual Progress Report, and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Annual Report.

The District's restoration efforts being implemented under regional programs entail numerous reporting mandates covered in the 2010 SFER – Volume I:

- An Everglades Forever Act Annual Report, required by Section 373.4592, F.S., and Subsection 373.4592(13), F.S., submitted to the FDEP, the Florida governor's office, and the leaders of the Florida legislature. This report must summarize water conditions in the EPA and the status of the impacted areas, STA construction, BMP implementation, and actions taken to monitor and control exotic species.
- An annual peer-reviewed report, required by Subparagraph 373.4592(4)(d)5, F.S., also submitted to the FDEP, the Florida governor, and legislative leaders regarding the research and monitoring program that summarizes all data and findings as an update on most topics included in the 1999 Everglades Interim Report, required by Subparagraph 373.4592(4)(d)5, F.S.
- An annual financial report, required by Sections 373.4592 and 373.45926, F.S., accounting for all monies used to fund the 1994 Everglades Construction Project and the 2003 Long-Term Plan for Achieving Water Quality Goals for EPA Tributary Basins and providing a comparison annually of actual versus projected revenues and a projection of costs and revenues over the most recent, rolling five-year period.
- A non-Everglades Construction Project permit annual report, required by Paragraphs 373.4592(9)(k) and (l), F.S., and by FDEP Permit No. 06, 502590709, to be submitted to the FDEP and to address water quality at structures associated with the EPA that are not included in the Everglades Construction Project. This report also addresses schedules and strategies to improve that water quality.
- Section 404 Clean Water Act permit reports submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and updating the USACE on the activities authorized or otherwise regulated by the permits.
- A series of reports on the STAs required under permits and Administrative Orders issued under the Clean Water Act and the Everglades Forever Act. These permits require information on the quality of water discharged from the treatment systems and on the progress of the treatment systems at improving water quality.
- A Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Annual Report, required by Section 373.036(7), F.S., and submitted to the FDEP, the Florida governor's office, and the leaders of the Florida legislature. This report provides enhanced oversight and accountability for the financial commitments established under the

Everglades restoration section and the progress made in the implementation of CERP, Section 373.470(7), F.S., as amended in 2005.

- A series of reports on projects permitted under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Regulation Act, Section 373.1502, F.S., issued by the FDEP.
- A Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program Progress Report, required by Subsection 373.4595(6), F.S., and submitted to the Florida governor's office, and the leaders of the Florida legislature. This report must include a summary of conditions of hydrology, water quality, and aquatic habitat in the Northern Everglades based on the results of the Research and Water Quality Monitoring Programs, the status of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Construction Project, the status of the Caloosahatchee River Watershed Construction Project, and the status of the St. Lucie River Watershed Construction Project. In addition, the report contains an annual accounting of the expenditure of funds from the Save Our Everglades Trust Fund. At a minimum, the annual report provides detail by program and plan, including specific information concerning the amount and use of funds from federal, state, or local government sources. In detailing the use of these funds, the District shall indicate those designated to meet requirements for matching funds. The report is prepared in cooperation with the other coordinating agencies and affected local governments.
- A Lake Okeechobee Water Control Structure Operations Permit report, required by Permit 0174552-001-GL and issued pursuant to Subsection 373.4595(9), F.S., of the Lake Okeechobee Protection Act and the FDEP's authority under Chapters 373 and 403, F.S. This permit regulates operation and maintenance of and requires water quality information on 35 water control structures that are owned or operated by the SFWMD and that discharge into or from Lake Okeechobee.

## STRATEGIC PLAN REPORTING

To maximize the agency's efficiency and effectiveness, the South Florida Water Management District is committed to a four-part, annual performance management cycle (**Figure 1-2**). As the first step of this cycle, the District's 10-year Strategic Plan is updated each fiscal year and outlines the agency's mission, priorities, and success indicators to continually assess progress in each program (see [www.sfwmd.gov/budget](http://www.sfwmd.gov/budget)).

As presented in Volume II, Chapter 2, the Annual Work Plan Report (also known as the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Report) is central to the "reporting and evaluation" step of the District's business cycle. In the 2010 SFER, the Annual Work Plan Report serves to evaluate agency compliance with the other elements of the cycle for FY2009, including the District's Strategic Plan, Annual Work Plan, and Budget. The 2010 SFER also provides detailed reporting on many of the agency's strategic objectives, success indicators, and deliverables and milestones across programs. An overview of the connections between the agency's programs and the SFER is presented in Table 1-3 of the 2009 SFER – Volume I, Chapter 1.



**Figure 1-2.** The District's annual performance management cycle.