

Project Name: Kissimmee River Restoration (KRR)
Project ID: 1306
Lead Agency: USACE / SFWMD
Authority: WRDA 1986 Section 1135 (PL 99-662); WRDA 1988 Section 46 (PL 100-676);
WRDA 1990 (Section 116 (h) (PL 101-640); **WRDA 1992** Section 101 (8) (PL 102-580)
Funding Source: Federal/State

Strategic Plan Goal(s) Addressed: **Primary: 2-A.3**

Measurable Output(s):

- 27,000 acres of floodplain wetlands improved
- 43 miles of meandering river channel restored
- 22 miles of backfilling of Canal 38
- 9 miles of new river channel

Project History: The *Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study* (Restudy) noted that the WRDA 1992 (section 101) authorized remaining portions of the Kissimmee River Restoration (lower basin ecosystem) and construction of the Kissimmee River Headwaters Revitalization project (upper basin creating a more natural physical environment in the lower Kissimmee River Basin. The project included backfilling the 30-foot deep Canal 38 and restoring flow to over 43 miles of presently isolated river channel to restore an estimated 27,000 acres of floodplain wetlands and associated fish and wildlife resources. The project would also provide more natural seasonal flow to Lake Okeechobee.

Current Project Synopsis: As the headwaters of the Everglades system, the health of the 3,000-square-mile Kissimmee River stretching from Orlando to Lake Okeechobee in central Florida is crucial to the health of the South Florida ecosystem. That health will be assured by the reestablishment of more natural flow. Several alternative plans were reviewed, as part of the USACE planning process, to address the lower basin and the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) was identified in 1992. The plan involves reestablishing historic hydrologic conditions, recreating the historical river/floodplain connectivity, recreating the historic mosaic of wetland plant communities, and restoring the historic biological diversity and functionality. This would be accomplished by modifying the operation of the many lakes and Structure 65; enlargement of canals 36 and 37; backfilling 22 miles of Canal 38; excavation of nine miles of new river channel; removal of two water control structures and locks, along with land acquisition [Lower Basin Land Acquisition (SFWMD 68,332 acres) and Upper Basin Land Acquisition (SFWMD 36,763 acres)]. The project will restore the ecological integrity of the historical Kissimmee River/floodplain ecosystem by recreating 40 square miles of the river/floodplain ecosystem, including re-establishing flow to 43 miles of contiguous meandering river channel and 27,000 acres of wetlands.

A comprehensive evaluation program for tracking the environmental response to the plan is in place to gauge the success of meeting goals for ecological integrity for the river and the floodplain. This program predicts and tracks resulting ecological changes that are expected, including changes in hydrology, water quality, and major biological communities such as plants, invertebrates, fish, and birds. Evaluation research is required to be continued by the SFWMD for at least 5 years following completion of the final phase of construction (projected for 2020), or until environmental responses stabilize.

In August 2013, it was decided that SFWMD would continue to use current interim regulation schedule operations for the KRR structures and the authorized Headwaters Revitalization Project may be implemented after lower basin construction is complete. The following features are completed: Canal 38 Reach 1 backfilling (2001), Canal 35 maintenance dredging (2001), Structure 65 enlargement (2001), Structure 65A gate extension (2001), Canal 36 widening (2003), U.S. Highway 98 bridge openings (2004), Structure 84 spillway addition (2007), Radio tower (2007), Structure 65DX2 grade control structure (2007), Canal 38 reach 4A backfilling (2007), Structure 68 spillway addition (2009), Canal 38 Reach 4B backfilling

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(2009), Structure 65DX2 Retrofit, Istokpoga Boat Ramp (2010), Structure 68A spillway (2011), Structure 65DX1 Modifications (2011), Oxbow Excavation and Embankment (2012), Reaches 2 and 3 Oxbow Excavation (2012), Canal 37 Enlargement and Miscellaneous Features (2012), Structure 67 Erosion Repairs (2012), Structure 65D Boat Ramp (2013), CSX Railroad Bridge (2013), Canal 37 Enlargement and Miscellaneous Features (2013), River Acres Supplemental Works (2015), and Structure 65EX1 Spillway (2015) .

Current Status: More than 98% of the 102,061 acres of land needed for the restoration have been acquired by the SFWMD. Natural flow has been reestablished for 22 of 43 miles of historic river channel, including the 4 miles reconnected in 2009, 4 miles in 2007 and 14 miles in 2001. 6,500 acres of floodplain wetlands are restored and several species, including the Ring-necked Duck, American Avocet and Black-necked Stilt, have returned to the Kissimmee after an absence of 40 years. The USACE has restored 13 of the 22 miles of the Canal 38 (lower basin) to date.

The MacArthur Ditch Backfilling and the Canal 38 Reach 3 Backfill and Bass Embankment Degrade construction efforts are underway and are scheduled for completion in early fall 2016. The remaining features to be awarded include: Canal 38 Reach 2 backfilling (2016), Structure 69 Weir (2017), and the Canal 37 Embankment Armoring (2017). In addition, a Post Authorization Change Report has been prepared and is currently being reviewed to seek approval to request the United States Congress to authorize the USACE to credit the SFWMD, as the non-Federal sponsor, for the cost of in-kind activities that are integral to achieving benefits, but fall outside of the crediting authority granted in the Water Resources Development Act of 1992.

Est. Cost: \$ 759,315,000

Project Schedule:

1994	Start
1999	Construction begun
2020	Projected Completion

Detailed Project Budget Information (rounded):

KRR	OBLIGATIONS THRU FY16
USACE	\$314,389,000
SFWMD	\$346,094,000
TOTAL	\$660,483,000

Hyperlinks:

http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Portals/44/docs/FactSheets/Kissimmee_FS_April2016_web.pdf

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Source: Project description summarized from the *Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study (1999)*. Current status information was provided by the project manager. Cost estimate information is updated to reflect current price levels in October 2011 dollars.

Additional Information: None



