

*DRAFT Meeting Summary
South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force
Main Interior Building
Washington, DC
October 29, 2019*

1. Welcome, Goals and Administrative Announcements

Dr. Timothy Petty, Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, U.S. Department of the Interior called his first Task Force meeting to order at 10:02 AM. He recognized Commissioner Sarah Heard from Martin County, Mr. Corey Schmidt from Rep. Francis Rooney's office, Ms. Katherine Ann Russo and Ms. Ella Biggins from Governor Ron DeSantis' office, Commissioner Doug Smith from Martin County, Councilwoman Holly Smith from the City of Sanibel, Mr. Michael Weglein from Congressman Brian Mast's office, Ms. Elena Clark from Congressman Greg Steube's office and Mr. Wesley Brooks from Senator Marco Rubio's office.

Mr. Noah Valenstein (FDEP) said there is a lot of hope right now which can be attributed to the great working relationship the state has with its federal partner. The state has been making substantial progress on environmental protection and the Governor appointed the first Chief Resiliency Officer and the first Chief Science Officer. They are getting record funding from the state Legislature for the Everglades and for water quality.

Mr. Adam Gelber (OERI) provided some administrative announcements and reminded everyone the meeting was being webcast. Members were asked to review the minutes from the last meeting.

To view the webcast in its entirety and access power point presentations and handouts, please visit: <https://www.evergladesrestoration.gov/tfm/>

2. Task Force Member Introductions and Opening Remarks

Task Force members were asked to introduce themselves and provide brief introductory remarks. The following Task Force Members were in attendance:

Timothy Petty, Task Force Chair and Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, U.S. Department of the Interior

*Noah Valenstein, Task Force Vice Chair and Secretary, Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Ron Bergeron Sr., Governing Board Member, South Florida Water Management District*

Gene Duncan, Water Resources Director, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida

Nicole LeBoeuf, Acting Assistant Administrator for NOAA's National Ocean Service, U.S. Department of Commerce

Stephanie Maloney for Jeff Clark, Acting Assistant Attorney General, Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD), U.S. Department of Justice

Bill Northey, Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation and Astor Boozer, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Ryan Fisher, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary and Gib Owen for R.D. James, Assistant Secretary of the Army – Civil Works

Patty Power for Jim Shore, General Counsel to the Seminole Tribe of Florida

Kevin Ruane, Mayor for the City of Sanibel

Ed Smith, Director, Office of Ecosystem Restoration, Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Mary Walker, Regional Administrator for Region 4 alternate for Henry Darwin, Acting Deputy

Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Eric Sutton, Special Advisor and Executive Director, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

3. Science Coordination Group (SCG) Leadership

Mr. Gelber noted the SCG supports the Task Force in its efforts to coordinate the scientific aspects of the restoration effort. The current SCG Chair, Ms. Susan Gray, has announced her retirement effective at the end of this year and the SCG is recommending the SCG Chair and Vice Chair swap leadership positions. Mr. Valenstein made a motion to approve the SCG leadership change which was seconded. There was no discussion and the Task Force voted in favor of the SCG leadership change and appointed Mr. Bob Johnson and Ms. Gray as the Chair and Vice Chair respectively.

4. Report on Working Group (WG) and Science Coordination Group (SCG) Activities

Mr. James Erskine (FWC) reported on the WG's recent activities. On September 19th the WG sponsored an Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS) stakeholder workshop which was requested by the Corps of Engineers (Corps) and approved by the Task Force. The purpose of the workshop was to educate the public on the process to update the IDS and to increase transparency. The Task Force sponsored similar workshops during the 2015 update. Comments were received on the working version of the 2019 IDS update which was a precursor to the IDS being presented at this meeting. The staff at the Office of Everglades Restoration Initiatives (OERI) transmitted the entire record of the workshop to the Corps and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). The WG and SCG met jointly on June 20th and September 19th to continue working on their priorities. Of the six priorities that were identified, two ongoing intensive efforts are underway on the Invasive Exotic Species – Strategic Action Framework (SAF) and the system-wide ecological indicators.

Mr. Bob Johnson (NPS) reported on the SCG's recent activities reminding everyone that in 2009, the Task Force established a suite of 11 system-wide ecological indicators to assess current ecosystem health and provide a means to track ecosystem response to restoration. The indicators will be reviewed in partnership with the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan's (CERP's) Restoration Coordination and Verification (RECOVER) program. The goal is to determine whether the indicators are still appropriate, have enough data to support them, cover the right geographic areas and allow them to detect trends that can be separated from natural variability. Of the 11 indicators, the juvenile pink shrimp is no longer monitored due to lack of funding and the area that was monitored for crocodylians has been reduced substantially. The intent is to incorporate the needed revisions into the Task Force's 2022 Strategy and Biennial Report. The SCG is also looking into the recommendations made by the National Academy of Sciences' (NAS) Committee on Independent Review of Everglades Restoration Progress (CISRERP) to determine what can be incorporated into the process to improve performance. CISRERP recommends a mid-course assessment to look at how the benefits of the proposed CERP projects will change. The Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS) is a great example of how new science is brought into the planning process.

5. SFWMD Program and Project Update

Ms. Megan Jacoby (SFWMD) noted the tremendous momentum behind Everglades restoration and provided an update on the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration (SFER) projects the SFWMD works on with the Corps. The CERP projects reviewed included: the C-44 Reservoir and STA; C-43 Reservoir; Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP); Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) STA; and Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands. The state programs reviewed included the performance of the STAs which have been performing very well and provide approximately 80% phosphorus reduction. In Water Year 2018, one of the wettest years due to Hurricane Irma and excessive rain during May, the STAs still performed well. The Restoration Strategies Program which includes storage, additional stormwater treatment and provides a little bit of increased operational flexibility was also reviewed.

Mr. Gene Duncan said the SFWMD has done a great job building these STAs, referred to as the Everglades Construction Projects (ECPs), and they are performing incredibly well. He did not want to lose sight of the fact that there are non-ECP discharges that are going into the Everglades. The Western Everglades Restoration Plan (WERP) was supposed to address this issue. While the SFWMD should be commended for their great work, they still need to purchase the land and build the STAs for the western basins.

6. Corps Program and Project Update

Mr. Howie Gonzales (Corps) reported on the various projects the Corps is working on that will ultimately benefit two national parks, a national preserve and a national wildlife refuge as well as other federal and public lands. It is a significant program area of 2.4 million acres with over 8 million people relying on the freshwater and flood protection that the Central & Southern Florida (C&SF) project provides. Ultimately, the federally listed threatened and endangered species are a key component of why they do restoration. Within the SFER program they have multiple individual projects and programs, all of which have separate authorizations. Each of these projects could be considered a mega project, a project of significant scale and complexity that requires they break them down into smaller projects. An in-depth update was provided on the foundation projects, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation CERP projects and the CEPP.

COL Kelly noted there are three planning studies that are currently underway. The Corps anticipates moving the Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration Project (LRWRP) and the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project (LOWRP) studies across the finish line. Although there is no doubt as to the importance of the third planning study, the WERP, the Corps is recommending termination of WERP. The plan will increase hydroperiods within Big Cypress National Preserve (BCNP) directly impacting property, there are location limitations for the STAs and there are water quality concerns. Because the Corps doesn't have all the stakeholders on board and doesn't have consensus, they will be initiating the process for study termination.

Ms. Patty Power reminded the Task Force that in December 2012, the Seminole Tribe took a formal position to object to the CEPP moving forward. As a result, the Task Force put together a group to review that issue and that group met until WERP was initiated. While there are issues with Alternative H, the Seminole Tribe is disappointed to hear the Corps is recommending termination. The Seminole Tribe supports WERP and urged the Corps to keep going.

Mr. Duncan said the Miccosukee Tribe supports Alternative H and believes it is critical for the Everglades. He believes the lack of consensus comes primarily because of the Solicitor's letter dated

April 15, 2019. Both tribes have camps inside the BCNP, and Public Law 93-440, excerpt guarantees that members of the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and members of the Seminole Tribe of Florida would be permitted to continue their usual and customary use and occupancy of federally acquired lands and waters within the preserve. The camp members inside of the BCNP know they do not have flood protection and are willing to raise their camps. There is no need to condemn the property inside the BCNP. This is exactly what happened to the Miccosukee Tribe during the Picayune Strand Restoration project when the state moved forward with condemnation of 805 acres of Tribal lands on the southeast corner while giving flood protection to non-Indians on the southwest corner. The Miccosukee Tribe also wants WERP to move forward.

Mr. Ron Bergeron said it was extremely important for the planning to continue and he would be honored to recommend to the SFWMD Governing Board to take over the planning. Mr. Noah Valenstein noted the consensus and encouraged the conversation to continue and for the SFWMD to look at a possible Section 203 study. Mr. Adam Gelber added that the local knowledge is a big part of the decision-making process and Interior also supports WERP moving forward. Ms. Patty Power said the Seminole Tribe's preference would be for the Corps to finish what they started and asked for a commitment to move this forward.

Public Comment

Ms. Shannon Estenoz (Everglades Foundation) noted they also support WERP. The two tribes raised separate but integrated concerns to the Task Force in 2012. The Seminole Tribe's critical project was not operating, and the Miccosukee Tribe was being literally pushed off their Reservation by a plume of exotics. The federal agencies have a trust responsibility to the tribes. Not only is this project good for the tribes, it is good for the Everglades.

Ms. Celeste DePalma (Audubon Florida) also echoed support for WERP adding that a recent study by Audubon scientists shines a light on the increasing need for hydrologic restoration in the western Everglades. There are impacts to unique and rare species like the ghost orchid and the threatened wood stork. Audubon urges they continue the conversations on WERP.

Mr. Bill Cooksey (National Wildlife Federation) said that hunters and anglers have seen first-hand how too many summers with toxic algae outbreaks and changing salinity levels have wreaked havoc on fisheries, wildlife and the economy. They appreciate the historic \$200 million investment in the President's Budget which will enable them to continue progress made to restore the natural flow of water south and reduce toxic algae outbreaks. It is important to keep the momentum and grow the federal and state investments to move projects like the EAA Reservoir forward. He thanked the Task Force for working cooperatively to prioritize restoration of America's Everglades.

Ms. Kelly Ralston (American Sportfishing Association) reminded everyone that Florida is the fishing capital of the world and for the sportfishing industry that represents an \$11.5 billion economic impact. Florida is critical for the success of their industry with over 4 million anglers visiting Florida every year. They are poised to make great progress for the Everglades, but federal funding is the key. They applaud the state for its record funding allowing projects to move forward in an expedited fashion and for taking a comprehensive look at water quality throughout the state.

Mr. Mike Elfenbein (Everglades Coordinating Council) noted the council represents 17 conservation organizations in south Florida. The planning for WERP and the attempt to circumvent Congress and

condemn private property as documented in the Solicitor's memo has united stakeholders in a manner not seen since the BCNP was established in the 1970s. This body failed to engage the stakeholders throughout the planning process. WERP will merely treat the symptoms and not the cause which lies north of the lake. WERP may distort the rain driven system of Big Cypress and introduce nutrient levels that threaten to alter vegetation. WERP will elevate water levels and cause flooding of upland habitats and decimate the species that rely on the habitat, including Florida Panthers. Water quality cannot be assured and WERP will use Big Cypress as a filter to remove nutrients. WERP will not address the problems BCNP faces and will simply create more problems. He asked the Task Force to consider having a stakeholder group comprised of the people this project will directly affect.

Mr. Duncan provided a copy of the Tribe's comments to the post authorization change report for the Everglades Agricultural Area. The Tribe believes the reservoir is too deep and in the wrong place. The reservoir was supposed to be a three to four-foot shallow reservoir and the Tribe knows they will get no water quality treatment from a 23-foot deep reservoir. According to the Corps' analysis, there will be a 43% increase in flows into WCA-3 increasing phosphorus by 36% on tribal lands. There are tribal gravesites right in the middle of the footprint. While they were able to make accommodations for the smaller STA's there won't be any way to do that under 23 feet of water. Based on a 41-year period of record, they will not be able to access 300,000 acres of Tribal lands 11 out of 41 years. The Miccosukee Tribe has a serious concern with how the system is going to be operated.

COL Kelly said he heard a level of consensus he did not hear before and suggested they figure out how to move forward. Secretary Valenstein noted that the federal and state agencies are willing to work on this and the Corps is willing to look at Alternative H and the language regarding property rights. He suggested they, as a group, continue working together. Dr. Petty suggested they have a motion for the Director of the OERI to continue the discussions on the existing report and report back to the Task Force at its next meeting. Secretary Valenstein made a motion which was seconded. The Task Force voted unanimously for the Director and the OERI team to move forward with those discussions and report back at the next TF meeting.

Congressman Mast noted that at the last Task Force meeting, he asked whether the levels in Lake Okeechobee could be managed more appropriately. The Corps and the SFWMD worked to lower the water levels and as a result the community south of the Herbert Hoover Dike did not have to be evacuated when Hurricane Dorian, a Category 5 storm, came ashore. They did not have the damage they could have had if there had been too much water on the lake. There was no additional cost for managing the lake differently. This made a substantial difference to the ecosystem not just in terms of the discharges that were prevented but also in terms of the communities that were not receiving the discharges. He hoped they could take this on at the federal, state and local level and get those nutrients out of the waterways. He thanked the Task Force for its work over this past year and encouraged them to keep that momentum going.

Mr. Duncan said the Miccosukee Tribe supported the Corps' deviation because they were assured the STA's would remain hydrated and the conservation areas would not be overly drained. He provided a copy of the Miccosukee Tribe's comments on the 2019 planned deviation to the water control plan for Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades Agricultural Area (LORS 2018). Lake Okeechobee is the liquid heart of south Florida and they cannot manage the lake for one group.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Secretary Valenstein (FDEP) made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 2019 meeting which was seconded. The minutes were approved without objection.

7. Consultation on the Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS)

Ms. Eva Velez (Corps) provided an update on the IDS, a forward-looking document with a 10-year planning level estimate representing \$6 billion. Recognizing that the success of CERP sits on the shoulders of the foundation projects, those projects are also included in the IDS. For the first time, there is a detailed look at the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) which represents over \$3 billion. The projects on the IDS fit together because every project connects one region to another. The FY19 accomplishments and FY20 focus for the four regions (Southern Coastal Systems, Greater Everglades, Northern Estuaries and Lake Okeechobee) were reviewed. In the Yellow Book, there was an assumption that to implement those 68 components in 35 years, it would take about \$200 million each year from the federal and non-federal sponsor. As of FY18, the C&SF CERP federal investment is approximately \$1.3 million and the non-federal investment is approximately \$1.7 million, with significant investments made by the state that are not yet credited. It is important to acknowledge partners such as the City of Sanibel and Martin County that invest and do their part.

Mayor Ruane noted they are currently 5 years behind on the IDS schedule. He applauded the Corps for their operational flexibility and the Governor for what he is doing but these projects will run dry without funding. He reminded the Task Force that this is America's Everglades. He represents 412 mayors throughout Florida and 1,400 mayors throughout the U.S. that have all signed a resolution for Everglades restoration. Ms. Patty Power said she liked the way the IDS was re-packaged adding that it is a good planning tool that shows what can be done with enough funding.

Secretary Valenstein asked if there was a way to look at the IDS with multiple funding options. He thought it would be good for Task Force staff to show the implication of lower or higher funding. COL Kelly explained that by having multiple options they could end up with an infinite set of solutions. The current IDS is the baseline and the Corps will identify how it deviates on a regular basis every six months or every year. Secretary Valenstein agreed that was a good approach and the Corps' product did not have to change. Dr. Petty said the question is how this could lean forward or slow down based on the resources available. He would work with Mr. Gelber, the Corps and others to look at some ideas and options. These placemats are a great communication tool that allow them to look ahead to 2030, which is amazing.

8. Consultation on Project Implementation Reports (PIRs)

Mr. Howie Gonzales (Corps) noted the intent is to update the Task Force on progress made to complete the required PIRs and to satisfy the requirement in the Programmatic Regulations to consult with the Task Force. The LRWRP location, goals and plan formulation process was reviewed. The features of Alternative 5R were reviewed. They have gone through internal and external reviews, independent reviews as well as multiple public reviews. The concerns expressed are tied primarily to the water storage feature but they have continued to work to help them understand the data and models used and ultimately to have the support and understanding that once the project is authorized, they will work with them on detailed design as they collect the data. The schedule and milestones needed to get to a Chiefs Report in March 2020 and consideration for WRDA 2020 were reviewed.

The LOWRP location, purpose, goals and plan formulation process were reviewed. This is one of those CERP studies initiated back in the early 2000's that was put back on the shelf due to a couple of challenges that didn't make it feasible at that time. This study was picked back up in 2016 and is now on the verge of completion. The features of the TSP, Alternative 1BWR, were reviewed. LOWRP is the only CERP project that influences the timing and distribution of water entering Lake Okeechobee which is key to Everglades restoration, estuary protection and water supply. They conducted similar internal, external and public reviews. The schedule and milestones needed to get to a Chiefs Report in May 2020 and consideration for WRDA 2020 were reviewed.

Mr. Gene Duncan said his biggest concern with the LOWRP is that it doesn't address all the different watersheds that go into Lake Okeechobee and the phosphorus they contribute. The Miccosukee Tribe is disappointed that it is all centered on the southwest corner. Ms. Patty Power said the Seminole Tribe has objected to the LOWRP because there are parts of the wetland attenuation feature that are within a mile of the reservation border. This feature has been adjusted to address some of the Tribe's concerns, and while they appreciate that, it is still a big problem. They are concerned there could be pressure in the future to increase storage and the Seminole Tribe will do everything it can to stop this wetland attenuation feature from being put in place. The Tribe also has concerns that this amount of ASR has not been used anywhere else in the world. The Tribe prefers the ASR testing be done as far away as possible from the reservation border. The Tribe also believes the Corps should follow the NAS' recommendations on implementation when they finish its review. The Seminole Tribe's written comments were circulated to the Task Force via e-mail in advance of this meeting. The Seminole Tribe has had its own analysis done and does not see why they must bear all the risk for this portion of the project.

9. Python Management – One Mission, Many Hands

Mr. Eric Sutton (FWC) noted that despite hearing that pythons are everywhere in the Everglades, they are very difficult to find. They are excellent dispersers and there are no population estimates. Pythons are in the environment as a result of pet trade in south Florida and a breeding facility being destroyed by Hurricane Andrew. In 1979, the first Burmese python was removed from ENP. FWC, SFWMD and NPS have partnered together to maximize removal efforts by expanding contractor and volunteer removal programs, supporting innovative research and engaging the public. To date they have removed more than 9,100 snakes. There is collaborative research underway and they will continue pushing forward with these efforts so that when the water is right, they have a healthy fish and wildlife population. Their newly appointed Commissioner who also happens to be the Chairman for the Miami Super Bowl Host Committee along with the Everglades Foundation and The Ocean Conservancy will launch Ocean to Everglades (O2E) to engage and educate the public about the perils, opportunities and threats they have in south Florida. They will be highlighting the positive work they are doing against invasive exotics in south Florida, using the python as the poster child. There are three agencies, three different programs but one mission.

10. Florida Coral Reef Tract Discussion

Ms. Joanna Walzack (FDEP) noted the intent is to continue the conversation about the Everglades and the Florida reef tract which is one big ecosystem. Florida's coral reefs extend for 330 nautical miles from the Dry Tortugas to Martin County and the St. Lucie Inlet. The Florida Legislature established the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation Area to draw attention to the northern part of the

reef tract that had no coordinated management. Coral reefs are the rainforest of the sea, ecologically diverse and essential for south Florida's economy. In addition to world-class fishing, biomedical exploration and a \$6 billion tourism industry, Florida's coral reefs provide \$355 million in flood protection benefits and support nearly \$320 million in economic activity. Stony coral tissue loss disease, which is highly infectious, has been affecting all the predominant reef builders, including many species listed under the Endangered Species Act. This disease outbreak has spread from Miami-Dade County into the Caribbean. Because of this unprecedented outbreak they have an unprecedented response in Florida and have created an ad hoc group of partners working to make sure they have a coordinated effort going forward. The short-term efforts to enhance disease response capacity and the long-term efforts to reduce local stressors and restore environmental conditions to improve reef resilience were reviewed. They want to make sure they are conducting meaningful ecosystem restoration and the path forward is to continue working on those big challenging issues.

Ms. Sarah Fangman noted that the reefs in the Florida Keys and around the world have been declining for decades and the coral disease has made the situation more urgent. She highlighted some of NOAA's rescue and restoration activities to address the challenges on the reefs. With this disease ravaging their reefs, they have taken the unprecedented step of collecting live, healthy corals and sending them around the country for safekeeping and propagating. When they are put back into the water, they will need good water quality and that is where the work of this Task Force comes in. NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program was established to protect, conserve and restore the nation's coral reefs and will address increased resilience to climate change, reduce land-based sources of pollution, improve fisheries' sustainability and restore viable coral populations. At the local level, for example, the Florida Keys National Marine sanctuary recently released their "restoration blueprint" intended to be a comprehensive strategy for managing resources in the Florida Keys. She has been speaking to thousands of members in the community and they are concerned that they are not going to succeed if the regional issues are not addressed in addition to the local issues. They will continue to work to protect these corals and rescue them, but this needs to be done in conjunction with the work this Task Force is doing.

Ms. Nicole LeBoeuf said that as a lifelong conservationist, pulling healthy, live corals out of the wild is an act of desperation. All they are doing is buying time for this Task Force and others to mitigate some of the threats and pressures to the coral reefs as the corals are returned it to the wild.

Public Comment

Ms. Sarah Hurd (Martin County Commissioner) thanked Congressman Brian Mast for making sure that the progress made was successful over the past year. She reminded the members that one of the promises of Everglades restoration is to restore suitable habitat for successful nesting for the once magnificent flocks of wading birds that help define the Everglades. The Indian River Lagoon South (IRL-South) project authorized in WRDA 2007 calls for restoring 90,000 acres of natural lands. Martin County residents provided \$75 million and have already purchased nearly 30,000 acres of this land and restored a great deal of it with astonishing results. They need to prioritize acquisition and rehydration of the remainder. She has grave concerns about projects being leapfrogged in the IDS. When IRL South was authorized, they did not have anywhere near the knowledge or experience they now possess on cyanobacteria, harmful algal blooms as well as the dangers of non-alcoholic liver diseases and neurodegenerative disease clusters in Martin County. They now know volumes and that is why it is so critical to complete the IRL South projects.

Mr. Mike Elfenbein (Everglades Coordinating Council) noted the additional access provided to Everglades National Park (ENP) has provided for a 200% increase in the python eradication effort. It is his opinion that the management practices of the National Park Service in conjunction with the restrictive policies of the federal agencies have allowed this epidemic to get to where it is today. BCNP is quickly being consumed by the same problems and access remains limited. While they use fisherman to deal with lionfish, the policies do not allow them to use the large army of sportsmen who have the equipment, time and willingness to help with pythons. He asked that they work together to find a way to do that.

Ms. Kelly Ralstein (American Sports Fishing Organization) commended the state and federal partners along with NGOs and educational facilities that are working on the coral disease epidemic. It has been encouraging to see everyone coming together to develop a plan that will restore the reefs and prevent future disease outbreaks. She commended the Task Force for recognizing the linkage and the connectedness between water quality and the resources.

Mr. Paul Backhouse (Seminole Tribe of Florida) noted that the Seminole Tribe's ancestral land extended from south Florida up to southern Tennessee and today they have been reduced to seven reservations. While the Tribe supports wetland restoration, it cannot support the idea of a wetland attenuation feature right next to the reservation, as proposed in the LOWRP. The Tribe has significant cultural and historic sites on the eastern portion of its reservation which could be potentially flooded by any breach of that wetland attenuation feature on its boundaries.

Ms. Julie Hill Gabriel (National Audubon) said the solution for all the issues discussed at this meeting comes down to advancing these Everglades restoration projects which continues to be one of National Audubon's top priorities.

Assignments, Next Steps and Closing Comments

Secretary Valenstein said it would be useful for staff, at each meeting, to bring forward major obstacles so that they could have a straightforward conversation on how they can make progress. He suggested the agenda to have a section laying out the top 5 obstacles to making progress, recognizing that every agency and group may have different obstacles. Dr. Petty agreed. Mr. Gene Duncan seconded the Secretary's suggestion adding that this is the forum to discuss those problems and solve them.

Dr. Petty directed Mr. Gelber and the OERI team to work with the WG on building on the Corps' WERP report. For the IDS, OERI is to work with the WG and the Corps on the resources and finances and what it means to have more and what it means to have less so they can communicate that better. Finally, they should identify the top-five obstacles and top-five action items. It will be up to this Task Force to work on some priorities. He would love to see them try to accomplish some things before the next meeting. Mr. Adam Gelber said the WG, SCG and OERI will also continue working on pink shrimp funding, Lake Okeechobee, invasive species, system-wide ecological indicators, CISRERP activities and groundwater flows.

The meeting adjourned at 4:08PM.

To access power point presentations and handouts, please visit:

<https://www.evergladesrestoration.gov/tfm/>

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 - b. Draft Minutes, April 2019 meeting
 - c. Lunch Options
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3. SCG Leadership
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4. Report on WG and SCG Activities
 - a. Presentation
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5. SFWMD Program and Project Update
6. Corps Program and Project Update
7. Consultation on the IDS
 - a. Task Force Consultation Fact Sheet
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 - c. Power Point Presentation
8. Consultation on PIRs
 - a. Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration Project (LRWRP) presentation
 - b. LRWRP Fact Sheet
 - c. Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project (LOWRP)
 - d. LOWRP Fact Sheet
9. Python Management – One Mission, Many Hands
10. Florida Coral Reef Tract Discussion
 - a. FDEP presentation
 - b. NOAA presentation
11. Background Information
 - a. WRDA 1996 excerpt
12. Miccosukee Tribe's handout re: WERP (DOI Solicitor's memo)
13. Miccosukee Tribe's handout (excerpt of PL 93-440)
14. Miccosukee Tribe's handout (PACR for the Everglades Agricultural Area)
15. Miccosukee Tribe's handout (comments on Lake O. deviation)
16. Seminole Tribe's comments re: LOWRP