



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT
701 SAN MARCO BOULEVARD
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32207-8175

Programs and Project Management

Drew Bartlett
Executive Director
South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) recognizes the essential nature of water storage north of Lake Okeechobee to meet the goals of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), and to provide flexibility in managing the water resources of the Central and South Florida system. To that end, the Corps and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) kicked off the Lake Okeechobee Water Restoration Project (LOWRP) in July 2016. Since then, our agencies have put a great deal of effort into development of the Recommended Plan documented in the Final Integrated Project Implementation Report and Environmental Impact Statement (PIR/EIS), dated August 2020. Federal, state, local, and tribal governments, the United States Congress, the Florida Legislature, stakeholder groups, and members of the public have taken concrete, collaborative steps to move key restoration programs and plans forward, including storage north, south, east and west of Lake Okeechobee.

In response to comments received during State and Agency Review of the Draft Report of the Chief of Engineers in October 2020, and the Corps policy review of the Final PIR/EIS, the Corps would like to evaluate the potential benefits of the LOWRP Recommended Plan without the Wetland Attenuation Feature. With this letter, I am requesting SFWMD technical assistance with preparation of this supplemental information including the development of the scope, schedule, and budget to perform the required work to update the PIR/EIS.

The Corps looks forward to continued development of the plan for storage north of Lake Okeechobee and continuing our long-standing partnership to get the water right for America's Everglades through implementation of CERP.

If you have any questions regarding the status of the Corps review please feel free contact me or the LOWRP Project Manager, Mr. E. Timothy Gysan, at (904) 232-3272 or by e-mail at earl.t.gysan@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

Andrew D Kelly, Jr.
Colonel, U.S. Army
District Commander