



Jeb Bush
Governor

Department of Environmental Protection

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3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Colleen M. Castille
Secretary

September 1, 2006

Ms. Carol Ann Wehle
Executive Director
South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun club Road
West Palm Beach, Florida 33416-4680

Dear Ms. *Carol*

Thank you for your July 28, 2006 notification of proposed revisions to the *Everglades Protection Area Tributary Basins Long-Term Plan for Achieving Water Quality Goals* (Long-Term Plan). The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) shares the belief that these Long-Term Plan revisions will significantly enhance Florida's efforts to restore and protect the Everglades ecosystem. The DEP looks forward to working with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) to both expedite and ensure successful implementation of the projects described within these revisions.

As discussed, the proposed revisions include:

1. Addition of the C-9 & C-11W Basins Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) Projects to the Long-Term Plan through revision of Section 3.4 of the Long-Term Plan. This revision will provide a dedicated funding source to ensure timely completion of these important projects and will ensure integration and consistency with the CERP.
2. Revisions to the STA-1W enhancement of converting emergent vegetation to Submersed Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) in Cells 1B and 3. Based on lessons learned with similar enhancements previously used in other treatment cells, this conversion will now be done without taking the treatment cell completely off-line, resulting in more effective use of STA-1W during the enhancement period. The estimated completion date is January 2008, with SAV grow-in occurring over the summer of 2008.
3. Revisions to the STA-2 enhancement of adding an internal levee to Cell 3. Tracer studies and modeling on the potential effect of the levee indicate no improved phosphorus removal performance with the levee as compared to without the levee; therefore, the levee will be deleted. In addition, this deletion will avoid having to take this treatment cell off-line for 12 to 30 months during construction.

"More Protection, Less Process"

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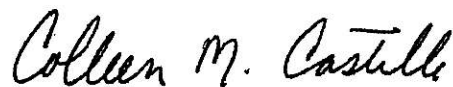
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4. Revisions to the STA-6 enhancement of adding internal levees and structures in Sections 1 and 2. As for STA-2, modeling of STA-6 indicated no improved phosphorus removal performance with the levees compared to without the levees; therefore, the levees will be deleted. In addition, this deletion will avoid having to take the existing Section 1 off-line for 12 to 30 months during construction.
5. Revisions to the Options for Accelerating Recovery Project in Section 7.1.3 of the Long-Term Plan. Due to the complex nature of this project, it is necessary to expand the scope, extend the time frame and increase the budget for the project in order to fulfill the objectives envisioned in the Long-Term Plan. The project will now continue until 2010, with a total budget of \$3,767,282. A summary of this project is available at: http://www.sfwmd.gov/org/wrp/wrp_evg/projects/pdfs/accelerat_fire_project.pdf.
6. Revisions to the Process Development and Engineering (PDE) Component of the Long-Term Plan. This series of revisions to various projects of the PDE Component will greatly enhance this component, consistent with the adaptive implementation process envisioned for the component.

The DEP understands that the above mentioned revisions were discussed at the June 2006 Long-Term Plan Communications Meeting and approved by the SFWMD's Governing Board at the July 2006 meeting. The DEP's permitting staff is aware of these revisions and will incorporate any modifications necessary to the permits to accommodate these revisions. It is also noted that the required request for permit modification has also been submitted along with the proposed revision. The DEP believes that the proposed revisions are consistent with the adaptive implementation process envisioned under the Everglades Forever Act (Section, 373.4592, Florida Statutes). Therefore, the DEP, through this letter, approves the SFWMD's proposed revisions to the Long-Term Plan. Please note that a description of these revisions must be included in the 2007 South Florida Environmental Report in lieu of the Everglades Consolidated Report, as required by Section 1.10.4 of the Long-Term Plan.

The DEP looks forward to working with the SFWMD on the implementation of the Long-Term Plan. If you or your staff has questions regarding this approval, please direct them to Frank Nearhoof 850-245-8420 or frank.nearhoof@dep.state.fl.us.

Sincerely,



Colleen M. Castille
Secretary

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