

Questions and Answers

Long-Term Plan for Achieving Water Quality Goals

What is the Long-Term Plan and why was it developed?

The Long-Term Plan is a comprehensive set of water quality improvement measures designed to ensure that all waters entering the Everglades Protection Area (EPA) achieve compliance with water quality standards. These measures include enhancements to the existing Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs), expanded best management practices, and integration with the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) projects. The Long-Term Plan was developed in response to the 1994 Everglades Forever Act (F.S.373.4592) requirement that the District submit to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) a plan by December 31, 2003, for achieving compliance with the phosphorus, and other state water quality standards in the EPA, and to include the estimated costs, funding mechanisms and implementation schedules associated with the plan. In response to this requirement, the Long-Term Plan for Achieving Water Quality Goals (The Long-Term Plan) was developed.

What are the underlying principles of the Long-Term Plan?

The Long-Term Plan is predicated upon maximizing water quality improvement through an adaptive implementation process in which:

- All scientifically defensible steps are taken at the earliest achievable dates, and in full recognition of the timeline established in the EFA.
- Focused efforts are directed to improving the scientific and technical basis for additional steps, leading to incremental implementation of those steps as soon as their need is confirmed.
- The synergy between the Long-Term Plan effort and other regional efforts, in particular the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) is recognized and maximum benefit realized from full integration with those efforts.
- Existing and proposed treatment facilities are operated, maintained and monitored to maximize their treatment effectiveness.
- Steps are taken to accelerate the recovery of previously impacted areas in the EPA, including completion of the hydropattern restoration goals of the EFA.

What is the timeframe for implementing the Long-Term Plan?

The Long-Term Plan contains an aggressive schedule of projects to be completed by December 31, 2006, followed by a series of additional projects to be completed in coordination with CERP projects. As described in the 2003 amended EFA, the Long-Term Plan contains an initial 13-year (2003-2016) phase and if needed to achieve the phosphorus criterion in the EPA, a 10-year second phase.

How much will the Long-Term Plan cost to implement?

In the October 27, 2003 version of the Long-Term Plan, the total estimated expenditures for full implementation of the Long-Term Plan over Fiscal Years 2004 through 2016 were projected to be \$444 million. These estimated expenditures include the routine monitoring, operation and maintenance of the ECP Stormwater Treatment Areas, however they do not include expenditures associated with any CERP efforts. In November 2004, the Long-Term Plan was revised to include the construction of an additional 18,000 acres of Stormwater Treatment Areas as well as the addition of recreational facilities at each of the STAs. Further revisions occurred in FY06, and a description of all revisions is included in the annual South Florida Environmental Report. Taking into account all revisions to date, the revised total estimated expenditures for full implementation of the Long-Term Plan over Fiscal Years 2004 through 2016 are approximately \$1.5 billion.

Who is working on the Long-Term Plan?

The South Florida Water Management District is the primary agency responsible for implementing the projects and activities included in the Long-Term Plan. The District is utilizing in-house staff as well as consultant and contractor support to implement the various research, design, and construction components of the Long-Term Plan. Other state and federal agencies and other stakeholders have provided and continue to provide support, assistance, input and guidance throughout the implementation of the Long-Term Plan. In some cases, other state and federal agencies and stakeholders are funding and implementing individual projects or project components described in the Long-Term Plan.

Will the Long-Term Plan alone restore the Everglades?

While the Long-Term Plan will accomplish many long-term restoration objectives, it alone cannot achieve all the goals of Everglades restoration. Several other activities and programs are currently underway that will contribute to the overall restoration of the Everglades ecosystem, including but not limited to the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Where can I get more information on the Long-Term Plan?

An executive summary of the October 27, 2003, Long-Term Plan is available by clicking here: [Executive Summary](#). The complete October 27, 2003 Long-Term Plan document can be viewed or printed by clicking here: [The Long-Term Plan for Achieving Water Quality Goals](#).