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quick facts on...

LONG-TERM PLAN

for Achieving Water Quality Goals in the Everglades Protection Area

JUNE 2007

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts.

Our Mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems, and water supply.

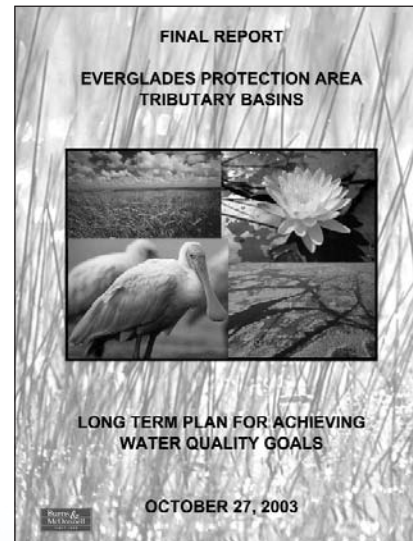
Substantial progress in reducing phosphorus in waters entering the Everglades Protection Area has been made by the State of Florida and other stakeholders. The combined performance of the regulatory program in the Everglades Agricultural Area and the Stormwater Treatment Areas, both mandated by Florida's Everglades Forever Act, has exceeded expectations. Successful phosphorus controls have also been implemented in urban and other Everglades tributary basins.

Despite these achievements, additional measures are needed to ensure that all waters entering the Everglades Protection Area meet water quality standards and the goals established in the Everglades Forever Act. This includes compliance with the phosphorus criterion established in Rule 62-302.540, F.A.C.

These additional measures, compiled in the Long-Term Plan for Achieving Water Quality Goals, were developed to achieve compliance with the phosphorus criterion. They include enhancements to the existing Stormwater Treatment Areas, expanded Best Management Practices and integration with other environmental restoration projects. The Long-Term Plan also addresses the remaining scientific uncertainties surrounding phosphorus reduction.

To maximize water quality improvements, the Long-Term Plan utilizes an adaptive implementation process. This is achieved by the following:

- All scientifically defensible steps are taken at the earliest achievable dates, in full recognition of the timeline established in the Everglades Forever Act.



- Focused efforts are directed at improving the scientific and technical basis for developing new or additional phosphorus-reduction steps. These are implemented incrementally as soon as their need is confirmed.
- The synergy between the Long-Term Plan and other regional efforts to reduce phosphorus, in particular the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), is clearly recognized. Maximum benefits will be realized through full integration with these efforts.
- Existing and proposed treatment facilities—especially the Stormwater Treatment Areas—are operated, maintained and monitored to maximize their treatment effectiveness.
- Steps are taken to accelerate the recovery of previously impacted areas in the Everglades Protection Area, including completion of the hydropattern restoration goals of the Everglades Forever Act.

Florida's Water
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Additional Facts

Timeframe: The Long-Term Plan is being implemented with an initial 13-year (2003-2016) phase and, if needed, a 10-year second phase.

Cost: In November 2004, the Long-Term Plan was revised to include the construction of an additional 18,000 acres of Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) as well as the addition of recreational facilities at each of the STAs. Further revisions occurred in FY06 and FY07, and a description of all revisions is included in the annual South Florida Environmental Report. Total estimated expenditures for full implementation of the revised Long-Term Plan over Fiscal Years 2004 through 2016 are approximately \$1 billion.

Agencies: The South Florida Water Management District is the primary agency responsible for implementing the projects and activities included in the Long-Term Plan. Other state and federal agencies as well as various stakeholders have provided and continue to provide support, assistance, input and guidance. In some cases, other state and federal agencies and stakeholders are funding and implementing individual projects or project components.

Public Involvement: Significant public involvement led to the development of the Long-Term Plan in 2003. Public involvement opportunities continue through quarterly and annual communications meetings. At these meetings, District project managers present progress reports, implementation details and proposed revisions. Members of the public or other stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in the revision process through these public meetings.



Vegetation research in a Stormwater Treatment Area.

Revisions: In keeping with the requirements of the Everglades Forever Act, revisions to the Long-Term Plan are incorporated through an adaptive management approach. Changes to the Long-Term Plan can be proposed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection or the South Florida Water Management District. The Everglades Forever Act states that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection is responsible for approving revisions to the Long-Term Plan.

Integration: 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 under way that will contribute to the overall restoration of the Everglades ecosystem, including but not limited to the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program.

More Information

An executive summary and complete text of the October 27, 2003, Long-Term Plan are available online at www.sfwmd.gov/sta. All revisions to the Long-Term Plan, including research and management of the Stormwater Treatment Areas, are posted on this website as well.



Enhancement work in Stormwater Treatment Area 1 West.



JR06/15/07

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