

# The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan The First Five Years

English

A journey is underway to restore the Everglades. In 2000, Congress authorized the **Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP)**, the largest environmental restoration effort in history. CERP will enhance Everglades wetlands and associated lakes, rivers, and bays in the 16-county region of south Florida. CERP projects will capture and store much of the 1.7 billion gallons of water a day currently lost to the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico, to revitalize south Florida's natural environment.

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan was developed in the 1990s with widespread public interest and support. Many public meetings were held and thousands of people provided input into the final plan – resulting in a widely supported plan that balances many competing interests.

Today, the plan is being implemented. A major milestone has been reached: 2005 marked the fifth year of the implementation of CERP. In this short time, much progress has been made to restore the Everglades and south Florida's ecosystem. Some highlights follow:

**Continuing Foundation Projects:** Related projects that provide the foundation for CERP moved forward with many nearing completion. These projects include restoring the Kissimmee River, improving water flows to Everglades National Park, and building treatment marshes to improve water quality in the northern Everglades.

**Buying Land:** More than 207,000 acres of land – or 51 percent of that needed – has been acquired at a cost of nearly \$1 billion. Land acquisition has been accelerated so needed parcels can be purchased at today's prices and while they remain available.

**Beginning Pilot Projects:** A regional study and pilot projects have begun to test the feasibility of large-scale aquifer storage and recovery and seepage management technologies. Information provided will help answer questions about these technologies.

**Designing CERP Projects:** Everglades restoration is a complex undertaking comprised of more than 50 individual projects. Principal features of these projects include water storage reservoirs, treatment marshes, removal of manmade barriers that block water flow, reduction of underground seepage, and more. The **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** and its partners are in various stages of planning for 19 of these individual projects.



Kissimmee River



Lake Okeechobee



Indian River Lagoon



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
Jacksonville District

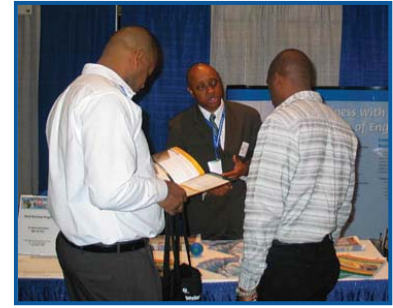
**Plans Completed for Two Projects:** Recommended final plans were completed for two important CERP projects: Indian River Lagoon South and Picayune Strand (Southern Golden Gate Estates) Hydrologic Restoration. After Congressional authorization, these projects will move into the detailed design and construction phases.

### **Establishing Management Processes and**

**Agreements:** CERP is a \$10.5 billion mission spanning 30 years and involving many levels of government and stakeholders. Important management agreements, processes, and guidance documents were established to ensure that the goals of CERP are met.

**Banding Projects:** The more than 50 CERP projects were prioritized and banded into five-year time frames. This will ensure projects are implemented in the most cost-effective manner and benefits to the natural environment are provided as quickly as possible.

**Involving the Public:** Many efforts have been made to engage the public in CERP implementation. Public meetings and workshops, special events, and the distribution of creative print and electronic products have all helped raise awareness. Tremendous efforts have been made to involve minority and low income communities and those with limited English proficiency. Special efforts have been made to communicate CERP contracting opportunities to small and minority businesses.



Regional Business Expo



Public Meeting

## **The Next Five Years**

During the next five years, key goals will be met. Foundation projects will be completed; pilot and regional studies will provide valuable information; construction of CERP projects will begin; and the natural environment will exhibit noticeable improvements.

## **To Learn More**

The *2005 Report to Congress* provides a full overview of CERP, including past and projected accomplishments, funding issues, outreach activities, banding of projects, and many more related topics. Please visit [www.evergladesplan.org](http://www.evergladesplan.org) to review the complete report and for much more information on Everglades restoration.

1-877-CERP-USA  
[www.evergladesplan.org](http://www.evergladesplan.org)



### **The Journey to Restore America's Everglades**

A partnership of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, South Florida Water Management District and many other federal, state, local and tribal partners.