

**Master Recreation Plan  
Recreation Planning Team Meeting  
Meeting Summary**

6 February 2003

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

---

**To:** Attendees

**From:** Everglades Partners Joint Venture (EPJV)

**Subject:** Master Recreation Planning Team Meeting Summary

**Attendees:** See Attendance Sheet(s)

**Handouts:** Agenda

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) Master Recreation Planning Team (RPT) meeting was held 6 February 2003 at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Services (IFAS) facility in Ft. Pierce, Florida.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Tambour Eller, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Project Manager, welcomed the RPT members and attendees and asked everyone to state their names and the agencies they represent. Jerry Krenz introduced himself as the new South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) project manager. Teri Shoemaker, Everglades Partners Joint Venture (EPJV), stated she would be providing support for this meeting.

**FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT**

Teri Shoemaker, EPJV, explained the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) to the attendees. Following is a list of main points with respect to the FACA as provided by the Jacksonville District Corps Office of Council. The suggestions from the guidance document are as follows:

- Team members/decision makers include only the federal officials and elected officers of State, Local and tribal governments (or their designated authority) acting in their official capacities;
- The team members should be physically distinct from the public attendants by seating, nametags or other measures;
- Any voting or consensus should reflect only the views of the members;
- Comments from non-members should be accepted in a forum that makes clear the comment is public input and not part of the interagency discussion or decision making;
- Comment periods should be at specifically designated times, prefaced with an explanation that the group is entertaining public comment; and

- Comment periods should not occur with great frequency during the meeting.

Teri also identified the public comment periods specified on the agenda.

## **MRP PROGRAM MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

Tambour Eller presented an update on the Master Recreation Plan (MRP) Program Management Plan (PgMP). She included background for new RPT members. She explained that the PgMP defines the project scope, schedule, and budget. The PgMP is not a decision document but rather a management document that helps measure success of the project. Tambour gave an overview of the RPT accomplishments completed thus far:

### September 2002:

The MRP kickoff meeting was held in September to establish the RPT and discuss initial tasks. Since some projects are already in the Project Implementation Report (PIR) phase, the RPT wanted to give those Project Delivery Teams (PDTs) interim guidance in the form of a CERP Guidance Memorandum (CGM). The RPT discussed the following work products at the kickoff meeting: PgMP, CGM, and the MRP.

### October–November 2002

In October, the RPT reviewed the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) and discussed sub team tasks. The RPT developed the following sub teams: CGM, Inventory, and Outreach. sub team members initiated tasks and developed preliminary strategies via e-mail and teleconferences.

### December 2002 – January 2003

The RPT formatted and revised the draft PgMP and developed the draft schedule and budget.

### Upcoming Activities

Following are the upcoming MRP PgMP activities:

- February: Finalize draft and complete internal review
- March: Finalize draft document and post to web
- April: Conduct Public Workshop and incorporate/address comments
- May: Agency Approval

RPT members should submit comments on the draft PgMP by 14 February 2003. Any member needing a copy should contact Tambour. A comments matrix was developed to track comments/responses. Grammatical comments will not be included in the matrix, but all other comments will be addressed using the matrix.

## **MRP Focus**

The MRP focuses on recreation and public use that can be authorized and implemented as features of CERP Projects:

- Must be compatible with project purpose, goals and objectives
- Must be affordable within project cost limitations
- Must be compatible with surrounding environment
- Primary emphasis will be on features that are cost-sharable under Corps policy

## Overview of WBS

Following is a quick overview of the WBS:

- Specify Problems/Opportunities
  - MRP Kick-Off Meeting
  - Draft Goals and Objectives
  - Series of stakeholder meetings/public workshops
  - Specific questions to gather information
  - Outreach sub team to recommend method
  - Finalize Goals and Objectives
- Inventory/Forecast Conditions
  - Cultural and Ecological Resources
  - Collect/compile inventory data
  - Recreation Program Analysis
  - ID/Delineate market area
  - Perform recreational use analysis
  - Evaluate recreational opportunities
  - Facility needs projection
- Land Allocation/Classification
  - Land Allocation
  - Operations
  - Recreation
  - Fish and Wildlife
  - Land Classification
  - Project operations
  - Recreation
  - Environmental Sensitive Areas
  - Multiple Resource Management
  - Easement Lands
- Formulate Conceptual Plans
  - Public Access and Needs Identified
  - Conceptual Plan
  - General description of proposed area
  - Site analysis
  - Develop design objectives
  - Outline proposed public access and recreation facilities
  - May include funding/partnering opportunities
  - Develop, evaluate, compare, and select

- System-wide Monitoring/Evaluation
  - MRP provides a baseline
  - Potential Recommendation
  - Master Recreation Implementation Team
  - Monitor/evaluate progress and success
  - Coordinates with PDTs
  - CERP Updates
  
- Outreach and Public Involvement
  - Throughout entire process
  - Develop Outreach Strategy
  - Public Involvement
  - Stakeholder meetings/coordination
  - Public workshops/meetings
  - Public Education
  - Informational Products
  - Web page

Currently the schedule and budget are being revised, and the Design Coordination Team (DCT) must approve the revised schedule. Tambour will distribute the PgMP appendices (WBS, Schedule, Budget, etc.) to the RPT members for review and input.

## **Discussion**

*Q&A: It appears that opportunities are identified based on the different CERP regions. Can the RPT identify opportunities not specific to a CERP project? Is that in the scope? Can the RPT pull resources for those facilities?* The RPT will have to stay within a CERP project boundary. However, the RPT will address this issue during the MRP. Specific opportunities should be identified so that the RPT can research, evaluate, and include the opportunity if it is within the project authority. Overall it is a good idea, but a constraint is that the facility would be funded by a CERP project, so it needs to be on the project site. The RPT should consider the option if one project is central and program oriented.

Bob Pace, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), stated that the response is very limiting. He hopes that if all agencies commit support to the MRP, maybe these opportunities could be considered outside of the project budget. He was specifically referring to the Hillsboro area south of the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (LNWR). He would like to see the inter-agency team have the ability to work under CERP, not just a specific project within CERP. The team would have to “think outside the box” and not follow the guidelines of a “traditional Corps project.”

Agustin Valido, USFWS, remembers discussing this concept related to a central facility for public involvement/education. He elaborated, saying an education/outreach facility could provide information, advice, and guidance, and serve as the center for all of CERP. The facility

would not necessarily have recreation at the facility, as it would mainly serve as an information center. However, the concept could also include recreation.

Tambour Eller stated that this is a great idea, and there is potential to research a regional education center where all agencies come together. The MRP does not have the authority for this type of facility, but there could be a way to develop this concept. Jerry Krenz suggested that the facility could adjoin an existing facility, such as a science center.

Bob Pace emphasized that the RPT members have the knowledge and expertise to develop such a concept, but the idea would have to be presented to the decision makers. Holly Hoier, USFWS, stated the IFAS facility in Vero Beach is an example of this type of facility. It started small but now is a regional research/education center through partnering. The facility is used for both formal education and public education.

Jerry Krenz stated that there is potential for education/outreach at each site with recreation. Each site could include a kiosk to explain site background and recreational details. Holly Hoier stated that the Park Service has been doing that for a long time, but the CERP central facility would be bigger and more comprehensive.

Jerry Krenz encouraged the RPT members to search for partners, including local governments, to sponsor recreational/education facilities. If partners could augment the project money, bigger and better things could be accomplished.

Augustin Valido stated that the center would serve all of the CERP area, not just a local area. Logistically, the RPT is trying to reach as many people as possible (system-wide CERP). The Hillsboro area is ideal for reaching a large number of people, as there are many large communities in that area.

Tambour Eller stated there is strong support for recreation, and the RPT should consider ways of coordinating existing facilities with the new facilities. There is a common theme shared for everglades restoration, which promotes connectivity and partnerships.

## **REVIEW OF SCOPE/GOALS/OBJECTIVES**

Jerry Krenz led a full team review of program scope, goal, and objectives. He explained that the team members should agree on the goal and objectives. The team should develop text today, but changes can be made later if necessary.

## Program Scope

The program scope is as follows:

“This Program Management Plan focuses on the development of a Master Recreation Plan for CERP. The Master Recreation Plan will take a system-wide approach to identify, evaluate, and address recreational opportunities within CERP with consideration of impacts to existing recreational opportunities that may result from CERP implementation.”

Discussion related to Project Scope

The RPT had no objections to the scope. Members agreed that the current wording is better than that included in the previous version because it allows for new opportunities rather than just mitigation for lost opportunities. Jerry Krenz agreed that “opportunities” is comprehensive and should allow the RPT to consider impacts of the project, surrounding activity, connectivity, etc.

## Program Goal

Following is the program goal:

“The primary goal of the CERP Master Recreation Plan is to prescribe a recreation planning process, within the CERP resource objectives and associated design and management concepts that provides recreational opportunities and public access to restoration lands.”

Discussion related to goal:

“Public access” is too limiting and may not embody the thought of recreation. Based on RPT comment, Jerry Krenz added “*recreational opportunities and*” before “public access.” [The revision is included above in italics.]

## Project Objectives

The objectives should support the project goal, and they are as follows:

- 1) Provide the best possible combination of responses to regional needs, resource capabilities, and suitability, and expressed public interests and desires consistent with authorized purposes.
- 2) Contribute towards providing a high degree of *recreational opportunities and public access*, activity and diversity within CERP boundaries.

Based on RPT comment, Jerry Krenz revised the second objective, replacing “recreation access” with “recreational opportunities and public access.” [The revision is in italics above.]

- 3) Emphasize the particular qualities, characteristics and potentials of individual CERP projects *when developing recreational opportunities and public access*. Based on RPT comment, Jerry Krenz revised the third objective by adding, “when developing recreational activities and public access.” [The revision is in italics above.]

- 4) Exhibit *and increase* consistency and compatibility with national objectives and other state and regional goals and programs.

Holly Hoier stated that the objectives should be measurable, so instead of “exhibit” the objective could say “initiate and increase.” Kim Taplin, Corps, stated that the objective could use “improve” and would be measured with an increase. “Improve” would be used in the objective, and “increase” would be used in the performance measure.

Kevin Salvilla, Corps, pointed out that the word “exhibit” is used in the guidance. RPT members stated that the word is too broad and vague, as is “explore” in the next objective. Kim Taplin explained that objectives are broad “do-good” statements. Jerry Krenz added “and increase” after “exhibit.” [The revision is included in italics above.]

- 5) *Identify* public, private, and intergovernmental partnerships to enhance recreation, public access and promote these opportunities.

Based on RPT comment, Jerry Krenz changed the fifth objective by replacing “explore” with “identify.” [The revision is included in italics above.]

Holly Hoier would like the fifth objective to capture “promoting” not just “identifying,” as well as coordination efforts between local governments and the PDTs. It was stated that specifics would be included in the actual plan.

Tambour Eller made a general statement that the RPT can change the objectives but should verify that the revised text is aligned with Corps guidance. Key words may be necessary for compliance, and the concepts must be captured. Corps South Atlantic Division (SAD) review will focus on making sure the revised objectives capture the intent of the Corps guidance.

- 6) Develop guidelines for recreation planning, needs and impact assessments, and integration into the CERP PIR process.

Assessment is too broad for people without a recreational planning background. Therefore, “needs and impact” was added in front of “assessment.”

The above objective is a re-write of the one originally presented to the RPT.

- 7) Develop measures to assess change in recreational opportunities and use as it relates to CERP.

The RPT developed the seventh objective during the meeting. It was thought that another objective was needed to cover the monitoring plan.

Q&A: *In what context is monitoring needed?* Monitoring is needed during implementation. *Is monitoring recreation necessary?* Monitoring is necessary to determine how recreation integrates with the project. *Will impacts to restoration be monitored?* Monitoring of

recreation's interface with the project would include restoration. The recreation and the project have goals, both of which should be met. Project goals include restoration.

Q&A: *Should the use of the recreational facility be measured (how many people use the boat ramp, etc)?* Yes, the recreation would be measured before construction, during construction, and after construction. This would establish a baseline of users pre-construction, during construction and post-construction related to the specific project implemented.

Terms such as "interfacing," "participants," and "monitoring" should be considered for an objective related to monitoring. However, it was stated that the number of participants does not mean satisfaction. The RPT must develop a strategy for monitoring recreational and project goals.

Q&A: *Is the objective to ensure an interface between users and the recreational facility?* Yes, use of the facility must be verified, and impacts of the project must be determined.

Q&A: *Is the development of measures to assess change in recreational opportunities covered under the sixth objective?* No, the seventh objective refers to post-PIR assessment.

Q&A: *Would the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) include this assessment? Efforts should not be duplicated.* SCORP would include assessment of this type; however, the RPT should consider responsibility for measuring the implementation of recreation related to the MRP.

The RPT members agreed on the final wording of the new (seventh) objective.

## **STATUS OF CERP GUIDANCE MEMO**

Annon Bozeman, Corps, stated that recreation does not guide what is going on in the CERP. Many projects will be built in the next 20-25 years. The RPT is developing the CERP MRP and will adapt to project features, such as stormwater retention areas. The RPT will manipulate recreation to fit the project, but the project will not be manipulated to accommodate recreation. The RPT will try to integrate a variety of recreation into the CERP projects. Some projects will not be conducive to air boaters for example, while other projects will provide the perfect opportunity for air boaters. In general, Off-road Vehicles (ORV) cannot be used on levees because of potential erosion and flooding.

The CGM is almost complete and ready for RPT review. Annon should be able to send it to the RPT members this week, as it has undergone in-house Corps and Office of Counsel review. Jerry Krenz, Tambour Eller, Paul Stevenson, and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) representatives have submitted comments, which have been incorporated. The CGM will provide general guidance for the PDTs. Each project is required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, which includes impacts to existing recreation. The CGM makes the PDTs aware that during NEPA, they must consider impacts to

existing recreation. Existing recreation does not preclude new recreation or a change in recreation.

Since the NEPA requires the PDT to evaluate impacts to recreation, the PDT will do part of the needs assessment included in the MRP. Although recreation is considered, the PDTs should not allow recreation to be a deciding factor in alternative selection and project development. The project should be developed and then the recreation aspects will be added (i.e. the PDT should not change a levee design for recreation).

The FWC disagrees with the previous statement. Part of this process is pre-determined even though projects could accommodate light recreation. Recreation evaluation should be done earlier in the project implementation process. If done later, recreational opportunities are constrained. Annon Bozeman clarified that recreation should be considered throughout project development; however, the PDTs must ensure that the function of the project is maintained and cannot spend additional funds on recreation. There is not a mandate that recreation must be included in every CERP project because that would be too expensive.

The FWC disagrees that recreation is too expensive, as there are extremely affordable ways to integrate recreation if it is done in the initial planning and design. Including recreation in the project is expensive when it comes too late in the process. The process constrains recreational opportunities, and stringent rules such as lack of public access to Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) makes it harder to integrate recreation. Kim Taplin explained that recreation is not a national priority for the United States Government. Restoration is a priority; however the federal authority does not allow much recreation within the restoration projects. This is why recreation cannot be the driving force behind plan formulation. For example, because of cost, a project cannot include a levee, double the size needed for sound design, just for recreation. The idea to cost-share should be considered, but recreation cannot be the goal of a project.

*Q&A: If PDTs are not able to consider recreation in plan formulation, what is the purpose of the MRP?* During the PIR process, the PDT may identify needs for recreation so that the design would not detract from recreational opportunities. It should be understood that each project must comply with NEPA. The MRP will not specify each project's needs.

*Q&A: The PDTs need to consider recreational issues in the PIR process to comply with NEPA, but those issues must then be considered for plans and specifications. How will that happen?* The PDTs will identify recreation during the PIR process and will develop costs associated with potential impacts. Costs associated with recreation weigh into plan comparison. In addition, if there are two plans that serve the same purpose, but one has recreation, that is part of the decision making process. So in reality, it is part of plan formulation. The NEPA process will assure that recreational considerations are made early in the process. The MRP will provide the tools to the PDTs to allow recreational master planning to be simpler.

*Q&A: Will the RPT look at how each alternative would look at recreational uses, impacts, etc?* The MRP should provide conceptual plans/ideas for the PDTs to use. The RPT will look at the overall CERP needs, and each PDT will have a more limited view. For example,

the MRP would include local government planning for parks and recreation allowing PDTs to coordinate plans in the vicinity. The RPT should base ideas in reality and what is actually affordable. It is not a requirement of every project to implement recreation, but it is an opportunity.

Q&A: *It seems that most CERP projects are over budget and behind schedule, so how would recreation not be left out at the end of a project?* This question is project-specific, but realizing budget constraints will help to ensure recreation integration. Cost-share partnerships would also be a way to offset costs. Most local governments would like to build a recreational facility, but land is the limiting factor. If CERP has the land, there is potential for eager partners. In addition, if recreation can get into the process early, the collected information builds an archive of information for future planners to be more cost-effective.

Q&A: *Was recreation part of the original Central and Southern Florida (C&SF) project? CERP affects the original project, so how is that going to be handled?* That is how it was authorized. If an impact is identified through the NEPA process, a cost is associated with that impact, which would be considered for decision making. Recreation losses may equate to economic loss.

Q&A: *If recreational benefits are added, does that add to the economic benefit of the project?* The National Economic Development (NED) benefits, as well as regional economic development, must be considered. This kind of analysis looks at benefits and impacts. The Corps economists should do a presentation at a future RPT meeting on how the Corps evaluates recreation impacts and benefits, in the planning process.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **Rick Persson, SAFER**

Rick Persson, South Florida Anglers for Everglades Restoration (SAFER), stated that most of the discussion has been related to funding for recreational projects. As a fisherman and recreational user, his main concern is preventing the filling of canals in the Everglades, and he is not concerned with “fancy” facilities and boat ramps. He and the other fisherman just want to be able to use the existing canals. He has talked to other agencies regarding available funds to build boat ramps if there are sites to build them; however, there are problems related to SFWMD’s liability on the property.

Rick also suggested that the Corps could sell excess fill when removing levees. Miles and miles of levee could be removed for free because people need fill for roadways and other projects.

Rick would like to know how public law affects overall CERP with regard to recreation. If recreation is adversely impacted, facilities should be restored for use.

Has the Corps approached other agencies to cost-share recreation? The Corps should look everywhere for partners.

In Rick's opinion, the main problem is the loss of the existing canal system. He proposes degrading the levees, leaving the canals, and doing modeling. There must be a compromise between recreation and restoration.

Rick stated that Dade County and Broward County have the worst system of boat ramps in Florida. The FWC has potential success stories with boat ramps, and the Corps must figure out how to cost-share and allow the other agencies to build such facilities.

### **Discussion related to Public Comment**

The Corps is required to cost-share recreation. If the Corps cannot find a cost-share partner, the Corps cannot fund recreation projects.

One problem with cost-share is that the Corps cannot have a Federal-Federal cost-share; therefore, the Corps cannot cost-share with the USFWS. The Corps needs a non-federal sponsor for each project. There is potential for Counties and other local governments to cost-share, and one of the MRP objectives is to develop partnerships.

### **Joel Marco, Air Boaters Association of Florida**

Joel Marco believes that the MRP (and CERP) Outreach is inadequate. When he contacted Dade County, the Dade County representative was not familiar with the CERP or the MRP. Evidently, Dade County Parks and Recreation Department has not been approached. He feels it is people like him who will be responsible for aiding in the communication between such groups. Dade County has removed pavilions, decreasing recreational opportunities to the 2.5 million people in Dade County. No one has approached the Air boaters Association asking for money. Recreation is the biggest public outreach vehicle, so the RPT has a lot of responsibility. So far, the team is not reaching out to the public. He noted that only three public attendees are present at this meeting, and the three are recreational users. Environmental groups are not even represented.

Joel stressed that the RPT should not reinvent the wheel and should use all existing information and coordinate with the requirements of NEPA. The RPT's directives are clear, but some of the language used today is very repetitive.

Birdwatchers and hunters CAN use the land together. Birdwatchers wear the appropriate vests, and the situation works as it always has. The RPT should not let this turn into certain citizens being able to use the land at specific times of the year. The Everglades National Park has taken away too much land use. There is no conflict between air boating and canoeing, etc. Groups like these have been co-using the land for a long time. The groups would like to continue using the land as they have in the past. Boaters just want the simple boat ramps that they have used for years.

Outdoor enthusiasts have offered numerous resources to the Corps, and the Corps has not considered or used these resources. For example, Joel has told many project teams and government agencies to save money by selling fill.

## **Discussion related to Public Comment**

Holly Hoier stated that every Thursday at 11:00 AM, Channel 5 in Miami hosts a discussion of CERP. The public can call into the news channel to ask questions and discuss any issues related to CERP.

Tambour Eller explained that she sent letters to all government agencies trying to get them involved in the MRP. If anyone knows of a local government or agency wanting to be involved, let her know. Public outreach is a product of the MRP. The RPT is passionate for recreation and the members want to be the voice for the public. This meeting today is an interagency team meeting to complete work, but there will be public meetings held to focus on public input and concern. It is very important that the RPT make progress. If Dade County representatives can be involved in the MRP, it is in the RPT's best interest to have them involved.

## **Byron Maharrey, Everglades Coalition**

Byron Maharrey, Everglades Coalition, asked for clarification regarding the April meeting. *Is that a public/stakeholder meeting? Yes. Is a date set for this workshop? No*

Byron feels that the strict rules/regulations [FACA] cause resentment among the public. He does not think the public attendees should even be invited if they are not allowed to partake in the meeting. He would just wait for the public workshop.

Byron referred to the SFWMD's public use guide, which states that persons may enter "unit" on foot at designated points; however, camping, hunting, bicycles, and airboats are all prohibited. Byron stated that the land was bought with public taxpayer money, although the land is not accessible to the public. He uses this to emphasize that facilities should not be built without planning on public interaction. He states that public interaction has minimal to no impact, although no public interaction is permissible on STAs for five years to keep them "pristine." He stated there was a study done along Alligator Alley that compared unused land to used land in order to measure environmental impacts of recreation use. The following year, the land showed no impacts.

## **SUB TEAM BREAK-OUT**

The following is a summary of the sub team break-out session:

### CERP Guidance Memo - Annon Bozeman, Planning Technical Lead

In addition to general guidance, the CGM Sub Team discussed the following items to be included in the CGM:

- Various regulations and laws related to recreation with hyperlinks to locations of public laws and Corps regulations.
- Definitions of needs assessment and inventory.
- Basic text related to threatened and endangered species for design of a recreation facility.

- List of facilities the Corps can cost-share, including a paragraph showing exactly what can be cost-shared, other ideas that would require another sponsor to cost-share, and an explanation of cost sharing.
- Operation and Maintenance (O&M) responsibilities.
- How NEPA and recreation are related.
- Where in the PIR process to start thinking of recreation – not too late, not too early.
- PDTs should look at all opportunities to promote recreation that is compatible with the project

Q&A: *What about exotic species? Should that be included under O&M?* Exotic species are not specific to recreation. There is linkage if exotic (and native) aquatic plants are near boat ramps because navigation is recreation. The SFWMD might already be doing management of exotic species on some sites. Another way to look at the exotic species issue is that if a project can build a boat ramp where Brazilian pepper is growing, that site should be used instead of a site with native vegetation.

Q&A: *Can the CGM be more specific? The CGM should not just include suggestions.* The idea is to give depth to the CGM by linking website resources to the document.

Annon Bozeman will distribute the draft CGM to the RPT for review by 21 February 2003.

#### Outreach and Public Involvement - Amanda Ellison, Lead Outreach Specialist

The Outreach Sub Team is developing a strategy for public involvement during the PgMP and MRP phases. Amanda Ellison will distribute a draft strategy to the RPT for review by 18 February 2003. The following are the main issues to be addressed:

- Product ideas
- Noticing Efforts/Contacts
  - Public Service Announcements
  - Web
  - News ads
  - South Florida Newspapers (Jon Fury has contacts)
- Web-Based Comment Form Protocol
  - How will responses be generated? Will project manager or full RPT respond?
- Stakeholders
  - Continue to refine the existing list.
- Fact/Overview sheets for Stakeholders
- Public Workshops
  - One public workshop will be held in West Palm Beach before release of the PgMP. (Once released, the PgMP will be posted on the website for public comment.)
  - Two series of public workshops will be held for the MRP phase: the first workshop will be held to gather input; and there will be five workshops held in different CERP regions to address issues/concerns.

Q&A: *There is already a huge stakeholder list, so will the RPT send letters to each one?*  
Letters/postcards will be sent to a contact for each organization.

Q&A: *Will information signs be posted at construction sites?* The SFWMD posts signage at each CERP project site. The RPT could consider ways to include recreation information on the signs.

Mike Abney, USFWS, suggested that whichever way is fastest should be the protocol for responding to the web-based comment form. Those submitting comments should not have to wait. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) should be posted to the website.

### Inventory Collection - Paul Stevenson, RET Recreation Sub Team Chair

The Inventory Collection Sub Team would like to develop a region by region interactive web page that would give users a visual and informational data medium to base decisions on for the PIRs. It would be similar to [www.evergladesplan.org](http://www.evergladesplan.org) (pull up regional map and see projects), but would be specifically for recreation. The sub team members will provide Paul Stevenson a list of inventory resources by 24 February 2003.

The sub team would like to provide PDTs existing information available now until a more conclusive inventory can be provided. Hyperlinks to useful websites could be added to the MRP web page. These could include the Florida SCORP, as a good reference for statewide inventory, and the LNWR Comprehensive Plan, which would be more specific to one CERP area but could provide a large group of PDTs with more specific information to make better decisions. Paul will post these hyperlinks this week.

The sub team will begin contacting different counties to identify what GIS data and other information is available. The FWC will provide economic information on hunting/fishing, including users per day and detailed recreational resource values, so that PDTs could use the information when evaluating alternatives.

Kim Taplin suggested that a list of uses could be posted on the website for PDTs to use as a resource. Such information is being considered for inclusion in the CGM, but the website may be a better location.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **Joel Marco, Air Boaters Association of Florida**

Joel Marco stated that, although he knows the RPT members are busy, it is extremely important to stay in contact with the public, more than those involved in the engineering and construction.

If anyone is excluded from using the land, all future generations are excluded. Freedom of movement is important. Recreational users want successful restoration more than most groups, but the government should not take away rights. The park service impacted recreation and created public frustration. CERP projects will probably have to make up for some of that loss.

Joel thanked the RPT members for their hard work, and stated that the Air Boaters Association wants to help in any way possible. The association would offer free services because they want the MRP to succeed. The Association can eradicate exotic species, etc.

The only good public attendance Joel Marco has seen was at a CERP meeting advertised in the Miami Herald and held at Florida International University (FIU) and usually at meetings held at the International Game Fish Association (IGFA) in Ft. Lauderdale. The recreation organizations usually spread news of the meetings to their members. The newspapers, especially the sports section, reach the public. He noted that not all newspapers are friendly to recreation. Sometimes, recreation such as deep-sea fishing is included, but not inner glades fishing since the perception has been that the fishing destroys the Everglades.

### **Discussion related to Public Comment**

Tambour Eller stated that today is an interagency meeting, which is open to the public but more focused on getting work done. The public workshops are geared toward disseminating information to the public.

### **RECAP NEXT STEPS & TASKS**

Kim Taplin thanked the RPT on behalf of the PDTs, and she knows the PDTs are really looking forward to receiving guidance. Recreation is an important issue for her project, WCA-3 Decompartmentalization and Sheet flow. Other PDTs will need to look at less obvious recreation issues.

Tambour Eller explained that there would be joint meetings between the project managers and planning technical leaders. Once the RPT has the approved PgMP and CGM, the RPT will take the documents to these joint meetings and present the information/guidance.

The RPT developed the following tasks during the meeting:

1. The Recreation Planning Team (RPT) members will submit comments on the draft Program Management Plan (PgMP) to Tambour Eller and Jerry Krenz. Suspense: 14 February 2003.
2. Annon Bozeman will distribute the draft CERP Guidance Memorandum (CGM) to the RPT for review. Suspense: 21 February 2003.
3. Paul Stevenson will add useful links such as the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (LNWR) Master Plan to the Master Recreation Plan (MRP) web page of [www.evergladesplan.org](http://www.evergladesplan.org). Suspense: 10 February 2003.
4. Inventory Sub Team members will provide recreation resources (websites and pertinent information) to Paul Stevenson ([Paul.C.Stevenson@saj02.usace.army.mil](mailto:Paul.C.Stevenson@saj02.usace.army.mil)). Suspense: 24 February 2003.

5. Inventory Sub Team members will contact counties and other local governments to establish points of contact for obtaining any existing recreation and geographic information system (GIS) data. Suspense: 15 March 2003.
6. Amanda Ellison will distribute the draft public outreach and involvement plan to the Outreach Sub Team members for review. Suspense: 18 February 2003.
7. After further revision of the schedule and budget, Tambour Eller will distribute the draft PgMP: appendices to the RPT. Suspense: 18 February 2003.
8. Tambour Eller and Jerry Krenz will schedule and notify the RPT members of the next meeting.

**ADJOURN**