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Chief of Engineers Completes Report Recommending Indian River Lagoon South Project In Support of Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan

WASHINGTON D.C. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced today that Lieutenant General Carl A. Strock has completed the Chief of Engineers' Report about the Indian River Lagoon – South (IRL-S) Project and has recommended proceeding with the project. The Chief's Report has been forward to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) for review and submission to Congress.

“This is a landmark report,” Lt. Gen Strock said. “This will be the first phase of the overall restoration of the Everglades. Indian River Lagoon is an estuary of national significance, and this project will substantially increase the extent of the wetlands and restore the estuarine and watershed ecosystems found there.”

The features of the plan include reservoirs, storm water treatment areas, restored uplands and wetlands, restored floodplain and the removal of muck from the St. Lucie River and estuary.

Specifically, the project will provide an increase of 92,000 acres of wetlands, reestablish natural patterns of freshwater flows to the estuary and improve water quality and habitat within the St. Lucie Estuary and the Indian River Lagoon. The project will also increase water supply and maintain existing flood protection.

The cost of the plan is estimated at \$1.2 billion. The federal government and the non-federal sponsor will share the costs equally.

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“Maintaining and restoring one of the most unique and diverse ecosystems in the world is especially challenging because the fragile ecosystem is located adjacent to a thriving human population,” Lt. Gen. Strock added. “Ours is an integrated ecosystem approach, and we believe that combining the resources, talents and dedication of the Corps with our federal, state and local partners will enable us to succeed.”

The final Project Implementation Report and the Chief of Engineers’ Report are available for viewing at www.evergladesplan.org and at the Martin, St Lucie, Okeechobee and Hendry County libraries.