

PART 385—PROGRAMMATIC REGULATIONS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EVERGLADES RESTORATION PLAN

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APPENDIX A TO PART 385—ILLUSTRATIONS TO PART 385

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Subpart A—General Provisions

§ 385.1 Purpose of the programmatic regulations.

(a) The programmatic regulations of this part implement the provisions of section 601(h)(3) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, Public Law 106-541, 114 Stat. 2688 (hereinafter “WRDA 2000”), which was enacted on December 11, 2000.

(b) The purpose of the programmatic regulations of this part is to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (the Plan) are achieved and to establish the processes necessary for implementing the Plan. Some of these processes are project specific, including, but not limited to, development of Project Implementation Reports, Project Cooperation Agreements, plans and specifications, Pilot Project Technical Data Reports, and Operating Manuals. Other processes are of more general applicability, including, but not limited to, development of program-wide guidance memoranda, interim goals, interim targets, and the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan. Taken together, these processes will ensure that the restoration purposes and other goals of the Plan are achieved. The regulations of this part

also describe the relationship among the various entities responsible for implementation of the Plan.

(c) Section 601(h) of WRDA 2000 establishes an integrated framework for assuring that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved. This framework includes tools for planning, implementation, and evaluation; a process for developing these tools in an open public process, with input from other Federal, State, and local agencies; and an enforcement mechanism to ensure that the requirements of the statute are carried out.

(1) *Tools.* (i) The specific planning tool established by section 601(h) is the Project Implementation Report.

(ii) The specific implementation tools established by section 601(h) are Project Cooperation Agreements and Operating Manuals.

(iii) The specific evaluation tool established by section 601(h) is the interim goals for evaluating the restoration success of the Plan.

(iv) In addition to the specific planning, implementation, and evaluation tools established by section 601(h), the regulations of this part establish additional tools, including but not limited to, Project Management Plans, Program Management Plans, Comprehensive Plan Modification Reports, the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan, and interim targets for evaluating progress towards achieving the other water related needs of the region.

(2) *Processes.* The regulations of this part establish the processes for developing these tools. Consistent with section 601(h), these regulations have been developed, after notice and opportunity for public content, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor, and in consultation with the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of Commerce, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies.

(3) *Enforcement mechanism.* The specific enforcement mechanism established by Section 601(h) is the “Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Assurance of Project Benefits

Agreement,” dated January 9, 2002, between the President and the Governor, under which the State shall ensure, by regulation or other appropriate means, that water made available by each project in the Plan shall not be permitted for a consumptive use or otherwise made unavailable by the State until such time as sufficient reservations of water for the restoration of the natural system are made under State law in accordance with the project implementation report and consistent with the Plan.

(4) *Public information.* The Secretary of the Army shall ensure that the public understands the linkage between the processes, tools, and enforcement mechanism and can monitor the effectiveness of this integrated framework in assuring that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved, as provided for in the regulations of this part, by:

(i) Providing for public notice and comment in the development of planning, implementation, and evaluation tools;

(ii) Providing notice of final action on planning, evaluation, and implementation tools;

(iii) Making available to the public on a web site or by other appropriate means final, and where appropriate draft, copies of all planning, evaluation, and implementation tools; and

(iv) Explaining through the regulations of this part and by other appropriate means the process for developing the tools, the linkage between the process, tools, and enforcement mechanism, and the means by which these elements constitute an integrated framework for assuring that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved.

§ 385.2 Applicability of the programmatic regulations.

(a) This part applies to all activities conducted to implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

(b) As used in this part, the Secretary of the Army acts through the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works with respect to the Army’s civil works program pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 3016.

(c) Nothing in this part shall be interpreted to amend, alter, diminish, or otherwise affect:

(1) The rights, powers and duties provided under the "Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Assurance of Project Benefits Agreement," dated January 9, 2002 pursuant to section 601(h)(2) of WRDA 2000; or

(2) Any existing legal water rights of the United States, the State of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, or the Seminole Tribe of Florida, including rights under the compact among the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the State, and the South Florida Water Management District, defining the scope and use of water rights of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, as codified by section 7 of the Seminole Indian Land Claims Settlement Act of 1987 (25 U.S.C. 1772e).

(d) This part is intended to aid the internal management of the implementing agencies and is not intended to create any right or benefit enforceable at law by a party against the implementing agencies or their officers. Nothing in this part shall create a right or expectation to benefits or enhancements, temporary or permanent, in third parties that are not specifically authorized by Congress in section 601 of WRDA 2000.

(e) Nothing in this part is intended to, or shall be interpreted to, reserve or allocate water or to prescribe the process for reserving or allocating water or for water management under Florida law. Nor is this part intended to, nor shall it be interpreted to, prescribe any process of Florida law.

§ 385.3 Definitions.

For the purposes of this part, the following terms are defined:

Adaptive management means the continuous process of seeking a better understanding of the natural system and human environment in the South Florida ecosystem, and seeking continuous refinements in and improvements to the Plan to respond to new information resulting from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific and technical information, new or updated modeling; information developed through the assessment principles contained in the Plan; and future authorized

changes to the Plan in order to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are fulfilled.

Alternative plan means a plan that consists of a system of structural and/or nonstructural measures, strategies, or programs formulated to achieve, fully or partially, the goals and purposes of the Plan, as further defined in section 1.6.1 of the Water Resources Council's "Economic and Environmental Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies," dated March 10, 1983.

Assessment means the process whereby the actual performance of implemented projects is measured and interpreted based on analyses of information obtained from research, monitoring, modeling, or other relevant sources.

Central and Southern Florida (C&SF) Project means the project for Central and Southern Florida authorized under the heading "CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN FLORIDA" in section 203 of the Flood Control Act of 1948 (62 Stat. 1176) and any modification authorized by any other provision of law, including section 601 of WRDA 2000.

Component means features of the Plan that include, but are not limited to, storage reservoirs, aquifer storage and recovery facilities, stormwater treatment areas, water reuse facilities, canals, levees, pumps, water control structures, and seepage management facilities; the removal of canals, levees, pumps, and water control structures; and operational changes.

Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) means the plan contained in the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement," dated April 1, 1999, as modified by section 601 of WRDA 2000, and any subsequent modification authorized in law.

Comprehensive Plan Modification Report means the report prepared for approval by Congress of major changes to the Plan that are necessary to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved. The Comprehensive Plan Modification Report describes the formulation and evaluation of alternatives, recommended modifications to the Plan, and other economic, environmental, and engineering information,

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and includes the appropriate NEPA document.

Concurrence means the issuance of a written statement of concurrence or the failure to provide such a written statement within a time frame prescribed by law or this part.

Consultation means a process to ensure meaningful and timely input in the development of program and project activities, reports, manuals, plans, and other documents from Federal, State, and local agencies, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, and the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

Coordination means the formal exchange of information and views, by letter, report, or other prescribed means, between the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor and another agency or tribe, including but not limited to, the exchange of information and views regarding the development of Project Implementation Reports, Operating Manuals, and Comprehensive Plan Modification Reports. Coordination activities are required by and in accordance with purposes and procedures established by Federal policy (public law, executive order, agency regulation, memorandum of agreement, and other documents that memorialize policy of the Corps of Engineers).

Cost-effective means the least costly way of attaining a given level of output or performance, consistent with the goals and purposes of the Plan and applicable laws.

Design Agreement means the agreement between the Corps of Engineers and a non-Federal sponsor concerning cost sharing for activities related to planning, engineering, design, and other activities needed to implement the Plan.

Dispute means any disagreement between the agencies or tribes associated with implementation of the Plan that cannot be resolved by the members of a Project Delivery Team or RECOVER and that is elevated to decision makers at the respective agencies or tribes.

District Engineer means the District Engineer of the Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District.

Division Engineer means the Division Engineer of the Corps of Engineers, South Atlantic Division.

Drought contingency plan means the plan required by §222.5(i)(5) of this chapter and described in implementing Engineer Regulation ER 1110–2–1941 “Drought Contingency Plans,” and means a plan contained within an Operating Manual that describes procedures for dealing with drought situations that affect management decisions for operating projects.

Environmental and economic equity means the fair treatment of all persons regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, or economic status, including environmental justice, and the provision of economic opportunities for small business concerns controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, including individuals with limited English proficiency, in the implementation of the Plan.

Environmental justice means identifying and addressing, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of a Federal agency’s programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations, in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.

Evaluation means the process whereby the performance of plans and designs relative to desired objectives is forecast through predictive modeling and other tools.

Expected performance level means the projected level of benefits to the natural system and human environment described in the Plan.

External peer review means a process to review and validate the scientific and technical processes and information developed for implementation of the Plan that is independent of the agencies involved in the implementation of the Plan.

Goals and purposes of the Plan means the restoration, preservation, and protection of the South Florida ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection.

Governor means the Governor of the State of Florida.

Guidance memorandum means the specific procedure, process, or other guidance specified in §385.5(b) that is developed and approved by the Secretary of the Army with the concurrence of the

Secretary of the Interior and the Governor.

Improved or new flood protection benefits means increased or new levels of service for flood protection that are identified in a Project Implementation Report and approved as a purpose of the project.

Independent scientific review means the process established pursuant to section 601(j) of WRDA 2000 to review the Plan's progress toward achieving the natural system restoration goals of the Plan.

Individual feature of the Plan means a component or group of components of the Plan related to and limited to one specific project of the Plan.

Interim goal is a means by which restoration success of the Plan may be evaluated throughout the implementation process. Interim goals provide a means of tracking restoration performance, as well as a basis for reporting on the progress made at specified intervals of time towards restoration of the South Florida ecosystem, and for periodically evaluating the accuracy of predictions of system responses to the effects of the Plan.

Interim target is a means by which the success of the Plan in providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection, may be evaluated throughout the implementation process. Interim targets provide a means of tracking Plan performance, as well as a basis for reporting on progress made at specified intervals of time towards providing for other water-related needs of the region, and for periodically evaluating the accuracy of predictions of system responses to the effects of the Plan.

Justified has the same meaning as in section 601(f)(2) of WRDA 2000 which states that the Secretary of the Army, in carrying out any activity to restore, preserve, or protect the South Florida ecosystem, may determine that an activity is justified by the environmental benefits derived by the South Florida ecosystem and no further economic justification for the activity is required, if the Secretary determines that the activity is cost-effective.

Levels of service for flood protection means the expected performance of the Central and Southern Project and

other water management systems in the South Florida ecosystem, consistent with applicable law, for a specific area or region.

Master Implementation Sequencing Plan means the document that describes the sequencing and scheduling for the projects of the Plan.

Mediation means a non-binding dispute resolution process designed to assist the disputing parties to resolve a disagreement. In mediation, the parties mutually select a neutral and impartial third party to facilitate the negotiations.

Monitoring means the systematic process of collecting data designed to show the status, trends, and relationships of elements of the natural system and human environment at specific locations and times.

Natural system means all land and water managed by the Federal government or the State within the South Florida ecosystem including, but not limited to, water conservation areas; sovereign submerged land; Everglades National Park; Biscayne National Park; Big Cypress National Preserve; other Federal or State (including a political subdivision of a State) land that is designated and managed for conservation purposes; the contiguous near-shore coastal water of South Florida; and, any tribal land that is designated and managed for conservation purposes, as approved by the tribe.

Next-added increment means the evaluation of an alternative as the next project to be added to a system of projects already implemented. For the purposes of this part, this means analyzing an alternative as the next project to be added to a system of projects that includes only those projects that have been approved according to general provision of law or specific authorization of Congress and are likely to have been implemented by the time the project being evaluated is completed.

Non-Federal sponsor means a legally constituted public body that has full authority and capability to perform the terms of the Project Cooperation Agreement and the ability to pay damages, if necessary, in the event of failure to perform, pursuant to section 221

of the Flood Control Act of 1970, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1962d-5b).

Operating Manuals means the set of documents that describe how the projects of the Plan and the Central and Southern Florida Project are to be operated to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved. Operating Manuals include the System Operating Manual and Project Operating Manuals. Operating Manuals contain water control plans, regulation schedules, and operating criteria for project and/or system regulations as well as additional information necessary to operate projects to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved.

Optimize means to follow a reasonable and practical process for developing a plan that returns the greatest excess of benefits, both monetary and non-monetary, over costs.

Outreach means activities undertaken to inform the public about the Plan and activities associated with implementation of the Plan, and to involve the public in the decision-making process for implementing the Plan.

Performance measure means an element or component of the natural system or human environment that is expected to be influenced by the Plan that has been selected to be evaluated or monitored as representative of a class of responses to implementation of the Plan and compared with a level of output that is expected and desired during or following the implementation of the Plan.

Periodic CERP update means the evaluation of the Plan that is conducted periodically with new or updated modeling that includes the latest available scientific, technical, and planning information.

Pilot project means a project undertaken to address uncertainties associated with certain components of the Plan such as aquifer storage and recovery, in-ground reservoir technology, seepage management, and wastewater reuse. The purpose of pilot projects is to develop information necessary to better determine the technical feasibility of these components prior to development of a Project Implementation Report.

Pilot Project Design Report means the report that contains the technical information necessary to implement a pilot project.

Pilot Project Technical Data Report means the report that documents the findings and conclusions from the implementation and testing phases of a pilot project.

Plan means the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan contained in the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement," dated April 1, 1999, as modified by section 601 of WRDA 2000, and any subsequent modification authorized in law.

Plans and specifications means the information required to bid and construct the recommended project described in the Project Implementation Report.

Pre-CERP baseline means the hydrologic conditions in the South Florida ecosystem on the date of enactment of WRDA 2000, as modeled by using a multi-year period of record based on assumptions such as land use, population, water demand, water quality, and assumed operations of the Central and Southern Florida Project.

Program-level activity means those tasks, activities, or products that support more than one project or that are system-wide in scope.

Program Management Plan means the document that describes the activities, tasks, and responsibilities that will be used to produce and deliver the products that comprise a program-level activity.

Project means a component or group of components of the Plan that are implemented together to provide functional benefits towards achieving the goals and purposes of the Plan.

Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) means the legal agreement between the Department of the Army and a non-Federal sponsor that is executed prior to project construction. The Project Cooperation Agreement describes the financial, legal, and other responsibilities for construction, operation, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and replacement of a project.

Project Delivery Team means the inter-agency, interdisciplinary team led by the Corps of Engineers and the

non-Federal sponsor that develops the technical products necessary to implement a project.

Project Implementation Report (PIR) means the report prepared by the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor pursuant to section 601(h)(4)(A) of WRDA 2000 and described in section 10.3 of the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement," dated April 1, 1999.

Project Management Plan means the document that describes the activities, tasks, and responsibilities that will be used to produce and deliver the products necessary to implement a project.

Project Operating Manual means the manual that describes the operating criteria for a project or group of projects of the Plan. The Project Operating Manual is considered a supplement to the System Operating Manual and presents more detailed information on the operation of a specific project or group of projects.

Public means any individuals, organizations, or non-Federal unit of government that might be affected by or interested in the implementation of the Plan. The public includes regional, State, and local government entities and officials, public and private organizations, including community-based organizations, Native American (Indian) tribes, and individuals.

Quality control plan means the plan prepared in accordance with applicable regulations and policies of the Corps of Engineers that describes the procedures that will be employed to insure compliance with all technical and policy requirements of the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor.

Reservation of water for the natural system means the actions taken by the South Florida Water Management District or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, pursuant to Florida law, to legally reserve water from allocation for consumptive use for the protection of fish and wildlife.

Restoration means the recovery and protection of the South Florida ecosystem so that it once again achieves and sustains those essential hydrological and biological characteristics that defined the undisturbed South Florida ecosystem. As author-

ized by Congress, the restored South Florida ecosystem will be significantly healthier than the current system; however it will not completely replicate the undisturbed South Florida ecosystem.

Restoration Coordination and Verification (RECOVER) means the interagency and interdisciplinary scientific and technical team described in the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement," dated April 1, 1999 and established by the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District to: ensure that a system-wide perspective is maintained; ensure the highest quality scientific and technical information is applied throughout the implementation process; and to assess, evaluate, and integrate the projects of the Plan with the overall goal of ensuring that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved.

South Florida ecosystem means the area consisting of the land and water within the boundary of the South Florida Water Management District in effect on July 1, 1999, including but not limited to, the Everglades, the Florida Keys, and the contiguous near-shore coastal water of South Florida.

South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) means the task force established pursuant to section 528(f) of WRDA 1996 (110 Stat. 3770).

South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) means the public body constituted by the State of Florida pursuant to Chapter 373.069 of the Florida Statutes.

State means the State of Florida.

System Operating Manual means the Operating Manual that provides an integrated system-wide framework for operating all of the implemented projects of the Plan and the Central and Southern Florida Project.

System-wide means pertaining to the Central and Southern Florida Project or the South Florida ecosystem, as a whole.

Technical review means the process that confirms that the engineering, economic, environmental, and other aspects of project formulation and design are in accord with appropriate Federal,

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State, and Corps of Engineers established standards and criteria, regulations, laws, codes, principles, and professional procedures that are necessary to ensure a quality product. Technical review also confirms the constructability and effectiveness of the product and the use of clearly justified and valid assumptions and methodologies.

Technical Review Team means the team established by the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor to ensure quality control of documents and products produced by the Project Delivery Team through periodic technical reviews of the technical aspects of projects.

Water budget means an account of all water inflows, outflows, and changes in storage over a period of time.

Water dedicated and managed for the natural system means the water to be reserved or allocated for the natural system under State law as identified in a Project Implementation Report.

Water made available means the water expected to be generated pursuant to the implementation of a project of the Plan in accordance with the Project Implementation Report for that project.

Without CERP condition means the conditions predicted (forecast) in the South Florida ecosystem without implementation of any of the projects of the Plan.

WRDA 1996 means the Water Resources Development Act of 1996, Public Law 104-303, which was enacted on October 12, 1996.

WRDA 2000 means the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, Public Law 106-541, which was enacted on December 11, 2000.

§ 385.4 Limitation on applicability of programmatic regulations.

In accordance with section 601(h)(3)(c)(ii) of WRDA 2000, this part expressly prohibits “the requirement for concurrence by the Secretary of the Interior or the Governor on Project Implementation Reports, Project Cooperation Agreements, Operating Manuals for individual projects undertaken in the Plan, and any other documents relating to the development, implementation, and management of indi-

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vidual features of the Plan, unless such concurrence is provided for in other Federal or State laws.”

§ 385.5 Guidance memoranda.

(a) *General.* (1) Technical guidance for internal management of Corps of Engineers personnel during Plan implementation will be normally issued in the form of Engineer Regulations, Circulars, Manuals, or Pamphlets, or other appropriate form of guidance.

(2) Guidance on the following six program-wide subjects shall be promulgated in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section:

(i) General format and content of Project Implementation Reports (§ 385.26(a));

(ii) Instructions for formulation and evaluation of alternatives developed for Project Implementation Reports, their cost effectiveness and impacts (§ 385.26(b));

(iii) General content of operating manuals (§ 385.28(a));

(iv) General directions for the conduct of the assessment activities of RECOVER (§ 385.31(b));

(v) Instructions relevant to Project Implementation Reports for identifying the appropriate quantity, timing, and distribution of water to be dedicated and managed for the natural system (§ 385.35(b)); and

(vi) Instructions relevant to Project Implementation Reports for identifying if an elimination or transfer of existing legal sources of water will occur as a result of implementation of the Plan (§ 385.36(b)).

(b) *Special processes for development of six program-wide guidance memoranda.* The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, develop the six guidance memoranda described in paragraph (a) of this section for approval by the Secretary of the Army. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall also consult

with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in the development of these guidance memoranda. The following procedures shall apply to the specific guidance memoranda described in paragraph (a) of this section:

(1) Guidance memoranda shall be consistent with this part, applicable law, and achieving the goals and purposes of the Plan.

(2) The Secretary of the Army shall afford the public an opportunity to comment on each guidance memorandum prior to approval through the issuance of a notice of availability in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(3) Approved guidance memoranda shall be made available to the public.

(4) The guidance memoranda specifically referenced in this part shall be developed by December 13, 2004.

(5) The six guidance memoranda described in paragraph (a) of this section shall be developed with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor. Within 180 days after being provided with the final guidance memorandum, or such shorter period that the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor may agree to, the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor shall provide the Secretary of the Army with a written statement of concurrence or non-concurrence with the proposed guidance memorandum. A failure to provide a written statement of concurrence or non-concurrence within such time frame shall be deemed as meeting the concurrency requirements of this section. A copy of any concurrency or nonconcurrency statements shall be made a part of the administrative record and referenced in the final guidance memorandum. Any nonconcurrency statement shall specifically detail the reason or reasons for the non-concurrence. If the six guidance memoranda described in paragraph (a) of this section create a special procedure for any individual Project Implementation Report, a specific Project Cooperation Agreement, an Operating Manual for a specific project component, or any other document relating to the development, implementation, and management of one specific individual feature of the Plan, this section does not require concurrence or non-concurrence on that spe-

cial procedure. In lieu of concurrence or non-concurrence on such a special procedure, the Secretary of the Army shall consult with the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor.

(6) The Secretary of the Army shall consider incorporating into the regulations of this part the guidance memoranda specifically referenced in this section during future reviews and revisions of the regulations of this part.

(c) *Revisions to six Program-wide guidance memoranda.* The Secretary of the Army may, whenever the Secretary believes it is necessary, and in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the South Florida Water Management District, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, other Federal, State, and local agencies, and the public, revise guidance memoranda that have been completed. Such revisions shall be developed and approved consistent with the provisions of paragraph (b) of this section. Revisions to the six guidance memoranda described in paragraph (a) of this section shall be made following the same concurrence process as in paragraph (b)(5) of this section.

(d) *Other guidance.* Nothing in this part shall be considered or construed to preclude the ability of the Corps of Engineers, the South Florida Water Management District, and other non-Federal sponsors from issuing other guidance or policy to assist in implementing the Plan. Any such guidance or policy shall be consistent with applicable law, policy, and regulations.

§385.6 Review of programmatic regulations.

(a) The Secretary of the Army shall review, and if necessary revise, the regulations of this part at least every five years. In addition, the Secretary of the Army may review and revise the regulations of this part whenever the Secretary believes that such review and revision is necessary to attain the goals and purposes of the Plan. The

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Secretary of the Army shall place appropriate notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER upon initiating review of the regulations of this part.

(b) Upon completing the review of the regulations of this part, the Secretary shall promulgate any revisions to the regulations after notice and opportunity for public comment in accordance with applicable law, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor, and in consultation with the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of Commerce, and other Federal, State, and local agencies.

(c) Within 180 days after being provided with the final revisions to the programmatic regulations of this part, or such shorter period that the Secretary of the Interior and Governor may agree to, the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor shall provide the Secretary of the Army with a written statement of concurrence or non-concurrence with the revisions. A failure to provide a written statement of concurrence or non-concurrence within such time frame shall be deemed as meeting the concurrency process of paragraph (b) of this section. A copy of any concurrency or nonconcurrency statements shall be made a part of the administrative record and referenced in the final revised programmatic regulations. Any non-concurrency statement shall specifically detail the reason or reasons for the non-concurrence.

§ 385.7 Concurrency statements.

The administrative record of the programmatic regulations in this part contains a copy of the concurrency statements by the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor to the Secretary of the Army. The concurrency statements can be obtained from the Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, 701 San Marco Blvd., Jacksonville, Florida 32207, or by accessing the programmatic regulations Web page at: http://www.evergladesplan.org/pm/progr_regs_final_rule.cfm.

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Subpart B—Program Goals and Responsibilities

§ 385.8 Goals and purposes of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

(a) The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) is a framework for modifications and operational changes to the Central and Southern Florida Project. The overarching objective of the Plan is the restoration, preservation, and protection of the South Florida ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection.

(b) The Corps of Engineers, the South Florida Water Management District, and other non-Federal sponsors shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, implement the Plan, as authorized by Congress, to ensure the protection of water quality in, the reduction of the loss of fresh water from, and the improvement of the environment of the South Florida ecosystem and to achieve and maintain the benefits to the natural system and human environment described in the Plan, and required pursuant to section 601 of WRDA 2000, for as long as the project is authorized.

(c) The goal of the Plan is to restore, preserve, and protect the South Florida ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region. The Plan is designed to accomplish this by providing the quantity, quality, timing, and distribution of water necessary to achieve and sustain those essential hydrological and biological characteristics that defined the undisturbed South Florida ecosystem. As authorized by Congress, the restored South Florida ecosystem will be significantly healthier than the current system; however it will not completely replicate the undisturbed South Florida ecosystem and some areas may more closely replicate the undisturbed ecosystem than others. Initial modeling showed that most of the water

generated by the Plan would go to the natural system in order to attain restoration goals, and the remainder of the water would go for use in the human environment. The Corps of Engineers, the South Florida Water Management District, and other non-Federal sponsors shall ensure that Project Implementation Reports identify the appropriate quantity, timing, and distribution of water to be dedicated and managed for the natural system that is necessary to meet the restoration goals of the Plan. In accordance with the "Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Assurance of Project Benefits Agreement," dated January 9, 2002 pursuant to section 601(h)(2) of WRDA 2000, the South Florida Water Management District or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection shall make sufficient reservations of water for the natural system under State law in accordance with the Project Implementation Report for that project and consistent with the Plan before water made available by a project is permitted for a consumptive use or otherwise made unavailable.

(d) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall implement the Plan in a manner to continuously improve the expected performance level of the Plan based upon new information resulting from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific and technical information, new or updated modeling; information developed through the adaptive assessment principles contained in the Plan; and future authorized changes to the Plan integrated into the implementation of the Plan.

§ 385.9 Implementation principles.

The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District and other non-Federal sponsors shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, conduct activities, including program-level activities, necessary to implement the Plan. Such activities

shall be conducted as part of an integrated implementation program, in accordance with this part, and based on the following principles:

(a) Individual projects shall be formulated, evaluated, and justified based on their ability to contribute to the goals and purposes of the Plan and on their ability to provide benefits that justify costs on a next-added increment basis.

(b) Interim goals shall be established in accordance with § 385.38 to provide a means for evaluating restoration success of the Plan at specific time intervals during implementation. Interim targets to evaluate progress on providing for other water-related needs of the region provided for in the Plan shall be established in accordance with § 385.39. Interim goals and interim targets shall be consistent with each other.

(c) Endorsement of the Plan as a restoration framework is not intended as a constraint on innovation during implementation through the adaptive management process. Continuous improvement of the Plan shall be sought to ensure that new information resulting from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific and technical information, new or updated modeling; information developed through the assessment principles contained in the Plan; and future authorized changes to the Plan are integrated into the implementation of the Plan. The adaptive management process provides a means for analyzing the performance of the Plan and assessing progress towards meeting the goals and purposes of the Plan as well as a basis for improving the performance of the Plan. Improving the performance of the Plan means enhancing the benefits of the Plan in terms of restoration of the natural system while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection.

§ 385.10 Implementation responsibilities, consultation, and coordination.

(a) *Implementing agencies.* Implementation of the Plan shall be the responsibility of the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsors.

(b) *Consultation*—(1) *Consultation with tribes.* (i) In addition to any other applicable provision for consultation with Native American Tribes, including but not limited to, laws, regulations, executive orders, and policies the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall consult with and seek advice from the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida throughout the implementation process to ensure meaningful and timely input by tribal officials regarding programs and activities covered by this part. Consultation with the tribes shall be conducted on a government-to-government basis.

(ii) In carrying out their responsibilities under section 601 of WRDA 2000 with respect to the restoration of the South Florida ecosystem, the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Interior shall fulfill any obligations to the Indian tribes in South Florida under the Indian trust doctrine as well as other applicable legal obligations.

(2) *Consultation with agencies.* The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall consult with and seek advice from the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies throughout the implementation process to ensure meaningful and timely input by those agencies regarding programs and activities covered under this part. The time for, and extent of, consultation shall be appropriate for, and limited by, the activity involved.

(c) *Coordination.* The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall coordinate implementation activities and the preparation of documents with other Federal, State, and local agencies and the tribes to fulfill the requirements of all applicable Federal and State laws, including but not limited to, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Endangered Species Act.

(d) *Timeliness obligations of consultation.* Consultation involves reciprocal obligations: on the part of the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor to involve agencies, tribes, and the public at an early stage and in such a way to ensure meaningful consultation, and on the part of the parties consulted to respond in a timely and meaningful fashion so that the implementation of the Plan is not jeopardized and so that delays do not result in other adverse consequences to restoration of the natural system, to the other goals and purposes of the Plan, or to the public interest generally. Prescribed time limits set by regulation are too inflexible for the entire consultation process. It is expected that the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor will set reasonable time limits for consultation on specific decisions consistent with the purposes of this part and that the parties will consult in a timely and meaningful way. The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor recognize that the time limits established for each specific decision will be proportionate to the complexity of the decision and will take into account the resources of the entity with whom the consultation is occurring in order to allow consultation to occur in a meaningful way. This part does not intend for a delay in consultation to be used as a de facto veto power. This part authorizes the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor to set reasonable limits on the amount of time for consultation. In setting reasonable time limits, the agencies and tribes may consider relevant considerations such as sequencing of projects, planning, contracting and funding, and any factor listed for setting time limits for consulting under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR 1501.8), including but not limited to, the nature and size of the proposed action, the degree to which relevant information is known or obtainable, the degree to which the action is controversial, the state of the art of analytical techniques, the number of persons affected, and the consequences of delay. In engaging in consultation, the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsor shall inform the agencies, tribes, and

public of the ending date for consultation. In addition, the agencies and tribes should adhere to all time limits imposed by law, regulations or executive order. In appropriate circumstances, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor may extend the time for consultation upon a showing that delays will not result in adverse consequences to the implementation of the Plan, to the restoration of the natural system, to the other goals and purposes of the Plan, or to the public interest and that relevant considerations justify a longer time. Failure of an agency, tribe or the public to engage in consultation with the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor, or file comments in a timely and meaningful way shall not be a sufficient reason for extending a consultation or comment period. Nothing in this part is intended to alter existing time limits established by statute or other regulations.

(e) *South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force.* The Department of the Army recognizes the valuable role that the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force), its working group, and its other advisory bodies play in the discussion and resolution of issues related to the South Florida ecosystem. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District regularly brief the Task Force on the Plan and regularly serve on the working group and other advisory bodies. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District and other non-Federal sponsors shall continue to provide information to, and consult with, the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, the Florida-based working group, and advisory bodies to the Task Force as appropriate throughout the implementation process for the Plan. In addition to consultation with the Task Force specified elsewhere in this part, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall consult with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, its working group, and its advisory bodies, on other matters related to the implementation of the Plan, as the Task Force from time to time may request. Pursuant to the provisions of

WRDA 1996, the Task Force shall provide general input concerning the implementation of the Plan. The Task Force shall provide recommendations to the Secretary of the Army regarding the implementation of the Plan, as provided in this part. The Secretary of the Army shall notify the Task Force to ensure it is afforded an opportunity to review and provide recommendations on reports and products, including but not limited to, interim goals and interim targets, Project Implementation Reports, Pilot Project Design Reports, Pilot Project Technical Data Reports, the pre-CERP baseline, assessment reports, guidance memoranda, Master Implementation Sequencing Plan, Comprehensive Plan Modification Reports, periodic CERP updates, and reports to Congress prepared pursuant to § 385.40.

Subpart C—CERP Implementation Processes

§ 385.11 Implementation process for projects.

Generally, the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall develop and implement projects in accordance with the process that is shown in figure 1 in Appendix A of this part. Typical steps in this process involve:

(a) *Project Management Plan.* The Project Management Plan describes the activities, tasks, and responsibilities that will be used to produce and deliver the products necessary to implement the project.

(b) *Project Implementation Report.* The Project Implementation Report provides information on plan formulation and evaluation, engineering and design, estimated benefits and costs, and environmental effects to bridge the gap between the conceptual design included in the Plan and the detailed design necessary to proceed to construction. The Project Implementation Reports will also set forth additional information and analyses necessary for the Secretary of the Army or Congress to approve the project for implementation.

(c) *Plans and specifications.* During this phase, final design of the project is completed and plans and specifications are prepared. Plans and specifications

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contain the information necessary to bid and construct the project.

(d) *Real estate acquisition.* The lands, easements, and rights-of way, and relocations necessary for the project are acquired prior to construction.

(e) *Construction.* This phase is the actual construction of a project's components and includes an interim operation and monitoring period to ensure that the project operates as designed.

(f) *Operation.* After construction of the project has been completed, it is operated in accordance with the System Operating Manual and the Project Operating Manual.

(g) *Monitoring and assessment.* After the project has been constructed, monitoring is conducted as necessary to assess the effectiveness of the project and to provide information that will be used for the adaptive management program.

§ 385.12 Pilot projects.

(a) The Plan includes pilot projects to address uncertainties associated with certain components such as aquifer storage and recovery, in-ground reservoir technology, seepage management, and wastewater reuse. The purpose of the pilot projects is to develop information necessary to better determine the technical feasibility of these components prior to development of a Project Implementation Report.

(b) Prior to initiating activities on a pilot project, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall develop a Project Management Plan as described in § 385.24.

(c) Project Implementation Reports shall not be necessary for pilot projects. Prior to implementing a pilot project, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall prepare a Pilot Project Design Report.

(1) The Pilot Project Design Report shall contain the technical information necessary to construct the pilot project including engineering and design, cost estimates, real estate analyses, and appropriate NEPA documentation.

(2) The Pilot Project Design Report shall include a detailed operational testing and monitoring plan necessary to develop information to assist in better determining the technical feasibility of certain components prior to

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development of a Project Implementation Report.

(3) In accordance with § 385.18, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall provide the public with opportunities to review and comment on the draft Pilot Project Design Report.

(4) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall approve the final Pilot Project Design Report in accordance with applicable law.

(d) Upon completion of operational testing and monitoring, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, prepare a Pilot Project Technical Data Report, documenting the findings and conclusions from the operational testing and monitoring of the pilot project. The purpose of the Pilot Project Technical Data Report is to help assess the viability of technology and to assist in the development of the full-scale project. The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall also consult with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in preparing the report.

(1) In accordance with § 385.22(b), the draft Pilot Project Technical Data Report shall be externally peer reviewed.

(2) In accordance with § 385.18, the public shall be provided with opportunities to review and comment on the draft Pilot Project Technical Data Report.

(3) The final Pilot Project Technical Data Report shall be made available to the public.

§ 385.13 Projects implemented under additional program authority.

(a) To expedite implementation of the Plan, the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors may implement projects under the authority of section 601(c) of WRDA 2000 that are described in the Plan and that will produce a substantial benefit to the restoration, preservation, and protection of the South Florida ecosystem.

(b) Each project implemented under the authority of section 601(c) of WRDA 2000 shall:

(1) In general, follow the process described in §385.11;

(2) Not be implemented until a Project Implementation Report is prepared and approved in accordance with §385.26; and

(3) Not exceed a total cost of \$25,000,000.

(c) The total aggregate cost of all projects implemented under the additional program authority shall not exceed \$206,000,000.

§385.14 Incorporation of NEPA and related considerations into the implementation process.

(a) *General.* (1) In implementing the Plan, the Corps of Engineers shall comply with the requirements of NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4371, *et seq.*) and applicable implementing regulations, including determining whether a specific action, when considered individually and cumulatively, will have a significant impact on the human environment.

(2) As appropriate, other agencies shall be invited to be cooperating agencies in the preparation of NEPA documentation pursuant to §230.16 of this chapter.

(3) The District Engineer is the NEPA official responsible for compliance with NEPA for actions conducted to implement the Plan. Unless otherwise provided for by this part, NEPA coordination for implementation of the plan shall follow the NEPA procedures established in part 230 of this chapter.

(b) *Actions normally requiring an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).* (1) In addition to the actions listed in §230.6 of this chapter, actions normally requiring an EIS are:

(i) Comprehensive Plan Modification Reports;

(ii) System Operating Manual or significant changes to the System Operating Manual;

(iii) Project Implementation Reports, including the draft Project Operating Manual when included in the Project Implementation Report;

(iv) Pilot Project Design Reports, including the detailed operational testing and monitoring plan; and

(v) Project Operating Manuals for any project where a Project Implementation Report is not prepared, or significant changes to Project Operating Manuals.

(2) The District Engineer may consider the use of an environmental assessment (EA) on the types of actions described in this paragraph if early studies and coordination show that a particular action, considered individually and cumulatively, is not likely to have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment.

(c) *Actions normally requiring an EA, but not necessarily an EIS.* In addition to the actions listed in §230.7 of this chapter, actions normally requiring an EA, but not necessarily an EIS, are modifications to Project Operating Manuals or the System Operating Manual, that do not provide for significant change in operation and/or maintenance.

(d) *Categorical exclusions.* In addition to the activities listed in §230.9 of this chapter, the following actions do not require separate NEPA documentation, either because, when considered individually and cumulatively, they do not have significant effects on the quality of the human environment or because any such effects will already have been considered in NEPA documentation prepared in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section. However, the District Engineer should be alert for extraordinary circumstances that may dictate the need to prepare an EA or an EIS. Even though an EA or EIS is not indicated for a Federal action because of a "categorical exclusion," that fact does not exempt the action from compliance with any other applicable Federal, State, or Tribal law, including but not limited to, the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

(1) Project Cooperation Agreements;

(2) Project Management Plans;

(3) Program Management Plans;

(4) Plans and specifications for projects;

(5) Pilot Project Technical Data Reports;

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(6) Assessment reports prepared for the adaptive management program;

(7) Interim goals and interim targets;

(8) Development or revision of guidance memoranda or methods such as adaptive management, monitoring, plan formulation and evaluation, quantification of water needed for the natural system or protection of existing uses, methods of determining levels of flood protection, and similar guidance memoranda or methods; and

(9) Deviations from Operating Manuals for emergencies and unplanned minor deviations when, considered individually and cumulatively, they do not have significant effects on the quality of the human environment, as described in applicable Corps of Engineers regulations, including § 222.5(f)(4) and § 222.5(i)(5) of this chapter, and Engineer Regulation ER 1110-2-8156 "Preparation of Water Control Manuals."

§ 385.15 Consistency with requirements of the State of Florida.

The State of Florida has established procedures, requirements, and approvals that are needed before the State or the South Florida Water Management District can participate as the non-Federal sponsor for projects of the Plan. Project Implementation Reports shall include such information and analyses, consistent with this part, as are necessary to facilitate review and approval of projects by the South Florida Water Management District and the State pursuant to the requirements of Florida law.

§ 385.16 Design agreements.

(a) The Corps of Engineers shall execute a design agreement with each non-Federal sponsor for the projects of the Plan prior to initiation of design activities with that non-Federal sponsor.

(b) Any procedures, guidance, or documents developed by the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor pursuant to a design agreement shall be consistent with this part.

§ 385.17 Project Delivery Team.

(a) In accordance with the procedures of the Corps of Engineers business process described in Engineer Regulation ER 5-1-11 "US Army Corps of En-

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gineers Business process," the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall form a Project Delivery Team to develop the products necessary to implement each project.

(b) The Corps of Engineers shall assign, and the non-Federal sponsor may assign, a project manager to lead the Project Delivery Team.

(c) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall encourage the participation of other Federal, State, and local agencies and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida on Project Delivery Teams, and use their expertise to ensure that information developed by the Project Delivery Team is shared with agencies, tribes, and the public at the earliest possible time in the implementation process. In forming the Project Delivery Team, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall request that the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies participate on the Project Delivery Team.

(1) In general, participation on the Project Delivery Team shall be the financial responsibility of the participating agency or tribe. However, the Corps of Engineers shall provide funding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service to prepare Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Reports, as required by applicable law, regulation, or agency procedures.

(2) Participation by an agency or tribe on the Project Delivery Team shall not be considered or construed to be a substitute for consultation, coordination, or other activities required by applicable law or this part.

(d) Documents and work products prepared or developed by the Project Delivery Team shall not be self-executing, but shall be provided as information for consideration by the Corps

of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies.

§ 385.18 Public outreach.

(a) *Goals.* (1) The goal of public outreach is to open and maintain channels of communication with the public throughout the implementation process for the Plan in order to:

- (i) Provide information about proposed activities;
- (ii) Make the public's desires, needs, and concerns known to decision-makers before decisions are reached; and
- (iii) Consider and respond to the public's views in reaching decisions.

(2) In carrying out implementation activities for the Plan, the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall undertake outreach activities to:

- (i) Increase general public awareness for the Plan;
- (ii) Involve interested groups and interested communities in the decision-making process and incorporate public values into decisions;
- (iii) Better serve and involve minority communities and traditionally underserved communities, persons with limited English proficiency, and socially and economically disadvantaged individuals;
- (iv) Improve the substantive quality of decisions as a result of public participation; and
- (v) Reduce conflict among interested and affected parties by building agreement or consensus on solutions to emerging issues.

(b) *General requirements.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall provide a transparent, publicly accessible process through which scientific and technical information is used in the development of policy decisions throughout the implementation process for the Plan.

(2) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall develop and conduct outreach activities for project or program-level activities in order to

provide information to the public and to provide opportunities for involvement by the public.

(3) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall monitor the effectiveness of outreach activities throughout the implementation process.

(4) Project Management Plans and Program Management Plans shall include information concerning any outreach activities to be undertaken during the implementation of the project or activity.

(5) Project Delivery Team meetings and RECOVER meetings shall be open to attendance by the public. The public shall be notified in advance of these meetings through e-mail, posting on a web site, or other appropriate means. The public shall be provided with an opportunity to comment at such meetings.

(6) Public meetings and workshops shall be held at such times and locations as to facilitate participation by the public.

(7) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on draft documents.

(c) *Outreach to socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and communities.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall develop and conduct public outreach activities to ensure that socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, including individuals with limited English proficiency, and communities are provided opportunities to review and comment during implementation of the Plan.

(2) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall monitor the effectiveness of outreach activities conducted to ensure that socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and communities, including individuals with limited English proficiency, are provided opportunities to review and comment during implementation of the Plan.

(3) Project Management Plans and Program Management Plans shall include information, concerning any outreach activities to be undertaken during the implementation of the project or activity, to socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and

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communities, including individuals of limited English proficiency.

(4) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall make project and program information available in languages other than English where a significant number of individuals in the area affected by the project or program activity are expected to have limited English proficiency.

(5) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall provide translators or similar services at public meetings where a significant number of participants are expected to have limited English proficiency.

§ 385.19 Environmental and economic equity.

(a) Project Management Plans and Program Management Plans shall include information concerning any environmental and economic equity activities to be undertaken during the implementation of the project or activity.

(b) As required by applicable laws and policies, the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall consider and evaluate environmental justice issues and concerns in the implementation of projects.

(c) During the implementation of the Plan, through appropriate means, consistent with section 601(k) of WRDA 2000 and other provisions of Federal law, the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall provide information to socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and communities, including individuals with limited English proficiency, about potential or anticipated contracting opportunities that are expected to result from implementation of the Plan.

(d) The District Engineer shall ensure that small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals are provided opportunities to participate under section 15(g) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(g)) throughout the implementation process. The District Engineer shall track the amount of contracts awarded to small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals in order to ensure that they are provided such opportunities.

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§ 385.20 Restoration Coordination and Verification (RECOVER).

(a) RECOVER (Restoration Coordination and Verification) is an inter-agency and interdisciplinary scientific and technical team described in the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement," dated April 1, 1999. RECOVER was established by the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District to conduct assessment, evaluation, and planning and integration activities using the best available science that support implementation of the Plan with the overall goal of ensuring that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved. RECOVER has been organized into a Leadership Group that provides management and coordination for the activities of RECOVER and teams that accomplish activities such as: developing system-wide performance measures; developing and implementing the monitoring and assessment program; evaluating alternatives developed by Project Delivery Teams to achieve the goals and purposes of the Plan; conducting system-wide water quality analyses; developing, refining, and applying system-wide models and tools; and evaluating modifications to the Plan. RECOVER is not a policy making body, but has technical and scientific responsibilities that support implementation of the Plan.

(b) Documents or work products prepared or developed by RECOVER shall not be self-executing, but shall be provided as information for consideration by the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies. Technical information developed by RECOVER shall be available to the public.

(c) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall encourage the participation

of other Federal, State, and local agencies and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida on RECOVER, to use their expertise, to ensure that information developed by RECOVER is shared at the earliest possible time with agencies, tribes, and the public, and to ensure that matters of concern are addressed as early as possible. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District recognize the special role of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the Department of Commerce, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Department of the Interior and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as stewards of the natural system and for their technical and scientific activities in support of restoration. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District recognize the special role of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in water quality issues. Accordingly, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District have used and will continue to use the Department of the Interior, the Department of Commerce, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection as co-chairs along with the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District on the appropriate technical teams that have been established to date as part of RECOVER.

(1) In general, participation on RECOVER shall be the financial responsibility of the participating agency or tribe.

(2) Participation by an agency or tribe on RECOVER shall not be considered or construed to be a substitute for consultation, coordination, or other activities required by applicable law, policy, or regulation.

(d) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall:

(1) Assign program managers from the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District to

be responsible for carrying out the activities of RECOVER; and

(2) Establish a RECOVER Leadership Group to assist the program managers in coordinating and managing the activities of RECOVER, including the establishment of sub-teams or other entities, and in reporting on the activities of RECOVER. In addition to the program managers, the RECOVER Leadership Group shall, consist of one member appointed by each of the following:

- (i) Environmental Protection Agency;
- (ii) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
- (iii) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- (iv) U.S. Geological Survey;
- (v) National Park Service;
- (vi) Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida;
- (vii) Seminole Tribe of Florida;
- (viii) Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services;
- (ix) Florida Department of Environmental Protection; and
- (x) Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

(3) As necessary to assist the program managers, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District may add additional members to the RECOVER Leadership Group.

(e) RECOVER shall perform assessment, evaluation, and planning and integration activities as described in this paragraph.

(1) *Assessment activities.* In accordance with §385.31, RECOVER shall conduct credible scientific assessments of hydrological, water quality, biological, ecological, water supply, and other responses to the Plan. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District will ensure that these assessments incorporate the best available science and that the results are provided for external peer review, as appropriate, and are made fully available for public review and comment. RECOVER shall conduct assessment activities, including, but not limited to:

- (i) Developing proposed assessment performance measures for assessing progress towards the goals and purposes of the Plan;

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(ii) Developing a proposed monitoring plan to support the adaptive management program;

(iii) Conducting monitoring and assessment activities as part of the adaptive management program to assess the actual performance of the Plan;

(iv) Developing recommendations for interim goals in accordance with § 385.38;

(v) Assessing progress towards achieving the interim goals established pursuant to § 385.38;

(vi) Developing recommendations for interim targets in accordance with § 385.39;

(vii) Assessing progress towards achieving the interim targets established pursuant to § 385.39; and

(viii) Cooperating with the independent scientific review panel and external peer review in accordance with § 385.22.

(2) *Evaluation activities.* In accordance with § 385.26(c) and § 385.32, RECOVER shall assist Project Delivery Teams in ensuring that project design and performance is fully linked to the goals and purposes of the Plan and incorporating, as appropriate, information developed for Project Implementation Reports into the Plan. RECOVER shall conduct evaluation activities, including, but not limited to:

(i) Developing proposed evaluation performance measures for evaluating alternative plans developed for the Project Implementation Report;

(ii) Conducting evaluations of alternative plans developed for Project Implementation Reports and Comprehensive Plan Modification Reports; and

(iii) Supporting development and refinement of predictive models and tools used in the evaluation of alternate plans developed by the Project Delivery Teams.

(3) *Planning and integration activities.* RECOVER shall conduct planning and integration activities, in accordance with § 385.31, in support of the adaptive management program as a basis for identifying opportunities for improving the performance of the Plan and other appropriate planning and integration activities associated with implementation of the Plan. RECOVER shall con-

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duct planning and integration activities, including, but not limited to:

(i) Developing and refining conceptual and predictive models and tools in support of the integration of new science into the adaptive management program;

(ii) Reviewing and synthesizing new information and science that could have an effect on the Plan;

(iii) Developing proposed refinements and improvements in the design or operation of the Plan during all phases of implementation;

(iv) Preparing technical information to be used in the development of the periodic reports to Congress prepared pursuant to § 385.40; and

(v) Analyzing proposed revisions to the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan.

(f) In carrying out the functions described in this section, RECOVER shall consider the effects of activities and projects that are not part of the Plan, but which could affect the ability of the Plan to achieve its goals and purposes.

(g) As appropriate, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall seek external peer review of RECOVER activities in accordance with § 385.22(b).

§ 385.21 Quality control.

(a) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall prepare a quality control plan, in accordance with applicable Corps of Engineers regulations, for each product that will be produced by a Project Delivery Team. The quality control plan shall be included in the Project Management Plan and shall describe the procedures to be used to ensure compliance with technical and policy requirements during implementation.

(b) During development of the Project Management Plan for each project, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall establish a Technical Review Team to conduct reviews to ensure that products are consistent with established criteria, guidance, procedures, and policy. The members of the Technical Review Team

shall be independent of the Project Delivery Team and the project being reviewed, and should be knowledgeable of design criteria established for the Plan.

(c) Technical review is intended to be a continuous process throughout project implementation. The Technical Review Team shall document its actions and recommendations and provide reports to the Project Delivery Team at designated points during the implementation process that shall be described in the quality control plan.

§ 385.22 Independent scientific review and external peer review.

(a) *The independent scientific review panel required by section 601(j).* (1) Section 601(j) of WRDA 2000 requires that the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor, in consultation with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, establish an independent scientific review panel, convened by a body, such as the National Academy of Sciences, to review the Plan's progress toward achieving the natural system restoration goals of the Plan. Section 601(j) also directs that this panel produce a biennial report to Congress, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor that includes an assessment of ecological indicators and other measures of progress in restoring the ecology of the natural system, based on the Plan.

(2) To carry out section 601(j), the Department of the Army, the Department of the Interior, and the State shall establish an independent scientific review panel to conduct on-going review of the progress achieved by the implementation of the Plan in achieving the restoration goals of the Plan and shall provide the panel with the resources and cooperation necessary to ensure that the panel is able to function effectively.

(3) Not later than June 14, 2004, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor, in consultation with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, shall enter into a five-year agreement, with options for extensions in five-year increments, with the National Academy of Sciences to convene this panel.

(4) The Department of the Army, the Department of the Interior, and the State expect that the National Academy of Sciences will use established practices for assuring the independence of members and that the review panel will include members reflecting a balance of the knowledge, training, and experience suitable to comprehensively review and assess progress towards achieving natural system restoration goals of the Plan.

(5) To ensure the independence of the section 601(j) panel, its sole mission shall be to review the Plan's progress toward achieving the natural system restoration goals of the Plan and to produce a biennial report to Congress, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor that includes an assessment of ecological indicators and other measures of progress in restoring the ecology of the natural system, based on the Plan. The Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, the Governor, and the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force and its members, shall not attempt to influence the panel's review or assign this panel any other tasks, nor request any advice on any other matter, nor shall this panel accept any other tasks nor provide advice on any other matter, to any entity, whether Federal, State or local, whether public or private.

(6) Before final establishment of the panel, the Department of the Army, the Department of the Interior, and the State, in consultation with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, shall be afforded the opportunity to review the list of panel members convened by the National Academy of Sciences.

(7) The agreement shall recognize that the Department of the Army, the Department of the Interior, and the State retain the right and ability to establish other independent scientific review panels or external peer reviews when deemed necessary by those agencies for conducting specific scientific and technical reviews.

(8) The Department of the Army, the Department of the Interior, and the State of Florida shall share the panel's costs. The Department of the Army and the Department of the Interior

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shall enter into a separate Memorandum of Agreement that will specify how the Federal agencies will pay the Federal share of these costs. The State's fifty percent share shall be accounted for in the design agreement between the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District.

(9) The panel shall produce a biennial report to Congress, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor, pursuant to section 601(j) of WRDA 2000, that includes an assessment of ecological indicators and other measures of progress in restoring the ecology of the natural system, based on the Plan.

(10) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District and other non-Federal sponsors shall cooperate with the independent scientific review panel, including responding to reasonable requests for information concerning the implementation of the Plan.

(11) The Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor shall consult with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in their decision to exercise each five-year option to extend the agreement with the National Academy of Sciences. Upon expiration of the agreement, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor shall consult the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in selection of another body to convene the independent scientific review panel required by section 601(j) of WRDA 2000.

(b) *External peer review.* (1) The Department of the Army, the Department of the Interior, the South Florida Water Management District, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida may initiate an external peer review process to review documents, reports, procedures, or to address specific scientific or technical questions or issues relating to their jurisdiction.

(2) In accordance with §385.12(d), draft Pilot Project Technical Reports shall be externally peer reviewed.

(3) In accordance with §385.31(b), draft assessment reports prepared for

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the adaptive management program shall be externally peer reviewed.

§ 385.23 Dispute resolution.

(a) Disputes with the non-Federal sponsor concerning a Project Cooperation Agreement shall be resolved under the specific dispute resolution procedures of that Project Cooperation Agreement.

(b) Disputes with the non-Federal sponsor concerning design activities shall be resolved under the specific dispute resolution procedures of the design agreement.

(c) All other unresolved issues with the non-Federal sponsor and disputes with the State associated with the implementation of the Plan shall be resolved according to the terms of the Dispute Resolution Agreement executed on September 9, 2002 pursuant to section 601(i) of WRDA 2000.

(d) For disputes with parties not covered by the provisions of paragraphs (a), (b), or (c) of this section, the Corps of Engineers shall attempt to resolve the dispute in accordance with applicable statutory requirements and/or the following procedures:

(1) The parties will attempt to resolve disputes at the lowest organizational level before seeking to elevate a dispute.

(2) Any disputed matter shall first be elevated to the District Engineer and the equivalent official of the other agency, or their designees. The parties may decide to continue to elevate the dispute to higher levels within each agency.

(3) The parties to a dispute may agree to participate in mediation.

(4) When a dispute is resolved the parties shall memorialize the resolution in writing.

§ 385.24 Project Management Plans.

(a) *General requirements.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, develop a Project Management

Plan prior to initiating activities on a project.

(2) The Project Management Plan shall define the activities, and where appropriate, the subordinate tasks, as well as the assignment of responsibility for completing products and activities such as Project Implementation Reports, Pilot Project Design Reports, plans and specifications, real estate acquisition, construction contracts and construction, Comprehensive Plan Modification Reports, and other activities necessary to support implementation of the Plan.

(3) The Project Management Plan shall include a quality control plan, as described in § 385.21.

(4) As appropriate, the Project Management Plan shall include activities to be conducted to meet the requirements of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, as described in § 385.26(e).

(5) The Project Management Plan shall provide schedule and funding information for the project.

(6) In accordance with § 385.18, Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on the Project Management Plan.

(b) *Revisions to Project Management Plans.* The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor may, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, revise the Project Management Plan whenever necessary, including after completion of the Project Implementation Report, or Plans and Specifications. In accordance with § 385.18, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on revisions to the Project Management Plan.

§ 385.25 Program Management Plans.

(a) *General requirements.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe

of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, develop a Program Management Plan prior to initiating a program-level activity.

(2) The Program Management Plan shall define the activities, and where appropriate, the subordinate tasks, as well as the assignment of responsibility for completing products developed in support to program-level activities.

(3) In accordance with § 385.18, Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on the Program Management Plan.

(b) *Revisions to Program Management Plans.* The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor may, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, revise the Program Management Plan whenever necessary to incorporate new or changed information that affects the scope, schedule, or budget of the activities described in the Program Management Plan. In accordance with § 385.18, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on revisions to the Program Management Plan.

§ 385.26 Project Implementation Reports.

(a) *General requirements.* (1) The Project Implementation Report is a document that provides information on plan formulation and evaluation, engineering and design, estimated benefits and costs, environmental effects, and the additional information and analysis necessary for the Secretary of the Army to approve the project for implementation, or for Congress to authorize the project for implementation. The Project Implementation Report bridges the gap between the conceptual level of

detail contained in the “Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement,” dated April 1, 1999 and the detailed design necessary to prepare plans and specifications required to proceed to construction. Prior to requesting approval or authorization for the implementation of a project, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, complete a Project Implementation Report addressing the project’s justification in accordance with section 601(f)(2) of WRDA 2000, and other factors required by section 601(h)(4)(A) of WRDA 2000. To eliminate duplication with State and local procedures, the Project Implementation Report shall also address the factors of relevant State laws, including sections 373.1501 and 373.470 of the Florida Statutes.

(2) Before completion of the draft Project Implementation Report, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall provide the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force with information about the alternative plans developed and evaluated for the Project Implementation Report.

(3) The Project Implementation Report shall:

(i) Be consistent with the Plan and applicable law, policy, and regulation, including the Principles and Guidelines of the Water Resources Council, as modified by section 601(f)(2)(A) of WRDA 2000;

(ii) Be based on the best available science;

(iii) Comply with all applicable Federal, State, and Tribal laws;

(iv) Contain sufficient information for proceeding to final design of the project, such as: additional plan formulation and evaluation, environmental and/or economic benefits, engineering and design, costs, environmental impacts, real estate requirements, and the preparation of the appropriate Na-

tional Environmental Policy Act documentation;

(v) Contain the information necessary to determine that the activity is justified by the environmental benefits derived by the South Florida ecosystem in accordance with section 601(f)(2)(A) and/or that the benefits of the project are commensurate with costs, and that the project is cost-effective;

(vi) Comply, in accordance with section 601(b)(2)(A)(ii) of WRDA 2000, with applicable water quality standards and applicable water quality permitting requirements;

(vii) Identify, in accordance with § 385.35, the appropriate quantity, timing, and distribution of water dedicated and managed for the natural system;

(viii) Identify, in accordance with § 385.35, the amount of water to be reserved or allocated for the natural system under State law necessary to implement the provisions in paragraphs (a)(3)(vi) and (vii) of this section;

(ix) Identify the quantity, timing, and distribution of water made available for other water-related needs of the region;

(x) Determine, in accordance with § 385.36, if existing legal sources of water are to be eliminated or transferred;

(xi) Determine, in accordance with § 385.37(b) that implementation of the selected alternative will not reduce levels of service for flood protection that:

(A) Were in existence on the date of enactment of section 601 of WRDA 2000; and

(B) Are in accordance with applicable law; and consider, as appropriate, in accordance with § 385.37(c), opportunities to provide additional flood protection;

(xii) Include an assessment of the monetary and non-monetary benefits and costs, optimization and justification, cost-effectiveness, and engineering feasibility of the project;

(xiii) Include a discussion of any significant changes in cost or scope of the project from that presented in the “Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement,” dated April 1, 1999;

(xiv) Include an analysis, prepared by RECOVER as described in paragraph (c) of this section, of the project's contributions towards achieving the goals and purposes of the Plan, including, as appropriate, suggestions for improving the performance of the alternative plans;

(xv) Describe how the project contributes to the achievement of interim goals established pursuant to §385.38 and the interim targets established pursuant to §385.39;

(xvi) Include, in accordance with §385.28(c), a draft Project Operating Manual as an appendix; and

(xvii) Include, as appropriate, information necessary for the non-Federal sponsor to address the requirements of Chapter 373 of the Florida Statutes, and other applicable planning and reporting requirements of Florida law.

(4) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall develop the Project Implementation Report generally in accordance with the process shown in figure 2 in Appendix A of this part.

(5) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall develop a guidance memorandum in accordance with §385.5 for approval by the Secretary of the Army, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor, that describes the major tasks that are generally needed to prepare a Project Implementation Report and the format and content of a Project Implementation Report.

(b) *Formulation and evaluation.* In preparing a Project Implementation Report, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall formulate and evaluate alternative plans to optimize the project's contributions towards achieving the goals and purposes of the Plan, and to develop justified and cost-effective ways to achieve the benefits of the Plan.

(1) *General.* The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall develop a guidance memorandum in accordance with §385.5 for approval by the Secretary of the Army, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor, that describes the processes to be used to formulate and evaluate al-

ternative plans and their associated monetary and non-monetary benefits and costs, determine cost-effectiveness and optimize the project's contribution towards achieving the goals and purposes of the Plan, and the basis for justifying and selecting an alternative to be recommended for implementation. The guidance memorandum shall also provide a process for evaluating projects that are outside the boundary of regional computer models or projects whose effects cannot be captured in regional computer models. Project Implementation Reports approved by the Secretary of the Army before December 12, 2003 or before the development of the guidance memorandum may use whatever method that, in the Secretary of the Army's discretion, is deemed appropriate and is consistent with applicable law, policy, and regulations.

(2) *Project formulation and evaluation.* The guidance memorandum shall describe the process for formulating and evaluating alternative plans for their ability to optimize contributions for achieving the goals and purposes of the Plan. The guidance memorandum shall describe the process for including each alternative plan with all of the other components of the Plan and evaluating the total monetary and non-monetary benefits and costs of the resulting comprehensive plan when compared to the without CERP condition. In formulating alternative plans to be evaluated, the project as described in the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement," dated April 1, 1999 shall be included as one of the alternative plans that is evaluated. For the selected plan, the guidance memorandum shall also describe the process for evaluating that plan as the next-added increment of the Plan.

(3) *Identification of selected alternative plan.* The guidance memorandum shall also include a process for identification of a selected alternative plan, based on the analyses conducted in paragraph (b)(2) of this section. The alternative plan to be selected should be the plan that maximizes net benefits, both monetary and non-monetary, on a system-wide basis, provided that this plan is justified on a next-added increment

basis. Alternative plans that are not justified on a next-added increment basis shall not be selected. The guidance memorandum shall describe an iterative process for evaluating and/or combining alternative options until an alternative is identified that maximizes net benefits while still providing benefits that justify costs on a next-added increment basis.

(c) *RECOVER performance evaluation of alternative plans.* (1) Prior to the identification of a selected alternative plan, RECOVER shall evaluate the performance of alternative plans towards achieving the goals and purposes of the Plan.

(2) RECOVER shall prepare information for the Project Delivery Team describing the results of the evaluations of alternative plans developed for the Project Implementation Report towards achieving the goals and purposes of the Plan, including, as appropriate, suggestions for improving the performance of the alternative plans.

(d) *NEPA documentation for Project Implementation Reports.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall prepare the appropriate NEPA document to accompany the Project Implementation Report. The NEPA document shall contain an analysis of the effects of the alternatives formulated for the Project Implementation Report. The NEPA document for the Project Implementation Report shall use the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement included in the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement," dated April 1, 1999, as appropriate, for the purpose of tiering as described in § 230.14(c) of this chapter.

(2) The District Engineer shall prepare the Record of Decision for Project Implementation Reports. Review and signature of the Record of Decision shall follow the same procedures as for review and approval of feasibility reports in § 230.14 of this chapter and other applicable Corps of Engineers regulations.

(e) *Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act requirements.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fish-

eries Service, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and other appropriate agencies in the preparation of a Project Implementation Report, as required by applicable law.

(2) The Project Management Plan shall include a discussion of activities to be conducted for compliance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and other applicable laws.

(3) Consistent with applicable law, policy, and regulations, coordination shall include preparation of the following documents as shown in figure 2 in Appendix A of this part:

(i) Planning Aid Letter that describes issues and opportunities related to the conservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife resources; and

(ii) Draft and final Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Reports that provide the formal views and recommendations of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission on alternative plans.

(f) *Project Implementation Report review and approval process.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on the draft Project Implementation Report and NEPA document, in accordance with § 385.18 and applicable law and Corps of Engineers policy.

(2) The Project Implementation Report shall contain an appropriate letter of intent from the non-Federal sponsor indicating concurrence with the recommendations of the Project Implementation Report.

(3) Upon the completion of the Project Implementation Report and NEPA document, the District Engineer shall submit the report and NEPA document to the Division Engineer.

(4) Upon receipt and approval of the Project Implementation Report the Division Engineer shall issue a public notice announcing completion of the Project Implementation Report based upon:

(i) The Division Engineer's endorsement of the findings and recommendations of the District Engineer; and

(ii) The Division Engineer's assessment that the project has been developed and the report prepared in accordance with current law and policy. The notice shall indicate that the report has been submitted to Corps of Engineers Headquarters for review.

(5) Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers shall conduct a review in accordance with applicable policies and regulations of the Corps of Engineers. Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers shall administer the 30-day state and agency review of the Project Implementation Report, and as appropriate, file the Environmental Impact Statement with the Environmental Protection Agency.

(6) After completion of the review and other requirements of law and policy, the Chief of Engineers shall submit the Project Implementation Report and the Chief of Engineers' recommendations on the project to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

(7) The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works shall review all Project Implementation Reports, and shall, prior to either approving them or submitting the Assistant Secretary's recommendations to Congress, coordinate the project and proposed recommendations with the Office of Management and Budget.

(i) For projects authorized by section 601(c) of WRDA 2000, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works shall review and approve the Project Implementation Report prior to implementation of the project.

(ii) For projects authorized by section 601(b)(2)(C) of WRDA 2000, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works shall review the Project Implementation Report prior to submitting the Assistant Secretary's recommendations to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate for approval.

(iii) For all other projects, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works shall review the Project Implementation Report prior to submitting the Assistant Secretary's recommendations regarding authorization to Congress.

§ 385.27 Project Cooperation Agreements.

(a) *General.* Prior to initiating construction or implementation of a project, the Corps of Engineers shall execute a Project Cooperation Agreement with the non-Federal sponsor in accordance with applicable law.

(b) *Verification of water reservations.* The Project Cooperation Agreement shall include a finding that the South Florida Water Management District or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection has executed under State law the reservation or allocation of water for the natural system as identified in the Project Implementation Report. Prior to execution of the Project Cooperation Agreement, the District Engineer shall verify in writing that the South Florida Water Management District or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection has executed under State law the reservation or allocation of water for the natural system as identified in the Project Implementation Report. The District Engineer's verification shall provide the basis for the finding in the Project Cooperation Agreement and be made available to the public.

(c) *Changes to water reservations.* Reservations or allocations of water are a State responsibility. Any change to the reservation or allocation of water for the natural system made under State law shall require an amendment to the Project Cooperation Agreement.

(1) The District Engineer shall, in consultation with the South Florida Water Management District, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, verify in writing that the revised reservation or allocation continues to provide for an appropriate quantity, timing, and distribution of water dedicated and managed for the natural system after considering any changed circumstances or new information since completion of the Project Implementation Report. In accordance

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with applicable State law, the non-Federal sponsor shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on any proposed changes in the water reservation made by the State.

(2) The Secretary of the Army shall notify the appropriate committees of Congress whenever a change to the reservation or allocation of water for the natural system executed under State law as described in the Project Implementation Report has been made. Such notification shall include the Secretary's and the State's reasons for determining that the revised reservation or allocation continues to provide for an appropriate quantity, timing, and distribution of water dedicated and managed for the natural system after considering any changed circumstances or new information since completion of the Project Implementation Report. The Secretary of the Army's notification to the appropriate committees of Congress shall be made available to the public.

(d) *Savings clause provisions.* The Project Cooperation Agreement shall ensure that the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor not:

(1) Eliminate or transfer existing legal sources of water until a new source of comparable quantity and quality as that available on the date of enactment of WRDA 2000 is available to replace the water to be lost as a result of implementation of the Plan; and

(2) Reduce levels of service for flood protection that are:

(i) In existence on the date of enactment of WRDA 2000; and

(ii) In accordance with applicable law.

§ 385.28 Operating Manuals.

(a) *General provisions.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, develop Operating Manuals to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved.

(2) Operating Manuals shall consist of a System Operating Manual and Project Operating Manuals. In general, the System Operating Manual provides a system-wide operating plan for the operation of the projects of the Plan and other C&SF Project features and the Project Operating Manuals provide the details necessary for integrating the operation of the individual projects with the system operation described in the System Operating Manual.

(3) In accordance with §385.18, the public shall have the opportunity to review and comment on draft Operating Manuals.

(4) The Division Engineer and the non-Federal sponsor shall approve completed Operating Manuals.

(5) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall develop a guidance memorandum in accordance with §385.5 for approval by the Secretary of the Army, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor, that describes the content of Operating Manuals and the tasks necessary to develop Operating Manuals.

(6) Operating Manuals shall:

(i) Be consistent with the goals and purposes of the Plan;

(ii) Comply with NEPA, in accordance with §385.14.

(iii) Describe regulation schedules, water control, and operating criteria for a project, group of projects, or the entire system;

(iv) Make provisions for the natural fluctuation of water made available in any given year and fluctuations necessary for the natural system as described in the Plan;

(v) Be consistent with applicable water quality standards and applicable water quality permitting requirements;

(vi) Be consistent with the reservation or allocation of water for the natural system and the savings clause provisions described in the Project Implementation Report and the Project Cooperation Agreement and the provisions of §385.35(b), §385.36, and §385.37 and reflect the operational criteria used in the identification of the appropriate quantity, timing, and distribution of water dedicated and managed for the natural system;

(vii) Include a drought contingency plan as required by §222.5(i)(5) of this chapter and Engineer Regulation ER 1110-2-1941 "Drought Contingency Plans" that is consistent with the Water Rights Compact Among the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the State of Florida, and the South Florida Water Management District and Florida Administrative Code Section 40E-21 (Water Shortage Plan) and Florida Administrative Code Section 40E-22 (Regional Water Shortage Plan); and

(viii) Include provisions authorizing temporary short-term deviations from the Operating Manual for emergencies and unplanned circumstances, as described in applicable Corps of Engineers regulations, including §222.5(f)(4) and §222.5(i)(5) of this chapter, and Engineer Regulation ER 1110-2-8156 "Preparation of Water Control Manuals." However, deviations shall be minimized by including planning for flooding events caused by rainfall and hurricane events, as well as by including a drought contingency plan.

(A) *Emergency deviations.* Examples of some emergencies that can be expected to occur at a project are: drowning and other accidents, failure of the operation facilities, chemical spills, treatment plant failures and other temporary pollution problems. Water control actions necessary to abate the problem are taken immediately unless such action would create equal or worse conditions.

(B) *Unplanned circumstances.* There are unplanned circumstances that create a temporary need for minor deviations from the Operating Manual, although they are not considered emergencies. Deviations are sometimes necessary to carry out maintenance and inspection of facilities. Requests for deviations for unplanned circumstances generally involve time periods ranging from a few hours to a few days. Approval of these changes shall be obtained from the Division Engineer.

(7) Except as provided in this part, operating manuals generally shall follow the procedures for water control plans in §222.5 of this chapter and applicable Corps of Engineers regulations for preparation of water control manu-

als and regulation schedules, including Engineer Regulation ER 1110-2-8156.

(b) *System Operating Manual.* (1) Not later than December 31, 2005, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, develop a System Operating Manual that provides a system-wide operating plan for the operation of implemented projects of the Plan and other Central and Southern Florida Project features to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved.

(2) The System Operating Manual shall initially be based on the existing completed Central and Southern Florida Project features and shall be developed by the Corps of Engineers as provided in §222.5(g) of this chapter and by the South Florida Water Management District as its laws and regulations require. Existing water control plans, regulation schedules, and Master Water Control Plans for the Central and Southern Florida Project shall remain in effect until approval of the System Operating Manual.

(3) The System Operating Manual shall be revised whenever the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, believe it is necessary to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved.

(4) Except as provided in this part, the System Operating Manual shall follow the procedures for preparation of water control manuals, regulation schedules and Master Water Control Manuals in §222.5 of this chapter and applicable Corps of Engineers regulations.

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(5) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall provide notice and opportunity for public comment for any significant modification to the System Operating Manual.

(c) *Project Operating Manuals.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, develop a Project Operating Manual for each project of the Plan that is implemented.

(2) Project Operating Manuals shall be considered supplements to the System Operating Manual, and present aspects of the projects not common to the system as a whole.

(3) Each Project Implementation Report shall, as appropriate, include a draft Project Operating Manual as an appendix to the Project Implementation Report.

(4) As appropriate, the draft Project Operating Manual shall be revised for the project construction phase and the operational monitoring and testing phase after completion of project construction.

(5) The final Project Operating Manual shall be completed as soon as practicable after completion of the operational testing and monitoring phase of the project. The completed project shall continue to be operated in accordance with the approved draft Project Operating Manual until the final Project Operating Manual is approved.

(6) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall provide notice and opportunity for public comment for any significant modification to the Project Operating Manual.

§ 385.29 Other project documents.

(a) As appropriate, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor may prepare design documents to provide additional design information needed for projects. Such documents shall be approved in accordance with applicable policies of the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor.

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(b) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall prepare plans and specifications necessary for construction of projects. Such documents shall be approved in accordance with applicable policies of the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor.

(c) The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor may prepare other documents as appropriate during the real estate acquisition and construction phases for projects. Such documents shall be approved in accordance with applicable policies of the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor.

Subpart D—Incorporating New Information Into the Plan

§ 385.30 Master Implementation Sequencing Plan.

(a) Not later than December 13, 2004 the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, develop a Master Implementation Sequencing Plan that includes the sequencing and scheduling for implementation of all of the projects of the Plan, including pilot projects and operational elements, based on the best scientific, technical, funding, contracting, and other information available. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall also consult with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in preparing the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan.

(1) Projects shall be sequenced and scheduled to maximize the achievement of the goals and purposes of the Plan at the earliest possible time and in the most cost-effective way, consistent with the requirement that each project be justified on a next-added increment basis, including the achievement of the interim goals established pursuant to § 385.38 and the interim targets established pursuant § 385.39, consistent with § 385.36 and § 385.37(b), and to the extent practical given funding,

engineering, and other constraints. The sequencing and scheduling of projects shall be based on considering factors, including, but not limited to:

- (i) Technical dependencies and constraints;
- (ii) Benefits to be provided by the project;
- (iii) Availability of lands required for the project; and
- (iv) Avoiding elimination or transfers of existing legal sources of water until an alternate source of comparable quantity and quality is available, in accordance with § 385.36.

(2) The Master Implementation Sequencing Plan shall include appropriate discussion of the logic, constraints, and other parameters used in developing the sequencing and scheduling of projects.

(3) In accordance with § 385.18, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan.

(b) Whenever necessary to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved, but at least every five years, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, review the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan.

(1) The Master Implementation Sequencing Plan may be revised as appropriate, consistent with the goals and purposes of the Plan, and consistent with § 385.36 and § 385.37(b), to incorporate new information including, but not limited to:

- (i) Updated schedules from Project Management Plans;
- (ii) Information obtained from pilot projects;
- (iii) Updated funding information;
- (iv) Approved revisions to the Plan;
- (v) Congressional or other authorization or direction;
- (vi) Information resulting from the adaptive management program, includ-

ing new information on costs and benefits; or

(vii) Information regarding progress towards achieving the interim goals established pursuant to § 385.38 and the interim targets established pursuant to § 385.39.

(2) Proposed revisions to the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan shall be analyzed by RECOVER for effects on achieving the goals and purposes of the Plan and the interim goals and targets.

(3) The revised Master Implementation Sequencing Plan shall include information about the reasons for the changes to the sequencing and scheduling of individual projects.

(4) In accordance with § 385.18, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on revisions to the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan.

§ 385.31 Adaptive management program.

(a) *General.* The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, establish an adaptive management program to assess responses of the South Florida ecosystem to implementation of the Plan; to determine whether or not these responses match expectations, including the achievement of the expected performance level of the Plan, the interim goals established pursuant to § 385.38, and the interim targets established pursuant to § 385.39; to determine if the Plan, system or project operations, or the sequence and schedule of projects should be modified to achieve the goals and purposes of the Plan, or to increase net benefits, or to improve cost effectiveness; and to seek continuous improvement of the Plan based upon new information resulting

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from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific and technical information, new or updated modeling; information developed through the assessment principles contained in the Plan; and future authorized changes to the Plan integrated into the implementation of the Plan. Endorsement of the Plan as a restoration framework is not intended as an artificial constraint on innovation in its implementation.

(b) *Assessment activities.* (1) RECOVER shall develop an assessment program to assess responses of the system to implementation of the Plan. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall develop a guidance memorandum in accordance with §385.5 for approval by the Secretary of the Army, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor, that describes the processes to be used to conduct these assessments.

(2) RECOVER shall develop a monitoring program that is designed to measure status and trends towards achieving the goals and purposes of the Plan throughout the South Florida ecosystem.

(3) RECOVER shall conduct monitoring activities and use the information collected and analyzed through the monitoring program as a basis for conducting assessment tasks, which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(i) Determining if measured responses are desirable and are achieving the interim goals and the interim targets or the expected performance level of the Plan;

(ii) Evaluating if corrective actions to improve performance or improve cost-effectiveness should be considered; and

(iii) Preparing reports on the monitoring program.

(4) Whenever it is deemed necessary, but at least every five years, RECOVER shall prepare a technical report that presents an assessment of whether the goals and purposes of the Plan are being achieved, including whether the interim goals and interim targets are being achieved or are likely to be achieved. The technical report shall be provided to the Corps of Engineers and

the South Florida Water Management District for use in preparing the assessment report. The technical report prepared by RECOVER shall also be made available to the public.

(i) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall consult with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies in the development of the assessment report. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall also consult with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in developing the assessment report.

(ii) In accordance with §385.22(b), the draft assessment report shall be externally peer reviewed.

(iii) In accordance with §385.18, Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on the draft assessment report.

(iv) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall transmit the final assessment report to the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor.

(v) The Secretary of the Army shall make the final assessment report available to the public.

(c) *Periodic CERP updates.* Not later than June 14, 2004 and whenever necessary to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved, but not any less often than every five years, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, conduct an evaluation of the Plan using new or updated modeling that includes the latest scientific, technical, and planning information.

As part of the evaluation of the Plan, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall determine the total quantity of water that is expected to be generated by implementation of the Plan, including the quantity expected to be generated for the natural system to attain restoration goals as well as the quantity expected to be generated for use in the human environment. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall also consult with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in conducting the evaluation of the Plan. As appropriate, the results of the evaluation of the Plan may be used to initiate management actions in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section that are necessary to seek continuous improvement of the Plan based upon new information resulting from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific and technical information, new or updated modeling; information developed through the assessment principles contained in the Plan; and future authorized changes to the Plan integrated into the implementation of the Plan. In addition, and as appropriate, the results of the evaluation of the Plan may be used to consider changes to the interim goals in accordance with § 385.38 and changes to the interim targets in accordance with § 385.39.

(d) *Management actions.* (1) In seeking continuous improvement of the Plan based upon new information resulting from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific and technical information, new or updated modeling; information developed through the assessment principles contained in the Plan; and future authorized changes to the Plan integrated into the implementation of the Plan, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District and other non-Federal sponsors shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, use the assessment report prepared in accordance

with paragraph (b) of this section, information resulting from independent scientific review and external peer review in accordance with § 385.22, or other appropriate information including progress towards achievement of the interim goals established pursuant to § 385.38 and the interim targets established pursuant to § 385.39 to determine if the activities described in paragraph (d)(2) of this section should be undertaken to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, consider the following actions:

- (i) Modifying current operations of the Plan;
- (ii) Modifying the design or operational plan for a project of the Plan not yet implemented;
- (iii) Modifying the sequence or schedule for implementation of the Plan;
- (iv) Adding new components to the Plan or deleting components not yet implemented;
- (v) Removing or modifying a component of the Plan already in place; or
- (vi) A combination of these.

(2) Such actions should be implemented through revisions to Operating Manuals in accordance with § 385.28, revisions to the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan in accordance with § 385.30, a Comprehensive Plan Modification Report in accordance with § 385.32, or other appropriate mechanisms.

§ 385.32 Comprehensive Plan Modification Report.

Whenever the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and

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other Federal, State, and local agencies, determine that changes to the Plan are necessary to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved or that they are achieved cost-effectively, or to ensure that each project of the Plan is justified on a next-added increment basis, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, prepare a Comprehensive Plan Modification Report using a process that is consistent with the provisions of §385.10, §385.14, §385.18, and §385.19. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall also consult with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in preparing the Comprehensive Plan Modification Report.

(a) *General requirements.* The Comprehensive Plan Modification Report shall:

(1) Be initiated at the discretion of the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, after consideration of the assessment report prepared in accordance with §385.31(b), requests from the Department of the Interior or the State, or other appropriate information;

(2) Comply with all applicable Federal and State laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and any other applicable law;

(3) Contain information such as: Plan formulation and evaluation, engineering and design, estimated benefits and costs, and environmental effects,;

(4) Include appropriate analyses of alternatives evaluated by RECOVER;

(5) Include updated water budget information for the Plan, including the total quantity of water that is expected to be generated by implementation of the Plan, and the quantity expected to be generated for the natural system to attain restoration goals as well as the quantity expected to be generated for use in the human environment;

(6) Contain appropriate NEPA documentation to supplement the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement included in the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement," dated April 1, 1999; and

(7) Include coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Coordination Commission, and other appropriate agencies in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan Modification Report, as required by applicable law.

(b) *Review and approval of Comprehensive Plan Modification Report.* (1) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on the draft Comprehensive Plan Modification Report and NEPA document, in accordance with §385.18 and applicable law and Corps of Engineers policy.

(2) The Comprehensive Plan Modification Report shall contain an appropriate letter of intent from the South Florida Water Management District indicating concurrence with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan Modification Report.

(3) Upon the completion of the Comprehensive Plan Modification Report and NEPA document, the District Engineer shall submit the report and NEPA document to the Division Engineer.

(4) Upon receipt and approval of the Comprehensive Plan Modification Report, the Division Engineer shall issue a public notice announcing completion

of the Comprehensive Plan Modification Report based upon:

(i) The Division Engineer's endorsement of the findings and recommendations of the District Engineer; and

(ii) The Division Engineer's assessment that the report has been prepared in accordance with current law and policy. The notice shall indicate that the report has been submitted to Corps of Engineers Headquarters for review.

(5) Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers shall conduct a review in accordance with applicable policies and regulations of the Corps of Engineers. Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers shall administer the 30-day state and agency review of the Comprehensive Plan Modification Report, and, as appropriate, file the Environmental Impact Statement with the Environmental Protection Agency.

(6) After completion of the policy review and other requirements of law and policy, the Chief of Engineers shall submit the Comprehensive Plan Modification Report and the Chief of Engineers' recommendations to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

(7) The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works shall review the Comprehensive Plan Modification Report and shall, prior to submitting the Assistant Secretary's recommendations to Congress, coordinate the proposed recommendations with the Office of Management and Budget.

(c) *Minor changes to the Plan.* The Plan requires a process for adaptive management and incorporation of new information. As a result of this process, minor adjustments in the Plan may be made through Project Implementation Reports. It is not the intent of this section to require a continual cycle of report writing for minor changes. Instead, the intent of this section is to develop a Comprehensive Plan Modification Report for changes to the Plan that would require a supplement to the programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District may, in their discretion, elect to prepare a Comprehensive Plan Modification Report for other changes.

§ 385.33 Revisions to models and analytical tools.

(a) In carrying out their responsibilities for implementing the Plan, the Corps of Engineers, the South Florida Water Management District, and other non-Federal sponsors shall rely on the best available science including models and other analytical tools for conducting analyses for the planning, design, construction, operation, and assessment of projects. The selection of models and analytical tools shall be done in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies.

(b) The Corps of Engineers, the South Florida Water Management District, and other non-Federal sponsors may, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, periodically revise models and analytical tools or develop new models and analytical tools as needed. As appropriate, RECOVER shall review the adequacy of system-wide simulation models and analytical tools used in the evaluation and assessment of projects, and shall propose improvements in system-wide models and analytical tools required for the evaluation and assessment tasks.

(c) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall determine on a case-by-case basis what documentation is appropriate for revisions to models and analytical tools, depending on the significance of the changes and their impacts to the Plan. Such changes may be treated as Minor Changes to the Plan, in accordance with § 385.32(c) where appropriate.

§ 385.34 Changes to the Plan.

(a) The Plan shall be updated to incorporate approved changes to the Plan resulting from:

- (1) Approval by the Secretary of the Army of a project to be implemented pursuant to § 385.13;
- (2) Authorization of projects by Congress;
- (3) Comprehensive Plan Modification Reports approved by Congress; or
- (4) Other changes authorized by Congress.

(b) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall annually prepare a document for dissemination to the public that describes:

- (1) The components of the Plan, including any approved changes to the Plan;
- (2) The estimated cost of the Plan, including any approved changes to the Plan;
- (3) A water budget for the Plan; and
- (4) The water that has been reserved or allocated for the natural system under State law for the Plan.

(c) The Corps of Engineers shall annually provide to the Office of Management and Budget an updated estimate of total cost of the Plan, the costs of individual project components, and an explanation of any changes in these estimates from the initial estimates contained in the “Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement,” dated April 1, 1999.

Subpart E—Ensuring Protection of the Natural System and Water Availability Consistent With the Goals and Purpose of the Plan

§ 385.35 Achievement of the benefits of the Plan.

(a) *Pre-CERP baseline water availability and quality.* (1) Not later than June 14, 2004 the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the

Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, develop for approval by the Secretary of the Army, the pre-CERP baseline to be used to aid the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District in determining if existing legal sources of water will be eliminated or transferred as a result of project implementation as described in § 385.36 and memorialize the pre-CERP baseline in an appropriate document. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall consult with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force in the development of the pre-CERP baseline.

(i) The pre-CERP baseline may express the quantity, timing, and distribution of water in stage duration curves; exceedance frequency curves; quantities available in average, wet, and dry years; or any other method which is based on the best available science.

(ii) The pre-CERP baseline shall include appropriate documentation that includes a description of the assumptions used to develop the pre-CERP baseline.

(iii) In addition to the development of the pre-CERP baseline, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall conduct other analyses that they deem necessary to determine if an existing legal source of water has been eliminated or transferred or if a new source of water is of comparable quality to that which has been eliminated or transferred in accordance with § 385.36.

(2) In accordance with § 385.18, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall provide opportunities for the public to review and comment on the pre-CERP baseline.

(3) The pre-CERP baseline shall be developed with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor. Within 180 days of being provided the pre-CERP baseline, or such shorter period that the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor may agree to, the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor shall provide the Secretary of the Army with a written

statement of concurrence or non-concurrence with the pre-CERP baseline. A failure to provide a written statement of concurrence or non-concurrence within such time frame shall be deemed as meeting the concurrency process of this section. A copy of any concurrency or non-concurrence statements shall be made a part of the administrative record and referenced in the final determination of the pre-CERP baseline. Any non-concurrence statement shall specifically detail the reason or reasons for the non-concurrence.

(4) Nothing in this paragraph is intended to, or shall it be interpreted to, reserve or allocate water or to prescribe the process for reserving or allocating water or for water management under Florida law. Nothing in this section is intended to, nor shall it be interpreted to, prescribe any process of Florida law.

(b) *Identification of water made available and water to be reserved or allocated for the natural system.* (1) Initial modeling showed that most of the water generated by the Plan would go to the natural system in order to attain restoration goals, and the remainder of the water would go for use in the human environment. The Corps of Engineers, the South Florida Water Management District, and other non-Federal sponsors shall ensure that Project Implementation Reports identify the appropriate quantity, timing, and distribution of water to be dedicated and managed for the natural system that is necessary to meet the restoration goals of the Plan. In accordance with the "Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Assurance of Project Benefits Agreement," dated January 9, 2002 pursuant to section 601(h)(2) of WRDA 2000, the South Florida Water Management District or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection shall make sufficient reservations of water for the natural system under State law in accordance with the Project Implementation Report for that project and consistent with the Plan before water made available by a project is permitted for a consumptive use or otherwise made unavailable. In accordance with §385.31(c), the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Manage-

ment District shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, determine the total quantity of water that is expected to be generated by implementation of the Plan, including the quantity expected to be generated for the natural system to attain restoration goals as well as the quantity expected to be generated for use in the human environment, and shall periodically update that estimate, as appropriate, based on new information resulting from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific or technical information, new or updated models, or information developed through the adaptive assessment principles contained in the Plan, or future authorized changes to the Plan integrated into the implementation of the Plan.

(2) Each Project Implementation Report shall take into account the availability of pre-CERP baseline water and previously reserved water as well as the estimated total quantity of water that is necessary for restoration for the natural system and the quantity of water anticipated to be made available from future projects in identifying the appropriate quantity, timing, and distribution of water dedicated and managed for the natural system, determining whether improvements in water quality are necessary to ensure that water delivered to the natural system meets applicable water quality standards; and identifying the amount of water for the natural system necessary to implement, under State law, the provisions of section 601(h)(4)(A)(iii)(V) of WRDA 2000.

(3) Section 601(h)(3)(C)(i)(I) of WRDA 2000 requires the regulations of this part to establish a process for development of Project Implementation Reports, Project Cooperation Agreements, and Operating Manuals that ensure that the goals and objectives of the Plan are achieved. Section 601(h)(4)(A)(iii)(IV) of WRDA 2000 provides that Project Implementation Reports shall identify the appropriate

quantity, timing, and distribution of water dedicated and managed for the natural system. Section 601(h)(4)(A)(iii)(V) of WRDA 2000 provides that Project Implementation Reports shall identify the amount of water to be reserved or allocated for the natural system necessary to implement, under State law, the provisions of section 601(h)(4)(A)(iii)(IV) and (VI) of WRDA 2000. To implement these provisions and §385.5, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall develop a guidance memorandum in accordance with §385.5 for approval by the Secretary of the Army, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor. The guidance memorandum shall provide a process to be used in the preparation of Project Implementation Reports for identifying the appropriate quantity, timing, and distribution of water dedicated and managed for the natural system; determining the quantity, timing and distribution of water made available for other water-related needs of the region; determining whether improvements in water quality are necessary to ensure that water delivered by the Plan meets applicable water quality standards; and identifying the amount of water for the natural system necessary to implement, under State law, the provisions of section 601(h)(4)(A)(iii) of WRDA 2000.

(i) The guidance memorandum shall generally be based on using a system-wide analysis of the water made available and may express the quantity, timing and distribution of water in stage duration curves; exceedance frequency curves; quantities available in average, wet, and dry years; or any other method which is based on the best available science. The guidance memorandum shall also provide for projects that are hydrologically separate from the rest of the system. The guidance memorandum also shall address procedures for determining whether improvements in water quality are necessary to ensure that water delivered to the natural system meets applicable water quality standards. These procedures shall ensure that any features to improve water quality are implemented in a manner consistent

with the cost sharing provisions of WRDA 1996 and WRDA 2000.

(ii) The guidance memorandum shall generally take into account the natural fluctuation of water made available in any given year based on an appropriate period of record; the objective of restoration of the natural system; the need for protection of existing uses transferred to new sources; contingencies for drought protection; the need to identify the additional quantity, timing, and distribution of water made available by a new project component while maintaining a system-wide perspective on the amount of water made available by the Plan; and the need to determine whether improvements in water quality are necessary to ensure that water delivered by the Plan meets applicable water quality standards.

(iii) Project Implementation Reports approved before December 12, 2003 or before the development of the guidance memorandum may use whatever method that the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor deem is reasonable and consistent with the provisions of section 601 of WRDA 2000.

(iv) Nothing in this paragraph is intended to, or shall it be interpreted to, reserve or allocate water or to prescribe the process for reserving or allocating water or for water management under Florida law. Nothing in this section is intended to, nor shall it be interpreted to, prescribe any process of Florida law.

(c) *Procedures in event that the project does not perform as expected.* The Project Implementation Report shall include a plan for operations of the project in the event that the project fails to provide the quantity, timing, or distribution of water described in the Project Implementation Report. Such plan shall take into account the specific authorized purposes of the project and the goals and purposes of the Plan and shall also provide for undertaking management actions in accordance with §385.31(d).

§ 385.36 Elimination or transfer of existing legal sources of water.

(a) Pursuant to the provisions of section 601(h)(5)(A) of WRDA 2000, Project Implementation Reports shall include

analyses to determine if existing legal sources of water are to be eliminated or transferred as a result of project implementation. If implementation of the project shall cause an elimination or transfer of existing legal sources of water, then the Project Implementation Report shall include an implementation plan that ensures that such elimination or transfer shall not occur until a new source of water of comparable quantity and quality is available to replace the water to be lost as a result of implementation of the Plan. The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall determine if implementation of the project will cause an elimination or transfer of existing legal sources of water by comparing the availability of water with the recommended project with the pre-CERP baseline developed in accordance with §385.35(a), by using the water quality and other analyses developed in §385.35(a)(1)(iii), and by using other appropriate information.

(b) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall develop a guidance memorandum in accordance with §385.5 for approval by the Secretary of the Army, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor, that describes the process for determining if existing legal sources of water are to be eliminated or transferred and for determining how and when a new source of water of comparable quantity and quality as that available on the date of enactment of WRDA 2000 is available to replace the water to be lost as a result of implementation of the Plan. The guidance memorandum shall also describe the process for comparing the recommended project with the pre-CERP baseline to determine if existing legal sources of water are to be transferred or eliminated as a result of project implementation. The guidance memorandum shall include a definition for existing legal sources of water for the purposes of determining if existing legal sources of water are to be eliminated or transferred. Existing legal sources of water shall include those for:

(1) An agricultural or urban water supply;

(2) Allocation or entitlement to the Seminole Indian Tribe of Florida under section 7 of the Seminole Indian Land Claims Settlement Act of 1987 (25 U.S.C. 1772e);

(3) The Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida;

(4) Water supply for Everglades National Park; and

(5) Water supply for fish and wildlife.

(c) Until guidance is issued, issues involving existing legal sources of water should be resolved on a case-by-case basis considering all factors that can be identified as relevant to decisions under the savings clause.

§ 385.37 Flood protection.

(a) *General.* In accordance with section 601 of WRDA 2000, flood protection, consistent with restoration, preservation, and protection of the natural system, is a purpose of the Plan.

(b) *Existing flood protection.* Each Project Implementation Report shall include appropriate analyses, and consider the operational conditions included in the pre-CERP baseline developed pursuant to §385.35(a), to demonstrate that the levels of service for flood protection that:

(1) Were in existence on the date of enactment of section 601 of WRDA 2000; and

(2) Are in accordance with applicable law, will not be reduced by implementation of the project.

(c) *Improved and new flood protection.* The overarching objective of the Plan is the restoration, preservation, and protection of the South Florida Ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection. As appropriate, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall consider opportunities to provide additional flood protection, consistent with restoration of the natural system, and the provisions of section 601(f)(2)(B) of WRDA 2000 and other applicable laws.

§ 385.38 Interim goals.

(a) *Agreement.* (1) The Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor shall, not later

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than December 13, 2004, and in consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, and the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, execute an Interim Goals Agreement establishing interim goals to facilitate inter-agency planning, monitoring, and assessment so as to achieve the overarching objectives of the Plan and to provide a means by which the restoration success of the Plan may be evaluated, and ultimately reported to Congress in accordance with § 385.40 throughout the implementation process.

(2) After execution of the Interim Goals Agreement, the Department of the Army shall memorialize the agreement in appropriate Corps of Engineers guidance.

(b) *Purpose.* (1) Interim goals are a means by which the restoration success of the Plan may be evaluated at specific points by agency managers, the State, and Congress throughout the overall planning and implementation process. In addition, interim goals will facilitate adaptive management and allow the Corps of Engineers and its non-Federal sponsors opportunities to make adjustments if actual project performance is less than anticipated, including recommending changes to the Plan. Interim goals are not standards or schedules enforceable in court.

(2) The interim goals shall:

(i) Facilitate inter-agency planning, monitoring and assessment;

(ii) Be provided to the independent scientific review panel established in accordance with § 385.22(a);

(iii) Be considered in developing the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan, Project Implementation Reports, and Comprehensive Plan Modification Reports; and

(iv) Be considered in making budgetary decisions concerning implementation of the Plan.

(3) To ensure flexibility in implementing the Plan over the next several decades, and to ensure that interim goals may reflect changed circumstances or new information resulting from adaptive management, the in-

terim goals may be modified, consistent with the processes set forth in paragraph (d) of this section, to reflect new information resulting from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific and technical information, new or updated modeling; information developed through the assessment principles contained in the Plan; and future authorized changes to the Plan integrated into the implementation of the Plan.

(4) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall sequence and schedule projects as appropriate to achieve the interim goals and the interim targets established pursuant to § 385.39 to the extent practical given funding, technical, or other constraints.

(5) If the interim goals have not been met or are unlikely to be met, then the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall determine why the interim goals have not been met or are unlikely to be met and either:

(i) Initiate adaptive management actions pursuant to § 385.31(d) to achieve the interim goals as soon as practical, consistent with the purposes of the Plan and consistent with the interim targets established pursuant to § 385.39; or

(ii) Recommend changes to the interim goals in accordance with paragraph (b)(3) of this section.

(c) *Principles for developing interim goals.* (1) RECOVER, using best available science and information, shall recommend a set of interim goals for implementation of the Plan, consisting of regional hydrologic performance targets, improvements in water quality, and anticipated ecological responses for areas such as, Lake Okeechobee, the Kissimmee River Region, the Water Conservation Areas, the Lower East Coast, the Upper East Coast, the Everglades Agricultural Area, and the Caloosahatchee River, Everglades National Park, Big Cypress National Preserve, Biscayne Bay, Florida Bay, and other estuaries and nearshore areas. These interim goals shall reflect the incremental accomplishment of the expected performance level of the Plan, and will identify improvements in

quantity, quality, timing, and distribution of water for the natural system provided by the Plan in five-year increments that begin in 2005, with the goals reflecting the results expected to be achieved by 2010 and for each five-year increment thereafter. The interim goals shall be developed through the use of appropriate models and tools and shall provide a quantitative basis for evaluating the restoration success of the Plan during the period of implementation. In developing the interim goals for the five-year increments, RECOVER shall use the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan as the basis for predicting performance at a given time. RECOVER may recommend additional interim goals in addition to those initially developed and may propose revisions to the initial set of interim goals as new information is gained through adaptive management. Interim goals shall include incremental improvements in the quantity, quality, timing, and distribution of water anticipated to be required to meet long-term hydrological and ecological restoration goals, based on best available science. These goals may be modified, based on best available science and the adaptive assessment principles contained in the Plan, in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section.

(2) In developing its recommendations for interim goals, RECOVER shall consider indicators including, but not limited to:

(i) Hydrologic indicators, including:

(A) The amount of water, in addition to the pre-CERP baseline and assumptions regarding without project conditions, which will be available to the natural system;

(B) Hydroperiod targets in designated sample areas throughout the Everglades;

(C) The changes in the seasonal and annual overland flow volumes in the Everglades that will be available to the natural system;

(D) The frequency of extreme high and low water levels in Lake Okeechobee; and

(E) The frequency of meeting salinity envelopes in estuaries such as the St. Lucie, Caloosahatchee, Biscayne Bay, and Florida Bay and nearshore areas.

(ii) Improvement in water quality; including:

(A) Total phosphorus concentrations in the Everglades; and

(B) Lake Okeechobee phosphorus concentrations.

(iii) Ecological responses, including:

(A) Increases in total spatial extent of restored wetlands;

(B) Improvement in habitat quality; and

(C) Improvement in native plant and animal abundance.

(3) In developing the interim goals based upon water quality and expected ecological responses, the Corps of Engineers, The Department of the Interior, and the South Florida Water Management District shall take into consideration the extent to which actions undertaken by Federal, State, tribal, and other entities under programs not within the scope of this part may affect achievement of the goals.

(d) *Process for establishing interim goals.* (1) The recommendations of RECOVER shall be provided to the Corps of Engineers, the Department of the Interior, and the South Florida Water Management District. These recommendations shall be provided no later than June 14, 2004. The proposed Interim Goals Agreement shall be developed by the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor in consultation with the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of the Commerce, other Federal, State, and local agencies, and the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force. In considering the interim goals to be included in the Interim Goals Agreement, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor, shall be provided with, and consider, the technical recommendations of RECOVER and any modifications to those recommendations by the Corps of Engineers, the Department of Interior, or the South Florida Water Management District. The Secretary of the Army shall provide a notice of availability of the proposed agreement to the public in the FEDERAL REGISTER and seek public comments. After considering comments of the public on the proposed

agreement, and incorporating any suggestions that are appropriate and consistent with the goals and purposes of the Plan, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor, shall execute the final agreement, and the Secretary of the Army shall provide a notice of availability to the public in the FEDERAL REGISTER by no later than December 13 2004.

(2) In developing its recommendations for interim goals, RECOVER shall use the principles in paragraph (c) of this section.

(3) The Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor shall review the Interim Goals Agreement at a minimum of every five years after the date of the Interim Goals Agreement, to determine if the interim goals should be revised. Thereafter, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor shall revise the interim goals and execute a new agreement as appropriate. However, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor may review and revise the interim goals whenever appropriate as new information becomes available. Any revisions to the interim goals shall be consistent with the process established in this section.

§ 385.39 Evaluating progress towards other water-related needs of the region provided for in the Plan.

(a) *Purpose.* (1) The overarching objective of the Plan is the restoration, preservation, and protection of the South Florida ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection. Progress towards providing for these other water-related needs shall also be evaluated.

(2) As provided for in paragraph (c) of this section, the Secretary of the Army and the Governor shall establish interim targets for evaluating progress towards other water-related needs of the region provided for in the Plan throughout the implementation process. The interim targets and interim goals shall be consistent with each other.

(3) The Department of the Army shall include these interim targets in appropriate Corps of Engineers guidance.

(4) To ensure flexibility in implementing the Plan over the next several decades, and to ensure that interim targets may reflect changed circumstances or new information resulting from adaptive management, the interim targets may be modified, consistent with the processes set forth in paragraph (c) of this section, to reflect new information resulting from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific and technical information, new or updated modeling; information developed through the assessment principles contained in the Plan; and future authorized changes to the Plan integrated into the implementation of the Plan.

(5) The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall sequence and schedule projects as appropriate to achieve the interim goals and interim targets for other water-related needs of the region provided for in the Plan, to the extent practical given funding, technical, or other constraints.

(6) If the interim targets have not been met or are unlikely to be met, then the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall determine why the interim targets have not been met or are unlikely to be met and either:

(i) Initiate adaptive management actions pursuant to § 385.31(d) to achieve the interim targets as soon as practicable, consistent with the purposes of the Plan and consistent with the interim goals established pursuant to § 385.38; or

(ii) Recommend changes to the interim targets in accordance with paragraph (a)(4) of this section.

(b) *Principles for developing interim targets.* (1) RECOVER, using best available science and information, shall recommend a set of interim targets for evaluating progress towards other water-related needs of the region provided for in the Plan. These interim targets shall reflect the incremental accomplishment of the expected performance level of the Plan, and will identify improvements in quantity, quality, timing and distribution of water in five-year increments that begin in 2005, with the targets reflecting the results expected to be achieved

by 2010 and for each five-year increment thereafter. The interim targets shall be developed through the use of appropriate models and tools and shall provide a quantitative basis for evaluating progress towards other water-related needs of the region provided for in the Plan during the period of implementation. In developing the interim targets for the five-year increments, RECOVER shall use the Master Implementation Sequencing Plan as the basis for predicting the performance at a given time. RECOVER may recommend additional interim targets for implementation of CERP in addition to those initially developed and may propose revisions to the initial set of interim targets as new information is gained through adaptive management.

(2) In developing its recommendations for interim targets, RECOVER shall consider indicators including, but not limited to:

(i) The frequency of water restrictions in the Lower East Coast Service Areas at each time increment;

(ii) The frequency of water restrictions in the Lake Okeechobee Service Areas at each time increment;

(iii) The frequency of meeting salt-water intrusion protection criteria for the Lower East Coast Service Area at each time increment; and

(iv) The frequency of water shortage restrictions on lands covered under the Water Rights Compact Among the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the State of Florida, and the South Florida Water Management District at each time increment.

(c) *Process for establishing interim targets.* (1) The recommendations of RECOVER shall be provided to the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District. These recommendations shall be provided no later than June 14, 2004. The proposed interim targets shall be developed by the Secretary of the Army and the Governor, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, and the South Florida Eco-

system Restoration Task Force. In considering the interim targets, the Secretary of the Army and the Governor, shall be provided with, and consider, the technical recommendations of RECOVER and any modifications to those recommendations by the Corps of Engineers or the South Florida Water Management District. The Secretary of the Army shall provide a notice of availability of the proposed interim targets to the public in the FEDERAL REGISTER and seek public comments. After considering comments of the public on the proposed interim targets, and incorporating any suggestions that are appropriate and consistent with the goals and purposes of the Plan, the Secretary of the Army and the Governor, shall establish the final interim targets, and the Secretary of the Army shall provide a notice of availability to the public in the FEDERAL REGISTER by no later than December 13, 2004, but not prior to the execution of the Interim Goals Agreement pursuant to § 385.38. Interim targets are intended to facilitate inter-agency planning, monitoring, and assessment throughout the implementation process and are not standards or schedules enforceable in court.

(2) In developing its recommendations for interim targets, RECOVER shall use the principles in paragraph (b) of this section.

(3) The Secretary of the Army and the Governor shall review the interim targets at a minimum every five years beginning five years after the establishment of the interim targets to determine if they should be revised and to determine what those revisions should be. The public shall also be provided with an opportunity to comment on the proposed revisions. The Secretary of the Army and the Governor may also revise the interim targets whenever appropriate as new information becomes available. Any revisions to the interim targets shall be established consistent with the process described in this section.

§ 385.40 Reports to Congress.

(a) Beginning on October 1, 2005 and periodically thereafter until October 1, 2036, the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Interior shall jointly

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submit to Congress a report on the implementation of the Plan as required by section 601(l) of WRDA 2000. Such reports shall be completed not less often than every five years.

(b) This report shall be prepared in consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the South Florida Water Management District, and other Federal, State, and local agencies and the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force.

(c) Such reports shall include a description of planning, design, and construction work completed, the amount of funds expended during the period covered by the report, including a detailed analysis of the funds expended for adaptive management, and the work anticipated over the next five-year period and updated estimates of total cost of the Plan and individual component costs and an explanation of any changes from the initial estimates contained in the "Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement," dated April 1, 1999.

(d) In addition, each report shall include:

(1) The determination of each Secretary, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, concerning the benefits to the natural system and the human environment achieved as of the date of the report and whether the completed projects of the Plan are being operated in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of section 601(h) of WRDA 2000;

(2) Progress towards the interim goals established in accordance with § 385.38 for assessing progress towards achieving the benefits to the natural system;

(3) Progress towards interim targets for other water-related needs of the region provided for in the Plan established pursuant to § 385.39 for assessing

progress towards achieving the benefits to the human environment; and

(4) A review of the activities performed by the Secretary pursuant to section 601(k) of WRDA 2000 and § 385.18 and § 385.19 as they relate to socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and individuals with limited English proficiency.

(e) The discussion on interim goals in the periodic reports shall include:

(1) A discussion of the performance that was projected to be achieved in the last periodic report to Congress;

(2) A discussion of the steps taken to achieve the interim goals since the last periodic Report to Congress and the actual performance of the Plan during this period;

(3) If performance did not meet the interim goals, a discussion of the reasons for such shortfall;

(4) Recommendations for improving performance; and

(5) The interim goals to be achieved in the next five years, including any revisions to the interim goals, reflecting the work to be accomplished during the next five years, along with a discussion of steps to be undertaken to achieve the interim goals.

(f) The discussion on interim targets in the periodic reports shall include:

(1) A discussion of the expected and actual performance of the Plan in achieving interim targets since the last periodic Report to Congress, including the reasons for any deviations from expected performance; and

(2) A discussion of the interim targets expected to be achieved during the next five years, including specific activities to achieve them and any recommendations for improving performance.

(g) In preparing the report to Congress required pursuant to this section, the Corps of Engineers and the Department of the Interior shall provide an opportunity for public review and comment, in accordance with § 385.18.

CERP Project Development Process

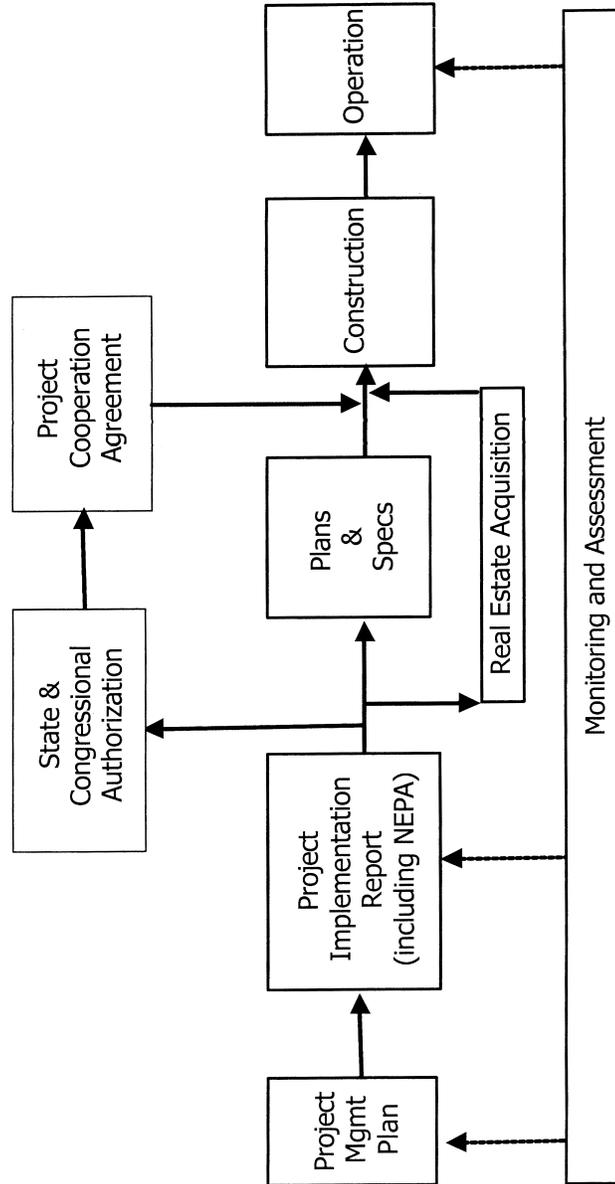


Figure 1

Appendix A

TYPICAL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT (PIR) PROCESS

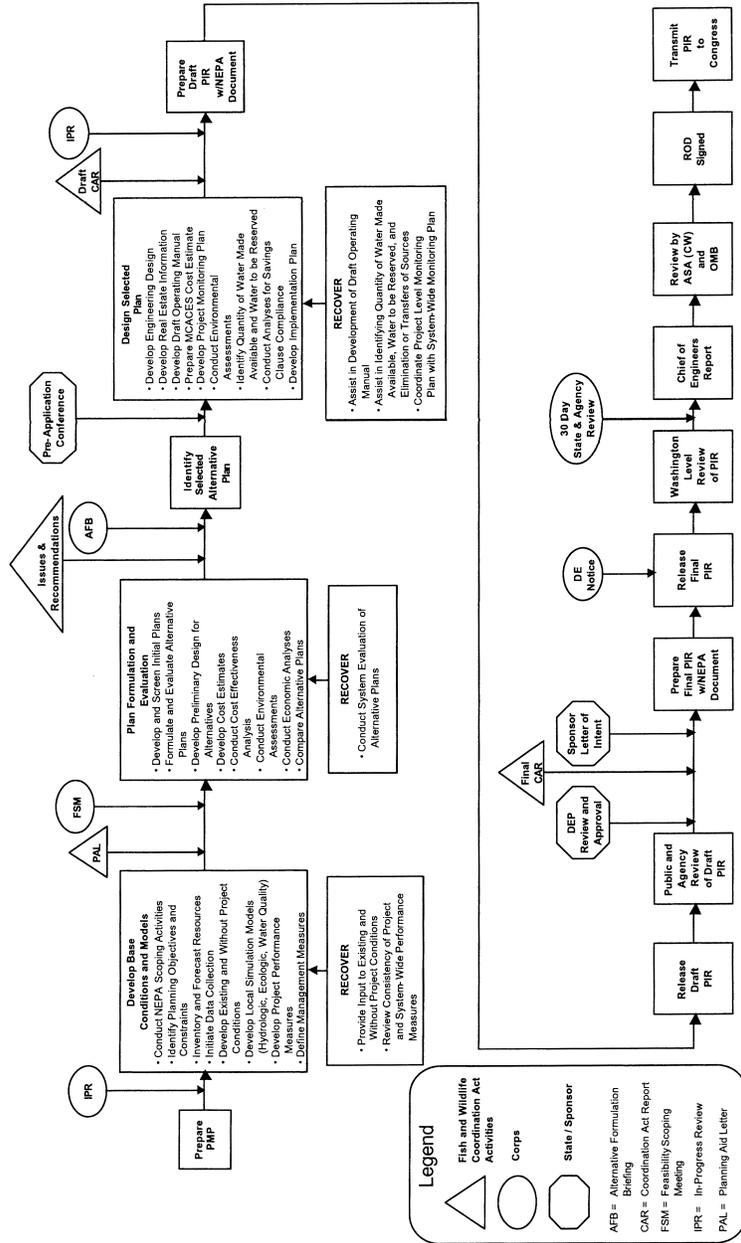


Figure 2

Appendix A

**PART 386—CREDIT ASSISTANCE
FOR WATER RESOURCES INFRA-
STRUCTURE PROJECTS**

Sec.

- 386.1 Purpose and scope.
- 386.2 Definitions.
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AUTHORITY: 33 U.S.C. 3901 *et seq.*

SOURCE: 88 FR 32675, May 22, 2023, unless otherwise noted.

§ 386.1 Purpose and scope.

The Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014 (WIFIA) authorized a new Federal credit program for water resources infrastructure projects to be administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). Title 1, Division D of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, and Division J, Title III of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act limits the program to safety projects to maintain, upgrade, and repair dams identified in the National Inventory of Dams with a primary owner type of State, local government, public utility or private. The purpose of this rule is to establish the process by which the Corps will administer such credit assistance, including the assessment of fees, and to set forth the policies and procedures that the Corps will use for receiving, evaluating, approving applications, and servicing and monitoring direct loans and loan guarantees.

§ 386.2 Definitions.

The following definitions apply to this part:

(a) *Application* means the form and attachments submitted by prospective borrowers that have been selected to apply for credit assistance after the review of letters of interest.

(b) *Borrower* means any entity that enters into a direct loan or Loan Guarantee Agreement with the Corps that is primarily liable for payment of the principal or interest on a Federal credit instrument. “Borrower” is synonymous with “obligor.” “Obligor” is used in place of borrower in this part whenever “obligor” appears in a corresponding section of WIFIA.

(c) *Clean energy* means systems, processes, and best practices for producing, converting, storing, transmitting, distributing, and consuming energy that avoid, reduce, or sequester the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emitted to, or concentrated in, the atmosphere.

(d) *Community* means a collection of people in a geographic area having one or more characteristic in common. The geographic area may be contained within or cross political subdivisions of States.

(e) *Credit agreement* means a contractual agreement (or agreements) between the Corps and a borrower (and the lender, if applicable) establishing the terms and conditions, rules, and requirements of a secured loan or loan guarantee.

(f) *Credit assistance* means a secured loan or loan guarantee under 33 U.S.C. 3908.

(g) *Credit subsidy* shall have the same meaning as “cost” under section 502(5) of the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 661a(5)), which is the net present value at the time the Loan Agreement or Loan Guarantee Agreement is executed. The credit subsidy cost for a given project is the net present value, at the time the Loan Agreement or Loan Guarantee Agreement is executed of the following estimated cash flows, discounted to the point of disbursement:

(1) Payments by the Government to cover defaults and delinquencies, interest subsidies, or other payments; less

(2) Payments to the Government including origination and other fees, penalties, and recoveries including the effects of changes in loan or debt terms resulting from the exercise by the borrower, eligible lender, or other holder of an option included in a Loan Agreement or Loan Guarantee Agreement.