

**Report on the South Florida Water Management District's  
July 7, 2005 Water Resources Advisory Commission Issues Meeting**

The meeting was somewhat abbreviated due to the concern over Hurricane Dennis.

1. Stormwater Inflows to Lake Okeechobee: Mike Collins is putting together a WRAC Committee to evaluate ways to reduce or at least prevent additional stormwater inflows into Lake Okeechobee from the north. This committee will explore what land developers can do under current rules, particularly in the arena of pre- versus post-development water quality and quantity parameters. Some people want to pursue development of new rules, but others feel significant improvements could result without that action. Terry Bates will be the staff member who works with this committee, which so far includes Walter Carson (Custom Living Space Builders) and someone else whose name I do not know. Mike Bauer may try to get a spot on this committee.
2. Lake O and Acceler8 Projects: Walter Wilcox presented an interesting report on how the Acceler8 projects will provide benefits to the Lake. He and others from the Interagency Modeling Center made some relative comparisons between Lake performance measures at the 2020 planning horizon for two conditions: with and without Acceler8 if no other improvements are made to the system, and with and without Acceler8 if other non-CERP features are constructed by 2020. The conclusion – Acceler8 projects will have a relatively small impact on the health of the Lake and the estuaries, and they won't play a huge role in providing water supply benefits to the Lake O Service Area. ASR is deemed the real answer to the dilemmas we are facing.
3. Lake Okeechobee Conditions: The Lake was at 16.3 feet yesterday, and rising. Inflows from the north and west are exceeding the discharges to the estuaries and Everglades. See attached Water Conditions Report.
4. South Florida Ecosystem Task Force Consultation: Dennis Duke (Director of CERP for the US Army Corps of Engineers) reported on the consultation process required for CERP. The Five Year Report to Congress will be due on October 1<sup>st</sup>, and it will be submitted on time. The draft report will be available in August. It will be interesting to see what has actually been accomplished thus far, and how much money has been spent. It was noted that the 50-50 match required between the State and the Federal Government will be skewed toward the State. Unless a way is created for the federal Government to reimburse the State or to purchase land, that 50-50 match will not be a reality. It was also mentioned that the State has acquired just over 50% of the land required for CERP, and with land prices escalating, there are serious doubts that the State will be able to purchase all of the land identified as necessary in the Yellow Book.
5. Interim Goals and Targets: There was considerable discussion about RECOVER indicators – some WRAC members feel that biologic indicators are taking precedent over hydrologic and water quality indicators when decisions are being made (for example, an endangered species may be located somewhere now because of the altered condition of the Everglades – it would not be there if the Everglades had not been altered, but that species cannot be adversely impacted by restoration efforts). John Arthur Marshall spoke to the group and requested that a Conceptual Ecological Model be developed for the Northern Everglades Watershed – he made this request on behalf of a group called the Environmental Action Committee. The EAC had originally asked that such a model be developed in 2003, but apparently there is not a strong feeling amongst the RECOVER group that a model is needed.