

CERP Projects Restore Estuaries Adjacent to Sanctuary Waters

CERP Projects Involve Wetlands to the North

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) includes many projects that are designed to restore sheet flow to wetlands in the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades Watershed, which begins north of Lake Okeechobee and ends in the Florida Keys. This watershed is managed by the South Florida Water Management District, a key agency involved in CERP. The US Army Corps of Engineers, responsible for providing flood control for developed area, also plays a key role. Two projects, summarized below, involve wetlands adjacent to the Keys or Florida Bay. Project updates are available on a regular basis by visiting the CERP website <http://www.evergladesplan.org>.

Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands

The targeted areas of restoration for the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands are the freshwater wetlands, tidal creeks and nearshore habitats of Biscayne Bay. The project calls for a collection of water management features in south Dade County that will improve the quantity, timing and distribution of freshwater flows to both the altered and natural system. The first phase of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands is being implemented as a state of Florida's Acceler8 project. This phase includes pump stations, flow ways and culverts that will redirect flows away from existing drainage canals towards coastal wetlands at Deering Estates, Black Point and along L-31E adjacent to Biscayne National Park. Construction on some of the project elements is scheduled to begin January 2008.

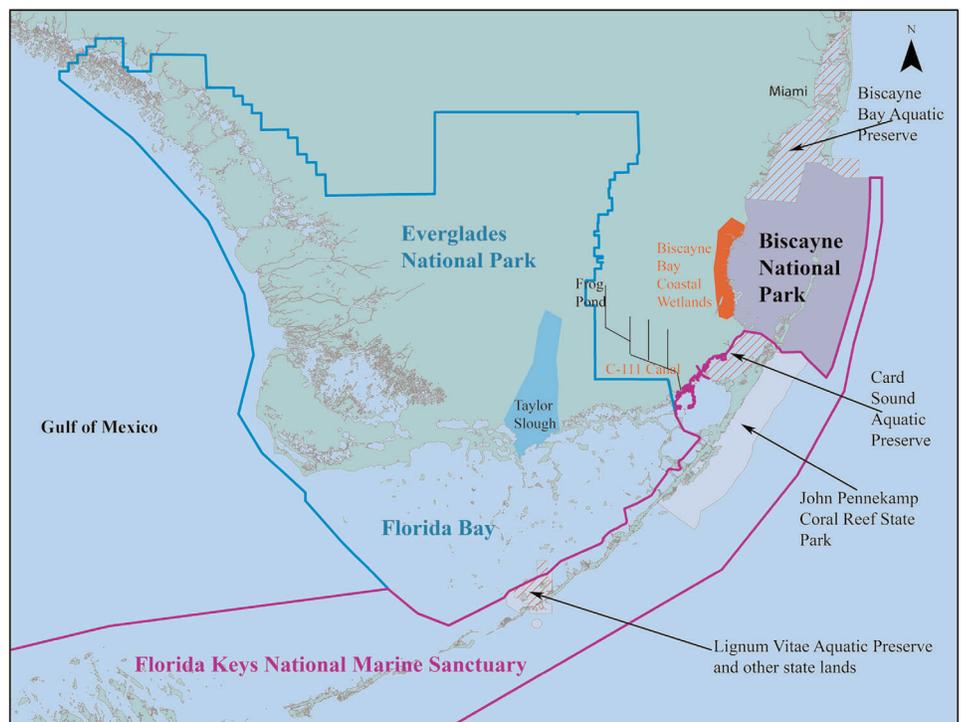
C-111 Spreader Canal Project

The C-111 Spreader Canal Project is also a component of CERP and a State of Florida Acceler8 project. Years ago, the dredging of the C-111 canal redirected water flows to the east, significantly reducing the amount of water that flowed through Taylor's Slough into northern Florida Bay. This reduced water input has impacted Florida Bay fisheries and ecology.

The goal of the first phase of this project is to reduce water loss through the canal system and improve water flows to northern Florida Bay through Taylor's Slough. In December 2007 the Project Development Team recommended alternative 2D to the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force for the first (Acceler8) phase of this project.

This alternative calls for a 530-acre Frog Pond detention area that will help create a mound of groundwater to the south and west of the detention area. This mound is expected to better hydrate Taylor's Slough by preventing groundwater seepage to the east.

Two other measures are also being implemented as part of alternative 2D: pumping water so that it discharges further west in the aerogjet canal and plugging key locations in the canal system. The final design for this phase of the project is expected to be completed by late 2009.



The approximate locations of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands project and the C-111 canal are shown in red. The sanctuary's boundary (magenta) is adjacent to Biscayne National Park and Everglades National Park (blue), which includes Florida Bay. Other managed lands in the Keys, including state parks and aquatic preserves, may also be affected by restoration activities. Map: Alicia Farrer