

## Results - it's working

- More than 90% of the entire Everglades Protection Area receives clean water that meets water quality goals.
- Farmers have invested tens of millions of dollars in on-farm techniques to reduce the impact of farming on the Everglades.
- As much as 73% of phosphorus has been removed from water leaving Everglades-area farms, with a 10-year average reduction of more than 50%. The law requires a 25% reduction.
- Farmers are paying 100% of the cost of cleaning the water that leaves their land, nearly \$300 million.
- Forty thousand acres of Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) mandated by the 1994 Everglades Forever Act have been constructed to treat water flowing to the Everglades.
- By 2004, farm water was the cleanest source of water to the new STAs. Other sources include urban areas and Lake Okeechobee, which receives water from northern tributaries.
- STAs are reducing phosphorus concentrations on a consistent basis to as low as 20 parts per billion (ppb) and are expected to go even lower as the STAs mature and their technologies are optimized.
- Areas that receive water from the STAs historically were impacted by water with as much as 200 ppb. With the success of on-farm best management practices and STAs, Everglades National Park now receives clean water with phosphorus levels less than 10 ppb.
- The Water Management District reported that, "This unprecedented environmental restoration project is on time and on budget."
- Wildlife is rebounding: Wading birds, down to 9,000 pairs in 1994, have reached nearly 70,000 nesting pairs for the first time since 1946; Florida panther births are now three times as numerous as panther deaths; Crocodile nests have doubled over 20 years.



Photo Credit: SFWMD

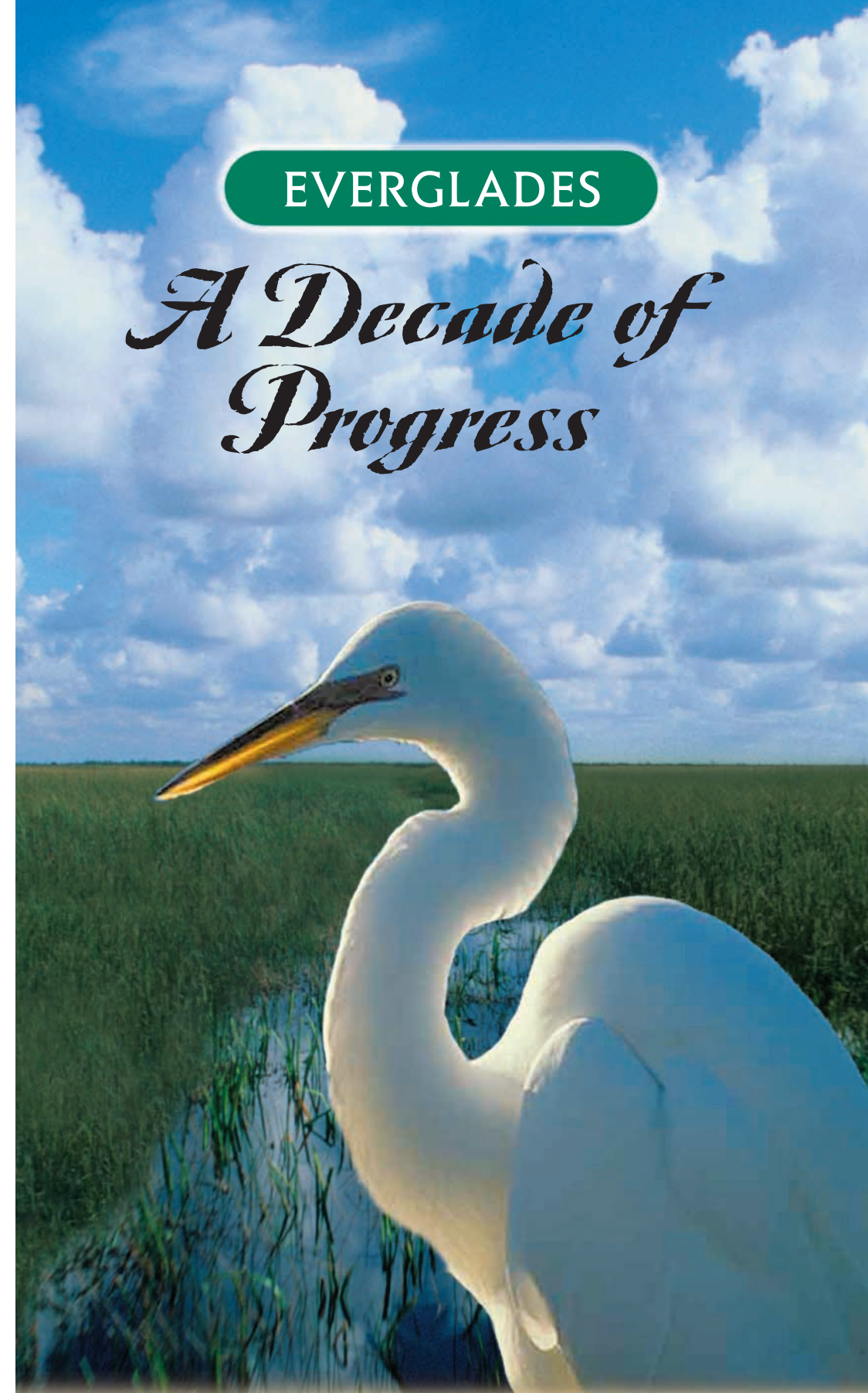
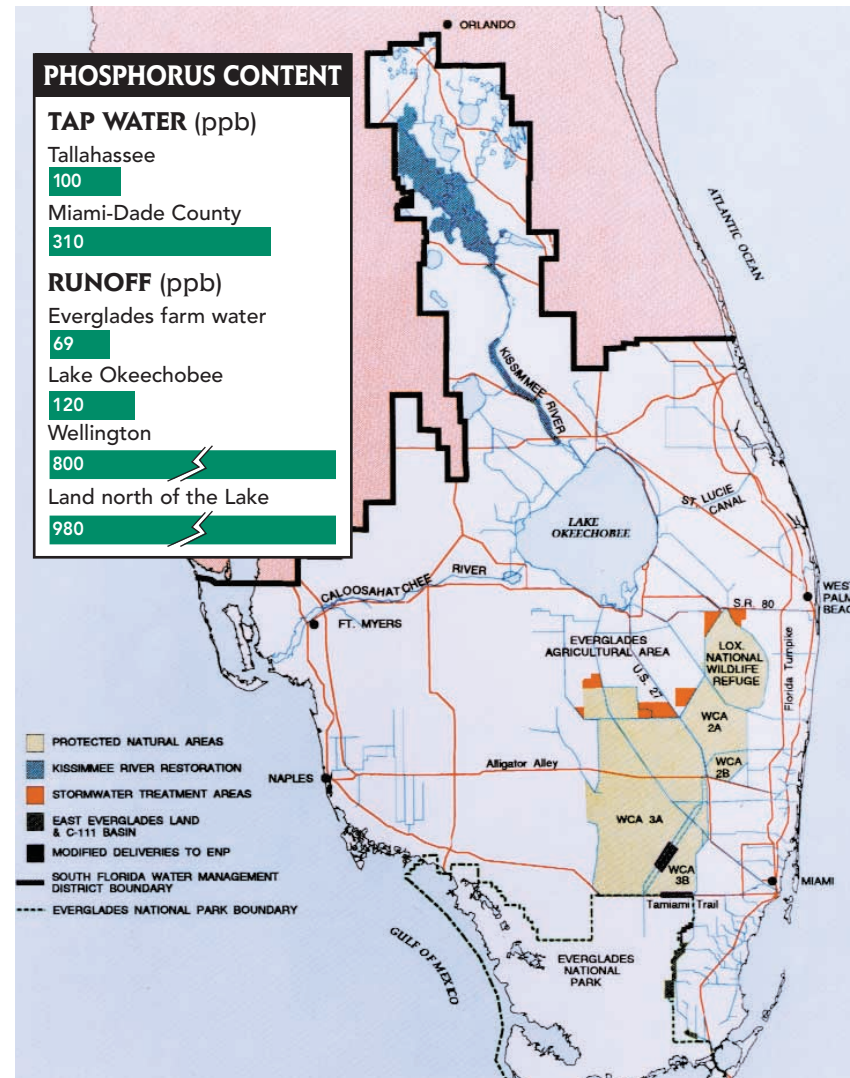
## Everglades Partnerships Produce Restoration Success

The partnership between the state and federal government, Florida farmers, and other stakeholders has been successful, and enormous progress has been made in preserving and restoring Florida's Everglades.

Farmers in the Everglades Agricultural Area have surpassed phosphorus reduction goals and continue to develop innovative on-farm best management practices. Everglades Agricultural Area farmers have removed as much as 73% of the phosphorus from the water leaving their farms.

Florida lawmakers have kept their commitments and continue to accelerate restoration. The Florida Legislature has actively created a planning process, adopted funding mechanisms and a long-term plan to ensure restoration efforts achieve the mandated 10 parts per billion of phosphorus. Forty thousand acres of Stormwater Treatment Areas have been constructed and perform outstandingly. The state has pledged an additional \$1.5 billion to speed construction of three major reservoirs and accelerate other water quality projects, including those that clean urban run-off.

The partnership is working. Everglades restoration is on time and on budget. Only continuing criticism, threats of litigation and political undermining of the process by extremist groups stand in the way of achieving this goal. Fortunately for the environment, those actively working towards restoration have proven that cooperation is leading to a successfully restored Everglades.



EVERGLADES

## A Decade of Progress

RESTORATION IS WORKING  
ON TIME & ON BUDGET



# Everglades Restoration Timeline

## 1991

**July** - Gov. Lawton Chiles "surrenders" in federal court and agrees that Florida should clean up the water reaching the Everglades from urban areas, Lake Okeechobee and farms. Legislature agrees.

## 1992

Scientists begin work. All parties agree in federal court to consent decree on cleaning water. Prior to agreement, at least 36 lawsuits had been filed.

## May

Science teams develop the "Mediated Technical Plan" that:

- Recommends six Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) totaling 40,000 acres
- Requires EAA farmers to adopt BMPs (Best Management Practices) to reduce phosphorus loads by 25%

## July

U.S. Interior Department outlines a broad framework for cleanup.

Agreement is signed by U.S. Government, Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP), South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), Flo-Sun, South Bay Growers, U.S. Sugar Corp.

**Everglades Nutrient Removal Project (ENR):** 3,700-acre prototype of proposed Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) is completed.

EAA farmers start on-farm BMPs to reduce phosphorus loading.

**March** - Gov. Chiles appoints Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida and works with federal agencies to negotiate with Florida legislators to enact cleanup plan.

- Environmental activists oppose the legislation and call for a penny-a-pound tax on Florida sugar.

**April** - Florida legislature passes \$685 million Everglades cleanup plan.

- Farmers to pay \$233 - \$322 million over 20 years.

**May 3** - Everglades Forever Act (EFA) is signed in a spirit of cooperation with Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, Gov. Chiles and SFWMD.

**"If we litigated this case and won years from now we might not obtain more than \$240 to \$280 million ... So we ended up with \$233 to \$322 million ... plus a set of incentives to actually get the phosphorus reduced ... what we're interested in is the cleanup and we arrived at that formula which we think is a damn fair settlement."** Assistant Interior Secretary Frampton.

- The EFA includes deadlines to meet water quality goals, funding sources, and outlines research programs.

**ENR** prototype of 3,700 acre STA starts operation.

**Wading birds** - Fewer than 9,000 nests.

**Farmers reduce phosphorus** by 68%, for a 3-year average of 45%.

**EFA Agricultural Privilege Tax:** Farmers pay \$12.8 million into the cleanup fund in FY 1995-1996.

The 1991 Federal Settlement Agreement is modified to acknowledge the 1994 Everglades Forever Act.

## Research

- Everglades Nutrient Removal Project - 1st full year of operation removes 28,000 lbs. of phosphorus --more than a 75% load reduction.

- Based on the ENR prototype, the general design is completed for the 40,000 acre Everglades Construction Project (ECP).

- Dozens of research projects proceed to understand the Everglades system.

## STATE:

**Everglades Construction Project** - Phase I begins. Cost estimate \$718 million over 20 years, with the water quality goal of reducing phosphorus to 50 parts per billion (ppb).

## FEDERAL:

**Water Resources Development Act** authorizes the C&SF project (Restudy). Together, the SFWMD and the Corps of Engineers begin to develop the conceptual master plan for ecosystem restoration, including environmental benefits, agriculture and urban water supply.

## August

**Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida** releases its final report, which includes 40 options for Everglades restoration. SFWMD unanimously approves the Restudy plan and its recommendations.

**November Election referendum ballot: Amendment 4** - Florida voters reject penny-per-pound tax on sugar.

## Research

- Research proceeds on superior technologies and STA performance optimization.

- The ENR prototype project outperforms expectations, with an average concentration of 24 ppb, an 80% reduction in phosphorus.

- Research also continues on issues related to hydropattern and its impact on nutrients and on wading birds, mercury and nutrient thresholds.

## 1997

**January** - Sec. Babbitt tells the Everglades Coalition: **"In 1992 the Everglades itself was bogged down in the muck of litigation ... With Gov. Chiles and the Florida Legislature, we broke the impasse, settled the litigation and enacted the Everglades Forever Act."**

**Everglades Construction Project milestone:** The first STA (STA-6- Section 1) is completed and starts operating to remove phosphorus.

**1999 July** - Corps of Engineers transmits \$7.8 billion Restudy Plan to Congress, citing restoration of the ecosystem as its "overarching purpose."

**Between 2000 and 2002 the wading bird population** soars from 40,000 to 70,000 nests.

**2000 Population** in the 16 county SFWMD increased 26.28% from 6,305,406 in 1990 to 7,962,645 in 2000.

**2001** Farmer's BMPs achieve 73% phosphorus reduction.

**2002 Jan** - Pres. George W. Bush and Gov. Jeb Bush sign agreement on \$8 billion Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

**May** - Gov. Bush signs state legislation authorizing \$800 million funding plan for restoration.

**Success of the STAs** Four of the six STAs are fully operational (STA 1-W, STA-2, STA-5, STA-6 -Section 1) and during Water Year 2002 removed more than 83 metric tons of phosphorus, for an overall 71% removal rate.

Since 1994, STAs have reduced phosphorus loads by approximately 198 tons through April 2002.

**Feb** - Florida DEP announces:  
• Phase II Restoration will use best available technologies to ultimately achieve the water quality standard.

**"There is great cause for optimism that we have a plan in place that's very promising ... There's no reason to believe that the momentum is going to stop ... Florida has already made more progress in less time to reduce phosphorus levels than ever predicted ... we are on the right track,"** David Struhs, Florida DEP Secretary.

**March** - "This unprecedented environmental restoration project is on time and on budget." SFWMD ECP Report.

**Success of the STAs** STAs have reduced phosphorus concentration to less than 35 ppb, well below the long-term design target of 50 ppb.

**May - Florida lawmakers amended the 1994 Everglades Forever Act:**  
• Insuring funding for restoration - \$450 million.

- Extending the agricultural privilege tax of \$25 per acre until 2016 - \$75 million per year.

- Adopting a long term plan for water quality restoration set by the Environmental Regulatory Commission (ERC).

192,627 acres - 48% of the land projected to be needed for CERP has been acquired.

**Feb** - Water begins to move through the 16,500-acre STA 3/4, the world's largest constructed wetland. The \$197 million project is ahead of schedule and under budget.

Florida sugar farmers volunteer to help store 49,000 acre-feet of water to assist with drawdown and restoration of Lake Toho.

**March** - The U.S. Supreme Court rules in favor of the SFWMD and remands the S-9 Pump Station case to the 11th Circuit Court. An adverse ruling would have added barriers to Everglades restoration and substantially increased its cost.

**April** - Sugar farmers agree to vacate Talisman Lands, slated to potentially provide an additional 50,000 acres of water storage capacity.

**May** - Florida and the U.S. Dept. of Interior break ground on the first CERP project, the Southern Golden Gates Estates Hydrological Project, restoring more than 50,000 acres of wetlands.

**June** - Lake Okeechobee Restoration: Construction of the Taylor Creek and Nubbin Slough STAs begin in a multi-agency effort to improve water quality of tributaries flowing into the Lake.

ERC adopts the strictest water quality phosphorus standard in the nation, 10 ppb, equivalent to two drops of water in an olympic-size swimming pool.

**August** - Farmers' BMPs reduce phosphorus by 64%, exceeding 25% goal for the ninth straight year.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recommends proceeding with \$1.2 billion Indian River lagoon South Project.

1991-92

1993

1994

1995

1996

1997-99

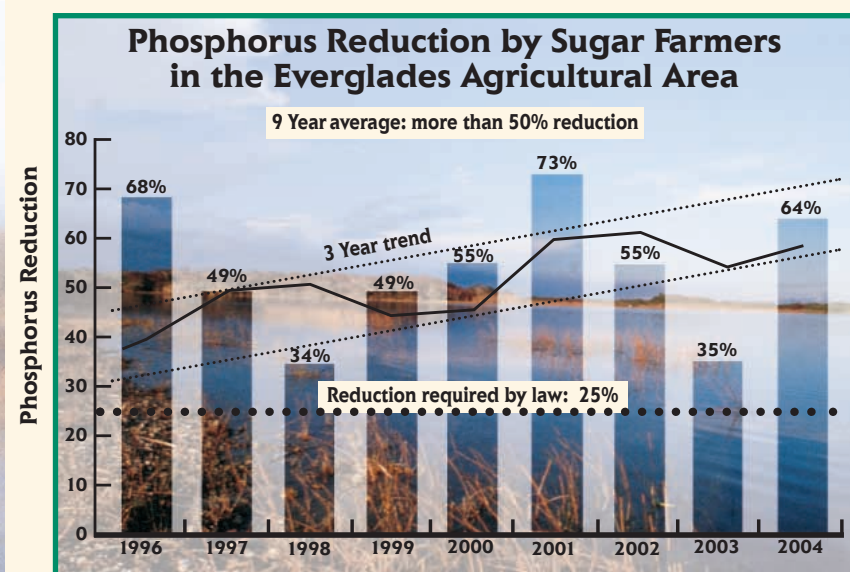
2000-02

2003

2004



STORMWATER TREATMENT AREA 6



Source: SFWMD



THE BIRDS ARE BACK

Wading birds are breeding at a rate unmatched since 1946, an excellent indicator of the Everglades' overall health.

Photo Credit: SFWMD