Strategic Communication of Science for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program

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REstoration COordination VERification

• Provide essential support to the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) in meeting goals and purposes
• Applies system-wide, integrative perspective to planning and implementation of the CERP
• Conducts scientific evaluations and assessments to improve CERP’s ability to restore, preserve, and protect the south Florida ecosystem
• Communicates the results of these evaluations and assessments
SOUTHERN COASTAL SYSTEM
GREATER EVERGLADES
NORTHERN ESTUARIES
LAKE OKEECHOBEE
REGIONS

- LAKE OKEECHOBEE
- NORTHERN ESTUARIES
- GREATER EVERGLADES
- SOUTHERN COASTAL SYSTEM

Oysters
Submerged Aquatic Vegetation
Benthic Infauna
Wading Birds
Vegetation/Landscape
Fish/Aquatic Fauna
Hydrology/Salinity/Depth
REstoration COordination VERification

System-wide Monitoring and Assessment Plan (MAP)
- Documents status and trends of key indicators
- Addresses key uncertainties related to achieving ecosystem restoration goals
- Adaptive management to track and guide activities to achieve restoration success

System Status Report (SSR) and Report to Congress (RTC)
- Inform Project Planning
- Establish pre-CERP conditions
- Track progress as CERP is implemented
- Evaluate CERP performance and system responses
- Determine if CERP is meeting its goals and objectives
- Initiate Adaptive Management Measures
Focus of Past SSR’s

• **2006 SSR**
  – Assessed current sampling designs, data quality, variability, power analyses, and relevant spatial-temporal patterns
  – To determine if sufficient to establish baseline for ecosystem indicators and detect change.

• **2007 SSR**
  – First comprehensive assessment of monitoring data
  – Provided estimates of pre-CERP conditions
  – Demonstrated sustained multi-year monitoring needed to establish sound estimates of pre-CERP conditions and trend
2009 and 2012 System Status Reports

• **2009**
  – Comprehensive accounting of key system indicators
  – Assessed baseline information and set the stage for future Adaptive Management activities
  – First web published report

• **2012**
  – interim update focused on ecological indicators revealing new information on restoration status and technical tool developments
2014 System Status Report

• Highlighted status and trend
• Demonstrated results of restoration project operations
• Highlighted new knowledge to support restoration planning and implementation
• Key Findings section to convey status of Everglades ecosystem to water managers, budget directors, decision-makers, and the public.
Next Steps in Strategic Communication for the CERP Science Program
Committee on Independent Scientific Review of Everglades Restoration Progress 2016
SSR Recommendations

• Report on progress toward **Interim Goals and Targets**
• Considering **how ecosystem will change in the future** is as important as looking back to document progress
• Strategies to communicate progress made to **address the highest priority AM uncertainties**
• **Clear graphics** that quickly convey progress, trends and summarize overall conclusions
RECOVER Team Goals for the 2019 SSR

• Improve outreach to multiple audiences
• Communicate Management Implications of key findings
• Integration of indicator analyses across regions and the entire Everglades eco-system
• Report on progress toward meeting Interim Goals and Targets
• Consideration of major system drivers such as climate change and exotic species
• Focus on key uncertainties identified in the 2015 Programmatic Adaptive Management Plan
To Communicate Complicated Scientific Knowledge to a variety of audiences you need to “tell the story”

• “It is one of the novelties of human language that it encourages story telling and thus creative imagination. Scientific discovery is akin to explanatory storytelling, to myth making and to poetic imagination.”
Report Cards can be used to “tell the story”
The 5 - Step Process of Report Cards

• Engages the Science Community and Stakeholders
• Forces critical review of available data
• Establishes Goal setting and status assessment
• Creates Shared Vision
Relating the SSR to the Report Card model

- Report to Congress
- Executive Summary and Key Findings
- Detailed System Status Report
- Yearly PI Reports/Publications
Developing a Report Card for the Everglades

• Kick-off workshop March 2017, three more workshops Summer 2017, completion early 2019
• Work closely with regional coordinators and PIs to develop the report card
• Report card summarizes data and gives the status of the Everglades
• Further integrate and synthesize data to give a clear picture of Everglades ecological health
• Can be used in the 2020 Report to Congress and as a high level communication tool
THANK YOU!