"The miracle of the light pours over the green and brown expanse of saw grass and of water, shining and slow-moving below, the grass and water that is the meaning and the central fact of the Everglades of Florida.

It is a river of grass."

— Marjory Stoneman Douglas
First Things First

Where is the Everglades?

Click [here](#) and find out.

What does the Everglades do for you?

A healthy economy is vital to the wellbeing of the region's 8.1 million residents. In South Florida, the Everglades is the economy.

The Everglades is an unparalleled natural economic engine, supporting multi-billion dollar agriculture, tourism, and recreation industries.

What does restoration do for you?

50% of the historic Everglades has been converted to development. That development can prosper only if the remaining natural Everglades survives.

Construction of restoration infrastructure will provide additional jobs and economic benefits throughout the region while insuring that residents will have clean drinking water and flood protection in the future.

What is the Everglades?

Scroll down or click on the buttons at the left and find out.

To fully enjoy the story, use the blue text as you read to discover additional images, maps, and multimedia.

The Everglades:
It's More Than You Think

The size of New Jersey, the Everglades provides drinking water for more than 8 million people. The Everglades also supports the multi-billion dollar economies of agriculture, recreation, and tourism of South Florida. The Everglades is home to two Native American tribes and hosts one of the highest levels of biodiversity in the country.
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Zoom in and out of the map at the right. Click on the colored pins in the map or the images to read more about the diverse landscape.

The Historic Everglades Prior to 1880

Historically, water flowed through the Kissimmee River 'valley' (modern day Disney World) to Florida Bay across the ecosystem's extremely flat landscape forming what became known as the "River of Grass."

A combination of connectivity and spatial extent created a broad range of habitats and supported diverse and abundant native plants and animals.
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Draining the Everglades
1880 - 1972

Time Series Map at right of the Central & South Florida Flood Control Project. Click on the Clock at the bottom right corner of the map to open the Time Slider control box. Press the Play Arrow to start the animation.

Efforts began in the late 1800s to drain the Everglades for agricultural, residential, and commercial development. Wetlands were drained or filled, and canals, roads, and buildings began to displace native habitats and disrupt historical water flows. In 1948 Congress authorized the Central and Southern Florida (C&S F) Flood Control Project, a huge system of water management infrastructure that drained half of the original Everglades and allowed south Florida to develop into one of the most important economic regions in the country.

Modern South Florida, including famous places like Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach, would not exist as we know it today without the C&S F Flood Control Project.

To see how the C&S F Flood Control Project changed the way water flows in the Everglades, click on **Current Flow Map animation**.

Landcover Change Swipe Map
Draining the Everglades
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Landcover Change Swipe Map

Legend

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Draining the Everglades
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EDDMaps

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In recognition of the magnitude of the restoration effort and the critical importance of partnerships with state, tribal, and local governments, the intergovernmental South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) was established by Congress in 1996.

The Task Force uses a restoration framework to organize and assess this complex intergovernmental effort. It includes three strategic goals that address water (Goal 1), habitats and species (Goal 2), and the built environment (Goal 3). Efforts to achieve these goals include the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), a consensus plan approved by Congress specifically to reverse unintended consequences of the C&SF Project, and a host of additional projects to further restore the ecosystem’s hydrology, improve water quality, restore natural habitats, and protect native species.

Goals 1, 2, and 3

Goal 1: Get the Water Right

Water is the lifeblood of the Everglades and of the vibrant urban, tourist, recreational and agricultural economies of south Florida. At its core, Everglades Restoration is about “getting the water right” again in the massive Everglades watershed for people and for ecosystem. Getting the water right means changing the configuration and operation of our infrastructure to restore the Quality, Quantity, Timing, and Distribution of water as it moves through south Florida. The nickname for this approach is “Restoring QTD” and it is the first, and most ambitious, goal of the Everglades Restoration effort. Our hypothesis is that if we get the water right by restoring QTD, the ecosystem will respond positively.

Swipe Map - Kissimmee River Restoration

Goal 2: Restore, Preserve, and Protect Habitats and Species

As we work to get the water right, there are other things we need to do to ensure that Everglades habitats and species recover. We are confident that restoring QTD is the most important thing we can do, but we know that some habitats and species will need more help to recover. For example, we need to combat invasive exotic species before they replace native habitats and species. We need to
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**Goal 3: Foster Compatibility of the Built & Natural Systems**

Goal 3 is all about ensuring a sustainable future relationship between the built environment and the Everglades for the sake of people, habitats, and wildlife. Getting the water right means restoring the remaining Everglades while simultaneously ensuring supplies of water for drinking and irrigation, flood protection, the sustainability of land and water-based recreation and tourism, and the conservation of agricultural lands. Goal 3 recognizes that the Everglades and people are “in it together” when it comes to facing the challenges of climate change, sea level rise, and population growth. Goal 3 aims to foster a lasting compatibility between the
Restoring America’s Everglades
Leadership-Partnership-Results

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**Swipe Map - Kissimmee River Restoration**

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The Everglades Restoration team is focused on results, and we have been busy! The map on the right reflects projects that will restore QPTD: the Quantity, Quality, Timing, and Distribution of water in the Everglades. It is where you will find individual components of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), Non-CERP, and Foundation Projects.

The Integrated Delivery Schedule is the tool used to prioritize restoration projects. Click on IDS.

Scroll down to learn about restoration highlights from the last two years starting with the restoration of the Kissimmee River, the project that is the farthest along.

RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-111 Stormwater Canal Western Project; C-67 West Savanna Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project.

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The Everglades Restoration team is focused on results, and we have been busy! The map on the right reflects projects that will restore QQTID: the Quantity, Quality, Timing, and Distribution of water in the Everglades. It is where you will find individual components of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), Non-CERP, and Foundation Projects.

The Integrated Delivery Schedule is the tool used to prioritize restoration projects. Click on "IDS" to learn about restoration highlights from the last two years starting with the restoration of the Kissimmee River, the project that is the farthest along.

RESULTS

2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project; C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project.

In 2015, the water 2015/2016 Improvements for the nation (SRP) Act authorized the Central Everglades Project.

The citizens of Florida passed an amendment to the Florida Constitution in 2014 that requires the Legislature to appropriate funds annually for land conservation and improvement. A portion of...
Everglades Restoration Projects

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The Integrated Delivery Schedule is the tool used to prioritize restoration projects. Click on IDS.

Scroll down to learn about restoration highlights from the last two years starting with the restoration of the Kissimmee River, the project that is the farthest along.

RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Refund and Development Act of 2014 (WRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-111 Speeder Canal Eastern Project; C-43 West Savanna Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase I; and Broward County Water Preserve Area Project.

In 2015, the water infrastructure improvements for the nation's saltwater ecosystem included the Central Everglades Project.

The citizens of Florida passed an amendment to the Florida Constitution in 2014 that requires the Legislative to appropriate funds annually for land conservation and improvement. A portion of
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The Integrated Delivery Schedule is the tool used to prioritize restoration projects. Click on IDS.

Scroll down to learn about restoration highlights from the last two years starting with the restoration of the Kaimaner River, the project that is the farthest along.

RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-313 Spreader Canal Widening Project; C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Preserve Area Project.

In 2016, the Water Infrastructure Improvement for the Nation (WIXI) Act authorized the Central Everglades Project.

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Everglades Restoration Projects

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The Integrated Delivery Schedule is the tool used to prioritize restoration projects. Click on IOS.

Scroll down to learn about restoration highlights from the last two years starting with the restoration of the Kissimmee River, the project that is the farthest along.

RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA) authorized another six CERP projects: C-38-C-48 Everglades Canal Western Project; C-43 West Bask Storage Reservoir; Kissimmee Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project.

In 2015, the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act for the Nation (WIIA) act authorized the Central Everglades Project.

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Scroll down to learn about restoration highlights from the last two years starting with the restoration of the Kissimmee River, the project that is the farthest along.

RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-111 Sprinkler Canal Widening Project; C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay, Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Reserve Areas Project.

In 2015, the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Next Century Act authorized the Central Everglades Project.

The citizens of Florida passed an amendment to the Florida Constitution in 2014 that requires the Legislature to appropriate funds annually for land conservation and improvement. A portion of
RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-111 Spread Canal Western Project; C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project.

In 2016, the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIN) Act authorized the Central Everglades Project.

The citizens of Florida passed an amendment to the Florida Constitution in 2014 that requires the Legislature to appropriate funds annually for land conservation and improvement. A portion of these funds is intended to go towards Everglades restoration efforts.

The Florida Legislature passed the Legacy Florida Bill in 2016 that provides a dedicated funding source for 10 years to 2026 for Everglades restoration. As written, it will deliver approximately $200 million a year to restoration projects for the Everglades.

Leadership and Partnership

Restoring the Everglades and protecting its unique Florida natural resources cannot be achieved by any single organization but depends upon a strategically coordinated set of federal, state, local, and tribal authorities, funding, and partnerships. These restoration programs and projects require a long-term vision for addressing key technical management, and policy issues. The intergovernmental South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (SF ERTF) was established by Congress in 1998 to provide the long-term strategic coordination and to facilitate the incorporation of new information and opportunities into the multi-decade restoration initiatives.

Four sovereign entities (federal, state, and two tribes) are represented on the Task Force, which develop strategies or the Task Force staff, representing seven federal agencies, three state agencies/offices, two American Indian tribes, and two local governments.

Planning for Future Restoration Projects

The planning for the Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration Project was re-initiated in 2016 to restore and sustain the overall quantity, quality, timing, and distribution of freshwaters to the federally-designated “National Wild and Scenic” Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River.

Planning was initiated in 2016 on the Western Everglades Restoration Project. The goal of this CERP project is to improve the quantity, quality, timing, and distribution of water needed to restore and reconnect the western Everglades ecosystem, while complying with applicable water quality standards.

Planning was also initiated on the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Project in 2016. This purpose of this CERP project is to improve the quantity and timing of water entering Lake Okeechobee and the northern estuaries, improve regional water management operational flexibility in context of the overall Everglades ecosystem restoration, and to restore wetland habitat within the project area and Lake Okeechobee.
Results
2014-2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project; C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project.

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Leadership and Partnership

Restoring the Everglades and protecting South Florida’s nature resources cannot be achieved by any single organization but depends upon a strategically coordinated set of federal, state, local, and tribal initiatives, funding, and partnerships. These restoration programs and projects require a long-term process for addressing key technical, management, and policy issues. The intergovernmental South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) was created by Congress in 1998 to provide this long-term strategic coordination and to facilitate the implementation of new initiatives and opportunities over the multi-decade restoration initiative.

Four sovereign entities (Federal, state, and two tribes) are represented on the Task Force. Participants include all of the Task Force staff, representing seven federal departments, three state agencies, four Indian Tribes, and two local governments.

Task Force
RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project; C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project.

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Leadership and Partnership

Restoring the Everglades and protecting South Florida’s cultural ecosystem cannot be achieved by any single organization but demands upon a strategically coordinated set of federal, state, local, and tribal initiatives, funding, and partnerships. These restoration programs and projects require a team effort that provides the needed institutional, management, and policy linkages. The intergovernmental South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) was created by Congress in 1987 to provide the long-term strategic coordination and to facilitate the transparent exchange of information and opportunities across the multi-decade restoration initiative.

Four sovereign entities (federal, state, and two tribes) are represented on the Task Force. Members sit on the Task Force itself, representing seven federal agencies, three state agencies/states, two American Indian tribes, and four local governments.
**Results**
2014 - 2016 Highlights

**Support for Restoration Remains Strong**

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project; C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project.

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**Leadership and Partnership**

Restoring the Everglades and protecting South Florida’s natural resources cannot be achieved by any single organization; it fully depends upon a strategically coordinated set of federal, state, local, and tribal initiatives, funding, and partnerships. These restoration programs and projects require a long-term, multi-level commitment to address the primary issues.

The intergovernmental South Florida Restoration Task Force (Task Force) was created in 1999 to provide the intergovernment strategic coordination and to facilitate the discussions of new initiatives and opportunities over the multi-year restoration effort.

Fourteen entities (federal, state, and two tribes) are represented on the Task Force, including federal agencies, state agencies, and other local governments. The Task Force also includes representatives from Federal, state, and local governments.

Restoring Natural Hydrology
( Goal 1 QQTD)

The Picayune Strand Restoration Project involves restoring flow across an area larger than the District of Columbia in western Collier County that were drained in the early 1960s in anticipation of extensive residential development that never materialized. The first of three large pump stations (Merritt) was completed in 2014. The second pump station (Faka Union) is undergoing operational testing and the final pump station (Miller) is under construction and expected to be completed in 2017.

The full implementation of the Merritt Pump Station contract will result in 30% of the hydrologic and 38% of the biological benefits of the Picayune Strand Restoration Project. The Manatee Refuge Feature designed to provide warm water habitat is complete and fully operational.

The Indian River Lagoon-South (IRL-S) Project will help restore the St. Lucie Estuary and southern portion of the Indian River Lagoon. The first major construction contract for the C-44 Reservoir and Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) component of the project was completed in July 2014. The remaining three construction contracts for the C-44 Reservoir and STA project have been awarded and are currently underway.
RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-111 Spreadee Canal Western Project; C-43 East Basin Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project.

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Leadership and Partnership

Restoring the Everglades and protecting South Florida’s natural resources cannot be achieved by any single organization but depends upon a robustly coordinated set of federal, state, local, and tribal initiatives, funding, and partnerships. These restoration programs and projects require a long-term strategy for addressing five critical issues: water management, and policy issues. The intergovernmental South Florida Restoration Task Force (Task Force) was created by Congress in 1999 to provide this long-term strategy coordination, and to facilitate the communication of new information and opportunities over the multi-agency restoration projects.

The interagency entities (federal, state, and local) are organized on the Task Force. The Task Force is comprised of seven federal departments, state and local departments, two American Indian tribes, and two local governments.

Task Force
RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRRDA 2014) authorized four new CERP projects: C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project; C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir; Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase 1; and Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project.

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Leadership and Partnership

Restoring the Everglades and protecting South Florida’s natural resources cannot be achieved by any single organization but requires a strategically coordinated set of federal, state, local, and non-governmental partnerships. These restoration programs and projects require a long-term funding strategy for the implementation of federal, state, and local initiatives.

The intergovernmental South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) was created by Congress in 1993 to provide the long-term strategic coordination and to facilitate the development of large-scale restoration projects. The Task Force consists of representatives from state, federal, and local government organizations.

The Task Force:
- Represents the federal government
- Represents state governments
- Represents local governments
- Represents non-governmental organizations

The task force is responsible for:
- Coordinating restoration efforts
- Identifying restoration priorities
- Monitoring progress and success
- Reporting to Congress
RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

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Leadership and Partnership

Restoring the Everglades and protecting South Florida's nature resources cannot be achieved by any single organization but depends upon a collaboratively coordinated effort of federal, state, local and tribal interests, funding, and partnerships. These restoration programs and projects require long-term commitment, a strong base of national support, and public support. The intergovernmental South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) was created by Congress in 1994 to provide the inter-agency strategic coordination, and to facilitate the coordination of more information and opportunities over the multi-organizational effort.

The membership includes (State, local, and tribal) organizations on the Task Force. Fifteen members sit on the Task Force Staff, representing seven federal departments, four state administrative offices, two American Indian tribes, and two local governments.

Task Force
RESULTS
2014 - 2016 Highlights

Support for Restoration Remains Strong

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Leadership and Partnership

Restoring the Everglades and protecting South Florida's natural resources cannot be achieved by any single organization but requires a strategically coordinated effort of federal, state, local, and tribal initiatives, funding, and partnerships. These restoration programs and projects require a long-term vision and commitment by all stakeholders to ensure their success.

For example, the South Florida Water Management District provides assistance to Florida Forever projects through the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and the Florida Forever Program. This includes both state and federal dollars, and the local governments are also involved.

The goal is to develop a comprehensive, multi-year plan for restoration and protection of the Everglades ecosystem.
Leadership and Partnership

Restoring the Everglades and protecting South Florida's natural resources cannot be achieved by any single organization but depends upon a strategically coordinated set of federal, state, local, and tribal initiatives, funding, and partnerships. These restoration programs and projects require a long-term process for addressing key technical, management, and policy issues. The intergovernmental South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) was created by Congress in 1996 to provide this long-term strategic coordination and to facilitate the incorporation of new information and opportunities over the multi-decade restoration initiative.

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Task Force

GB

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Public Participation

Public outreach and communication form an important cornerstone for support of ecosystem restoration efforts. Public outreach strategies aim to instill a broad sense of stewardship and responsibility for all stakeholders involved, including private citizens. Efforts include environmental education, small business outreach, community outreach, and project-specific local outreach.

The USGS and the SFWMD utilize web-based communication to help ensure that CERP and the Everglades ecosystem is better understood and that the public has opportunities to participate in decision-making.

The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force has developed an enhanced public and stakeholder dialogue process. This workshop model has been very successful and has received widespread praise from the public, agency staff, and decision makers.
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The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force has developed an enhanced public and stakeholder dialogue process. This workshop model has been very successful and has received widespread praise from the public, agency staff, and decision makers.

See it for yourself!
Visit the Everglades

It provides benefits to the local economy.

Our estimates tell us that Everglades Restoration will generate an increase in economic welfare of approximately $5.8 billion in net present value terms that could range up to $12.5 billion (before). There are many ways to see the Everglades firsthand. The links below can help you plan your trip:

- National Park Service
- Florida State Parks

Image at right: "Douglas the Everglades". Photo credit: T. Hines.
See it for yourself! Visit the Everglades

It provides benefits to the local economy.

Our estimates tell us that Everglades Restoration will generate an increase in economic welfare of approximately $46.5 billion in net present value terms that could range up to $123.9 billion. (Source).

There are many ways to see the Everglades first hand. The links below can help you plan your trip!

National Park Service
Florida State Parks

Image at right: "Crossing the Everglades". Photo credit: T. Howington
US Department of Interior
Everglades Restoration Initiatives

This Story Map Journal was developed in partnership with our federal partners as a means to provide a common web-based briefing tool during the administration transition.

We would like to thank the following agencies and their staff for their assistance in this effort:

US Department of the Interior
Office of Everglades Restoration Initiatives
https://www.evergladesrestoration.gov/

National Park Service
Everglades National Park
https://www.nps.gov/ever

US Army Corps of Engineers
http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/