

generated by the Plan would go to the natural system in order to attain restoration goals, and the remainder of the water would go for use in the human environment. The Corps of Engineers, the South Florida Water Management District, and other non-Federal sponsors shall ensure that Project Implementation Reports identify the appropriate quantity, timing, and distribution of water to be dedicated and managed for the natural system that is necessary to meet the restoration goals of the Plan. In accordance with the "Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Assurance of Project Benefits Agreement," dated January 9, 2002 pursuant to section 601(h)(2) of WRDA 2000, the South Florida Water Management District or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection shall make sufficient reservations of water for the natural system under State law in accordance with the Project Implementation Report for that project and consistent with the Plan before water made available by a project is permitted for a consumptive use or otherwise made unavailable.

(d) The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall implement the Plan in a manner to continuously improve the expected performance level of the Plan based upon new information resulting from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific and technical information, new or updated modeling; information developed through the adaptive assessment principles contained in the Plan; and future authorized changes to the Plan integrated into the implementation of the Plan.

§ 385.9 Implementation principles.

The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District and other non-Federal sponsors shall, in consultation with the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, conduct activities, including program-level activities, necessary to implement the Plan. Such activities

shall be conducted as part of an integrated implementation program, in accordance with this part, and based on the following principles:

(a) Individual projects shall be formulated, evaluated, and justified based on their ability to contribute to the goals and purposes of the Plan and on their ability to provide benefits that justify costs on a next-added increment basis.

(b) Interim goals shall be established in accordance with § 385.38 to provide a means for evaluating restoration success of the Plan at specific time intervals during implementation. Interim targets to evaluate progress on providing for other water-related needs of the region provided for in the Plan shall be established in accordance with § 385.39. Interim goals and interim targets shall be consistent with each other.

(c) Endorsement of the Plan as a restoration framework is not intended as a constraint on innovation during implementation through the adaptive management process. Continuous improvement of the Plan shall be sought to ensure that new information resulting from changed or unforeseen circumstances, new scientific and technical information, new or updated modeling; information developed through the assessment principles contained in the Plan; and future authorized changes to the Plan are integrated into the implementation of the Plan. The adaptive management process provides a means for analyzing the performance of the Plan and assessing progress towards meeting the goals and purposes of the Plan as well as a basis for improving the performance of the Plan. Improving the performance of the Plan means enhancing the benefits of the Plan in terms of restoration of the natural system while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection.

§ 385.10 Implementation responsibilities, consultation, and coordination.

(a) *Implementing agencies.* Implementation of the Plan shall be the responsibility of the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsors.

(b) *Consultation*—(1) *Consultation with tribes.* (i) In addition to any other applicable provision for consultation with Native American Tribes, including but not limited to, laws, regulations, executive orders, and policies the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall consult with and seek advice from the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida throughout the implementation process to ensure meaningful and timely input by tribal officials regarding programs and activities covered by this part. Consultation with the tribes shall be conducted on a government-to-government basis.

(ii) In carrying out their responsibilities under section 601 of WRDA 2000 with respect to the restoration of the South Florida ecosystem, the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Interior shall fulfill any obligations to the Indian tribes in South Florida under the Indian trust doctrine as well as other applicable legal obligations.

(2) *Consultation with agencies.* The Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall consult with and seek advice from the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Commerce, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other Federal, State, and local agencies throughout the implementation process to ensure meaningful and timely input by those agencies regarding programs and activities covered under this part. The time for, and extent of, consultation shall be appropriate for, and limited by, the activity involved.

(c) *Coordination.* The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor shall coordinate implementation activities and the preparation of documents with other Federal, State, and local agencies and the tribes to fulfill the requirements of all applicable Federal and State laws, including but not limited to, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Endangered Species Act.

(d) *Timeliness obligations of consultation.* Consultation involves reciprocal obligations: on the part of the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor to involve agencies, tribes, and the public at an early stage and in such a way to ensure meaningful consultation, and on the part of the parties consulted to respond in a timely and meaningful fashion so that the implementation of the Plan is not jeopardized and so that delays do not result in other adverse consequences to restoration of the natural system, to the other goals and purposes of the Plan, or to the public interest generally. Prescribed time limits set by regulation are too inflexible for the entire consultation process. It is expected that the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor will set reasonable time limits for consultation on specific decisions consistent with the purposes of this part and that the parties will consult in a timely and meaningful way. The Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor recognize that the time limits established for each specific decision will be proportionate to the complexity of the decision and will take into account the resources of the entity with whom the consultation is occurring in order to allow consultation to occur in a meaningful way. This part does not intend for a delay in consultation to be used as a de facto veto power. This part authorizes the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor to set reasonable limits on the amount of time for consultation. In setting reasonable time limits, the agencies and tribes may consider relevant considerations such as sequencing of projects, planning, contracting and funding, and any factor listed for setting time limits for consulting under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR 1501.8), including but not limited to, the nature and size of the proposed action, the degree to which relevant information is known or obtainable, the degree to which the action is controversial, the state of the art of analytical techniques, the number of persons affected, and the consequences of delay. In engaging in consultation, the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsor shall inform the agencies, tribes, and

public of the ending date for consultation. In addition, the agencies and tribes should adhere to all time limits imposed by law, regulations or executive order. In appropriate circumstances, the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor may extend the time for consultation upon a showing that delays will not result in adverse consequences to the implementation of the Plan, to the restoration of the natural system, to the other goals and purposes of the Plan, or to the public interest and that relevant considerations justify a longer time. Failure of an agency, tribe or the public to engage in consultation with the Corps of Engineers and the non-Federal sponsor, or file comments in a timely and meaningful way shall not be a sufficient reason for extending a consultation or comment period. Nothing in this part is intended to alter existing time limits established by statute or other regulations.

(e) *South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force.* The Department of the Army recognizes the valuable role that the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force), its working group, and its other advisory bodies play in the discussion and resolution of issues related to the South Florida ecosystem. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District regularly brief the Task Force on the Plan and regularly serve on the working group and other advisory bodies. The Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District and other non-Federal sponsors shall continue to provide information to, and consult with, the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, the Florida-based working group, and advisory bodies to the Task Force as appropriate throughout the implementation process for the Plan. In addition to consultation with the Task Force specified elsewhere in this part, the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District shall consult with the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, its working group, and its advisory bodies, on other matters related to the implementation of the Plan, as the Task Force from time to time may request. Pursuant to the provisions of

WRDA 1996, the Task Force shall provide general input concerning the implementation of the Plan. The Task Force shall provide recommendations to the Secretary of the Army regarding the implementation of the Plan, as provided in this part. The Secretary of the Army shall notify the Task Force to ensure it is afforded an opportunity to review and provide recommendations on reports and products, including but not limited to, interim goals and interim targets, Project Implementation Reports, Pilot Project Design Reports, Pilot Project Technical Data Reports, the pre-CERP baseline, assessment reports, guidance memoranda, Master Implementation Sequencing Plan, Comprehensive Plan Modification Reports, periodic CERP updates, and reports to Congress prepared pursuant to § 385.40.

Subpart C—CERP Implementation Processes

§ 385.11 Implementation process for projects.

Generally, the Corps of Engineers and non-Federal sponsors shall develop and implement projects in accordance with the process that is shown in figure 1 in appendix A of this part. Typical steps in this process involve:

(a) *Project Management Plan.* The Project Management Plan describes the activities, tasks, and responsibilities that will be used to produce and deliver the products necessary to implement the project.

(b) *Project Implementation Report.* The Project Implementation Report provides information on plan formulation and evaluation, engineering and design, estimated benefits and costs, and environmental effects to bridge the gap between the conceptual design included in the Plan and the detailed design necessary to proceed to construction. The Project Implementation Reports will also set forth additional information and analyses necessary for the Secretary of the Army or Congress to approve the project for implementation.

(c) *Plans and specifications.* During this phase, final design of the project is completed and plans and specifications are prepared. Plans and specifications