

RECOVER (REstoration COordination & VERification) and the Role of Science in Everglades Restoration

Dave Tipple¹, Carol Mitchell², Steve Traxler³, **Rebecca Burns⁴** – on behalf of RECOVER



¹U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Jacksonville District, Jacksonville, Florida; ²National Park Service, Everglades National Park, Homestead, FL;
³U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Vero Beach, FL; ⁴Everglades Partners Joint Venture (EPJV), Jacksonville, FL

REstoration COordination and VERification (RECOVER) is the system-wide science program of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). RECOVER ensures that Plan implementation is guided by the best available science and that a system-wide perspective is maintained throughout the restoration process.

RECOVER accomplishes this by using a multi-agency team of scientists, modelers, planners, engineers, and resource specialists. RECOVER also supports the application of adaptive management to CERP, advocating the use of a scientific process that promotes and applies learning, reduces uncertainty and increases the probability of CERP success.

RECOVER Mission Areas:

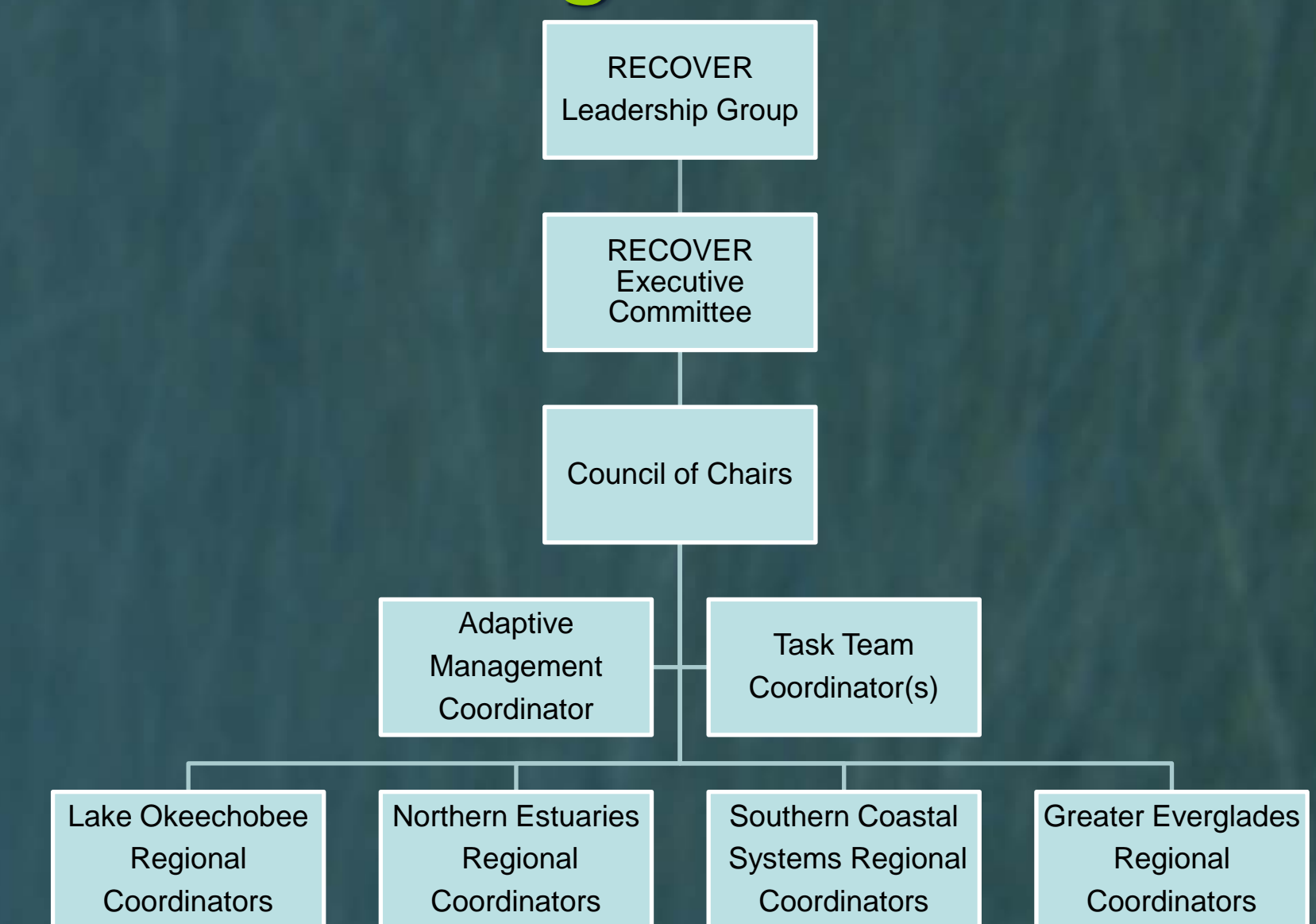
- **Assessment** – Develops and implements an ecological monitoring program to establish pre-restoration environmental conditions and track ecological response as restoration progresses. Provides a system-wide science perspective to ensure projects meet objectives and to guide planning and operations in order to maximize benefits to the natural system.
- **Evaluation** – Evaluates, using numerical modeling and other tools, the performance of project and program plans and designs to ensure that they are fully linked to the system-wide goals and purposes of CERP.
- **Planning** – Identifies and provides analyses regarding potential improvements in the design and operation of the CERP, consistent with the CERP objectives, and strives for consensus regarding scientific and technical aspects of the CERP.

RECOVER Guiding Principles:

- **Restoration**
- **Science-based approach**
- **Transparency and access**
- **Consensus-building**
- **Inclusiveness**
- **Accountability**
- **Adaptive Management**



RECOVER Organization:



CERP Adaptive Management

is a structured management approach for addressing uncertainties by testing hypotheses, linking science to decision making, and adjusting implementation, as necessary, to improve the probability of restoration success.

❖ One application of CERP Adaptive Management is the **2010 Shared Definition of Everglades Restoration** effort, the goal of which is to better define the functional attributes of a restored ecosystem, in order to inform planning, implementation and operation of restoration projects. RECOVER is supporting this effort by compiling new scientific information since 1999.

RECOVER Member Agencies:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- South Florida Water Management District
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Geological Survey
- National Park Service
- Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida
- Seminole Tribe of Florida
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Recent RECOVER Work Efforts:

- ✓ **2009 Monitoring and Assessment Plan (MAP)** – updated and optimized system-wide monitoring plan
- ✓ **2009 System Status Report (SSR)** * – assessment of recent monitoring data that reaffirms hypotheses and links to interim goals
- ✓ **Technical Report on System-wide Performance of 2015 Band 1 Projects** * – simulates initial CERP projects and evaluates their performance
- ✓ **System Performance Measures** – guide evaluation of project designs and reporting of CERP performance
- ✓ **CERP Adaptive Management Integration Guide** * – guidance on how to integrate adaptive management into CERP and its projects
- ✓ **Scientific and Technical Knowledge Gained in Everglades Restoration (1999-2009) document** *
- ✓ **Support to Decentralization and Sheetflow Enhancement (Decomp) Project** * - scientific and technical support to project planning

* Indicates topics with GEER sessions and/or posters

