

# Partnerships – They're Not All The Same

Developing Partnerships That Meet Specific  
Purposes

Miles Meyer, Supervisory F&W Biologist  
South Florida Ecological Services Office



# My View on Partnerships



- o Partnerships are very important in what we do.
- o I enjoy working collaboratively.
- o Much of the work my staff do are as part of a team – internally as well as externally.



# My View on Partnerships

Area of work	Benefit of partnerships
Regulatory (Corps of Engineers)	Collaborating with other agencies resulted in better projects
Invasive species management (Corps)	Wide range of partners improves chances of successful control
Habitat Conservation Plan Coordinator (USFWS)	Public and private partners needed to do conservation projects
Interagency liaison (USFWS)	Other agencies bring other authorities to the table
College professor	Teamwork is hard but worth the effort

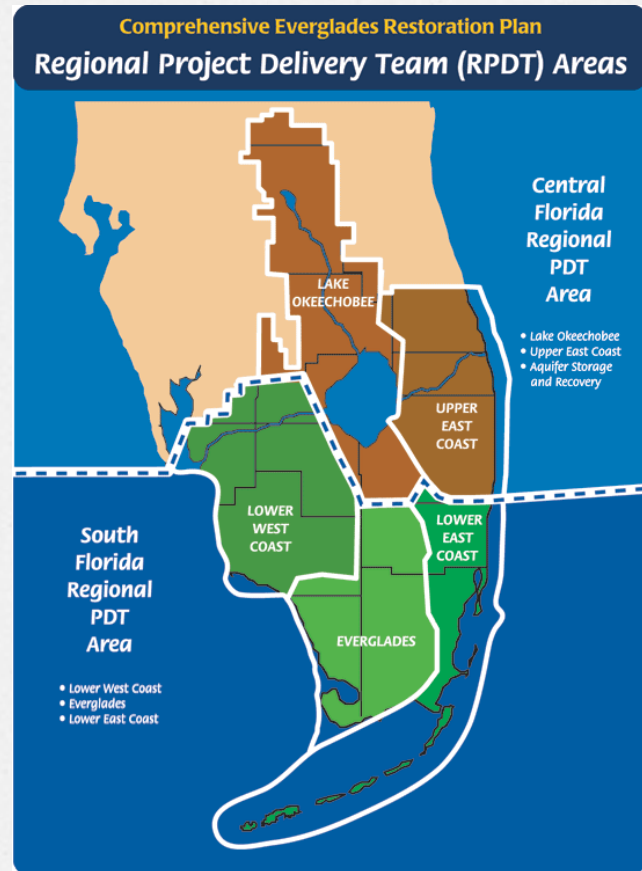
# Importance of Partnerships

- o Partnerships allow us to have a broader reach and utilize resources that we may not have on staff, to benefit the resources over which we have stewardship.
- o My staff have a variety of partnerships which they need to develop and maintain in order to accomplish our mission.



## Where do we use partnerships?

- Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program (CERP)
- Peninsular Florida Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC)
- Coastal Program
- RESTORE Act
- Water Farming
- Species Recovery



# Partnerships as a Component of Performance

- o As a part of my staff's EPAPs, I asked them develop up to three projects to accomplish in the coming year.
- o Staff developed a wide range of projects that could be considered under their various programs.
- o Staff who developed project ideas were asked to meet with potential partners, build relationships and take the lead in implementing the actions.
- o We use this list to help us allocate end of year funding and other resources.



Show of hands:

How many of you  
provide substantive  
input on your EPAP  
Critical Elements?



# Examples of Partnerships Developed by Staff

- o An MOU between DOI agencies to support recovery actions for the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow.
- o RESTORE Act staff member met with several counties about using RESTORE Act funds to fund Southwest Florida Comprehensive Watershed Study (SFCWS) projects.
  - o SFCWS was a planning level document developed by the Corps in 2004 with assistance from various federal, state and local agencies, including FWS.



# Examples of Partnerships Developed by Staff

Coordination with Universities allowed us to provide volunteer opportunities and mentors for several college students, who engaged in:

- o Hydrologic analysis
- o Development of a pollinator education program
- o Transferring survey and monitoring reports to a GIS database
- o Providing assistance during field surveys
- o Bibliographic database development
- o Updating status of species reports for several species.

# Examples of Partnerships Developed by Staff

- We also have a better relationship with the field researchers and are able to make changes to survey protocols more easily.





# Challenges in Developing Partnerships

- o Not all staff are comfortable developing partnerships. Some prefer to stay in the office.
- o Who are the right people to meet with when developing new partnerships?
- o Finding the right partnerships to accomplish our mission.



# Examples of Some of Our Partnerships



# Everglades Restoration Program Partnerships

- o Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program consists of over 60 projects, in 16 counties, over 18,000 square miles.
- o Each project has a Project Delivery Team (PDT) composed of various state and federal agencies and other partners.
- o PDT meetings are open to the public and frequently have representation from a variety of NGOs and public stakeholders.

# Everglades Restoration Partnerships

## Interagency teams – Federal agencies

- o US Army Corps of Engineers
- o US Fish & Wildlife Service
  - o Ecological Services
  - o ARM Loxahatchee NWR
  - o Panther NWR
  - o Ten Thousand Island NWR
  - o Kissimmee Headwater NWR
- o National Park Service
  - o Everglades National Park
  - o Biscayne Bay National Park
  - o Big Cypress National Preserve
- o Environmental Protection Agency
- o NOAA
- o USGS



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**





# Everglades Restoration Partnerships

## Interagency teams – State agencies

- o South Florida Water Management District
- o Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- o Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
- o Florida Department of Agricultural & Consumer Services



# Everglades Restoration Partnerships

## Interagency teams – Educational

- o University of Florida
- o Florida International University
- o Florida Atlantic University
- o and several others (Rutgers, Duke, MIT, etc.)
  
- o These universities provide much of the science necessary to develop the projects and monitor their success.





# Coastal Program Partnerships

- o Coastal program staff are able to work on projects on public as well as private lands.



- o Work closely with individual counties and NGOs to develop effective habitat restoration projects.



# LCC Partnerships

- o LCCs are applied conservation science partnerships among federal agencies, regional organizations, states, tribes, NGOs, private stakeholders, universities and other entities.



- o LCCs inform resource management decisions in an integrated fashion across the landscape at a broader scale than the individual agency's responsibilities.



# Water Farming Partnerships

- Water farming is a partnership between large landowners, usually ranchers or agriculture, and the state and federal agencies.
- The purpose of these partnerships is to provide easements which allow for payments to landowners to provide water storage on their lands.

# Species Recovery Partnerships

The DOI agencies have joined together under an MOU to support recovery of the Cape Sable seaside sparrow (CSSS).



- o USFWS is the recovery lead and has been designated as the lead for demographic studies.
- o USGS is leading the science programs, hydrologic monitoring and modeling, developing population viability models and habitat suitability models.
- o NPS is leading the on-the-ground science, species surveys and habitat restoration initiatives.



# Species Recovery Partnerships

We have also instituted an Interagency CSSS Working Group to address actions on a broader scope.

- o Support funding is provided by the USACE.
- o Water Control Plan and Operations are managed by the USACE and SFWMD.
- o Habitat management (prescribed fire, vegetation management, invasive species control) is performed by ENP, FWC and SFWMD.
- o Water quality issues are addressed by FDEP and Lox NWR.
- o FWC will be undertaking several projects to control water flows – including filling in canals and breaching levees.
- o Tribal interests are also included.

# Lessons Learned

- o Work is work – don't let it interfere with building partnerships.
- o Find ways to overcome work related conflicts without impacting the relationships.
- o You may not agree with what the partners have to say but you can still be friends after it is all over.
- o You may need that relationship in the future so don't burn bridges.





# Lessons Learned

- o Try not to let the stovepipe limit your creativity.
  - o We all have policies that we must follow but don't allow pseudo-policies to restrict you.
  - o Sometimes you may need to work around a blockage.
- o You don't have to be the lead to get things done. Let others lead when appropriate.



# What Can You Do?

- o How can you take some of these ideas to help in the development of your partnerships?

