

A summary of why the EAA flowway was not included in the CERP plan, as stated in CERP, is as follows on page N-70:

154. Why were flowways not included in the recommended plan?

Response: A flowway is generally described as a broad, shallow marsh area that is

used to freely-flow water from Lake Okeechobee to one or more of the WCAs. The

evaluation of the concept shows a number of problems concerning its feasibility,

including soil subsidence, evapotranspiration, seepage management, vegetation,

timing of flows, and lack of flow events. Additional EAA issues include numerous

roads, bridges, and railroad relocations would be required if a flowway cuts through

and divides the entire area.

Soil subsidence in the EAA has substantially reduced the hydraulic head that would

drive the southward flow of water; hence, velocities and flow rates would be greatly

reduced. By spreading the water over shallower areas (as opposed to reservoirs) and

because a marsh habitat would have to be kept hydrated, the evapotranspiration

loss could easily be doubled. A long, rectangular configuration would have a

75 percent longer levee than a more square area, thus increasing seepage management

features. Because nutrient-laden soil would be flooded for the flowway, the vegetation most likely to dominate would be cattails and not desirable Everglades

habitat. Flowways would not “hold back” water going the WCAs and the delivery of

that water would exacerbate the already high stages in the northern parts of the

WCAs. Thus, the timing of flows from flowways would not be manageable or

beneficial for the remaining Everglades. Perhaps the most crucial element, water

flowing from the lake to the WCAs, is not present in dry or even normal years! For

example, during long periods from 1970-1982 or 1985-1994, no significant excess

lake water was available for the flowway. Only demand releases to the Everglades

were made from the lake during those periods. Water delivered to the Everglades on

a demand basis, through a flowway, would not be effective with increased travel

times and increased evapotranspiration losses. The only years where water could

flow for long duration are wet periods like 1969-1970, 1982-1983, and 1994-1995. In

those years, the stages in the WCAs are already too high and additional flow from

flowways would be damaging, not beneficial.

http://www.evergladesplan.org/docs/comp_plan_apr99/app_n.pdf

Water Conservation Areas [WCAs]

Everglades marshland areas that were modified for use as storage to prevent flooding, to

irrigate agriculture and recharge well fields and as input for agricultural and urban runoff. The Water Conservation Areas WCA-1, WCA-2A, WCA-2B, WCA-3A and WCA-3B comprise five surface water management basins in the Everglades; bounded by the Everglades Agricultural Area on the north and the Everglades National Park basin on the south, the WCAs are confined by levees and water control structures that regulate the inflows and outflows to each one of them. Restoration of more natural water levels and flows to the WCAs is a main objective of the CERP.