Audubon FLORIDA

# Everglades Restoration is:

- The Right Amount of Water
- At the Right Time
- In the Right Place

## *Improving Water Quality is a Critical Step Toward Successful Restoration*

Success in Everglades restoration will be defined by bringing back the wildlife that depend on a functioning ecosystem and restoring habitat that depends on unique conditions. Everglades restoration is having the right amount of freshwater delivered at the right time in the right place. A step toward reaching these goals is to resolve the decades-old challenge of cleaning up water before it flows into the Everglades. ***By itself, cleaning up pollution in the Everglades is only one component of restoration.*** But with progress on this front, truly restoring this unique ecological wonder is closer to reality.

The recent plan to have additional treatment areas constructed puts the physical framework in place to remove much of the pollution from Everglades water. These new treatment areas, when combined with improved Best Management Practices or other source controls, can provide assurance that the Everglades water quality standards will be attained.

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan is underway to restore the ecosystem's hydrology. With the way forward for Everglades clean-up now outlined, the restoration partnership between Florida and the federal government can continue to work in parallel on projects that put more water into the Everglades. Restoring the natural wetland flows will benefit the tourism and recreation based economies in South Florida, while protecting the source of drinking water for 1 in 3 Floridians. Rehydrating and restoring sheetflow to the River of Grass is what will truly create the measurable recovery of the ecosystem for wildlife and people.

Some key features of restoration projects that are underway include:

*Building projects in the Central Everglades to allow water to flow freely and reconnect the River of Grass between Lake Okeechobee with the Southern Everglades; move water south that is currently flushed to tide to rehydrate Everglades National Park; and prevent losing Everglades water to the coasts through seepage;

*Bridging Tamiami Trail to remove this barrier to the free flow of water south into Everglades National Park and Florida Bay;

*Redistributing flows from the massive C-111 canal to improve freshwater deliveries into Florida Bay, which depends on a healthy balance of fresh and salt water to support native wildlife like the Roseate Spoonbill and a significant fishing industry that drives the local economy;

*Storing and cleaning water near the northern coastal estuaries to avoid large harmful discharges in wet years and providing water needed in drought years;

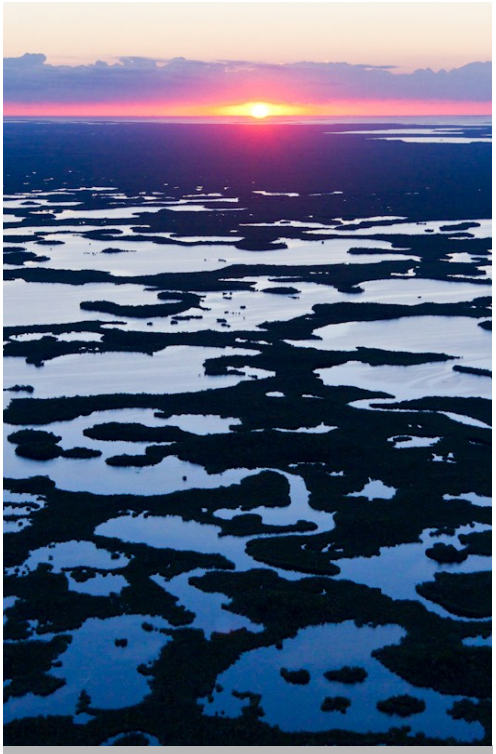
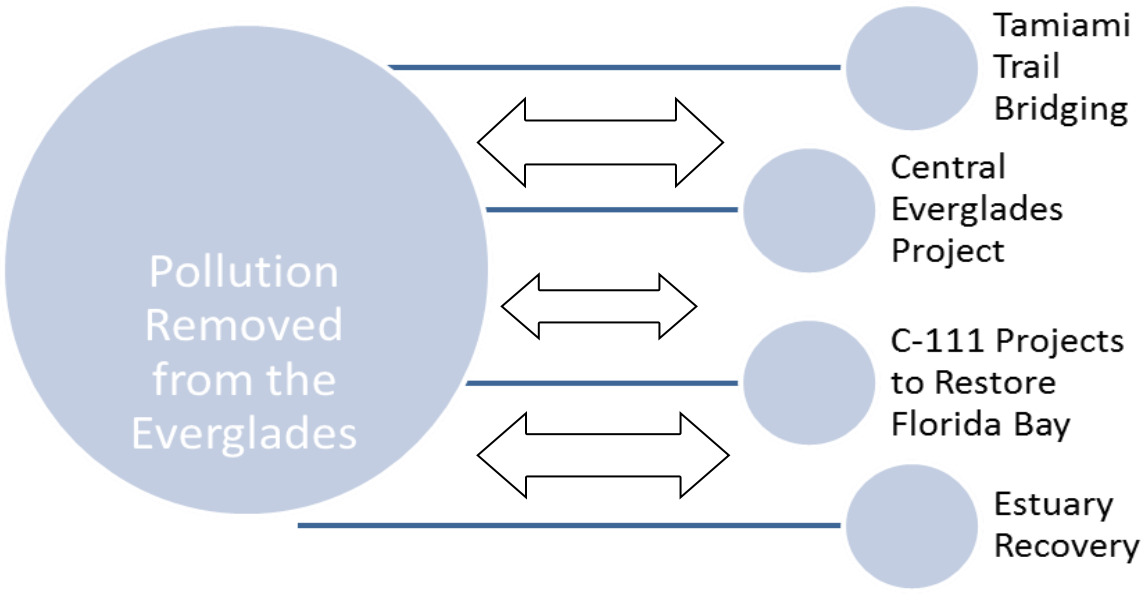


Photo by Mac Stone

These restoration projects **must proceed apace** with efforts to treat agricultural and urban runoff. Ecological progress through Everglades restoration comes when projects actually move more water into the Everglades. The real and urgent work of restoring the Everglades' water flows and habitat to benefit birds, other wildlife and people must continue in order to restore this ecological treasure and key economic driver.

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