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**SfAA/EPA Environmental Anthropology Project**  
**Year One Final Report**

## **I. Introduction**

This document serves as my Final Report and the completion of my Year 1 deliverables under my contract as Consulting Anthropologist to the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida. This Final Report summarizes my activities which have been documented in my bi-weekly project updates to Barbara Johnston, SfAA/EPA Environmental Anthropology Project Director (attachment 1).

A joint agreement between the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Sustainable Ecosystems and Communities (EPA) provided, in part, the services of an Environmental Anthropology consultant to the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida (GCSSF). As the consultant, I worked with the GCSSF's Executive Director, Dr. Bonnie Kranzer, on initiatives designed to help strengthen the ties between environmental quality and social, cultural, and economic conditions as they relate to ecosystem restoration activities in South Florida.

## **II. Project Description**

Ecosystem restoration spans a number of overlapping South Florida landscapes—from sawgrass marshes, mangrove swamps, and coral reefs to acres of agricultural lands and rural towns, all of which are bounded by a sprawling urban corridor, culminating in the pastelled urban metropolis of Miami. The scale of the greater South Florida restoration effort is vast—for instance, the region spans more than 18,000 square miles with a population of about 6 million. The boundaries of this system include the Kissimmee River and floodplain, Lake Okeechobee, and the freshwater marshes south of Lake Okeechobee. These marshes interconnect with the Big Cypress Swamp (a national preserve) and ultimately flow through the mangrove and salt marsh estuaries into Florida Bay. The multiple federal, state, tribal, and local agencies coordinating South Florida restoration efforts are attempting to balance the often competing water and land requirements of the region's wilderness and developed areas.

The emphasis of ecosystem restoration initiatives in South Florida has been the expansion of the entire region's water resources. This emphasis on water reflects the way agencies have conceptualized restoration here—which has primarily meant "natural" system restoration. And funding for restoration research has followed this directive, such as exotic plant species eradication programs,

ecological and hydrologic modeling of the Everglades, etc.

There are two organizations coordinating local restoration efforts in South Florida: the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force "Working Group" and the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida. In the past year (from July 1997 to July 1998), I have worked with both groups to develop avenues for integrating social, economic, and cultural goals into land management and environmental restoration decision-making, as well as adaptive management strategies. Brief descriptions of both of these groups follow within this section.

### **A. South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force "Working Group"**

The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration project consists of nearly 200 environmental restoration, growth management, agricultural, and urban revitalization projects, programs, and initiatives that are designed to make South Florida more sustainable in the future. Restoration activities are generally guided and coordinated by the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, its Florida-based Working Group, various advisory boards (e.g., the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida), and other technical working groups (e.g., the Science Coordination Team, Public Outreach Steering and Support Team, and project coordination teams).

The federal Water Resources Development Act of 1996 enabled the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force to establish a Florida-based working group. The Working Group supports the Task Force in its efforts to achieve, in cooperation with all interested parties, the restoration, preservation and protection of the ecosystem while promoting a sustainable South Florida. Working Group members include representatives from federal, state, and tribal agencies involved in ecosystem restoration in South Florida.

My involvement with the Working Group has been two-fold. I have attended Working Group meetings throughout the year and have provided staff support to Bonnie Kranzer, who is a member of the Working Group, on relevant socioeconomic issues. In addition, I have helped develop funding requests for social science research and programs as part of Working Group funding procedures.

#### **1. Science Coordination Team**

A Science Coordination Team (SCT) was established by the Working Group to assist both the Working Group and Task Force in meeting their obligations under the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 by ensuring the highest level of communication, coordination, and cooperation in the application of the various scientific disciplines to the ecological and socioeconomic problems of South Florida. Serving as the senior science advisory group to the Working Group and Task Force, the SCT is responsible for recommending research plans and priorities; and facilitating the integration, synthesis, and application of the best scientific information available for the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration effort.

The SCT's charter includes the coordination of social science research relevant to ecosystem restoration in South Florida. To help garner the SCT's support for

social science research initiatives, I made a presentation to the SCT entitled "The Social Sciences and Ecosystem Restoration" (Attachment 2). As all SCT members, except Bonnie Kranzer, are physical and biological scientists, this presentation helped to brief the SCT on the relevance of social science research in regional ecosystem restoration projects. The support of the SCT later helped ensure funding for the Social Science Symposium (as discussed in Section III).

### ***B. Governor's Commission (GCSSF)***

In 1994, Florida Governor Lawton Chiles created the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida through an Executive Order. This commission was created to explore and develop recommendations for balancing the needs of a healthy Everglades ecosystem with a dynamic and sustainable South Florida economy.

The Executive Order further recognizes that the results of rapid population growth, including land development, water management activities, and land conversion, have negatively impacted the Everglades ecosystem and that its water quality has been degraded and the associated natural systems no longer adequately accomplish the functions they once performed. With population expected to triple in the South Florida region in the next half century, it is increasingly critical that decisions are made which will curb the deleterious effects of growth and development and that recommendations are offered on how to ensure ecological health and a sustainable economy for South Florida over the long run.

To make these decisions, Governor Lawton Chiles appointed a 42 member standing Commission representing the South Florida business and economic community; public interest and environmental organizations; county and city officials; the regional planning councils; relevant state agencies; the Seminole Tribe; and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians.

The GCSSF offers a unique opportunity to observe the diverse interest groups involved in the region. My involvement in the activities of the GCSSF have included attending GCSSF monthly meetings and related sub-committee meetings, particularly the Public Outreach Committee and the Livable Communities Committee. When appropriate, I participate in the committee meetings and review committee products. For instance, I provided extensive comments on the Public Outreach Committee's "Public Outreach Strategy," and their Request for Proposal for developing an educational video on sustainability.

Though generally, the majority of the projects I have been working on for the past year have been Working Group products. While the GCSSF has been supportive of the greater social science effort underway in South Florida, their support has been more benign than progressive or active. As the GCSSF serves as an advisory body to the Working Group, it is important for us to garner their support for social science initiatives to ensure future funding success. Moreover, the GCSSF already conceptualizes the issue of ecosystem restoration in a holistic manner—linking urban issues to natural system restoration goals. Our mistake was assuming that the GCSSF understood what social scientists do, particularly as it relates to environmental issues. It would probably be beneficial for us to make an "informational" presentation to the GCSSF which outlines the role social science research plays in ecosystem restoration projects (similar to the presentation I made to the Science Coordination Team).

In the course of the past year, I have coordinated responses to two EPA Request for Proposals for the GCSSF. The GCSSF's mandatory consensus building role grants the group the ability to facilitate projects between governmental and non-governmental agencies, communities, and the private sector. Both proposed projects advocate the involvement of communities in environmental restoration and preservation initiatives. As the Consulting Anthropologist, I wrote and coordinated the development of the first proposal and oversaw the development and writing of the second proposal by GCSSF staff (Attachments 3 and 4).

### **1. Societal Indicators of Everglades Restoration Project**

The GCSSF has ranked thirty-four projects proposed by the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group as "critical" to the restoration of South Florida's Everglades ecosystem and for meeting the region's future economic and social needs. The scope of these Critical Projects is great. For instance, the Army Corps of Engineers has been allocated \$75,000,000 to pay the federal share (representing a cost-share of 50%) of these Critical Restoration Projects, funded under the 1996 federal Water Resources Development Act. The Societal Indicators of Everglades Restoration Project is designed to help communities affected by these projects develop their own set of indicators for judging each project's long-term success. These indicators will then be incorporated into each project's planning and evaluation stages. The project partners [South Florida Water Management District, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the GCSSF, the Florida Department of Community Affairs, and the South Florida Regional Planning Council] have designed the project to include two goals: 1) facilitate the incorporation of local community standards and goals into the planning of these critical projects and 2) use the planning focus group sessions as a forum for discussing with community stakeholder groups the Critical Project's role in the broader context of South Florida sustainability.

### **2. Coral Reef Classroom Environmental Education Grant**

The proposed Coral Reef Classroom (CRC) project is designed to expand an existing environmental education program managed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection at the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Project partners include the National Audubon Society, the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Dade County School Board, the GCSSF, and representatives from the local dive boat industry. The CRC encourages students to think critically about the complexities of the coral reef ecology, concepts of habitat (human and non-built) interdependence, the costs and benefits of habitat protection, and how personal choice and decision-making affects the health of South Florida's diverse ecosystem. Project partners propose expanding the CRC, which has been successfully working with Monroe County school children for the past five years, to include Dade County schools. Specifically, project partners will work with the Dade County school board to target 10 schools in under-served areas, seeking out communities and neighborhoods whose populations are less traditionally involved in environmental issues.

### **III. South Florida Social Science Initiative**

As a first step toward integrating social and economic goals into restoration planning, monitoring, and adaptive management strategies, the Working Group asked its Science Coordination Team (SCT) to develop a plan for social science input into the restoration process. Social scientists participating in the SCT's Ad Hoc Social Science Committee decided that holding a symposium to address social science input into South Florida ecosystem restoration would be the best method for developing such a plan.

While the social science research plan has been the major focus of the Ad Hoc Social Science Committee, the committee has initiated other concurrent projects to underscore the utility of social science research to agencies involved in restoration projects. My involvement in these activities include attending relevant stakeholder meetings throughout the region (such as sponsored by the Army Corps of Engineers); attending public outreach forums sponsored by the Working Group; seeking funding for "pilot" social science research projects; and helping to develop a socioeconomic monitoring plan for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

#### ***A. Pre-Symposium Presentations***

To garner support for the Social Science Initiative and symposium, I have made three presentations on the topic: 1) to the Working Group's Science Coordination Team (Nov. 3, 1997); 2) to the Army Corps of Engineers, Socio-Economics Branch (Jan. 6, 1998); and 3) to the members of the Biscayne Lands Trust Group—a regional stakeholder working group (Jan. 27, 1998).

#### ***B. Social Science Symposium Planning***

The focus of my work has been to help develop a directed symposium process designed to produce an "Action Plan for South Florida Social Science Research" as its endpoint. NOAA's Strategic Environmental Assessment Division provided us with a model for the symposium process (Attachment 5), which we adapted for the Social Science Initiative. I also helped design a "mock-up" or template for the Action Plan (Attachment 6). Having this mock-up during the planning stage of the symposium helped us stay focused throughout the process. To fund the symposium process, I wrote a project proposal and helped develop a project budget with Karyn Ferro of Everglades National Park (Attachment 7 and 8). This proposal was funded through the Department of Interior's Critical Ecosystem Science Initiative funding and we received \$60,000.

An advisory body of key social scientists involved in environmental issues, called the "Core Group," was formed to oversee all significant symposium planning decisions. The Core Group includes:

1. Ms. Barbara DeMeo-Anderson, Seminole Tribe of Florida
2. Dr. Margriet Caswell, USDA
3. Mr. Tom Culliton, NOAA

4. Dr. Miki Crespi, NPS
5. Dr. Shirley Fiske, NOAA
6. Ms. Karyn Ferro, ENP
7. Dr. Bonnie Kranzer, GCSSF
8. Dr. Bob Leeworthy, NOAA
9. Ms. Betsy LaRoe, EPA
10. Dr. Gary Machlis, NPS
11. Ms. Laura Ogden, GCSSF
12. Ms. Theresa Trainor, EPA
13. Dr. Robbin Shoemaker, USDA.

SfAA Environmental Anthropology Director, Dr. Barbara Johnston, helped ensure that two prominent anthropologists were included in this Core Planning Group (Dr. Miki Crespi and Dr. Shirley Fiske). Their participation was critical to shaping the direction of the symposium—by making sure that the symposium process was applicable to the development of research strategies linked to the discipline and by identifying (and inviting) anthropologists from agencies and universities.

We held four "Core Group" meetings prior to the symposium, as well as numerous conference calls. I participated in each Core Group meeting and helped to develop agendas for each meeting.

Major pre-symposium planning tasks included choosing projects for evaluation in symposium break-out groups; coordinating the invitation process; and the development of pre-symposium information packets for all participants. Karyn Ferro, at Everglades National Park, and I orchestrated all three of these tasks. We designed the break-out groups to include restoration projects that are currently a part of the South Florida effort—as a way of developing a model for applying social science to restoration projects. To choose the projects considered in the break-out groups (out of the hundreds of projects currently linked to ecosystem restoration in South Florida), the Core Group developed selection criteria. The Environmental Anthropology project helped to ensure that selection criteria included social and cultural variables (such as picking projects that represented a range of cultural groups—from projects impacting agricultural labor to urban poor).

### **C. Symposium**

Out of the seventy invited symposium participants, eleven anthropologists participated in the break-out group sessions. In addition, two anthropologists served as facilitators (myself and Theresa Trainor) for different break-out group sessions. Symposium participants recommended a total of fifty-one social science recommendations. Anthropologists worked

on fourteen of these recommendations, in most instances in teams with other non-anthropologist symposium participants.

The involvement of the SfAA Environmental Anthropology Project in this process ensured a "critical mass" of anthropologists participating at the symposium. This critical mass may account for the overwhelming number of highly ranked recommendations which were clearly "anthropological" in scope and method. Of the three or four highest ranked social science recommendations for each group, over 1/3 of these recommendations employed traditional anthropological methods.

In addition, as Barbara Johnston suggested, the symposium provided a rare forum for applied anthropologists to interact with project managers involved in ecosystem restoration. These "technical experts" were typically senior level engineers or hydrologists working for the Army Corps of Engineers or natural resource managers. Although unanticipated, these technical experts teamed up with participating anthropologists to craft research recommendations. From the responses I received after the symposium, these technical experts were extremely enthusiastic about their experience at the symposium and the recommendations which it produced. For the anthropologists, and other participants, these personal contacts may help to garner support within agencies for social science research projects.

#### ***D. Post-Symposium***

Since the symposium, I have coordinated the production of the symposium summary document (Attachment 9). This process involved following-up with all the symposium participants on their recommendations, and overseeing the input of all symposium materials into databases. Symposium summary documents were then sent to all participants and interested parties.

To gain funding for symposium recommendations, I have written a funding request for Year 2000 Department of the Interior, Critical Ecosystem Science Initiative funds (Attachment 10).

In addition, I presented an overview of the South Florida SfAA/EPA Environmental Anthropology project at the 1998 SfAA meetings in Puerto Rico (Attachment 11).

To help us translate the symposium recommendations into the "Action Plan," the US EPA is sponsoring a project intern to work out of the GCSSF office. As the intern will be working closely with me, I wrote the position's job description (Attachment 12) and coordinated the hiring process.

#### ***E. Literature Review***

As part of the South Florida Social Science Initiative, we have been developing an annotated bibliography of relevant social science literature related to South Florida ecosystem restoration. I coordinated this effort by overseeing the work of project interns who developed a questionnaire which was sent to university departments throughout the state; helped to design a database for inputting the material; and helped the interns to write abstracts for the

annotated bibliography. We were able to have this bibliography available to symposium participants prior to the meeting. The literature review was critical to the symposium's success, as it provided us a snapshot of past, current, and needed social science research related to ecosystem restoration in South Florida.

### ***F. Social and Economic Monitoring for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary***

As the Consulting Anthropologist to the GCSSF, I was asked to help design a meeting for developing s Socioeconomic Monitoring Plan for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. This conference was sponsored by NOAA's SEA Division and was held in January of 1998. The majority of the participants at this conference were economists. In fact, I was the only anthropologist at either the planning meeting or the conference. Though my affiliation with the GCSSF (due to the SfAA/EPA joint agreement), I may have been able to affect the tenor of some of the recommendations which came out of this conference.

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