

Developing near-term and long-term solutions for managing  
impacts of water quality and hydrologic modification on the  
Miccosukee Federal Indian Reservation

Florida Natural Resource Leadership Institute  
Graduation Practicum Class XIV  
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# Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida

Have lived in the Everglades immemorial and as such have developed a unique Tribal culture and governance.

**General Council**  
(Special Community Meeting)

## Miccosukee Business Council

**Chairman**

**Assistant  
Chairman**

**Treasurer**

**Lawmaker**

**Secretary**

## Miccosukee Environmental Protection Agency (MEPA)

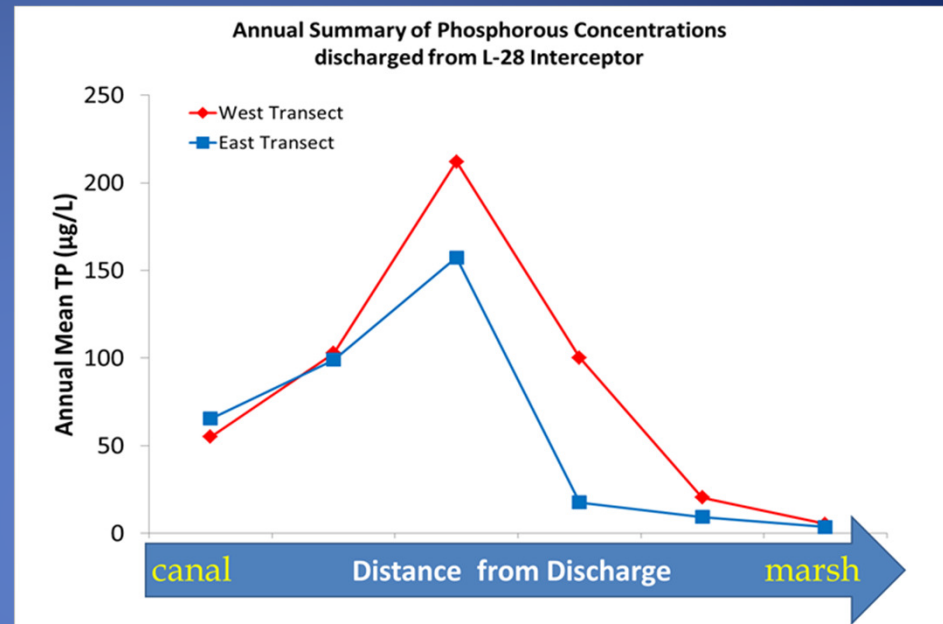
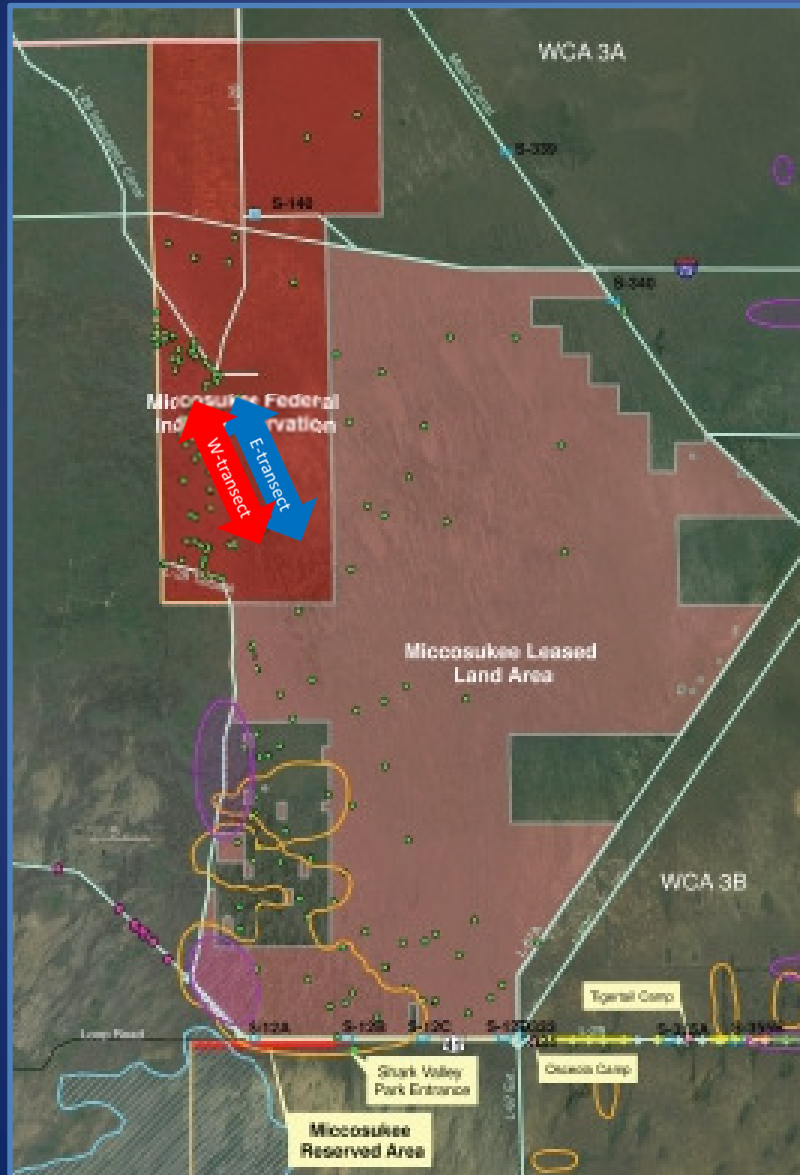
**Water  
Resources  
Department**

**Wildlife  
Department**

**Real Estate  
Services**

Step 1: Identify the problem

# Brief Water Quality Overview

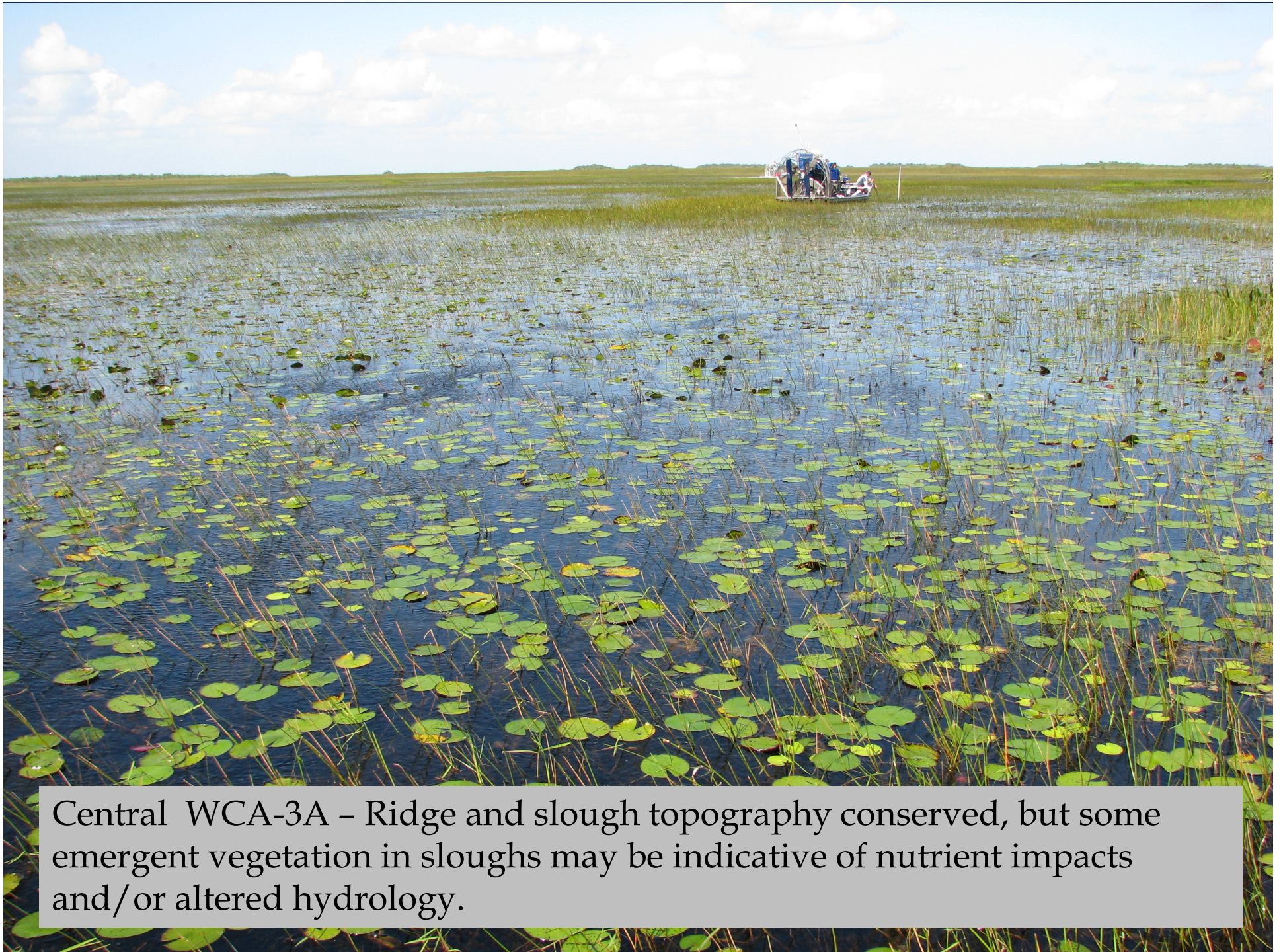


- Canal and levee system has significantly altered hydrology.
- Degradation of unique everglades ecosystem.
- Loss of tree islands
- Loss of ecosystem services









Central WCA-3A – Ridge and slough topography conserved, but some emergent vegetation in sloughs may be indicative of nutrient impacts and/or altered hydrology.



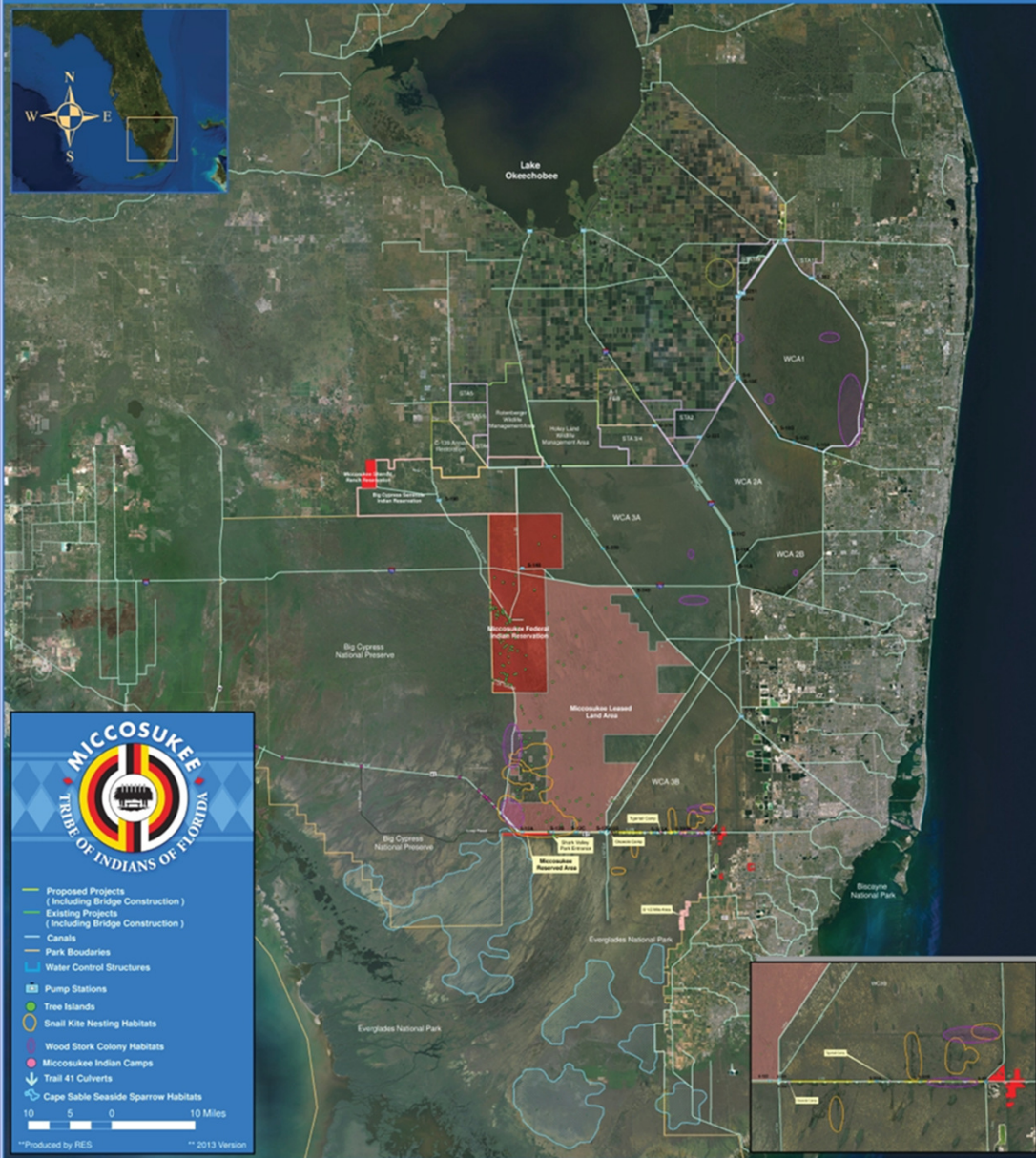


Mullet Slough area of WCA-3A (2013) – Due to the effects of nutrient enrichment and hydrologic modification the ridge and slough topography is almost entirely gone, sloughs and ridges are overgrown with vegetation.



## Step 2: Identify stakeholders

## Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida Tribal Lands and Everglades Restoration Projects



## Identified Stakeholders

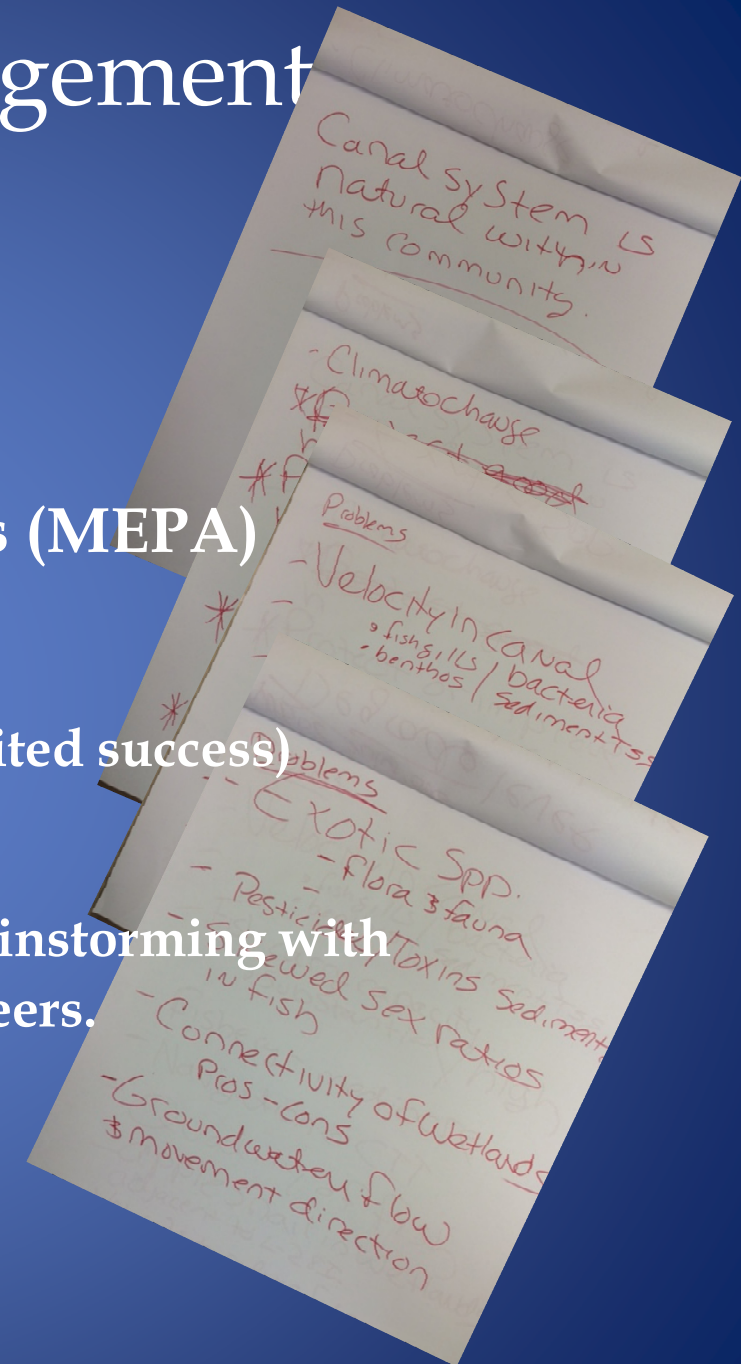
- Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida
- Elected Officials
- Community Members
- Wildlife Department
- Real Estate Services Department
- Water Resources Department
- Tribal Housing
- Everglades Study Participants
- Tribal Elders
- Tribal traditional hunters
- Tribal traditional fishermen
- Tribal fisherman
- Traditional camp owners
- Tribal Independents
- Previous McCormacks camp inhabitants (family)
- Miccosukee Cultural Services Department
- Seminole Tribe of Florida
- Seminole Ag/ Cattle

## Step 3: Stakeholder engagement

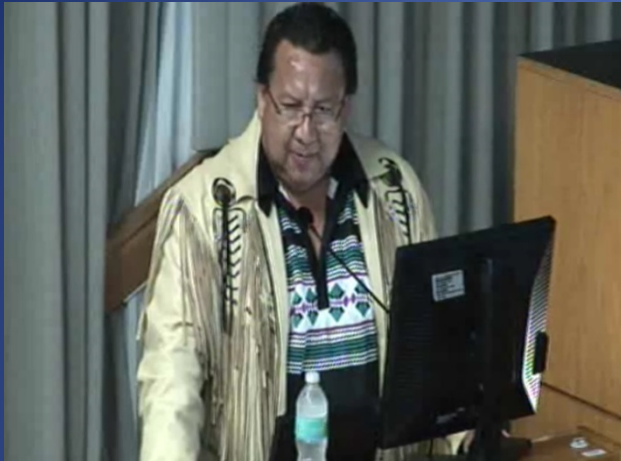


# Stakeholder Engagement

- **Tribal community engagement**
  - one-to-one interviews
  - Small group & place based meetings
  - Outreach activities
- **Engaging Tribal resource agencies (MEPA)**
  - Department brainstorming session
  - MEPA brainstorming session
  - Critical questions writing excise (limited success)
- **Agency engagement**
  - Information sharing meeting and brainstorming with MEPA and US Army Corps of Engineers.
  - Multi Agency Meetings



# Stakeholder Engagement Multi-Agency Meeting



South Florida Ecosystem  
Restoration Task Force  
November, 2014



## NRLI Tools :

- Process agenda
- Preparation
- Emphatic listening

## Lessons learned

- Emphasized the importance of incorporating the Tribal community in the development of solutions.

*Substantive Interests*

*Procedural interest*

## Outcomes

- Tribal commitment to a participatory public process.



# Stakeholder Engagement



Place based information sharing meeting with Miccosukee Indian School, Tribal cultural leaders, community members and Tribal scientists, April 15, 2015.

**Reinforced NRLI competency that participation is a learned skill**

# Stakeholder Analysis Identified

- An overwhelming call for action within the community.
  - Generally, those interviewed felt the more the community is involved in developing a solution the higher the degree of satisfaction.
  - Good support for participatory process.
- Agreement between community members that there should be public meetings on the subject.
  - A substantial amount of community outreach & education will help participation in a public meeting.
  - During interviews individuals were asked how they could contribute at community meeting.
- More community education is needed and Water Resources needs to play a role in educating and engaging the school children.

# Stakeholder Analysis Identified

- Solutions involving canal filling and levee re-grading are not widely supported at this time.
  - Climate change models are predicting an increased drought severity & frequency.
  - Data is may not be available to support as the best decision.
  - Ecosystem is dependent on canal until more CERP benefits achieved.
  - Concerns with trespassing – levees provide physical barriers.
- Significant fisheries and wildlife concerns.
  - Fisheries quality, quantity, makeup and consumption
  - Endangered species habitat
  - Exotic species flora & fauna



# Next Steps

- Define critical questions and identify data needs.
- Continue interviews & community education.
  - Miccosukee Indian School curriculum.
    - Focus on CERP Restoration goals
    - Introduce the principles of a participatory process to reinforce that NRLI competency that participation is a learned skill.
- Hold information & solution oriented community meeting.
- More engagement of non-tribal stakeholders
  - Discussing a focus group with hunting camp lease holders.
- Submit the stakeholder analysis for internal review
- Development of near-term and long-term solutions.



A photograph of a group of people on an airboat in a marshy area. The airboat is white with a black canopy and is moving through tall, golden-brown grass. In the background, there is a line of trees, including many bare, white-barked trees and some green ones. The sky is blue with large, white, fluffy clouds. The water in the foreground is calm and reflects the sky and the grass.

# Thank you

Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida  
Practicum Mentor John Dain  
Project Team  
Fellows of Class XIV