

E. Incomplete Information

As complete as information is believed to be for accurate decision making, there are always the components of incomplete data, inaccurate data, and unavailable data. This section is dependent upon the work being performed by other entities as regard to data availability, accuracy, or adequacy. There are agencies that have research roles regarding land use changes (and the socio-economic causes), hydrologic alterations, water quality, and habitat loss. These agencies are commonly discussed for their research role in the appropriate section above. Special entities established for filling the information gaps are identified below.

It should be noted that some entities are not discussed for their research roles. These are the numerous private organizations or individuals that undertake research as their vocation or avocation. The valuable contributions that are being provided by these persons and/or entities has been identified in other Charlotte Harbor NEP publications including the **Proceedings of the Charlotte Harbor Public Conference and Technical Symposium** and the **Compendium of Existing Monitoring Programs in the Greater Charlotte Harbor Watershed**, prepared for the Charlotte Harbor NEP by W. Dexter Bender and Associates.

1. Federal Role

a. Department of the Interior

Program: Biological Information

The National Biological Service (NBS) was created on November 11, 1993, through the transfer and restructuring of certain functions of the following Interior bureaus: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Minerals Management Service, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, U.S. Geological Survey, and Bureau of Reclamation. The mission of the NBS is to work with others to provide the scientific understanding and technologies needed to support the sound management and conservation of our nation's biological resources.

To accomplish this mission, the National Biological Service undertakes research, inventory, monitoring information sharing, and technology transfer activities to educate about biological systems and their benefits to society. The NBS provides scientific support, technical assistance, and information required for the sound management of biological resources. It establishes partnerships with federal, state, and local agencies; with museums and universities; and with private organizations

The NBS consists of a headquarters office located in Washington, D.C., and four regional offices, located in Lafayette, LA; Denver, CO; Seattle, WA; and Leetown, WV. The NBS also has 16 science centers; 88 field stations; and 54 cooperative research units, all located at colleges and universities.

- b. **South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group.** The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group was established on September 23, 1993 under a five-year Interagency Agreement between the U.S. Departments of the Interior, Commerce, Army, Justice, Agriculture, and the Environmental Protection Agency. The task force resulting from the agreement coordinates "the development of consistent policies, strategies, plans, programs and priorities for addressing the concerns of the South Florida Ecosystem." The agreement established the working group to perform these tasks.

2. State Role

- a. **Florida Department of Environmental Regulation, Division of Technical Services.** Technical Services provides technical, laboratory, and computer assistance to all other Department programs and monitors the quality of the data collected by Department staff and by others. Technical Services has four bureaus: Geology, Information Systems, Laboratories, and Quality Assurance. The most pertinent of these are:
- i. Bureau of Geology. The Florida Geological Survey conducts research into Florida geology, ministers programs related to oil and gas development, and conducts geological investigations to support decision-making.
 - ii. Bureau of Laboratories. A biology and chemistry laboratory and trained scientists in Tallahassee provide detailed analyses of water quality samples collected from all of the state.
- b. **Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Ecosystem Management Teams.** These teams have been discussed elsewhere and they are taking on valuable research roles.
- c. **Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Environmental Education.** This office is responsible for coordinating the Department's environmental education efforts. It develops education materials and programs for adults and children, serves as the point of contact for teachers and others who need environmental education materials, coordinates Department educational efforts with those of other agencies, and operates the DEP's Ecosystem Management and Environmental Education computer bulletin board. It also assists in the development and maintenance of an extensive collection of environmental education and public information publications, and coordinates the agency's speakers bureau which provides knowledgeable speakers on environmental issues to schools and other entities.

Service Office: 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000
Phone (850) 488-7326

d. **University of Florida**

Program: Florida Sea Grant College

Sea Grant is an educational and research program originated from and supported by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (see U.S. Department of Commerce), which is hosted by and supported by the University of Florida. Its primary mission is research into use and protection of marine resources, and (as one example) an active program regarding boating use of marine resources has been underway within Charlotte Harbor for four years.

An important component of the Sea Grant Program is the provision of funding (in partnership with the sponsoring local government) for Marine extension agents. These agents provide research, educational, and informational assistance to public and private interests regarding the marine resources of the area. All of the coastal counties of the Charlotte Harbor NEP have used this joint cooperative program.

Service Office: University of Florida
Sea Grant Extension Office
Box 110400
Gainesville, FL 32611
Phone (352) 392-5870

Program: Center for Governmental Responsibility

The Center undertakes research into governmental and legal structures for improved management of Florida's resources. This analysis in the past provided support to the Charlotte Harbor Resource Planning and Management Committee, and to the Environmental Protection Agency's 208 program. The Center is currently working in conjunction with Sea Grant in the Charlotte Harbor programs.

Service Office: Center for Governmental Responsibility
P.O. Box 117629
Gainesville, FL 32611-7629
Phone (352) 392-2237

Program: Institute for Food and Agricultural Services

This Institute provides information, technical assistance, and educational training regarding agriculture, agricultural land and water use activities, and rural home services. Separate divisions of the Institute undertake significant research into agricultural products; the most common experience people have with the Institute is through the Extension services available in each county as part of a joint cooperative service, partly funded by the counties.

Service Office: University of Florida
Institute for Food and Agricultural Services
P.O. Box 110220
Gainesville, FL 32611
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3. Regional Role

The regional entities discussed in the previous sections have research functions contained within their operational divisions.

4. Private Initiatives

- a. **Mote Marine Laboratory, Inc..** Mote Marine Laboratory is a not-for-profit corporation established for the purposes of environmental research and study. Known for a long time as the "Shark People," Mote has diversified into a broad range of activities, and enters into collaborative arrangements for research within the Charlotte Harbor NEP study area.

F. Reinventing Government

One component of reinventing government to get agencies to operate outside of their traditional roles. It uses temporary arrangements to resolve management issues or to undertake team approaches to structural or institutional problems. The National Estuary Program is one such approach that can be considered an amalgamation of place-based management through the facilitation and informal mediation of issues. Similar programs have been described in sections above. However, there are also special vehicles available for fact finding and dispute resolution. These special programs that exist for these purposes are described below.

1. Growth Management Conflict Resolution Consortium. This organization was established through legislative appropriation to the Board of Regents. The Consortium is housed at Florida State University, with adjunct locations elsewhere, and the Consortium itself is composed of a board representing the various public and private interests usually involved in conflicts. Its mission is to train facilitators in techniques in facilitating and negotiating non-judicial conclusions in growth management disputes.

2. Bert Harris Act. This Act, passed in 1995, requires the opportunity be given for negotiations between parties when the private party believes that the value of property has been diminished by governmental action.

3. Regional Planning Council Mediation. This vehicle for mediation, primarily between local governments, is provided by Regional Planning Councils. It is also available to any pair of disputants within a particular RPC (or between RPCs) in matters that normally fall within the realm of the National Estuary Program.