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1. Introduction
I applied for the 2007 Visiting International Fellowship in August 2006 with the abstract of my paper exploring a host for qualifying for the fellowship. After a few days I got a confirmation that Mr. Ananta Nath, Chief Consulting Engineer, South Florida Water Management District had kindly agreed to host me. Then we jointly made the full application that was awarded the 2007 VIF and the IC committee officially notified us of the award. I arrived at Tampa airport on the evening of May 14th and my host picked me up to the Tampa Marriott Waterside hotel, where we stayed during the conference. After the conference, I traveled to Naples, Florida on 18th. As post conference activity, the visit to South Florida Water Management District SFWMD started on May 21st that lasted till May 27th, 2007. I boarded my return trip to India on 31st May, 2007.

2. Summary of Activities
The period of my stay in the US as a part of the following was one of the most enriching period of my life so far. Several activities took place during my stay and I could benefit a lot from each of them. Below I have tried to highlight my major experiences out of this visit.

• May 15th, 2007
(9:00 am to 5:00 pm) Attended the concurrent technical sessions of various presentations pertaining to my area of interest. Running between the parallel sessions in a major congress like this was a new experience for me.
(6:00 to 8:00 pm) International Reception & Icebreaker – Section & Branch Welcome in the Exhibit Hall-Tampa Marriott Waterside. A memorable evening for me. Here I received the VIF plaque from Jeanette A. Brown, President, EWRI and Bill Marcuson, President, ASCE. I also visited the stalls for display of various firms and consultancies and collected mementoes from them. I joined the party and conversed with some revered names in the field of Water and Environmental Engineering.
• May 16th, 2007
(09:00 am to 10:30 am) Participated in the International Issues/VIF Panel Discussion session. During the session I gave a presentation and shared my perspectives in a panel format on the future of Improving Water Management-Priorities.

(11:00 am to 5:00 pm) Attended several illuminating talks in the concurrent technical sessions.

(6:00 pm to 7:00 pm) Visited the poster presentations and interacted with the authors.

(7:15 am to 9:00 pm) Met EWRI's Governing Board (GB) members over a dinner. I was accompanied by my host Mr. Nath and my project supervisor Prof. C. Mahanta. We had discussions with a range of people including Brian Parson......... It was gratifying meeting the key people behind EWRI.

• May 17th, 2007
(09:00 am to 10:30 am) I participated in the Track: Water, Wastewater, Storm water; Session: Water Supply & Modeling; in this session I presented my paper entitled, "Modeling Approach Towards Eco-Restoration Strategies for the Polluted Tributaries of
the Brahmaputra River System". The session was rich in attendance and highly interactive.

(11:00 am to 5:00 pm) Attended other concurrent technical sessions that had a range of interesting presentations.

• May 18th, 2007

(9:00 am to 3:00 pm) Continued with various concurrent technical sessions complementing my area of research.

(3:30 pm to 5:00 pm) Participated in the Track: Sedimentation; Session: Sedimentation Modeling III; during the session I assisted my supervisor Prof. C. Mahanta presenting our paper entitled, "Evaluation of Sediment Flux..."

That evening we left Tampa for Naples for visiting the Corkscrew Sanctuary and Lake Trafford the next morning.
• May 19th, 2007

(11:00 am-1:30 pm) Visited the corkscrew sanctuary, attended a presentation on the eco-hydrology of the region and took a guided tour of the ecosystem. Our guide was humorous and very informative. I was thrilled to find much similarity between my native place Assam and the Florida Everglade ecosystem.

(2:30 pm-4:30 pm) Visited the Lake Trafford for understanding its ecology and present environmental condition. An initiative has been taken up for its eco-restoration by the SFWMD. We had an airboat ride around the lake and observed hundreds of alligators and wild birds there. Our boat was loaded with a group of experts to explain all the observations of the lake in great scientific details.
• May 20th, 2007
Was a holiday and we joined a birthday party at Naples. I was fortunate enough to meet Dr. Sanjay Shukla and Dr. Gonesh C. Bora of University of Florida there with whom I had academic discussion on the agricultural and water management practices in Florida.

• May 21st, 2007
Early in the morning we went to the Naples office of SFWMD, with my host where he has been currently working as the Chief Consulting Engineer. We had long discussion with Mike Duever, Senior Environmental Scientist, who briefed about the Big Cypress Basin. We could learn about the ecology and hydrogeology of Florida and the everglades. Max Guerra, Senior Engineer demonstrated various modeling approaches utilized for the water and environmental engineering applications. Judy Haner, Intergovernmental/Outreach Specialist was always there to assist us learning and understanding about various completed and ongoing projects. In the afternoon we visited few canals and hydraulic structures managed by SFWMD around the place. My host Mr.
Nath was always forthcoming with every information about these tools and their operations.
• May 22nd, 2007
In the morning we left for SFWMD, West Palm Beach office. We visited several canal hydraulic structures including a pumping station falling along the way. The personnel supervising these installations demonstrated about the capacity and operations of the pumps. On our way, we could see the everglades along the side of the highway. We reached the SFWMD head office in the afternoon. There was an orientation by Office of Hydrologic Systems modeling staff/GIS group. I am thankful for the efforts of Shashi Nair, GIS Engineer for educating me on the GIS application in water management and modeling. Late in the evening, I visited the Beach area with my host braving the heavy winds.

• May 23rd, 2007
Attended a lecture early in the morning at the SFWMD head office, West Palm Beach, by Chandra Pathak on the control room operations and data quality management. Then we went to visit the central control room and could meet people from diverse backgrounds working together for the control operation. We had a rich conversation starting from
meteorology to the automatic gate operations. During the noontime, we visited one data collection field center for having an idea of data collected from the field sensors and data loggers and data management for practical use. We also visited few sites where we could see the equipments in field and later had a visit of the workshop. In the afternoon that day, we headed towards Miami. After a brief visit of the beach and the city, we started towards Naples in the late evening.

• May 24\textsuperscript{th}, 2007- May 27\textsuperscript{th}, 2007

Accompanied my host Ananta Nath to continue visiting water installations, canal sites along with some shopping and moving around for site seeing and recreation, whenever we got some scope. The efforts put up by the SFWMD in managing the water resources of Florida with a sustainable development perspective helped me to learn several aspects that I would like to pursue back home.
Reached Tampa from Naples and stayed with a friend for the rest of the trip. During this period, I moved around Tampa and tried to learn about local culture, food habits and social practices.

May 31st, 2007
I left for India from the Tampa airport.

3. Acknowledgement
I thank and appreciate the efforts of my host Mr. Ananta Nath, for his guidance and generosity. I also thank EWRI’s International Council (I.C.) members especially Cristiane and Stacy for their support all along. I am grateful to Dr. Chandan Mahanta, my guide, whose continuous support enabled me getting this recognition and very first international exposure. Last but not the least, thanks to all the people that I met and interacted with during this enriching trip and who encouraged me to go further and do better in future.

4. Conclusion
I wish that EWRI continue to make this visiting fellowship a more important activity in the coming years. This is a great opportunity for young scholars like me to explore new diversities in future career and forging lasting relationship with US Institutions. While EWRI should continue this Visiting International Fellowship, I hope there should also be some provision for the past fellows to keep the touch for encouraging participation in future initiatives.