



EVERGLADES COALITION

A Resolution Urging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Promptly Protect the Ghost Orchid as an Endangered Species and Use Its Full Authority to Protect Wetland Habitat for the Ghost Orchid

WHEREAS, the ghost orchid (*Dendrophylax lindenii*) is an iconic Florida native plant found in the Greater Everglades Ecosystem;

WHEREAS, the health of the ghost orchid's wetland habitat is essential to the health of the Everglades;

WHEREAS, many threats including poaching, habitat degradation driven by hydrological changes, storms of increasing intensity and frequency driven by climate change threaten the ghost orchid with extinction;

WHEREAS, habitat degradation and destruction is driven by canalization, ditching, groundwater extraction, and other activities associated with human development, which reduce water flow and availability to nearby natural areas;

WHEREAS, degradation of the ghost orchid's limited remaining habitat is ongoing and imminent, including through commercial and residential development affecting aquatic resources in occupied ghost orchid habitat;

WHEREAS, on June 5, 2025, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed to list the ghost orchid as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined it was not prudent to designate protected critical habitat for the ghost orchid because it could increase the threat of poaching;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is accepting public comments on its proposal through August 4, 2025;

WHEREAS, the Endangered Species Act requires the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to make a final determination regarding the orchid's protections within a year of the proposal.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED ON JULY 10TH 2025:

The Everglades Coalition strongly urges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to promptly finalize its proposal to list the ghost orchid as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act.

The Everglades Coalition further urges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to use all its authorities, individually and in cooperation with federal and state agencies, to safeguard the integrity of remaining ghost orchid habitat in southwest Florida and to protect the ghost orchid from poaching.

Mark Perry, Co-Chair

Kelly Cox, Co-Chair

The Everglades Coalition is a 501(c)3 alliance of local, state, and national conservation organizations dedicated to the full protection and restoration of America's Everglades.

evergladescoalition.org