



Everglades Coalition

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WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

May 2, 2013

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen, Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related
Agencies
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur, Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related
Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Kaptur,

On behalf of the 57 organizations of the Everglades Coalition and our more than 6 million members nationwide, we appreciate your committee's support for America's Everglades. As you consider your FY 2014 appropriations for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), we ask that you maintain current funding levels for projects and initiatives related to Everglades restoration. Sustained funding levels will allow key projects, such as Picayune Strand, the Indian River Lagoon-South C-44 Reservoir, and Kissimmee River Restoration, to continue moving forward without costly delays, and it will continue to employ thousands of workers and return millions of dollars back to the local economy.

We are witnessing significant progress in Everglades restoration after years of research and planning. In March 2013, we celebrated the completion of the one-mile bridge on Tamiami Trail, a major Everglades restoration project that is part of the Modified Water Deliveries project. The bridge will help restore water flow to the heart of the Everglades that wildlife, fisheries, and nesting colonies of birds rely on, including the endangered Everglade Snail Kite and the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow. Other important projects are underway today because of the support your committee has provided to the USACE so it can fulfill the goals of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

We are pleased to report that every project previously authorized under CERP is currently under construction, and we anxiously await passage of a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) so that we can begin construction on the next generation of CERP projects. The National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences noted in the fourth biennial review that, "[t]he uncertain and sporadic occurrence of WRDA legislation has the potential to severely impede CERP progress..." Four Chief of Engineer's Reports for the C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir, C-111 Spreader Canal, Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands and Broward Water Preserve Areas are complete and have been presented to Congress for authorization by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. While we await Congressional authorization to implement these components of CERP,

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the ecosystem continues to degrade and the more likely it becomes that costly planning updates will be required.

Everglades restoration projects make economic sense and bring critically needed jobs to Florida. Over the last three years, Everglades restoration projects have generated 10,500 jobs. The Tamiami Trail one-mile bridge construction brought more than 1,200 jobs to South Florida. Thousands of workers are employed by projects now under construction, such as the Picayune Strand project with more than 2,100 jobs and the Kissimmee River Restoration project with more than 1,000 jobs between 2010 and 2012. According to the National Park Service, in 2011 alone, Everglades National Park created approximately 2,408 jobs and generated more than \$146.8 million in visitor spending. A 2011 study by Mather Economics found that for every dollar invested in Everglades restoration, four dollars are returned to the economy as a conservative estimate. Sustained funding to keep restoration projects on schedule is critical to avoiding collapse of the ecosystem, economy, and water supply of 7.5 million South Floridians.

We appreciate your continued support and commitment to Everglades restoration as we move forward with this monumental restoration effort, fulfilling our promise to future generations.

Sincerely,



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