RESOLUTION REGARDING OIL DRILLING

WHEREAS the Everglades ecosystem, spanning from the Kissimmee River Valley to Florida Bay, is a significant national resource and international treasure,

WHEREAS restoration of the Everglades has commenced to return the abundance of wildlife once found in the Everglades, to recover thousands of acres of marshes and estuarine habitat, and to benefit Florida Parks, National Parks and ecosystem-based economies,

WHEREAS numerous efforts to allow near-shore oil drilling off of Florida’s coasts have surfaced,

WHEREAS, Florida’s economy depends on its multi-billion dollar tourism industry which resulted in more than 82 million visitors coming to Florida in 2008, during which period tourism generated over $4.0 billion in taxable sales, including eco-tourism and recreation in the Everglades,

WHEREAS near-shore oil drilling could have devastating impacts on the Everglades ecosystem that are in direct contrast to goals of Everglades restoration efforts, including the restoration and protection of estuarine, beach and near-shore habitat. Some potential impacts include damage to wildlife and the ecosystem from oil spills, water quality degradation resulting from drilling platforms’ wastewater discharges, and the release of contaminants such as drilling fluid and metal cuttings which harm wildlife and natural resources.

Therefore be it resolved,

The Everglades Coalition, with 53 organizations dedicated to protecting and restoring the Everglades ecosystem, hereby opposes attempts to expand oil drilling off of Florida’s coasts.

We hereby strongly encourage all elected officials at the local, State and Federal levels to oppose legislative attempts to expand oil drilling in Florida, by allowing near-shore drilling, or eliminating moratoria prohibiting off shore drilling, and urge such officials to take immediate steps to encourage and assist in the development of renewable and sustainable sources of energy.

Approved January 7, 2010

Sara Fain
National Co-Chair

Mark Perry
State Co-Chair