Everglades Coalition Resolution in Support of Strong Wilderness Stewardship Management within Everglades National Park

WHEREAS, the U.S. Wilderness Act of 1964 defines wilderness as “undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions;”

WHEREAS, over 90% of Everglades National Park’s landscape is designated as wilderness, including 1.3 million acres designated as the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Wilderness in 1978;

WHEREAS, Everglades wilderness is home to dozens of endangered and threatened plant and animal species such as the Florida panther, American crocodile, and the snail kite;

WHEREAS, the health of the Everglades has been deeply impacted by human factors such as population growth and land development patterns, while at the same time the area provides essential services to the built community such as recharging South Florida’s drinking water supply and providing a buffer against damage from of tropical storm wind and hurricanes;

WHEREAS, science plays a critical role in ongoing efforts to restore the Greater Everglades ecosystem and better protect wilderness habitat by improving freshwater flows to Everglades National Park and Florida Bay;

WHEREAS, motorized recreational activities can be damaging to wilderness habitat, including lasting damage to sawgrass prairies and sound disruption generated by airboat operations;

WHEREAS, numerous wilderness-friendly forms of recreation are available to allow national park visitors to experience the Everglades while leaving the ecosystem unimpaired;

WHEREAS, Everglades National Park is currently developing a Wilderness Stewardship Management Plan to establish policies and educate visitors about the importance of protecting wilderness while still allowing for the enjoyment and restoration of the natural ecosystem;

Committed to full protection and restoration of America’s Everglades
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Everglades Coalition, with 62 member organizations committed to the protection and restoration of America’s Everglades, strongly supports the creation of a Wilderness Stewardship Management Plan for Everglades National Park that will:

- Oversee and support Everglades wilderness ecological functions
- Limit harmful activities and practices that adversely impact wilderness
- Maximize non-motorized recreational activities for the public enjoyment
- Establish best practices for necessary science to advance ecosystem restoration
- Educate visitors about the unique qualities of wilderness and ways to ensure its protection while enjoying Everglades National Park

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 26th day of July, 2018.

Mark Perry  
Co-Chair

Marisa Carrozzo  
Co-Chair