



# Everglades Coalition

1000 Friends of Florida  
Arthur R. Marshall Foundation  
Audubon Florida  
Audubon of Southwest Florida  
Audubon of the Western Everglades  
Audubon Society of the Everglades  
Backcountry Fly Fishers of Naples  
Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association/  
Riverwatch  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Clean Water Action  
Conservancy of Southwest Florida  
Defenders of Wildlife  
“Ding” Darling Wildlife Society  
Earthjustice  
Environment Florida  
Everglades Foundation  
Everglades Law Center  
Everglades Trust  
Florida Conservation Voters Education Fund  
Florida Defenders of the Environment  
Florida Keys Environmental Fund  
Florida Native Plant Society  
Florida Oceanographic Society  
Friends of the Arthur R. Marshall  
Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge  
Friends of the Everglades  
Hendry-Glades Audubon Society  
International Dark-Sky Association,  
FL Chapter  
Izaak Walton League of America  
Izaak Walton League Florida Division  
Izaak Walton League Florida Keys Chapter  
Izaak Walton League Mangrove Chapter  
Last Stand  
League of Women Voters of Florida  
Loxahatchee River Coalition  
Martin County Conservation Alliance  
Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition  
Miami Waterkeeper  
National Audubon Society  
National Parks Conservation Association  
National Wildlife Refuge Association  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
North Carolina Outward Bound School  
Ocean Research & Conservation Association  
Reef Relief  
Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation  
Save It Now, Glades!  
Sierra Club  
Sierra Club Florida Chapter  
Sierra Club Broward Group  
Sierra Club Calusa Group  
Sierra Club Central Florida Group  
Sierra Club Loxahatchee Group  
Sierra Club Miami Group  
Snook and Gamefish Foundation  
South Florida Audubon Society  
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy  
The Florida Wildlife Federation  
The Institute for Regional Conservation  
The National Wildlife Federation  
The Urban Environment League of  
Greater Miami  
Tropical Audubon Society

## **Everglades Coalition Resolution in support of acquiring lands and developing projects in the EAA to help protect the estuaries, Everglades National Park, and Florida Bay**

**WHEREAS**, Florida is experiencing a statewide water crisis that is having a tremendous detrimental impact on the environment, economy, public health, and quality of life;

**WHEREAS**, harmfully high flow discharges from Lake Okeechobee to the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie estuaries have been ongoing and are expected to continue at a rate known to cause significant harm to aquatic resources, causing ecological harm and widespread economic loss to businesses and families across the state;

**WHEREAS**, the discharges are filled with nutrient pollution that is contributing to a violation of state water quality standards with 61% of the nitrogen pollution reaching the Caloosahatchee estuary coming from Lake Okeechobee discharges and 38% of the nitrogen pollution reaching the St. Lucie estuary coming from Lake Okeechobee discharges;

**WHEREAS**, the discharges which are bringing additional nutrient pollution into the Caloosahatchee estuary and the Gulf of Mexico have contributed to red tide events, which can produce toxins that result in fish kills or manatee deaths as well as create adverse human health effects;

**WHEREAS**, Florida Bay is suffering under a chronic lack of freshwater flow needed to sustain the dynamic and invaluable aquatic ecosystems of Everglades National Park and the Florida Keys;

**WHEREAS**, all imperiled species in the Everglades region benefit from a healthy ecosystem and suffer as a result of current water management regimes;

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) calls for the creation of reservoirs capable of storing 360,000 acre-feet of water in the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) with the goal of providing a water source for the Water Conservation Areas during the dry season, supplying flow to optimize operations of nearby Stormwater Treatment Areas, and reducing ill-timed releases into the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries;

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**WHEREAS**, an independent technical review by the University of Florida Water Institute has highlighted the need, in addition to completing initially planned CERP projects, to buy a significant amount of land in the EAA to store and treat water. The Institute estimates that at least one million acre-feet of storage is needed north and south of Lake Okeechobee to divert the harmful discharges from the estuaries and move water south to Florida Bay. Future planning processes must address the additional storage, treatment, and conveyance needed to stop harmful discharges;

**WHEREAS**, the purchase of land south of Lake Okeechobee in the EAA remains the vital missing piece of the puzzle to stop the harmful high discharges from the Lake to the northern estuaries;

**WHEREAS**, U.S. Rep. Curt Clawson has proposed HR4793, which would direct the federal government to allocate \$500M in emergency funds to study and acquire lands needed in the EAA to reduce harmful discharges and restore southern flow;

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Legislature has passed the Legacy Florida Bill, designating at least \$200M per year from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund for Everglades restoration which could be used to buy land in the EAA;

**WHEREAS**, Florida Rep. Heather Fitzenhagen has requested that the State Coordinating Officer during this state of emergency direct the South Florida Water Management District to immediately initiate planning the next phase of water storage south of Lake Okeechobee; and

**WHEREAS**, the conditions that have led to widespread environmental upset in Florida's estuary communities will continue to threaten our ecology, economy, and quality of life until a long term solution is implemented;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Everglades Coalition, with its 61 member organizations committed to the protection and restoration of America's Everglades, strongly supports the immediate efforts by state and federal leaders to acquire lands and develop projects in the EAA necessary for providing the storage, treatment, and conveyance of water to stop the harmful high discharges to the northern estuaries from Lake Okeechobee and send clean water south to Everglades National Park and Florida Bay.

Adopted April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016

*Cara Capp*

Cara Capp  
National Co-Chair



Michael J. Baldwin  
State Co-Chair

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