Everglades Coalition

Everglades Coalition Resolution Urging the Suspension of Consideration of Bird Drive Recharge Area Land Surplus

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 and National Parks and ecosystem-based economies,

WHEREAS, the Bird Drive Basin Recharge Area (Bird Drive) is within the historic footprint of the Everglades and has robust ecological values, and provides numerous ecosystem services in its current state with short hydroperiod wetlands in close proximity to key Wood Stork foraging and nesting habitat,

WHEREAS, system-wide wading bird nesting patterns is an indicator for the restoration success of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan,

WHEREAS, Bird Drive was originally listed as a Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan project (project) and is the northern gateway to Everglades National Park,

WHEREAS, the Yellow Book explained that the project would seek to enhance and maintain the continued viability of wetlands within the basin, recharge groundwater and reduce seepage from the Everglades National Park buffer areas and provide C-4 flood peak attenuation and water supply deliveries to the South Dade Conveyance System and Northeast Shark River Slough,

WHEREAS, the project was determined by the Project Delivery Team to be infeasible in 2008,

WHEREAS, the South Florida Water Management District is considering the surplus of lands within Bird Drive,

WHEREAS, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has encouraged consistency among Florida’s five water management districts to evaluate ecological, hydrologic factors through their land surplus decisions,
Therefore, be it resolved:

1. The Everglades Coalition, with 54 organizations dedicated to protecting and restoring America’s Everglades, hereby urges the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), FDEP, the Department of Interior (DOI), Miami Dade County, and other interested parties to work in a collaborative process with stakeholders to assess and protect the ecological values of the Bird Drive Basin Recharge Area, considering the area’s function as a short hydroperiod wetland and proximity to wading bird nesting colonies.

2. The Everglades Coalition urges the SFWMD and FDEP to suspend consideration of the land surplus process for Bird Drive.

Approved: January 5, 2012.

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