September 4, 2008

Dear Secretary Pelham and Director Gauthier:

The Everglades Coalition wishes to thank the Department for its leadership in Everglades Restoration by challenging Miami-Dade County’s recent “UDB” Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) amendments and upholding the integrity of Florida’s Growth Management Act.

We believe that language and objections included in the Department’s 7/19/08 Notice of Intent reflect the need for a consistent and comprehensive statewide approach to the protection of important natural resources such as the Everglades and agricultural resources. Governor Crist’s June 2008 announcement regarding the planned purchase of U.S. Sugar signaled hope for true restoration of America’s Everglades.

As you may be aware, a new application to move Miami-Dade’s Urban Development Boundary (UDB) has been filed. The proposed Parkland development would construct nearly 7,000 homes outside of the current UDB despite adequate developable land within the UDB. This application violates the County’s sustainable land use policies and will exacerbate the problem of unfettered growth and sprawl that the CDMP seeks to prevent.

The Department’s continuing role in maintaining Miami-Dade County’s existing UDB preserves open space critical to protect and restore the Everglades, Biscayne Bay and National Park as well as ensuring adequate water supply for South Florida families. In 2007 Miami-Dade County had more than 26,000 mortgage foreclosures (a 269% increase from 2006) and more than 16,000 in the first four months of 2008 (Miami Dade County Clerks of Courts, [http://www.miami-dadeclerk.com/dadecoc/Mortgage-Statics.asp](http://www.miami-dadeclerk.com/dadecoc/Mortgage-Statics.asp)).

Our members and supporters thank you for strong action and wise implementation of Florida’s growth management laws as part of Florida’s ongoing commitment to Everglades restoration.

Sincerely,

Sara Fain
National Co-Chair

Mark Perry
State Co-Chair