Resolution of Support for EPA's Development of Numeric Nutrient Standards for Florida

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

WHEREAS numerous lakes, streams, rivers and canals in South Florida are waters tributary to the Everglades ecosystem,

WHEREAS many of the waters tributary to the greater Everglades ecosystem are degraded by pollution from nutrients discharged from agricultural operations, the deposition of sewage residue on vacant lands as a form of disposal, septic tank seepage and treated sewage effluent,

WHEREAS this degradation from nutrient pollution has triggered recurrent toxic algae outbreaks in Lake Okeechobee and in its distributary waters that have had grave effects on the Lake and its distributary waters including the estuaries and have caused widespread economic damage to businesses and properties that are dependent on clean water,

WHEREAS the natural Everglades proper is an oligotrophic ecosystem thus the downstream portions of the Everglades ecosystem are often more sensitive to nutrient pollution than are the upstream portions,

WHEREAS the existing water quality standard in Florida for nutrient pollution is a narrative standard that is not susceptible to enforcement as demonstrated by the increased nutrient pollution throughout Florida,

WHEREAS the Environmental Protection Agency on January 14, 2010 publish proposed numeric nutrient standards for Florida, which consisted of different concentration limits for categories of water bodies in different geographic areas of Florida,

Therefore, now be it resolved, that

The Everglades Coalition is dedicated to protecting and restoring the greater Everglades ecosystem and hereby strongly supports the Environmental Protection Agency's action to establish numeric nutrient standards. We urge that these decisions be made solely based on the best available science and that these standards would not be compromised.

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