A RESOLUTION OF THE EVERGLADES COALITION SUPPORTING THE PRESERVATION OF THE RICHMOND PINE ROCKLANDS

WHEREAS The Richmond pine rocklands are the largest globally imperiled tracts of pine rocklands outside of Everglades National Park and

WHEREAS Recent studies by the U.S. Geological Survey recently found only 1.5% of America’s pine rocklands remain in south Florida and

WHEREAS Overdevelopment of south Florida and severe fragmentation of habitat have reduced imperiled pine rocklands throughout south Florida and

WHEREAS Pine rocklands are considered to be more biologically diverse than even our vanishing coral reefs and

WHEREAS The Richmond pine rocklands are home to dozens of rare and federally protected plants and animals including the eastern indigo snake, gopher tortoise, rim rock crowned snake, Audubon’s crested caracara, Florida burrowing owl, little blue heron, southeastern American kestrel, tri-color heron, white crowned pigeon, wood stork, Florida bonneted bat, Bartram’s scrub hairstreak butterfly, Cassius blue butterfly, Ceraunus blue butterfly, Florida leafwing butterfly, Miami tiger beetle, Florida brickell bush, Deltoid spurge, Small’s milkpea, Carter’s small flowered flax, tiny polygala, bracted colicroot, Blodgett’s wild potato Morning glory, Rockland’s morning glory, skyblue clustervine, pine rockland lantana, sand flax, wild sweet basil, Everglades poinsettia, Bahama wild coffee, Florida skullcap, pygmy spikemoss, wedglet fern, southern ladies tresses, least halberd fern, common white pine tillandsia, giant wildpine tillandsia, golden leather fern, Lamarrck’s trema, pineland golden trumpet, pink-pink orchid, locustberry byrosnima, Rabbit’s tail fern, white sunbonnets, satin-leaf, silver palm, Christmas berry, Blodgett’s swallowwart, Caribbean crabgrass, Miami cave crayfish, Atala hairstreak butterfly, great white heron, big brown bat, bald eagle and

WHEREAS Climate change is forecast to trigger sea-level rise in south Florida over the coming years and

WHEREAS Everglades National Park is expected to be adversely affected by rising sea water damaging its pine rockland habitat and destroying saltwater intolerant plants and animals and
WHEREAS The Richmond pine rocklands are significantly higher in elevation than Everglades National Park pine rocklands and can serve as “Lifeboat Habitat” for rare and endangered plants and animals living in the vanishing pine rocklands of south Florida and

WHEREAS The Richmond pine rocklands are already severely fragmented and facing a proposed $1 billion worth of commercial development and

WHEREAS Most of the Richmond pine rocklands are already designated critical habitat by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and

WHEREAS The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considering approving draft Habitat Conservation Plan for a mixed use development known as “Coral Reef Commons” in the Richmond pine rocklands and

WHEREAS The proposed “Coral Reef Commons “ development includes a 900-unit apartment complex, a big-box anchor store, additional smaller retail stores, and land set aside for the construction of a school and

WHEREAS Proper management of pine rocklands requires periodic burns and creates potential smoke and fire hazards potentially incompatible with shopping centers, residential developments and schools yet therefore:

BE IT RESOLVED That the Everglades Coalition opposes the further destruction of the Richmond pine rocklands, including the approval of “Coral Reef Commons” which would result in the take of several federally listed species. Instead, we urge the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Miami-Dade County to work to preserve and restore the Richmond pine rocklands and not allow any further commercial development in this globally imperiled habitat so it may be enjoyed by future generations of Floridians and continue to serve as a home to the dozens of rare and endangered plants and animals found there.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 19th day of May, 2017.

Sincerely,

Mark Perry  
Co-Chair

Michael J. Baldwin  
Co-Chair