



Everglades Coalition

1000 Friends of Florida
Arthur R. Marshall Foundation
Audubon of Florida
Audubon Society of the Everglades
Audubon of Southwest Florida
Caloosahatchee River Citizens
Association
Clean Water Action
Clean Water Network
Collier County Audubon Society
Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Defenders of Wildlife
Ding Darling Wildlife Society
Earthjustice
Environment Florida
The Environmental Coalition
Everglades Coordinating Council
Everglades Foundation
Everglades Law Center
Florida Defenders of the Environment
Florida Keys Environmental Fund
Florida Native Plant Society
Florida Oceanographic Society
Florida Sierra Club
Florida Wildlife Federation
Friends of the Arthur R. Marshall
Loxahatchee Wildlife Refuge
Friends of the Everglades
Hendry-Glades Audubon Society
Izaak Walton League
Florida Keys Chapter
Florida Division
Izaak Walton League of America
Mangrove Chapter
Last Stand
League of Women Voters of Florida
Loxahatchee River Coalition
Martin County Conservation Alliance
National Audubon Society
National Parks
Conservation Association
National Wildlife Federation
National Wildlife Refuge
Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
The Ocean Conservancy
The Pegasus Foundation
Sanibel-Captiva
Conservation Foundation
Save It Now, Glades!
Sierra Club
Sierra Club Broward Group
Sierra Club Central Florida Group
Sierra Club Loxahatchee Group
Sierra Club Miami Group
South Florida Audubon Society
Tropical Audubon Society
The Urban Environment League
World Wildlife Fund

RESOLUTION OF THE EVERGLADES COALITION, DECLARING SUPPORT FOR DRY SEASON BASE FLOWS TO THE CALOOSAHATCHEE & ESTUARY

April 12, 2011

WHEREAS, the Caloosahatchee and its estuary provide critical habitat and environmental resources that support a \$3 billion economy and over 124,000 jobs in southwest Florida; and

WHEREAS, the Caloosahatchee Estuary suffers ecologically during the dry season if no freshwater is discharged from Lake Okeechobee; and

WHEREAS, lack of dry season flows have caused the loss of hundreds of acres of freshwater tapegrass habitat in the Caloosahatchee estuary; and

WHEREAS, tapegrass habitat is a critical food source for the Endangered Florida Manatee in the Caloosahatchee estuary where the state's largest number of animals congregate in the winter; and

WHEREAS, loss of this habitat requires animals to migrate 50 miles to find food sources in the lower estuary, causing them to use vital energy stores and placing them at increased exposure to boat risks; and

WHEREAS, the freshwater tapegrass habitat in the Caloosahatchee estuary is a critical habitat for reproduction and survival of economically important fishery species including snook, drum, silver perch, redfish, bay anchovy, crabs and shrimp; and

WHEREAS, lack of flow causes salinities in the lower Caloosahatchee estuary oyster beds to rise above the desired range for oyster productivity, growth, larval recruitment and spawning, increasing risks of infection and predation and decreasing survival; and

WHEREAS, lack of dry season "base flow" causes stagnation resulting in algae blooms by the Olga Water Treatment Plant that cause the plant to shutdown and require Lee County to purchase water from Cape Coral; and

WHEREAS, the Caloosahatchee is in its 4th consecutive year of MFL exceedence, having passed the significant harm stage it is now in serious harm; and

WHEREAS, SFWMD-funded research studies demonstrate the need for freshwater releases; and

WHEREAS, the minimal “base flow” requested would have a minimal effect on water levels in Lake Okeechobee and water available for agriculture in the Everglades Agricultural Area and for water utilities; and

WHEREAS, the Caloosahatchee is routinely completely cut off from all water flow at the most critical times even when no water use restrictions have been imposed on any other users; and

WHEREAS, the economy of the west coast communities is dependent upon a healthy, vibrant and resilient estuary,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 53 organizations of the Everglades Coalition and their members urge the SFWMD Governing Board and the United States Army Corps of Engineers to establish a policy to provide ecologically sufficient base flow releases to the Caloosahatchee River and estuary.

Approved April 12, 2011.



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