Resolution to Advance Everglades Projects Authorized in the 2014 Water Resources Reform and Development Act

WHEREAS, the spatial extent of wetlands habitat in the Greater Everglades Ecosystem has been substantially reduced by the creation of drainage and flood control infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, increasing the quality, quantity, timing and distribution of freshwater flows into the Central Everglades, Everglades National Park and Florida Bay are vital to restoring the Everglades Ecosystem, and

WHEREAS, the C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project will rehydrate Taylor Slough and surrounding wetlands and improve salinity levels in northeast Florida Bay, and these changes will improve habitat for wading birds, crocodiles, shrimp, stone crabs, and fish like tarpon and bonefish, and

WHEREAS, the Broward County Water Preserve Areas will create new wetlands and benefit over 750,000 acres of existing wetlands in the Greater Everglades Ecosystem, and improve habitat quality for federally threatened and endangered species, wading birds, and other wildlife, and

WHEREAS, the C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir will capture and store a portion of both basin stormwater and water from Lake Okeechobee in the wet season, to provide a source of freshwater in the dry season in order to maintain the delicate salinity balance of the Caloosahatchee estuary, and

WHEREAS, the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands project will help redirect damaging surface water pulses to a more natural seasonal flow to improve the health of this highly productive estuary for birds, fish, and shellfish, and

WHEREAS, the C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project, Broward County Water Preserve Areas, C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir, and Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands project were authorized in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014.
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Everglades Coalition, with 55 organizations dedicated to protecting and restoring America’s Everglades, urgently requests that Congress appropriate funds to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the above four projects during FY 2015, a precursor to Project Partnership Agreements.

The Everglades Coalition urgently requests the South Florida Water Management District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to enter into Project Partnership Agreements for each of the above four projects by December 2014.

The Everglades Coalition urgently requests President Obama to include funding for uncompleted portions of these projects in the FY 2016 budget request to Congress. The funding requested should be at a level sufficient to begin construction.

Approved August 1, 2014

Cara Capp
National Co-Chair

Jason Totoiu
State Co-Chair