March 24, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander, Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
188 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Feinstein:

On behalf of the 61 members of the Everglades Coalition committed to the protection and restoration of America’s Everglades, we want to thank you for your Subcommittee’s long-time support for Everglades restoration. Your ongoing leadership and support has kept restoration on a strong and steady path, and we hope to continue building on the many successes with more on the horizon.

To build on this progress, we respectfully request the amount of $180 million for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for Fiscal Year 2018 for South Florida Ecosystem Restoration. We believe this amount represents the full capacity of the Army Corps and allows critical water infrastructure projects to move forward that will restore federal lands in South Florida, reduce polluted water discharges from Lake Okeechobee to Florida’s coastal waterways, and help ensure drinking water for 8 million Floridians.

Specifically this funding will advance key Everglades restoration projects under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), such as Picayune Strand Restoration, Indian River Lagoon-South, Broward County Water Preserve Area, Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands, and CERP Design. It also would help advance the recently authorized Central Everglades Project, specifically the Army Corps’ review of the Validation Report, which we hope will be expedited so that work can begin on the Project Participation Agreement as soon as possible. In addition to CERP projects, there are two non-CERP projects that are very close to completion that would receive funding – Kissimmee River Restoration and C-111 South Dade.

We greatly appreciate your continued support and commitment to Everglades restoration as we move forward with this monumental restoration effort, fulfilling our promise to future generations.
Sincerely,

Cara Capp
National Co-Chair

Michael J. Baldwin
State Co-Chair