August 21, 2017

Col. Jason A. Kirk
Jacksonville District Commander
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
701 San Marco Boulevard
Jacksonville, FL 32207

E. Timothy Gysan
Lake Okeechobee Watershed Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
701 San Marco Boulevard
Jacksonville, FL 32207

RE: Rejection of Deep Injection Wells (Lake Okeechobee Watershed Project)

Dear Col. Kirk and Mr. Gysan:

On behalf of the 61 member organizations of the Everglades Coalition committed to the protection and restoration of America’s Everglades, we thank you for your decision to discard deep injection wells as potential project features in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed (LOW) Project.

We agree with your thoughtful decision; the use of deep injection wells is inconsistent with the goals of Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). In fact, the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2000, which authorized CERP, included a provision that CERP shall be implemented to ensure “the reduction of the loss of fresh water” from the South Florida ecosystem. Deep injection wells would dispose of billions of gallons of freshwater from the South Florida ecosystem.
Thank you for your efforts to protect and restore America’s Everglades. We look forward to continuing to work with USACE and other agency and public partners toward our shared goal of ecosystem restoration.

Sincerely,

Mark Perry
Co-Chair

Michael J. Baldwin
Co-Chair

cc: June E. Mirecki, Ph.D., P.G, Hydrogeologist, USACE-Jacksonville
    Eric P. Summa, Chief Environmental Branch, USACE-Jacksonville
    Dr. Gretchen Ehlinger, USACE-Jacksonville
    Tzufit Boyle, Lake Okeechobee Watershed Project Manager, SFWMD