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AUDUBON OF FLORIDA

CLEAN WATER ACTION

CONSERVANCY OF
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE

FLORIDA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION
ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

TROPICAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

March 1, 2007

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-218 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Everglades Restoration Funding

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Lewis:

We thank you for your support of restoration of America's Everglades. Your leadership and understanding of the importance of moving ahead with restoration efforts with the least possible delay is essential to our success. We strongly support the recent FY 2008 Everglades funding request you received from many members of the Florida Delegation.

Restoration of the Everglades is at a critical juncture. Keeping Everglades restoration on schedule requires significant federal investment in 2008. The long anticipated Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park and Kissimmee River Restoration Projects will be complete in 2010, but only if fully funded for the next 3 years.

We respectfully request the following funding be provided in FY 2008 legislation for the following essential elements of Everglades restoration.

Modified Water Deliveries (Mod Waters) project construction funding---We support the President's budget request of \$35 million for the Corps of Engineers and \$14.526 million for the Department of Interior for this vital project. The Mod Waters project was authorized in 1989. This project's primary purpose is to provide sufficient water to Everglades National Park. It was originally estimated to be completed in 1997. The WRDA 2000 legislation, which authorized the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), provides that Mod Waters must be completed before several CERP projects that restore water flows to the Everglades can move forward. With full funding, the project should be completed within approximately three years. The failure to fund this project constitutes a serious threat to the future of the Everglades.

CERP Planning and Science—Each of the 40 or more major CERP projects must undergo extensive planning and scientific design and review with the local sponsor before being submitted to Congress for authorization. This involves the preparation of the project

implementation reports. Only two of these major projects that must be authorized have undergone full planning and design —Indian River Lagoon-South and Picayune Strand. For this planning and scientific process for CERP projects, the President requested only \$64 million. We support the Florida Delegation's request for an additional \$36 million, for a total of \$100 million for CERP Planning/Science.

Kissimmee River Restoration—Authorized in 1992, this successful project has already returned much of the Kissimmee River to its natural state, correcting earlier Corps of Engineers work that had turned that beautiful river into the C-38 Canal. So far some 7.5 miles of the canal have been filled, allowing the river to flow naturally as it once did. Much wildlife has returned to the area. In fact, the Kissimmee River restoration has become a real showcase of success for Everglades restoration. The President's request of \$32.5 million is insufficient to keep the project on schedule. We support the Florida delegation's request for an additional \$17.5 million, for a total of \$50 million to keep the project on schedule for completion in 2010.

CERP Project Construction of Indian River Lagoon-South and Picayune Strand—Finally we support the Florida delegation's request for authorization and funding for the Indian River Lagoon-South and Picayune Strand CERP projects. We request authorization of the projects in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, and respectfully request an initial \$35 million to begin construction of the first CERP projects in FY 2008.

Everglades restoration will repair much of the damage from drainage and development, bringing back the wading birds that once filled the South Florida landscape and restoring hundreds of thousands of acres of wetlands and estuarine habitat.

We look forward to working with you both towards the successful restoration of America's Everglades.

Sincerely,

Charles Pattison, Executive Director
1000 Friends of Florida

Laurie Ann Macdonald, Florida Director
Defenders of Wildlife

David Anderson, Executive Director
Audubon of Florida

Manley Fuller, President
Florida Wildlife Federation

Kathleen Aterno, Managing and Florida Director
Clean Water Action

April Gromnicki,
Assistant Director of Government Relations
National Audubon Society

Andrew McElwaine, President
Conservancy of Southwest Florida

Shannon Estenoz, Sun Coast Regional Director
National Parks Conservation Association

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Malia Hale, Director National Restoration & Water
Resources Campaigns
National Wildlife Federation

Cynthia Guerra, Executive Director
Tropical Audubon Society

Debra Harrison
World Wildlife Fund

cc: The Honorable Peter Visclosky, Chair, Energy and Water Development Subcommittee
The Honorable Norman Dicks, Chairmen, Interior and Environment Subcommittee
The Honorable David Hobson, Ranking Member, Energy and Water Development
The Honorable Todd Tiahrt, Ranking Member, Interior and Environment Subcommittee