



RESTORING AMERICA'S EVERGLADES

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Carper
Chairman
Committee on Environment & Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Chairman DeFazio, and Chairman Carper:

On behalf of the undersigned conservation organizations dedicated to restoring America's Everglades, we write to support the recent letter by ten Members of Congress from Florida requesting inclusion in the American Jobs Plan legislation of a necessary \$5 billion Federal investment to complete Everglades restoration in accordance with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS). Restoration of America's Everglades is a national climate imperative. A restored Everglades will enhance the carbon sequestration capacity of an ecosystem that spans 3 million acres and serves as one of the East Coast's largest carbon banks. Congress has a generational opportunity to complete one of the world's largest ecosystem restoration projects and reverse large scale manmade impacts on our environment.

Restoring America's Everglades is not an altruistic concept. There is a clear roadmap for completion and all that is needed is financial investment. The IDS is a detailed document showing how \$5 billion dollars of Federal funding, leveraged by State match, will be expended to complete multi-benefit projects that increase the resilience of communities and economies which are among the most vulnerable in the country to climate change. These projects also provide direct benefits to Everglades National Park, Biscayne National Park, and Big Cypress National Preserve – three jewels within America's National Park System. As noted in the Congressional letter, USACE confirms they can spend the \$5 billion in five years. In fact, \$2 billion of that funding will be obligated quickly to construct the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir. This flagship project of Everglades restoration is critical to fully harnessing the system of existing and planned projects. Both the Senate and House Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittees specifically called out the need for progress on the EAA Reservoir in their FY22 appropriations bills.

The completion of Everglades restoration will galvanize national investment in climate friendly ecosystem restoration projects. Everglades restoration represents a complex system of complex projects on a scale unseen anywhere else. When appropriately funded and completed, America's Everglades will be a global model for the ability to reverse human impact and combat climate change. Lessons learned and best practices from Everglades restoration can be harnessed elsewhere for future ecosystem restoration projects across the country. Financially, a one-time \$5 billion investment will result in a lack of need for Everglades funding starting in this upcoming fiscal year and enable robust funding for other worthy projects nationally. It will also enable any bipartisan infrastructure funding to be focused on projects across the country. Moreover, a one-time \$5 billion investment is projected to save nearly \$2 billion over time, as opposed to annual underfunding in regular appropriations.

There are two paths ahead. One includes an infusion of \$5 billion to restore America's Everglades as a global banner for ecosystem restoration. Without this investment, the other path begins in FY23 when the single year need for Everglades restoration funding will be nearly five times the current funding levels. The path of underfunding Everglades restoration has been tried, and we now have an opportunity to finish the job and secure a major climate win.



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Sincerely,

Lise Aangeenbrug
Executive Director
Outdoor Industry Association

Capt. Daniel Andrews
Executive Director
Captains for Clean Water

Brad Beefus
President
Scientific Angler

Jeff Crane
President and CEO
Congressional Sportsman's Foundation

Paola Ferreira
Executive Director
Tropical Audubon Society

Brian Gorski
Executive Director
Coastal Conservation Association Florida

Geoff Haskett
President and CEO
National Wildlife Refuge Association

Frank Hugelmeyer
President
National Marine Manufacturers Association

Jim McDuffie
President and CEO
Bonefish and Tarpon Trust

Collin O'Mara
President and CEO
National Wildlife Federation

Simon Perkins
President
The Orvis Company

Theresa Pierno
President and CEO
National Parks Conservation Association

Jason Schratwieser
President
International Game Fish Association

Bruce Akin
Chief Executive Officer
Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S.)

Benji Backer
President
American Conservation Coalition

Derek Brockbank
Executive Director
Coastal States Organization

Eric Eikenberg
Chief Executive Officer
The Everglades Foundation

Whit Fosburgh
President and CEO
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

Elizabeth Gray
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National Audubon Society

Emma Haydocy
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Florida Bay Forever

Glenn Hughes
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American Sportfishing Association

Rob Moher
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Conservancy of Southwest Florida

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Adam Putnam
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