



## SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

October 28, 2020

The Honorable Rickey "R.D." James  
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

**RE: Support for the Advancement of the Section 216 Central and Southern Florida Flood Resiliency Study**

Dear Assistant Secretary James,

The South Florida Water Management District (District) reiterates our support for the Section 216 Central and Southern Florida (C&SF) Flood Resiliency Study by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This critical study evaluates South Florida's water management infrastructure to determine what is necessary to ensure the system can continue to protect communities from flooding in the face of sea level rise and the projected impacts of increasingly extreme weather. As I write this letter, there are C&SF coastal structures at risk, and many of these structures cannot be operated during high water events like king tides to provide flood protection for South Florida residents. We ask for your support to fully fund this study in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Fiscal Year 2021 Work Plan.

Congress originally authorized the C&SF Project in 1948 to manage water and provide flood protection for South Florida. This aging system requires evaluation and improvement for the millions of South Florida residents and the tens of millions of annual visitors the flood protection system serves. Since its inception, the C&SF Project has not been evaluated for increasing risks to flood protection associated with 21<sup>st</sup> century conditions, including sea level rise, changing climatic conditions, land development and population growth. In addition, there have been significant changes to physical and economic conditions within the boundary of the C&SF Project that make the project eligible for funding under the authority of Section 216 of the Flood Control Act of 1970.

The occurrence of more frequent flooding impacts resulting from inland extreme rainfall events has also been emphasized as part of technical review comments to the USACE Miami-Dade Back Bay Coastal Storm Risk Management Study. Compounding flood impacts, exacerbated by sea level rise and storm surges, constitute a critical risk to our communities. Several of the technical and public comments presented to the Draft Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement process emphasize the need to advance compounding flooding analysis, accounting for interior drainage impacts and future extreme rainfall scenarios and urging the initiation of the C&SF Flood Resiliency Study.

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The District is pleased to support the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in recognizing the urgency of addressing the limitations of the 72-year old C&SF system, through a feasibility study and identification of priority investments. We also welcome opportunities to review and enhance the study's scope. The economic health and the quality of life in South Florida relies on the flood protection provided by the C&SF Project, and billions of dollars in existing and proposed infrastructure depend on the C&SF Project functioning effectively for decades to come. Thank you for supporting this significant effort to reduce the flood risks affecting millions of South Florida residents.

Sincerely,



Drew Bartlett  
Executive Director