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March 2, 2020

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor of Florida
PL05, The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

The Honorable Bill Galvano
President, Florida Senate
409, The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

The Honorable Jose Oliva
Speaker, Florida House of Representatives
420, The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Dear Governor DeSantis, President Galvano and Speaker Oliva:

On behalf of the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), we are pleased to provide you with the *2020 South Florida Environmental Report*, a consolidated compilation in accordance with Subsection 373.036(7), Florida Statutes. Overall, this peer-reviewed, three-volume report unifies more than 80 individual documents and efficiently distributes important information about South Florida's ecosystem and restoration progress.

The report covers a year of restoration, water quality, scientific and engineering accomplishments in the Kissimmee Basin, Lake Okeechobee, Everglades and South Florida coastal areas. Much of the significant progress seen for South Florida outlined in this report are a direct result of the commitment from Governor DeSantis and the Legislature. In less than 48 hours after taking office, Governor DeSantis signed the historic *Achieving More Now For Florida's Environment* Executive Order 19-12 that urged strong funding and action for Florida's water resources. Your investment and leadership in response to Executive Order 19-12 has led to significant progress to

advance projects north, south, east, and west of Lake Okeechobee and continue large-scale projects across South Florida to reduce damaging freshwater discharges to northern estuaries.

Under the Governor's leadership, and with support of both the House of Representatives and Senate, Florida has allocated record funding for Everglades restoration and the protection of water resources. This report recognizes the importance of restoration projects and highlights the need to continue to expedite the finalization of the Environmental Impact Statement, the Record of Decision and the Corps permitting of the EAA Reservoir Project. The Governor's budget proposal to include more than \$625 million of recurring funding for Everglades restoration and the protection of water resources will help continue to support expedited progress on projects that reduce harmful discharges and send more clean water south to the Everglades.

The full report is available online and covers environmental information of Water Year 2019 and project/budgetary information for the South Florida Water Management District Fiscal Year 2018-2019 (October 1, 2018- September 30, 2019). A summary of highlights as well as previous consolidated reports are also available at www.sfwmd.gov/sfer.

Our agencies continue to focus on ensuring that environmental restoration moves forward by adhering to schedules and completing projects in a measurable and cost-effective way. Thank you for your leadership and support as we work together toward restoring America's Everglades, improving water quality, and helping keep South Florida a great place to live, work and raise families.

Sincerely,



Noah Valenstein, Secretary
Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Sincerely,



Drew Bartlett, Executive Director
South Florida Water Management District

c: The Honorable Jeanette Núñez, Lieutenant Governor
Members, Florida Senate and Florida House of Representatives
Members, SFWMD Governing Board

Attachment: *2020 South Florida Environmental Report Highlights*