

RESOLUTION B-15

A RESOLUTION OF THE BROWARD COUNTY LEAGUE OF CITIES, FLORIDA SUPPORTING THE EFFORTS OF GOVERNOR CHARLIE CRIST AND THE SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT TO ACQUIRE LAND SOUTH OF LAKE OKEECHOBEE FOR PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF AMERICA'S EVERGLADES AND FLORIDA'S COASTAL ESTUARIES; DIRECTING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO TRANSMIT A COPY OF THIS RESOLUTION TO THE GOVERNOR, THE SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT, THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA AND ALL MUNICIPALITIES LOCATED WITHIN BROWARD COUNTY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, America's Everglades and the South Florida ecosystem is a unique expanse of habitats, whose environmental health is critical to the economy and quality of life of South Florida; and

WHEREAS, on June 24, 2008, Governor Charlie Crist unveiled a momentous strategy to bring about the largest environmental land acquisition in Florida's history and restore America's Everglades in a way never before anticipated; and

WHEREAS, the Governor announced that the South Florida Water Management district will begin negotiating an agreement with the United States Sugar Corporation to purchase nearly 300 square miles of land spanning four counties in South Florida; and

WHEREAS, the acquisition of as much as 187,000 acres of land south of Lake Okeechobee would provide the "missing link" needed to better protect the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee rivers and estuaries, and revive, restore and preserve one of America's greatest natural treasures – the Everglades; and

WHEREAS, the South Florida Water Management District and the United States Sugar Corporation signed a "Statement of Principals" that provides the framework for the potential acquisition of property and assets; and

WHEREAS, through successful negotiations and strategic land swaps, vast tracts would be used to reestablish as part of the historic connection between Lake

Okeechobee and the Everglades through a managed system of storage and treatment; and

WHEREAS, dedicating significantly more land in the Everglades Agricultural Area to restoration will build upon and enhance the 30-year state-federal Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, offering the opportunity and the flexibility to store and clean water on a scale never before contemplated; and

WHEREAS, benefits from the land acquisition include huge increases in the availability of water storage, significantly reducing the potential for harmful discharges from Lake Okeechobee to Florida's coastal rivers and estuaries; and

WHEREAS, the acquisition will prevent thousands of tons of phosphorous from entering the Everglades every year and eliminate the need for "back-pumping" water into Lake Okeechobee; and

WHEREAS, the acquisition also provides the potential opportunity to sustain remaining agriculture in the region by eliminating environmental concerns, enhancing the availability of water supply, and fostering green energy production; and

WHEREAS, the Governor has identified the State of Florida's Rural Economic Development Initiative as a resource for working with the United States Sugar Corporation, local government, area businesses, state agencies and the South Florida Water Management District on an economic transition plan for the area; and

WHEREAS, saving the Everglades and protecting Florida's coastal estuaries is an environmental priority for the Broward County League of Cities; and

WHEREAS, the South Florida Water Management District's initiative to purchase 187,000 acres of land in the Everglades Agricultural Area is a watershed event for restoring a beloved national treasure – the Everglades; and

WHEREAS, Broward County League of Cities finds that the Land Acquisition as detailed herein is in the best interests of the citizens and residents of the municipalities in Broward County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BROWARD COUNTY LEAGUE OF CITIES, FLORIDA THAT:

Section 1. The foregoing "WHEREAS" clauses are hereby ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of this Resolution.

Section 2. The Broward County League of Cities hereby applauds and supports the landmark efforts of Governor Charlie Crist and the South Florida Water Management District to negotiate the acquisition of the significant lands in the Everglades Agricultural Area for the purpose of restoring and protecting the northern and southern Everglades and Florida's coastal estuaries.

Section 3. The Executive Director is hereby directed to provide a copy of this resolution to the Governor, the South Florida Water Management District, the members of the Legislature of the State of Florida, and all municipalities located within Broward County.

Section 4. All resolutions or parts of resolutions on in conflict herewith be, and the same are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section 5. If any clause, section, other part or application of this Resolution is held by any court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional or invalid, in part or application, it shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions or applications of this Resolution.

Section 6. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 6TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2008

BROWARD COUNTY LEAGUE OF CITIES, FLORIDA



President M. Margaret Bates

ATTEST:


