



**Florida Department of Environmental Protection**  
Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

**South Florida Water Management District**  
3301 Gun Club Road  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406



September 23, 2010

Mr. Frank Davis, CISRERP Chair  
C/o Stephen Parker  
Water Science and Technology Board  
National Research Council  
500 Fifth St NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Davis:

Please convey our sincere appreciation to the entire National Research Council's Committee on Independent Scientific Review of Everglades Restoration Progress and staff for the tremendous time and effort in producing the third biennial review of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

The State of Florida and the South Florida Water Management District recognize and value the role of the committee in providing the United States Congress with a thorough and independent review of both CERP and non-CERP activities. It is vital that decision makers and stakeholders are apprised of restoration progress and accomplishments, as well as the significant ongoing and new challenges to implementation, in order to bring about long-term support for this monumental undertaking.

We concur with the committee's overall evaluation that while significant and tangible progress has been made over the past two years, slow recovery of the natural system makes accelerated progress in Everglades restoration critical. Since 2008, a number of earlier initiatives and new construction projects continue to move forward, and significant progress has been made in many areas, including additional scientific knowledge and understanding of the natural, pre-drainage system and how water flow, depth and timing influence Everglades ecology.

We especially appreciate the committee's insight and recognition regarding the daunting water quality and quantity challenges facing the State and, ultimately, its restoration partners. As the committee identified, the difficulties in achieving these restoration goals

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independently for all parts of the ecosystem are becoming increasingly clear. Solutions will be costly and require significant time to implement, and should be considered simultaneously to move restoration forward. Adequately managing water levels and restoring hydrologic conditions while meeting restoration water storage and treatment goals is, indeed, a formidable task.

Despite the challenges, the State also concurs with the committee's optimism that if restoration progress continues, substantial ecological benefits to the ecosystem will increase. To date, Florida has invested more than \$2.4 billion in CERP in addition to more than \$1.8 billion dollars for water quality projects. Florida's efforts to restore the Everglades have now spanned over 20 years and the State remains committed to continue the important restoration work.

Looking forward, CERP must balance a long-term vision, based on sound science, with judicious planning and economic realities. Adaptive management must become a more significant part of the CERP. Restoration success can be achieved only if projects and programs are designed to embrace new information and better opportunities.

While the economic downturn has had a substantial impact on the state of Florida's funding capabilities, the commitment to continue moving forward remains strong. Advanced construction initiatives by the State plus its bold vision for land acquisition have been limited by significant revenue declines since 2008. At the same time, recent federal funding has been invaluable.

Undeniably, sustained funding at the national level, including adequate funding for CERP projects in the next Water Resources Development Act, is essential to maintaining the benefits and progress documented to-date.

Sincerely,



Mimi A. Drew, Secretary  
Department of Environmental Protection

Sincerely,



Carol Ann Wehle, Executive Director  
South Florida Water Management District