



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

July 10, 2018

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

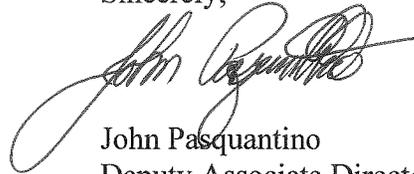
Dear Mr. James:

Per your May 30, 2018 request, the Office of Management and Budget has reviewed for clearance your May 2018 Review Assessment of the South Florida Water Management District's Central Everglades Planning Project, Section 203 Post Authorization Change Report, Integrated Feasibility Study and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (March 2018. Amended May 2018). Your review assessment includes the determination that the South Florida Water Management District's (SFWMD) plan is feasible from an engineering and construction viewpoint. However, your assessment does not make a determination of the economic or environmental feasibility of the plan. Further, it makes recommendations concerning the plan or design of the proposed project, specifies conditions that must be met to proceed to construction, and details a number of significant concerns. We understand that you are not making a recommendation for authorization, appropriations, or legislative action for this study. We have concluded that it would be premature to take a position on authorization or funding of the project at this time given the outstanding issues your review has identified that need to be addressed.

The Office of Management and Budget appreciates the importance of restoring the Everglades. We also appreciate the Corps' efforts to enable greater non-federal sponsor participation in the planning and construction of projects such as through Sec. 203 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, as amended. However, as your review assessment concludes, the proposed SFWMD Central Everglades Planning Project feasibility study raises significant concerns regarding the feasibility of this project. To facilitate future studies led by non-federal sponsors, the Corps should establish clear standards for such studies so that non-federal sponsors and the public are aware of the criteria and standards by which such reports will be evaluated.

The Office of Management and Budget does not object to your submitting this Review Assessment to the Congress. When you do so, please advise the Congress that if authorized the project would need to compete with other proposed investments in future Budgets. Further, the Army Civil Works must submit an additional report to OMB adequately addressing the concerns, recommendations, and conditions delineated in the Review Assessment before the project would be eligible for funding in the Budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Pasquantino", written in a cursive style.

John Pasquantino
Deputy Associate Director
Energy, Science, and Water