



Compiled by: South Florida Water Management District
(for internal use only)

Total Clips: 82

Headline	Date	Outlet	Reporter
Bulldozers Move in the Everglades to Help Eco System	04/01/2010	WIOD-AM - Online	
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	WTXL-TV - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	WWSB-TV - Online	
Ruling could hinder US Sugar/ Everglades deal	04/01/2010	WWSB-TV - Online	
Ruling could hinder Everglades deal	04/01/2010	WFRV-TV - Online	
Ruling could hinder Everglades deal	04/01/2010	WFTS-TV - Online	
Everglades Deal In Jeopardy After Judge's Ruling	04/01/2010	WFTV-TV - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
FOX 4 WFTX - Cape Coral, Fort Myers, Naples News, WeatherRuling could hinder US Sugar/Everglades deal	04/01/2010	WFTX-TV - Online	
Fla. Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge's ruling	04/01/2010	WGN-TV - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Daily Herald Newspapers - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Daily Herald - Online	
US Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge s ruling	04/01/2010	Creston Valley Advance	
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Connecticut Post - Online	
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	WTHR-TV - Online	

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	WTVT-TV - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Everglades Restoration threatened	04/01/2010	WTVY-TV - Online	
Everglades Deal In Jeopardy After Judge's Ruling	04/01/2010	WKRK-TV - Online	
Ruling Could Hinder US Sugar/ Everglades Deal	04/01/2010	WPBF-TV - Online	
Fla. Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge's ruling	04/01/2010	WPMT-TV - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Everglades Deal In Jeopardy After Judge's Ruling	04/01/2010	WPXI-TV - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project	04/01/2010	SYS-CON Media	
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Bay News 9 - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Fla. Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Baltimore Sun - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Atlanta Journal-Constitution - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Associated Press (AP)	SKOLOFF, BRIAN
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	KFDA-TV - Online	
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	KTVB-TV - Online	
Ruling could hinder US Sugar/ Everglades deal	04/01/2010	Ledger - Online, The	
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	PhysOrg.com	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Ruling could hinder US Sugar/ Everglades deal	04/01/2010	News Press - Online	
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Ocala.com	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Naples Daily News - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Court Ruling May Imperil Florida Deal	04/01/2010	New York Times	CAVE, DAMIEN

Ruling puts Big Sugar land buy in peril	04/01/2010	Miami Herald - Online, The	CURTIS MORGAN
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Sarasota Herald-Tribune - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Seattle Times - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project	04/01/2010	HazMat Management	
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	St. Augustine Record, The	
Está en peligro la compra de terrenos azucareros	04/01/2010	El Nuevo Herald	MORGAN, CURTIS
US Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge s ruling	04/01/2010	Free Press, The	
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	FOXNews.com	
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	04/01/2010	Forbes - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	03/31/2010	Greeley Tribune, The	BRIAN SKOLOFF
Fla. Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge?s ruling	03/31/2010	Gaea Times Blog	AP
South Florida judge presses for action on reservoir project	03/31/2010	St. Petersburg Times - Online	
Judge: Finish reservoir shelved by Crist's land deal	03/31/2010	Sun Sentinel - Online	
Ruling could hinder US Sugar/ Everglades deal	03/31/2010	Florida Today - Online	
Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project	03/31/2010	Finance.Boston.com	Gaston Cantens
Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project	03/31/2010	South Florida Business Journal - Online	
AFBF files suit against Corps of Engineers	03/31/2010	Poultry Times	
Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project	03/31/2010	PR Newswire - Online	Florida Crystals Corporation

<u>Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project</u>	03/31/2010	Quote.com Spain	
<u>Wednesday March 31, 2010 19:15:00 EDT</u>			
<u>Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling</u>	03/31/2010	Salon.com	BRIAN SKOLOFF
<u>Everglades deal in jeopardy after ruling</u>	03/31/2010	MSNBC.com	BRIAN SKOLOFF
<u>Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling</u>	03/31/2010	News Chief - Online, The	BRIAN SKOLOFF
<u>Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project</u>	03/31/2010	Orlando Business Journal - Online	
<u>Judge orders restart of Everglades reservoir project and questions governor's massive land-buy plan</u>	03/31/2010	Palm Beach Post - Online	Paul Quinlan
<u>Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling</u>	03/31/2010	KGW-TV - Online	
<u>Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling</u>	03/31/2010	KMSB-TV - Online	
<u>Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project</u>	03/31/2010	Houston Business Journal - Online	
<u>Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project</u>	03/31/2010	Jacksonville Business Journal - Online	
<u>Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project</u>	03/31/2010	Los Angeles Business Journal - Online	
<u>Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling</u>	03/31/2010	Marco Island Eagle - Online	Marco Eagle
<u>Everglades Deal In Jeopardy After Judge's Ruling</u>	03/31/2010	Black Enterprise Magazine	
<u>Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project</u>	03/31/2010	SYS-CON Australia	Liz McMillan
<u>Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project</u>	03/31/2010	Sys-Con Deutschland	Phil Ayres
<u>Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling</u>	03/31/2010	Whiznews.com	
<u>Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project</u>	03/31/2010	Wichita Business Journal - Online	
<u>Ruling Could Hinder US Sugar/ Everglades Deal</u>	03/31/2010	WKRK-TV - Online	

 Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	03/31/2010 WSVN-TV - Online	
 Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project Update APNewsNow. For global distribution.	03/31/2010 Earthtimes.org	
 Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project	03/31/2010 Business First of Louisville - Online	
 Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project	03/31/2010 Business First of Columbus - Online	
 Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project	03/31/2010 Business Courier of Cincinnati - Online	
 Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	03/31/2010 Bradenton Herald - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF
 Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project	03/31/2010 Tampa Bay Business Journal - Online	
 Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project	03/31/2010 U.S. Political Today	Gaston Cantens
 Fla. Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge's ruling	03/31/2010 Washington Examiner - Online	BRIAN SKOLOFF Associated Press
 Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	03/31/2010 Washington Post - Online	Skoloff, Brian
 Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling	03/31/2010 WBBH-TV - Online	
 Ruling could hinder US Sugar/ Everglades deal	03/31/2010 WTXL-TV - Online	

Bulldozers Move in the Everglades to Help Eco System

04/01/2010
WIOD-AM - Online

[Return to Top](#)

By:

South Florida Water Management District to restart a stalled nearly \$800 million construction project once aimed at helping restore water flow in the ecosystem.

The bulldozers are expected to begin moving in again in the Everglades, but environmentalists aren't upset.

A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration orders the South Florida Water Management District to restart a stalled nearly \$800 million construction project once aimed at helping restore water flow in the ecosystem.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy.

Compiled by: South Florida Water Management District (For Internal Use Only)

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

WTXL-TV - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

Associated Press Writer

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

WWSB-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

Chechen militant claims responsibility for Moscow bombings as attacks kill 12 in south Russia

Obama lifts ban on offshore drilling, opens way for oil platforms off much of US coastline

Gunman sprays DC crowd from moving vehicle, killing 4 and wounding 5; 3 people in custody

Bond hearings scheduled for Christian militia members accused of plot to kill police officers

Small businesses fret over new health law that mixes promised savings with added costs, fines

Rhode Island, battered by economy and now water, watches with rest of East as rivers rise

APNewsBreak: Vatican cites sovereignty as defense in abuse case, says bishops aren't employees

Although he says 'tea party' members have legitimate concerns, Obama puts core on 'fringe'

Associated Press Writer

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Ruling could hinder US Sugar/Everglades deal

04/01/2010

WWSB-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) - A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered the state to restart a stalled nearly \$800 million construction project once aimed at helping store water for efforts to clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came just about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Ruling could hinder Everglades deal

04/01/2010

WFRV-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

Florida Everglades, September 2007. (Joe Raedle, Getty Images)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered Florida officials to restart a stalled multimillion-dollar construction project once aimed at helping store water to help clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of a massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy.

But the decision to stop construction came about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

©2010 Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

Ruling could hinder Everglades deal

04/01/2010

WFTS-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

Florida Everglades, September 2007. (Joe Raedle, Getty Images)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered Florida officials to restart a stalled multimillion-dollar construction project once aimed at helping store water to help clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of a massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy.

But the decision to stop construction came about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

©2010 Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

Everglades Deal In Jeopardy After Judge's Ruling

04/01/2010

WFTV-TV - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

[Return to Top](#)

BRIAN SKOLOFF, Associated Press Writer

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. -- Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir -- the largest of its kind in the world -- was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

FOX 4 WFTX - Cape Coral, Fort Myers, Naples News, WeatherRuling could hinder US Sugar/Everglades deal

04/01/2010

WFTX-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

Ruling could hinder US Sugar/Everglades deal

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) - A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered the state to restart a stalled nearly \$800 million construction project once aimed at helping store water for efforts to clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came just about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Fla. Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge's ruling

[Return to Top](#)

04/01/2010

WGN-TV - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

It the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010 Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

Daily Herald Newspapers - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir _ the largest of its kind in the world _ was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

It the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal

challenges and political bickering.

Posted in National on Wednesday, March 31, 2010 9:52 pm Updated: 12:06 am. | Tags:

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

Daily Herald - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. -- Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir -- the largest of its kind in the world -- was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

US Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge's ruling

[Return to Top](#)

04/01/2010

Creston Valley Advance

Environment

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile (65-sq. kilometre) reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The Everglades wetlands have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres (73,000 hectares) and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the Republican nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

Connecticut Post - Online

[Return to Top](#)

BRIAN SKOLOFF, Associated Press Writer Published: 08:10 p.m., Wednesday, March 31, 2010

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

WTHR-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

WTVT-TV - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH - (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright AP Modified, Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Everglades Restoration threatened

04/01/2010

WTVY-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) - A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered Florida officials to restart a stalled multimillion-dollar construction project once aimed at helping store water to help clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of a massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

(Copyright 2010 by The Associated Press. All Rights Reserved.)

Everglades Deal In Jeopardy After Judge's Ruling

04/01/2010

[Return to Top](#)

WKRG-TV - Online

West Palm Beach, Florida - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir the largest of its kind in the world was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office didn't immediately return a telephone message on Wednesday. The district said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Ruling Could Hinder US Sugar/Everglades Deal

04/01/2010

WPBF-TV - Online

Judge Orders State To Restart Stalled \$800M Construction Project

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. -- A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered the state to restart a stalled nearly \$800 million construction project once aimed at helping store water for efforts to clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came just about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

Fla. Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge's ruling

04/01/2010

WPMT-TV - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010 Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

Everglades Deal In Jeopardy After Judge's Ruling

04/01/2010

WPXI-TV - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

BRIAN SKOLOFF, Associated Press Writer

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. -- Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir -- the largest of its kind in the world -- was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

04/01/2010

[Return to Top](#)

SYS-CON Media

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

[Return to Top](#)

Bay News 9 - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) -- Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir _ the largest of its kind in the world _ was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010 Associated Press. All right reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed

Fla. Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge's ruling

[Return to Top](#)

04/01/2010

Baltimore Sun - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010 Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

Atlanta Journal-Constitution - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010, The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

Associated Press (AP)

SKOLOFF, BRIAN

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla._Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir _ the largest of its kind in the world _ was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright © 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

KFDA-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

KTVB-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Ruling could hinder US Sugar/Everglades deal

04/01/2010

Ledger - Online, The

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered the state to restart a stalled nearly \$800 million construction project once aimed at helping store water for efforts to clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came just about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

PhysOrg.com

BRIAN SKOLOFF

[Return to Top](#)

(AP) -- Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

©2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Ruling could hinder US Sugar/Everglades deal

04/01/2010

[Return to Top](#)

News Press - Online

Associated Press March 31, 2010

8:46 P.M. — WEST PALM BEACH A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered the state to restart a stalled nearly \$800 million construction project once aimed at helping store water for efforts to clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came just about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

[Return to Top](#)

Ocala.com

BRIAN SKOLOFF

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

Naples Daily News - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office didn't immediately return a telephone message on Wednesday. The district said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams

and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Court Ruling May Imperil Florida Deal

04/01/2010

New York Times

CAVE, DAMIEN

MIAMI -- The federal judge supervising Everglades restoration issued a ruling on Wednesday that could make it impossible for Gov. Charlie Crist to complete a land acquisition he has described as the signature environmental achievement of his administration.

The proposed purchase of 73,000 acres from United States Sugar for \$536 million has already run into financing challenges, with the deal downsized twice since it was first announced in 2008. But now Judge Federico A. Moreno of Federal District Court has ordered water managers to restart construction on a \$700 million reservoir in Palm Beach County, an expense that could put the land acquisition financially out of reach.

The governor's office and Eric Buermann, chairman of the board at the South Florida Water Management District, which is charged with overseeing the purchase, said they were reviewing the judge's order to determine its impact. But United States Sugar insisted that the ruling did not necessarily kill the deal.

Judy Sanchez, a spokeswoman for the company, said that in the time it took to consider how to best accelerate projects like the reservoir, the purchase could be completed. "With the time frame involved in all that considering, the U.S. Sugar deal could very well be approved and worked into the district's budget," she said.

But for critics of the deal -- including members of the Miccosukee Tribe, which sued to stop the acquisition because they said it diverted money from other projects -- the ruling amounts to a victory.

The reservoir had been a major component of their argument against the deal. The district stopped construction on it just before Mr. Crist announced what was initially a \$1.75 billion purchase of United States Sugar in its entirety. Internal e-mail messages show that district officials were concerned that the cost and design of the reservoir would have conflicted with the acquisition. Now officials are trying to determine if the two are once again on a collision course.

Copyright © 2010 The New York Times Company

[Return to Top](#)

Ruling puts Big Sugar land buy in peril

04/01/2010

Miami Herald - Online, The

CURTIS MORGAN

[Return to Top](#)

Posted on Wednesday, 03.31.10

THE EVERGLADES

A Miami federal judge, saying he is out of patience regarding Everglades restoration, ordered the state to restart a reservoir project that could derail the controversial land purchase.

The Miami federal judge overseeing Everglades cleanup issued a ruling Wednesday that could prove the final nail in the coffin of Gov. Charlie Crist's controversial Big Sugar land buy -- or serve as a judicial kick in the butt to finally seal the much-delayed, twice-downsized deal.

Saying he was tired of waiting, Chief U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno ordered water managers to restart construction on a \$700 million reservoir in western Palm Beach County -- a project once touted as critical to Everglades restoration but halted two years ago and left in limbo while the state bargained to buy massive tracts from the U.S. Sugar Corp.

Moreno sided with the Miccosukee Tribe, which had argued that halting the reservoir exposed tribal lands to worsening pollution that the \$536 million sugar deal, scaled back in size and cost twice by the deteriorating economy, might not alleviate for a decade or more.

"Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interests of the Everglades in the very distant future, the Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate," Moreno wrote.

"The court recognizes the complications of acquiring the vast acreage proposed and the apparent difficulties in attaining the original goal. But it is not the role of the Court to negotiate with competing land owners or to manage the treasury of" the state agencies.

Dexter Lehtinen, the tribe's attorney, said the ruling put "restoration back on the proper track."

The tribe and Florida Crystals, a rival grower of U.S. Sugar, have waged a fierce legal and lobbying war to derail the U.S. Sugar deal. They have painted it as a bailout for a struggling and politically influential agricultural giant that would siphon money from existing projects and ultimately push back restoration by decades.

Gaston Cantens, a vice president of Florida Crystals, praised the decision.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," he said.

The South Florida Water Management District, which is negotiating to buy the U.S. Sugar land, issued a statement saying attorneys were reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. Crist's office also said it was reviewing the ruling.

Supporters acknowledged it posed another hurdle, potentially a serious one, but insisted it was not the death knell for a deal they argue is essential to resolving water pollution problems that have plagued the Everglades for decades.

The judge left open windows to completing the land purchase, said David Guest, an attorney for Earthjustice who represents a number of environmental groups in a landmark 22-year-old settlement that forced Florida to halt the flow of pollution into the Everglades. Moreno has monitored the effort since 2003.

Guest, echoed by U.S. Sugar, said the judge did not order an immediate restart of the reservoir but instead ordered hearings to set construction deadlines before a special master, John Barkett. Moreno appointed Barkett in 2005 to assess cleanup progress and propose remedies to pollution violations in the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge.

"It plainly doesn't help, but it certainly doesn't foreclose it," Guest said of the larger deal.

The judge also noted that the state and federal governments could ask to amend the cleanup settlement, known as a consent decree, at any time. The state is negotiating with the federal government over two more recent water quality violations, talks likely to include pledges of using some of the 72,500 acres of sugar lands and citrus groves to expand the state's existing 41,000 acres of pollution treatment marshes.

Thom Rumberger, chairman of the Everglades Trust, called the decision an "unwelcome complication" and said its timing was a surprise.

On Tuesday, the Florida Supreme Court is scheduled to hear an appeal of Water District plans to bankroll the deal with

bonds. Last year, in a lawsuit brought by Florida Crystals and the tribe, a Palm Beach County circuit court judge approved enough bonding capacity to close the first of the two-phase deal, but chopped the \$2.2 billion credit line by two-thirds.

Rumberger said he shared the judge's frustration with repeated delays and blown deadlines and hoped the ruling would ``help move folks along.

``Nothing in the Everglades is ever simple," he said.

Water managers, who have acknowledged that bleak financial projections threaten plans to bankroll the deal with bonds, have been exploring options. They include paying for all of part of the deal with cash -- possibly by canceling other projects or selling land -- or by further downsizing the initial purchase.

Being forced to build the reservoir would further strain the district's finances.

In his ruling, Moreno credited the state for progress and ``good faith efforts" by Crist, previous governors and water managers in the \$1.1 billion cleanup effort.

But he also said he was ``now uncertain about what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration" and that he could not allow water managers to ``abandon projects when new opportunities arise unless the proper process is employed to amend those commitments."

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

Sarasota Herald-Tribune - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

Seattle Times - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

[Return to Top](#)

Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

04/01/2010

[Return to Top](#)

HazMat Management

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Contact: Gaston Cantens 561-248-1953

Florida Crystals Corporation

CONTACT: Gaston Cantens, +1-561-248-1953

Web Site: <http://www.floridacrystals.com/>

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

[Return to Top](#)

St. Augustine Record, The

WEST PALM BEACH (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Está en peligro la compra de terrenos azucareros

04/01/2010

El Nuevo Herald

MORGAN, CURTIS

[Return to Top](#)

El juez federal de Miami que supervisa la limpieza de los Everglades emitió un fallo el miércoles que pudiera terminar definitivamente con la controversial compra de terrenos azucareros del gobernador Charlie Crist o empujar el cierre del demorado acuerdo.

El juez federal de Distrito Federico Moreno dijo estar cansado de esperar y ordenó a los administradores de los distritos hidráulicos que reiniciarán la construcción de un reservorio de \$700 millones en la parte este de Palm Beach, un proyecto una vez considerado como crítico para la restauración de los Everglades pero que se detuvo hace dos años y quedó en el limbo mientras el estado negociaba para comprar grandes terrenos de la U.S. Sugar Corp.

Moreno se puso del lado de la Tribu Miccosukee, que había alegado que el reservorio exponía a las tierras tribales a una contaminación peor que el negocio azucarero de \$536 millones, que era menor en tamaño pero costaba el doble debido al deterioro de la economía y que pudiera no aliviarse durante una década o más.

“Aunque la parcial adquisición de terrenos azucareros pudiera ser lo mejor para los Everglades en un futuro muy distante, los sufrimientos ecológicos de la tribu son inmediatos”, escribió Moreno.

“La corte reconoce las complicaciones de adquirir los vastos terrenos propuestos y las aparentes dificultades de conseguir el objetivo original. Pero no es el papel de la corte negociar con propietarios de terrenos en disputa o administrar el tesoro de las agencias estatales”.

Dexter Lehtinen, el abogado de la tribu, dijo que el fallo ponía “la restauración de vuelta en el camino correcto”.

La tribu y Florida Crystal, un competidor de U.S. Sugar, han librado una feroz batalla legal y de cabildeo para impedir el acuerdo con la U.S. Sugar. Lo han descrito como el rescate de un gigante agrícola con influencia política que pudiera desviar fondos de actuales proyectos y, en última instancia, demorar la restauración en décadas.

Gaston Cantens, vicepresidente de Florida Crystals, elogió la decisión.

“Afortunadamente, tenemos un sistema judicial independiente que está dispuesto a hacer lo correcto y no está cegado por la política”, afirmó.

El Distrito Hidráulico del sur de la Florida, que está negociando para comprar las tierras de U.S. Sugar, emitió una breve declaración diciendo que los abogados estaban revisando el fallo para determinar el próximo paso. La oficina de Crist también dijo estar revisando el fallo.

Sus partidarios reconocieron que planteaba otro obstáculo, potencialmente serio, pero insistieron en que no era la muerte de un acuerdo que alegan es esencial para resolver los problemas de contaminación del agua que han plagado a los Everglades desde hace décadas.

El juez dejó abiertas ventanas para terminar la compra de tierras, dijo David Guest, un abogado de Earthjustice, que representó a un número de grupos ecologistas en un acuerdo de hace 22 años que obligó a la Florida a detener la contaminación de los Everglades. Moreno ha monitoreado el esfuerzo desde 2003.

Guest, en una opinión de la que se hizo eco U.S. Sugar, dijo que el juez no había ordenado la inmediata reiniciación del reservorio pero que había ordenado audiencias para establecer plazos de construcción ante un maestro especial, John Barkett. Moreno nombró a Barkett en el 2005 para evaluar el progreso de la limpieza y proponer remedios a las violaciones de contaminación en el Loxahatchee National Wild-life Refuge.

“Obviamente no ayuda pero ciertamente no lo excluye”, dijo Guest refiriéndose al negocio más grande.

El juez también observó que los gobiernos estatal y federal pudieran pedir enmendar el acuerdo de limpieza, conocido como un decreto de consentimiento, en cualquier momento.

El estado está negociando con el gobierno federal sobre dos violaciones de la calidad del agua más recientes. Es probable que las conversaciones incluyan compromisos de usar parte de las 72,500 acres de terrenos azucareros y huertos de cítricos para ampliar los 41,000 acres de ciénagas de tratamiento de contaminación.

Thom Rumberger, presidente del Everglades Trust, calificó la decisión de “una desagradable complicación” y dijo que el momento había sido una sorpresa.

El martes, el Tribunal Supremo de la Florida va a oír una apelación de los planes del Distrito Hidráulico de pagar el negocio con bonos. El año pasado, en otra demanda presentada por Florida Crystals y la tribu, un juez de Circuito de Palm Beach aprobó suficiente capacidad de bonos para cerrar la primera de las dos fases del negocio, pero rebajó en

dos tercios la línea de crédito de \$2,200 millones.

Rumberger dijo compartir la frustración del juez con las repetidas demoras y plazos ignorados y esperaba que el fallo `` ayude a mover a la gente.

`` Nada en los Everglades es nunca simple', dijo.

Los administradores hidráulicos, que han reconocido que la malas proyecciones financieras amenazan con los planes de pagar el acuerdo con bonos, han estado explorando opciones. Estas incluyen pagar por todo o parte del negocio con efectivo - posiblemente mediante la cancelación de otros proyectos o ventas de tierras - o por seguir reduciendo la compra inicial.

Verse obligado a construir el reservorio agravaría aun más las finanzas del distrito. En su fallo, Moreno acreditó al estado de progreso y de `` esfuerzos de buena fe" por Crist, por anteriores gobernadores y por administradores hidráulicos en el esfuerzo de limpieza de \$1,100 millones.

Pero también dijo que `` ahora no estaba seguro de que papel iba a jugar la disminuida compra de tierras en la restauración de los Everglades" y que no podía permitirle a los administradores hidráulicos `` abandonar proyectos cuando surjan nuevas oportunidades a no ser que se utilice el proceso adecuado para enmendar esos compromisos".

Copyright © 2010 McClatchy-Tribune Information Services

US Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge s ruling

[Return to Top](#)

04/01/2010

Free Press, The
Environment

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile (65-sq. kilometre) reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The Everglades wetlands have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres (73,000 hectares) and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the Republican nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

FOXNews.com

[Return to Top](#)

Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multim...

Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office didn't immediately return a telephone message on Wednesday. The district said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

04/01/2010

Forbes - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. -- Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

U.S. Sugar spokeswoman Judy Sanchez said the ruling does not preclude the state from purchasing lands that would allow for more effectively designed restoration projects.

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2009 Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

Greeley Tribune, The

BRIAN SKOLOFF

Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

[Return to Top](#)

Fla. Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge's ruling

03/31/2010

Gaea Times Blog

AP

[Return to Top](#)

Ruling could hinder US Sugar/Everglades deal WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered Florida officials to restart a stalled multimillion-dollar construction project once aimed at helping store water to help clean the ecosystem of pollution. U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of a massive reservoir. Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

South Florida judge presses for action on reservoir project

03/31/2010

St. Petersburg Times - Online

Miami Herald

[Return to Top](#)

MIAMI — The federal judge overseeing Everglades cleanup issued a ruling Wednesday that could be the final nail in the coffin of Gov. Charlie Crist's controversial Big Sugar land buy.

Chief U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno ordered regional water managers to restart construction on a stalled \$700 million reservoir near the borders of west Broward and southwest Palm Beach counties, saying he has waited long enough and was "now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration."

The ruling was a major victory for the Miccosukee Tribe, which has argued that the \$536 million deal with the U.S. Sugar Corp. would siphon money from existing projects and delay Everglades restoration, possibly for decades.

Attorneys for the South Florida Water Management District had argued the state was close to completing \$1.1 billion in projects and that acquisition of the 73,000 acres of sugar farms and citrus groves could greatly expand cleanup efforts.

The district halted work on the \$700 million reservoir, first citing a separate lawsuit by environmental groups, then Crist's controversial sugar land deal. In 2003, Moreno assumed oversight of the 21-year-old settlement that forced Florida to reduce pollution flowing into the Everglades.

Judge: Finish reservoir shelved by Crist's land deal

03/31/2010

Sun Sentinel - Online

[Return to Top](#)

Dealing a legal jolt to stalled Everglades restoration, a federal judge Wednesday ordered construction to resume on a massive reservoir left unfinished in western Palm Beach County.

South Florida taxpayers have already invested almost \$280 million to start building the 16,700-acre reservoir west of U. S. 27 — put on hold in 2008 as Gov. Charlie Crist and the South Florida Water Management District pursued a blockbuster deal to buy U.S. Sugar Corp. farmland for Everglades restoration.

The judge's ruling now threatens to become a fatal financial blow to Crist's proposed \$536 million deal to buy 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar that would be used to restore water flows the Everglades.

Having to build the reservoir while also buying the U.S. Sugar land could prove too costly for the water management district, which leads Everglades restoration.

The district has argued that the location of the Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir, which once was to be finished this year, doesn't fit in with Everglades restoration plans now being reshaped by the pending U.S. Sugar deal.

But with financial concerns and legal fights continuing to stall the U.S. Sugar deal, U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday sided with reservoir supporters who argued they have waited long enough.

"The time is now to go forward with the work that needs to be done on this project, which all parties agreed to be important," Moreno said in his ruling.

The Miccosukee Tribe, which called for the judge to force construction of the reservoir, declared victory Wednesday. The tribe has opposed the U.S. Sugar deal, saying it takes money away from long-stalled restoration projects such as the reservoir.

"We did get Everglades restoration back on track," tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen said. "Do not use some long-term land purchase as an excuse for not doing restoration."

The water management district is already struggling to afford the land deal — twice downsized due to Florida's struggling economy.

District officials have said that buying the U.S. Sugar land would allow for building reservoirs closer to Lake Okeechobee and that the unfinished reservoir could be converted to a treatment area to filter pollutants out of water headed to the Everglades.

On Wednesday, district officials issued a statement saying they were still reviewing the judge's order.

Defenders of the U.S. Sugar deal argued Wednesday that the judge's ruling was not the end of the land deal.

The district has other legal alternatives to pursue that could still convince the courts that alternative uses of the reservoir land would be better for Everglades restoration, said Thom Rumberger, of the Everglades Trust.

"It's a complication, but it's not a complication that will ultimately stall the acquisition," Rumberger said about the judge's ruling. "It's a long way to building the reservoir."

Crist's U.S. Sugar deal faces another legal challenge April 7 when the Miccosukee Tribe and U.S. Sugar-competitor Florida Crystals try to persuade the Florida Supreme Court to scuttle the financing for the deal.

The district plans borrow the \$536 million for the U.S. Sugar land buy, with South Florida property taxpayers paying off the long-term debt.

The 16,700-acre reservoir was intended to hold water that could be used to replenish the Everglades. Plans called for building embankments rising 30-feet high to hold 62 billion gallons of stormwater up to 12-1/2 feet deep.

The judge's action calls for a special master to figure out when reservoir work should resume. Supporters of the U.S. Sugar deal contend that the court could ultimately accept changing the proposed use of the reservoir land.

The water management district paid the reservoir contractor, Barnard Parsons Joint Venture, about \$13 million from June to December 2008 to standby while the agency decided whether reservoir construction should continue along with the U.S. Sugar deal. It then cost another \$12 million to terminate the contract.

David Reiner, former president of Friends of the Everglades, said the judge's ruling shows that the district should finish the reservoir and walk away from the U.S. Sugar deal.

"It was always a pipe dream. It was always years in the future," Reiner said. "There's a crisis now."

Andy Reid can be reached at abreid@SunSentinel.com or 561-228-5504.

Ruling could hinder US Sugar/Everglades deal

03/31/2010

Florida Today - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered the state to restart a stalled nearly \$800 million construction project once aimed at helping store water for efforts to clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came just about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

[Return to Top](#)

Finance.Boston.com

Gaston Cantens

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

[Return to Top](#)

South Florida Business Journal - Online

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

AFBF files suit against Corps of Engineers

03/31/2010

Poultry Times

[Return to Top](#)

WASHINGTON -- The American Farm Bureau Federation has filed an action against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for what the organization calls another example of regulatory overreach. The suit, filed by AFBF and the U.S. Sugar Corp. in the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., take the Corps to task for non-compliance with its own rules regarding prior converted croplands.

The suit argues that recent action by the Corps goes against the 1993 rule that excluded prior converted croplands from regulation under the Clean Water Act. The Corps' actions would subject croplands to federal control if farmers take their prior converted cropland out of crop production and change its use. There are currently more than 53 million acres of prior converted cropland in the U.S.

"These lands are out of the realm of Clean Water Act jurisdiction, meaning the Corps can't regulate the as waters of the U.S.," said AFBF President Bob Stallman. "This is important because the value of prior converted croplands is significantly higher than land encumbered by costly federal wetlands regulations."

Until recently, farmers could rely on the regulations established in 1993 and could use prior converted cropland for both agricultural and non-agricultural uses. Many farmers use the equity in prior converted cropland as collateral for the capital needed for farm and other loans. For many farmers, the development value of the land is an important asset.

"The Corps is now trying to arbitrarily change the rules of the game, which would have significant impacts on producers' land values and property rights," Stallman said.

For further information, please call Poultry and Egg News at 770-536-2476 to subscribe.

Copyright © 2002-2008 Poultry and Egg News. All Rights Reserved.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

PR Newswire - Online

Florida Crystals Corporation

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

Wednesday March 31, 2010 19:15:00 EDT

03/31/2010

Quote.com Spain

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31, 2010 /PRNewswire via COMTEX News Network/ --

[Return to Top](#)

Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue

working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Contact:
Gaston Cantens
561-248-1953

SOURCE Florida Crystals Corporation

Copyright (C) 2010 PR Newswire. All rights reserved

*Marsh Completes Acquisition In All Geographies With Exception Of Abu Dhabi And Saudi Arabia

19:33:00 EDT

*Marsh Says HSBC Insurance Brokers Acquisition Extends Breadth Of Marsh's International Operations In Several High Growth Markets

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

Salon.com

BRIAN SKOLOFF

Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir -- the largest of its kind in the world -- was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams

[Return to Top](#)

and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after ruling

03/31/2010

MSNBC.com

BRIAN SKOLOFF

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

News Chief - Online, The

BRIAN SKOLOFF

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

[Return to Top](#)

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

Orlando Business Journal - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Judge orders restart of Everglades reservoir project and questions governor's massive land-buy plan

[Return to Top](#)

03/31/2010

Palm Beach Post - Online

Paul Quinlan

Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

The federal judge overseeing Everglades cleanup issued a ruling Wednesday that could be the death knell for Gov. Charlie Crist's controversial Everglades restoration land deal with U.S. Sugar Corp.

Chief U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno ordered that construction of a \$800 million, city-size reservoir in the canefields south of Lake Okeechobee must now go forward, despite South Florida water managers' decision to cancel the project to free up money for the Crist land deal.

But in the two years since Crist announced his plans to buy the U.S. Sugar land that environmentalists have long coveted, the governor has twice downsized the purchase to less than half its original size.

Moreno wrote that he is "now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration."

Attorney Dexter Lehtinen, who has argued for more than 20 years that the government should speed up restoration efforts, first as a U.S. Attorney and now on behalf of the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians, cheered Moreno's ruling.

"He put Everglades restoration back on track, that's for sure," Lehtinen said Wednesday in response to the order.

The tribe, along with U.S. Sugar rival Florida Crystals, has argued that Crist's deal to purchase 73,000 acres of land from U.S. Sugar for \$536 million provides no clear or direct benefit to the Everglades and will likely delay cleanup for decades.

The South Florida Water Management District, the state agency Crist tapped to finance the land deal, halted the \$800 million reservoir project, eventually arguing that the reservoir property would be better used to create pollution-filtering marshes, given the availability of the U.S. Sugar land.

Everglades Foundation CEO Kirk Fordham reiterated that argument Wednesday, calling Moreno's order Wednesday "one of many unfortunate chapters in the long history of Everglades restoration."

"I don't think this is a final decision will happen with the (reservoir) land," Fordham said.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

KGW-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Florida (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile (65-sq. kilometer) reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The Everglades wetlands have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres (73,000 hectares) and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the Republican nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

KMSB-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office didn't immediately return a telephone message on Wednesday. The district said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

Houston Business Journal - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

Jacksonville Business Journal - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

[Return to Top](#)

Los Angeles Business Journal - Online

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

[Return to Top](#)

Marco Island Eagle - Online

Marco Eagle

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office didn't immediately return a telephone message on Wednesday. The district said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Everglades Deal In Jeopardy After Judge's Ruling

03/31/2010

Black Enterprise Magazine

Article written by Associated Press.

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

SYS-CON Australia

Liz McMillan

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Contact:

Gaston Cantens

561-248-1953

SOURCE Florida Crystals Corporation

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

Sys-Con Deutschland

Phil Ayres

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Contact:
Gaston Cantens
561-248-1953

SOURCE Florida Crystals Corporation

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

Whiznews.com

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist"

would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

[Return to Top](#)

Wichita Business Journal - Online

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Ruling Could Hinder US Sugar/Everglades Deal

03/31/2010

[Return to Top](#)

WKRK-TV - Online

West Palm Beach, Florida - A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered the state to restart a stalled nearly \$800 million construction project once aimed at helping store water for efforts to clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came just about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

WSVN-TV - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) -- Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir -- the largest of its kind in the world -- was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

Earthtimes.org

Author : Florida Crystals Corporation

[Return to Top](#)

News Alerts by Email ([click here](#))

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Contact:

Gaston Cantens

SOURCE Florida Crystals Corporation

Copyright © 2010 PR Newswire. All rights reserved.

Update APNewsNow. For global distribution.

03/31/2010

Canadian Press (Broadcast)

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered Florida officials to restart a stalled multimillion-dollar construction project once aimed at helping store water to help clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of a massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

(The Associated Press)

Copyright © 2010 The Canadian Press

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

[Return to Top](#)

Business First of Louisville - Online

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

[Return to Top](#)

Business First of Columbus - Online

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

[Return to Top](#)

Business Courier of Cincinnati - Online

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

Bradenton Herald - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF

Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

[Return to Top](#)

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

Tampa Bay Business Journal - Online

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Independent Federal Judge Resumes Everglades Project

03/31/2010

U.S. Political Today

Gaston Cantens

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 /PRNewswire/ -- Federal District Court Judge Federico Moreno today renewed the potential for Everglades restoration to become a reality by ordering the South Florida Water Management District to resume and complete construction of the A-1 reservoir, one of 68 projects authorized under the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Construction commenced on the massive 16,700-acre reservoir, the largest in the world, in 2006 as part of former Gov. Jeb Bush's successful Acceler8 program. Gov. Charlie Crist worked with the District to halt construction of the reservoir in 2008 in order to divert the funds to his proposed purchase of U.S. Sugar's lands.

The District had already spent nearly \$300 million when the project was abruptly stopped.

"Thankfully, we have an independent judiciary that is willing to do the right thing and is not blinded by politics," said Gaston Cantens, vice president of Florida Crystals.

Florida Crystals has opposed Gov. Crist's U.S. Sugar deal because of the negative impact it has had -- and would continue to have -- on the District's financial ability to construct Everglades projects. In fact, to date, not a single authorized CERP project has ever been completed. The U.S. Sugar acquisition further hinders the Everglades and delays preservation efforts.

In his order, Judge Moreno agreed, stating: "Although the partial sugar land acquisition may be in the best interest of the Everglades in the very distant future, the [Miccosukee] Tribe's environmental suffering is immediate."

Florida Crystals commends the Miccosukee Tribe for their efforts on behalf of the Everglades and pledges to continue working toward successful Everglades preservation.

Fla. Everglades restoration plan to buy land from sugar farmers jeopardized by judge's ruling

[Return to Top](#)

03/31/2010

Washington Examiner - Online

BRIAN SKOLOFF Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, FLA. — Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir — the largest of its kind in the world — was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S. District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

Washington Post - Online

Skoloff, Brian

[Return to Top](#)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. -- 's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project. Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir. 'The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration,' Moreno wrote in his ruling. 'Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill.' The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project 'despite the best efforts of Governor Crist' would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling. 'This puts Everglades restoration back on track,' said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. 'If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem.' The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Everglades deal in jeopardy after judge's ruling

03/31/2010

WBBH-TV - Online

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) - Gov. Charlie Crist's grand plan to revive the dying Florida Everglades by buying back the land is in jeopardy after a federal judge Wednesday ordered the state to resume construction on a multimillion-dollar restoration project.

Work on the 25-square-mile reservoir - the largest of its kind in the world - was halted in 2008 after water managers said a lawsuit from environmentalists could hinder their ability to complete the project.

The decision to stop work came just a month before Crist announced a plan to spend \$1.75 billion to buy all of U.S. Sugar Corp.'s 180,000 acres and assets in the Everglades.

Crist's plan has since been scaled down, because of the economy, to \$536 million for 73,000 acres from U.S. Sugar, the nation's largest cane sugar producer.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno's ruling on Wednesday could now end it all.

Moreno granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir with an estimated cost of up to \$800 million.

The district oversees the state's Everglades restoration efforts and has said previously it likely couldn't afford both the U.S. Sugar deal and the reservoir.

[Return to Top](#)

"The court is now uncertain as to what role the downsized land purchase will play in Everglades restoration," Moreno wrote in his ruling. "Meanwhile, the projects devised years ago ... are waiting in standstill."

The judge agreed with the Miccosukee that halting the reservoir project "despite the best efforts of Governor Crist" would further pollute the tribe's land.

Crist's office said it was reviewing the ruling to determine the next step. The district also said it was reviewing the ruling.

"This puts Everglades restoration back on track," said tribe attorney Dexter Lehtinen. "If they're going to do the land deal, it's got to now be in addition to the restoration projects they promised, so they've got a huge problem."

The sugar land deal also faces legal challenges. The state Supreme Court is set to hear the case next week.

If the deal falls through, it could serve up another blow to Crist's campaign for U.S. Senate. He is locked in a close contest for the GOP nomination, and the U.S. Sugar purchase was set to be a cornerstone of his legacy.

The Everglades have been dying for decades from the intrusion of farms and development, dissected by dikes, dams and canals, effectively draining much of the swamp and polluting it with fertilizers and urban runoff. The state and federal governments' efforts to restore the wetlands have been stymied for years by funding shortfalls, legal challenges and political bickering.

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Ruling could hinder US Sugar/Everglades deal

03/31/2010

WTVX-TV - Online

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) - A federal judge overseeing Everglades restoration has ordered the state to restart a stalled nearly \$800 million construction project once aimed at helping store water for efforts to clean the ecosystem of pollution.

U.S District Judge Federico Moreno on Wednesday granted a motion from the Miccosukee Indians, who live in the Everglades, to force the South Florida Water Management District to resume construction of the massive reservoir.

Construction was halted in 2008 after district officials said a lawsuit put the plan in jeopardy. But the decision to stop construction came just about a month before Gov. Charlie Crist announced a grand plan to buy land from U.S. Sugar Corp. for restoration efforts. That \$536 million land deal is now threatened.

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

[Return to Top](#)

