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U.S. Sugar deal a milestone in restoring River of Grass

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The announcement by Gov. Charlie Crist to purchase approximately 187,000 acres of the Everglades Agricultural Area is tremendous news and a significant milestone in efforts to restore America's Everglades.

Acquisition of this farmland south of Lake Okeechobee will improve water quality and increase water quantity flowing south to Everglades National Park and ultimately out into Florida Bay, simultaneously restoring coastline ecosystems on the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee rivers.

The state of Florida continues to show its commitment to restoring the historic River of Grass and making America's Everglades a vibrant ecosystem once again. This deal provides an opportunity to revitalize federal participation in this endeavor and to reinvigorate federal funding toward restoration goals.

We all must pledge to continue progress to restore our River of Grass.

This is essential to our economic survival and quality of life in South Florida, and the heritage of our children and grandchildren.

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