



Everglades Coalition

1000 Friends of Florida
Arthur R. Marshall Foundation
Audubon of Florida
Audubon Society of the Everglades
Audubon Society of Southwest Florida
Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association
Clean Water Action
Clean Water Network
Collier County Audubon Society
Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Defenders of Wildlife
Ding Darling Wildlife Society
Earthjustice
Environment Florida
The Environmental Coalition
Everglades Coordinating Council
Everglades Foundation
Everglades Law Center
Florida Defenders of the Environment
Florida Keys Environmental Fund
The Florida Native Plant Society
Florida Oceanographic Society
Florida Sierra Club
Florida Wildlife Federation
Friends of Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee Wildlife Refuge
Friends of the Everglades
Hendry-Glades Audubon Society
Izaak Walton League Florida Keys Chapter Florida Division
Izaak Walton League of America Mangrove Chapter
Last Stand
League of Women Voters of Florida
Loxahatchee River Coalition
Martin County Conservation Alliance
National Audubon Society
National Parks Conservation Association
National Wildlife Federation
National Wildlife Refuge Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
The Ocean Conservancy
The Pegasus Foundation
Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation
Save It Now, Glades!
Sierra Club
Sierra Club Broward Group
Sierra Club Central Florida Group
Sierra Club Loxahatchee Group
Sierra Club Miami Group
South Florida Audubon Society
Tropical Audubon Society
The Urban Environment League
World Wildlife Fund

Everglades Coalition Resolution Urging the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan 2011 Update to Craft Bold Steps Towards Improving Water Quality

WHEREAS, the Everglades ecosystem, spanning from the Kissimmee River Valley to Florida Bay, is a significant national resource and international treasure,

WHEREAS, restoration of the Everglades has commenced to return the abundance of wildlife once found in the Everglades, to recover thousands of acres of marshes and estuarine habitat, and to benefit Florida and National Parks and ecosystem-based economies,

WHEREAS, a critical component of Everglades restoration is improving the quality of, and reducing phosphorus levels in, water that flows from Lake Okeechobee to the southern Everglades,

WHEREAS, improving water quality in the Northern Everglades by 2015, to meet the plan's mandated goal of reaching the TMDL of 140 metric tons (mt) of total phosphorus per year to be met by January 1, 2015, is mandated in the Lake Okeechobee Protection Act and is an essential priority for Everglades restoration.

WHEREAS, human agricultural and urban activities currently result in annual net increase of 4,000 mt of phosphorus to the Lake Okeechobee watershed,

WHEREAS, effective agricultural best management practices, dispersed water management, and urban nutrient source control are necessary tools to improve water quality in Lake Okeechobee and the greater Everglades,

WHEREAS, the Kissimmee River Restoration is the largest project of its kind in the nation, but lacks water quality protection, which can be gained only through the LOPP,

Therefore, be it resolved:

1. The Everglades Coalition, with 53 organizations dedicated to protecting and restoring America's Everglades, hereby urges the SFWMD, FDEP, and FDACS to revise the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan 2011 Update to be a bold list of policy and spending recommendations that will guide the Legislature and agencies in crafting the laws, rules and budgets necessary to meet the phosphorus TMDL for Lake Okeechobee and benefit the greater Everglades.

The Everglades Coalition urges the SFWMD, FDEP, and FDACS (the coordinating agencies) to revise the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan 2011 Update to improve the effectiveness of agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) by basing phosphorus application rates on TMDL water quality goals for receiving waters. The addition of phosphorus in feedstock and fertilizer should be restricted. The coordinating agencies should develop nutrient balance methodologies. A systematic new BMP implementation reporting program to promote greater transparency and accountability should be developed, as well as new water management requirements for BMP certification.

2. The Everglades Coalition urges the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan 2011 Update to refocus water storage efforts on Dispersed Water Management projects, and away from large regional water storage projects, crafting a specific funding schedule and timeline to assure the 450,000 acre feet of dispersed water management projects are achieved by a date certain.

3. The Everglades Coalition urges the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan 2011 Update to adopt aggressive mechanisms for improving urban nutrient source control, including the development of incentives for property owners who construct stormwater systems with PRE/POST reduction outcome. New provisions regarding reclaimed water quality standards in the Okeechobee Basin should be drafted. The SFWMD should continue to provide strategic support and input to the DEP for the development of the Unified Statewide Stormwater Rule, 62-347, FAC.

4. The Everglades Coalition urges the Lake Okeechobee Protection Plan 2011 Update to phase out the land application of biosolids. The coordinating agencies should interpret the new biosolids rule, and craft additional guidance. The goal should be to establish a balance between basin nutrient inputs and exports.

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