



Everglades Coalition

1000 Friends of Florida
Arthur R. Marshall Foundation
Audubon of Florida
Audubon of Southwest Florida
Audubon Society of the Everglades
Broward County Audubon Society
Caloosahatchee River Citizens
Association
Clean Water Action
Clean Water Network
Collier County Audubon Society
The Conservancy of Southwest
Florida
Defenders of Wildlife
Earthjustice
Everglades Law Center
The Environmental Coalition
Everglades Coordinating Council
Environment Florida
Florida Defenders of the
Environment
Florida Division of the Izaak
Walton League of America
Florida Keys Chapter of the Izaak
Walton League of America
Florida Keys Environmental Fund
Florida Native Plant Society
Florida Oceanographic Society
Florida Sierra Club
Florida Wildlife Federation
Friends of the Everglades
Izaak Walton League of America
Last Stand
League of Woman Voters of Florida
Loxahatchee River Coalition
Mangrove Chapter of the Izaak
Walton League of America
Martin County Conservation
Alliance
National Audubon Society
National Parks Conservation
Association
National Wildlife Federation
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 Loxahatchee Group
Sierra Club Miami Group
Tropical Audubon Society
The Urban Environment League
World Wildlife Fund

April 23, 2008

Chairperson Addie Greene
Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners
301 North Olive Avenue
West Palm Beach, FL

Re: *Mining in the Everglades Agricultural Area*

Dear Chairperson Greene,

The Everglades Coalition is an alliance of 49 national, state, and local organizations who advocate for the restoration, protection and enhancement of the greater Everglades ecosystem.

In the last twenty-four months, Palm Beach County has received applications to mine over 15,000 acres within the EAA. Due to the EAA's critical location and the sensitivity of surrounding lands, uses such as mining have the potential to undermine restoration efforts and cause environmental harm. Large scale mines limit options for restoring flow from Lake Okeechobee to the Everglades, can result in seepage from nearby environmental or water management features, and can negatively impact water quality.

In order to provide sufficient water to the Everglades during drought and to reduce damaging high volume discharges to the estuaries, significantly more land than has been identified in the current Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan will be needed in the EAA for water storage, water quality treatment, and conveyance of water south to the Everglades and Florida Bay.

Uncertainties associated with the ability of Aquifer Storage and Recovery – a key component of the restoration plan - to perform to anticipated levels, the need to treat water prior to storage, the high operations and maintenance costs associated with this technology, and the lack of available land for surface storage elsewhere underscore the need to maintain maximum flexibility for restoration alternatives within the EAA. This need, combined with the potential for mines to cause significant environmental effects makes it even more critical to undertake a comprehensive analysis to understand the system-wide effects of mining on the region.

Given both the importance of the EAA to Everglades Restoration, and the broad range of issues still unresolved regarding the cumulative environmental

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impact of mining to the region, we ask that the Board of County Commissioners deny the approval of new mines and the expansion of current mines in the EAA. Instead, we encourage the Board to work with the Florida Department of Community Affairs to establish a Resource Management Planning Committee to identify strategies for a comprehensive solution to the issues affecting the EAA.

Again, we ask that you *deny* the applications for new mines and for mining expansion in the EAA, in order to preserve our possibilities for true Everglades Restoration. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of the name "Sara Fain".

Sara Fain
Co-Chair

A blue ink signature of the name "Mark Perry".

Mark Perry
Co-Chair