

1000 Friends of Florida\*\*Audubon of Florida  
Clean Water Action\*\*Collier County Audubon Society  
Conservancy of Southwest Florida\*\*The Everglades Foundation  
Everglades Law Center, Inc.\*\*National Audubon Society  
National Park Conservation Association\*\*National Wildlife Federation  
Sanibel-Captiva Audubon Society\*\*Tropical Audubon Society

April 26, 2007

Kevin McCarty  
Chairman of the Governing Board  
South Florida Water Management District  
3301 Gun Club Road  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Carol Ann Wehle  
Executive Director  
South Florida Water Management District  
3301 Gun Club Road  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Dear Chairman McCarty and Ms. Wehle:

The below signed organizations commend the South Florida Water Management District (District) for implementing water conservation and environmental protection policies that protect the Greater Everglades ecosystem. With the current drought, your agency is requesting to lower water levels in the Everglades, specifically the Water Conservation Areas, to protect water supplies and wellfields in the Lower East Coast Service Area. With the precarious conditions for plants and wildlife within the Everglades ecosystem, we respectfully request the District to implement increased conservation measures before additional water is removed from the Everglades.

We recognize the efforts of the District to maximize water conservation during one of the driest periods on record. Your agency has issued much needed water restrictions for service areas and pledged to achieve reductions in the amount of water drawn out of the Biscayne aquifer. Additionally, the District's adoption of the Regional Water Availability Rule enacted policy to protect the environment's water from future water demands. These actions aim to protect the Everglades, maximize water conservation, and shift water use to alternative water supply.

To further the intent of these policies, we offer the following recommendations to protect water for people and nature:

Short-term recommendations:

1. Implement the most restrictive water restrictions throughout all services areas, including commercial and residential uses, within the SFWMD;
2. Demonstrate the water restrictions are achieving their conservation goals by publishing data collected at the wellfields pump stations in all service areas;
3. Limiting water use to one day a week for lawns, golf courses and other large landscapes;
4. Increase funding and outreach to promote xeriscape and Florida Friendly landscaping;
5. Do not issue new water Consumptive Use Permits, or CUP renewals above April 2006 levels, except where permits use alternative water supplies sources, such as recovered wastewater and storm water.

Long-term recommendations:

1. Fully and rapidly implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP);
2. Provide for additional water storage beyond that anticipated in CERP to capture as much of the wet season water dumped into the ocean as possible;
3. Permanently enact water restrictions throughout the District and enforce them;
4. Implement the Regional Water Availability Rule; and
5. Develop water reservations for the environment.

As South Florida will continue to have large variability in rainfall, it is essential that we promote conservation and protect the water needed to restore the Everglades ecosystem. The District has made admirable steps towards this goal. We look forward to working with the District on water conservation and protection of water for environment.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel P. Reed  
Former SFWMD Board Member and  
Former Assistant Secretary of Interior

Kathleen E. Aterno  
Managing and Florida Director  
Clean Water Action

Charles G. Pattison, AICP  
Executive Director  
1000 Friends of Florida

Alan Keller  
President  
Collier County Audubon Society

David E. Anderson  
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Andrew McElwaine  
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CC: Governor Charlie Crist, State of Florida  
Michael Sole, Secretary, FDEP, State of Florida  
Kevin McCarty; Governing Board Chairman, SFWMD  
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