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Senator Bob Graham

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January 23, 2008

Mr. Mark Perry
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Dear Mark,

Congratulations on the outstanding Everglades Coalition meeting last weekend on Captiva Island. I have been to most of these conferences since they started over 20 years ago; I can attest, this was one of the best.

The program was a thoughtful mixture of science and policy. The participants were the "doers" of Everglades restoration. There was ample time for them to share personal insights. I got a lot accomplished on the draft legislation to establish a water restoration act and a legislative strategy for its enactment. And, the South Seas Plantation facilities and services were excellent.

I am enclosing a summary of the home work assignments I suggested in my Sunday morning remarks. I hope you will think well of them and if I can be of any assistance in moving toward achievement of these or other Everglades restoration initiatives, I would be pleased to do so.

I hope you have gotten some well deserved R and R since Captiva. The leaders of the next Coalition meeting will have very big, sand laden, shoes to fill.

Best wishes,



Bob Graham

January 23, 2008

During my remarks to the Coalition on January 13, 2008, I suggested several "home work assignments" for the Coalition and its members.

These assignments were:

Washington:

1. Reach out to the Presidential candidates.

The principal reason for Florida moving its Presidential primary to January 29th was to provide Floridians an opportunity to discuss with the candidates issues of interest to our state, with Everglades restoration at the top of the list. Although time is short, and the Democrats have agreed not to campaign in the state, every effort should be directed at the Republican candidates in order to use the primary for its intended purpose. After the nominees have been selected a second effort should be directed at the candidates.

2. Reenergize the effort to encourage non-Florida members of Congress to join the fight.

We need to reestablish our efforts to bring non-Florida members of Congress to the Everglades and to participate in the 2009 conference of the Everglades Coalition, ideally to do both concurrently. Members of our Congressional delegation should be asked to undertake the task of identifying colleagues who will be most influential on Everglades legislation and funding, and to assist in developing an organized effort to get those legislators to

the Everglades. The South Florida Water Management District has been very helpful in the past under the leadership of Kathy Copeland. The SFWMD and Kathy should be asked to continue their participation.

3. Remain focused on securing appropriations which have already been authorized

There should be a non-wavering, laser-like focus on securing appropriations for the long delayed projects which have now been authorized in the WRDA bill of 2007. This will be a long term, annually recurring project. I recommend that the appropriators who will be most influential on these decisions – those members of the water resources subcommittees of the house and senate appropriations committees - be contacted directly by a member of the Coalition who has an affinity with that member, such as a former resident of the member's state or district. The goal should be a personal friendship and sharing of knowledge between the Coalition member and the member of Congress which can be sustained and enhanced over time.

4. Reform the WRDA bill by creating a separate Water Restoration Act

The Everglades and other water restoration projects have not been well served and have often been held captive by being lumped with the traditional water development projects in WRDA. Students and faculty at the University of Florida Law School have

developed a proposal for separate Water Restoration Act (WRA) and a legislative strategy was mapped during the Coalition meeting. The support of the Coalition will be critical to this success.

5. Restore the Everglades to the United Nations list of most endangered world habitats.

The inexplicable removal of the Everglades from the UN's designation was a serious blow. Continuing to present the Everglades as one of the most important and endangered habitats in the United States and on the planet is a key to maintaining broad based support for restoration. The same students and faculty at the University of Florida Law School referenced above, are undertaking to file a citizens petition to do so. While this is proceeding, the Coalition should attempt to secure from each presidential candidate a commitment to restore this vital UN designation to the Everglades.

Florida:

1. Replenish the state land acquisition fund.

The currently empanelled Taxation and Budget Reform Commission is the best chance in twenty years to place before the people a constitutional amendment that establishes and adequately funds a state land acquisition fund. The leadership of the Commission should be approached in an aggressive and orderly

fashion urging such action. The Florida Wildlife Federation has already undertaken this effort and should be fully supported.

2. Protect the Everglades Agricultural Area from inappropriate development

An effort should be launched that protects the Everglades Agricultural Area from inappropriate post agriculture development that will interfere with Everglades restoration. Governor Crist's support will be critical to ensuring there is a concerted effort, especially since there will be significant costs incurred if partial or total public acquisition is required.

3. End the wide disparity of water conservation practices among Florida counties.

There is a wide disparity in the water conservation practices, particularly water reuse, among Florida counties. All counties should be mandated to meet the standards of the best practice counties within a designated time period. The Coalition should seek scientific and legal assistance to develop policy papers and legislative initiatives to ensure this process moves forward.

4. Engage the Business Community

For peninsular Florida no initiative will have a greater impact on availability of water, and as a result the Peninsula's demographic and economic future, than Everglades's restoration. This fact remains largely unrecognized by Florida's business leadership.

Papers based on solid science should be commissioned to document this reality, coupled with an outreach to the business community seeking its full partnership in support of completion of Everglades restoration. Selected members of the business community should be invited to the 2009 Coalition meeting and given a prominent position on the program.