

1000 Friends
of Florida

Audubon

Audubon of Florida

Caloosahatchee
River Citizens
Association

Collier County
Audubon Society

Conservancy of
Southwest Florida

Everglades
Foundation

Everglades
Trust

Florida Wildlife
Federation

Hendry-Glades
Audubon Society

National Parks
Conservation
Association

National Wildlife
Federation

Peace River
Audubon Society

PURRE Water
Coalition

Sanibel-Captiva
Audubon Society

Sanibel-Captiva
Conservation Fund

Tropical Audubon
Society

World Wildlife Fund

November 19, 2008

United States Senator Bill Nelson
United States Senate
716 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

As you prepare to convene for the final session of the 110th Congress, we fully support your efforts dealing with the economic crisis confronting the nation and appreciate the difficult task before you. We urge you to support economic stimulus legislation, including a strong infrastructure element, encompassing critical environmental needs. Such a component will jumpstart our economy by moving essential infrastructure projects forward, creating greatly needed jobs.

As you're well aware, the protection and restoration of America's Everglades, a national treasure, is far behind schedule, and delay is the Everglades' worst enemy. About a dozen components of the nation's largest environment restoration effort are authorized and ready for immediate construction; however, the lack of federal funding has prevented them from moving forward.

Funding these Everglades projects now will provide an immediate and substantial boost to the economy. Environmentally, the funding will also help restore natural water flow through the Everglades, clean that water, protect environmentally sensitive coastal estuaries, enhance the integrity of the Hoover Dike surrounding Lake Okeechobee and balance out the damaging flood and drought cycle throughout the Everglades. The River of Grass is under siege by ever-increasing development and by the growing threat of global warming.

Nowhere on earth is there another Everglades. Like the economy, America's Everglades requires immediate care and attention. The new stimulus package you will consider could advance the restoration of this critical ecological jewel, and provide positive, wide-reaching economic implications.

We appreciate the difficulty of the task before you and wish you every success in your deliberations on our nation's behalf.

Sincerely,

(Signatures waived in order to expedite delivery.)