



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

OCT 28 2003

The Honorable Les Brownlee
Acting Secretary of the Army
Office of the Under Secretary of the Army
102 Army Pentagon, Rm. 3E732
Washington, DC 20310-0102

Dear Secretary Brownlee:


The Department of the Interior appreciates the tremendous effort of the Jacksonville District of the Army Corps of Engineers to develop the programmatic regulations to implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (Plan). We appreciate the extra opportunities afforded to the public, and all stakeholders, to participate in the development of the regulations.

Issuance of the final programmatic regulations is an important and significant step toward a restored Everglades. Along with the Assurances of Project Benefits Agreement, which was signed by the President and the Governor of Florida in January 2002, the programmatic regulations prescribe processes to ensure that the Everglades natural system environment will once again receive the appropriate quantity, timing and distribution of water. Restoration is clearly defined and procedures are set forth to adaptively manage the implementation of the Plan so that it may be adjusted as new information is developed.

We are pleased that the programmatic regulations recognize the role of Interior and its agencies in the Plan's implementation. We look forward to working with the Army on the guidance memoranda, the pre-CERP baseline, and the joint development of interim goals. As steward of one-half the remaining Everglades, we pledge to work closely with our Federal and State partners to ensure that the goals and purposes of the Plan are achieved.

The Department believes that the final programmatic regulations fully meet the legal requirements of Section 601(h)(3)(C) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. As a result, I concur with your issuance of the final programmatic regulations.

Sincerely,



Gale A. Norton



STATE OF FLORIDA

Office of the Governor

THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0001

JEB BUSH
GOVERNOR

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October 30, 2003

The Honorable Les Brownlee
Acting Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Mr. Brownlee:

The State of Florida concurs with the Programmatic Regulations established by the United States Army Corps of Engineers to guide the 30-year Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. This concurrence letter is submitted in accordance with Section 601(h)(3) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 ("Act").

The framework established by these regulations embodies the letter and spirit of the law that launched Everglades restoration – a 50-50 partnership between Florida and the federal government to restore a more natural flow of water to the famed River of Grass.

Since passage of the Act, Florida has committed more than \$2.5 billion to clean up pollution and replenish the watery landscape of the Everglades. More than 80 percent of the land for initial restoration projects and half the total land needed to complete restoration have been acquired. Within the last month, Florida began operating a wetland treatment system to clean water before it enters the pristine marsh, donated the last of more than 42,000 acres to complete the expansion of Everglades National park, and started work on the first restoration construction project, ahead of schedule and under budget.

The Programmatic Regulations strengthen the fair and equitable partnership to save the habitat of more than 60 endangered species and replenish the underground supply of water for millions of Floridians.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature of Jeb Bush in black ink.

Jeb Bush

JB/pan

cc: Mr. John Paul Woodley



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