

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members AGENDA ITEM 9
From: Staff
Date: March 18, 2016 Council Meeting
Subject: Resolution in Support of Proposed U.S. Senate Bill 2481 – Everglades for the Next Generation Act

Introduction

Senator Bill Nelson is sponsoring a Congressional bill to amend the Water Resources Development Act to provide for expedited project implementation relating to the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). The proposed bill will provide the Secretary of the Army Corps of Engineers with the flexibility and authority to more quickly advance individual CERP projects by eliminating additional Congressional authorization (Attachment 1). Currently there are 68 individual project components identified in the CERP. Only three of these projects are under construction and one is fully completed (Attachment 2).

Background and Analysis

The Everglades, Lake Okeechobee, Indian River and Lake Worth lagoons, and the St. Lucie River Estuary are imperiled ecosystems and critical to the economy and quality of life in the Treasure Coast Region and all of Southeast Florida. In December 2000, CERP was signed into law to restore health to these ecosystems, while maintaining urban and agricultural water supply and flood control. Council's top 2016 legislative priorities are **Restore the Everglades and Eliminate Harmful Freshwater Discharges into the St. Lucie River Estuary and Indian River and Lake Worth Lagoons** (Attachment 3). Senate Bill 2481, the Everglades for the Next Generation Act strongly supports Council's 2016 legislative priorities and should accelerate the construction and completion of CERP projects. Resolution 16-04 is provided for Council adoption in support of U.S. Senate Bill 2481 (Attachment 4).

Recommendation

Council should adopt Resolution 16-04 and authorize its transmittal to the U.S. Secretary of the Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Congress, and President of the United States.

Attachments



II

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2481

To amend the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 to provide for expedited project implementation relating to the comprehensive Everglades restoration plan.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 2, 2016

Mr. NELSON introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

A BILL

To amend the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 to provide for expedited project implementation relating to the comprehensive Everglades restoration plan.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Everglades for the
5 Next Generation Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. COMPREHENSIVE EVERGLADES RESTORATION**
2 **PLAN.**

3 Section 601(d) of the Water Resources Development
4 Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-541; 114 Stat. 2684) is
5 amended—

6 (1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “and subject
7 to paragraph (3)” after “subsection (b) or (c)”; and

8 (2) by adding at the end the following:

9 “(3) **EXPEDITED PROJECT IMPLEMENTA-**
10 **TION.**—After completing a project implementation
11 report prepared in accordance with subsections (f)
12 and (h), the Secretary may carry out, without any
13 further congressional authorization—

14 “(A) any project identified in the Plan for
15 which a project implementation report is com-
16 pleted that is in accordance with an integrated
17 delivery schedule approved by the Chief of En-
18 gineers and the South Florida Water Manage-
19 ment District, in consultation with the South
20 Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force,
21 subject to the condition that the report is com-
22 pleted not later than 5 years after the date of
23 enactment of this paragraph; and

24 “(B) any group of projects under the Plan
25 that the Secretary determines will provide re-
26 gional or watershed ecosystem or water supply

1 benefits if the group of projects is constructed
2 in accordance with a project implementation re-
3 port approved by the Chief of Engineers and
4 the South Florida Water Management District,
5 in consultation with the South Florida Eco-
6 system Restoration Task Force, not later than
7 5 years after the date of enactment of this
8 paragraph.”.

○

COMPREHENSIVE EVERGLADES RESTORATION PLAN | CERP



CURRENT CERP PROJECTS

More than 50 projects make up the CERP effort. Because of their size and complexity, several projects have multiple components, such as reservoirs and stormwater treatment areas. In total, there are 68 individual components that make up the more than 50 projects in the plan.

The USACE is currently planning, designing and constructing multiple CERP projects in partnership with the SFMWD. The current CERP projects are broken down into two generations:

- **Generation 1:** Authorized in 2007; Currently under construction (with the exception of Melaleuca Eradication, completed in 2013)
- **Generation 2:** Authorized in 2014; Currently being designed (Some project features constructed by SFWMD in advance of authorization)

These projects work in concert with the Foundation Projects, authorized prior to CERP.

Together, all these projects aim to get the right amount of water, of the right quality, delivered to the right places, at the right times. This is done by utilizing several basic project features that capture, store, treat, and redistribute water through the natural ecosystem to restore and revitalize the Everglades.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

VISIT: <http://bit.ly/EvergladesRestoration>

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS



TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

2016 Legislative Priorities

Restore the Everglades and Eliminate Harmful Freshwater Discharges into the St. Lucie River Estuary and Indian River and Lake Worth Lagoons



Legislative Initiatives in Support of these Priorities Include:

- significantly increasing the long-term use of Land Acquisition Trust Fund (Amendment 1) monies for Everglades restoration, including bonding these monies;
- restoring historic flows south to Everglades National Park;
- creating significant additional storage in the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River/Indian River Lagoon Estuary basins;
- establishing water management system interconnections between the St. Johns River Water Management District and South Florida Water Management District beneficial to Everglades and regional estuary restoration, and protection of the Region's drinking water supply;
- creating significant additional storage in the Northern and Southern Everglades;
- adequately funding local government efforts to comply with Total Maximum Daily Load regulations and targets contained in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Basin Management Action Plans;
- supporting local and regional efforts to increase water storage, aquifer recharge and the health and longevity of the Region's ground and surface fresh water supply;
- better managing Lake Okeechobee and improving the Herbert Hoover Dike;
- increasing freshwater flows to the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River; and
- increase funding for and reduce the cost of converting coastal septic systems to central sewer systems and provide incentives for property owners and local governments to encourage conversions.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
Palm Beach • Martin • St. Lucie • Indian River

DRAFT

Subject to Modifications

RESOLUTION #16-04

A RESOLUTION OF THE TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL REPRESENTING THE 54 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OF INDIAN RIVER, MARTIN, PALM BEACH, AND ST. LUCIE COUNTIES, FLORIDA SUPPORTING U.S. SENATE BILL 2481 (EVERGLADES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION ACT) FOR EVERGLADES RESTORATION AND REDUCING HARMFUL FRESHWATER DISCHARGES TO THE ST. LUCIE AND CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER ESTUARIES AND THE INDIAN RIVER AND LAKE WORTH LAGOONS

WHEREAS, the Everglades, Lake Okeechobee, St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee River estuaries, and Indian River and Lake Worth lagoons are imperiled ecosystems and waters of the state; and

WHEREAS, the health of these ecosystems is critical to the economy and quality of life of the Treasure Coast Region and all of southern Florida; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Senate Bill 2481 should result in actions to more quickly advance CERP projects to restore the long-term health and ecological and economic productivity of these ecosystems of statewide and national importance; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Senate Bill 2481 is in support of and consistent with the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council's 2016 legislative priorities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL FULLY SUPPORTS U.S. SENATE BILL 2481 TO RESTORE THE EVERGLADES ECOSYSTEM AND ELIMINATE HARMFUL FRESHWATER DISCHARGES TO THE ST. LUCIE AND CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER ESTUARIES AND THE INDIAN RIVER AND LAKE WORTH LAGOONS.

DULY ADOPTED by the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council this 18th day of March 2016.

Michael Davis
Chairman

Michael J. Busha
Executive Director