

Why Restore the Everglades?

- ✓ **1 in 3 Floridians depend on the Everglades for their daily supply of drinking water.**
- ✓ **To protect our waterways, estuaries and other water bodies from toxic algae outbreaks that kill fish and cause respiratory and other health problems in children & adults.**
- ✓ **To protect key Florida job-producing industries: tourism, boating, real estate, commercial and recreational fishing.**

2012 Legislative Priorities

(1) Funding to Restore the Everglades: In 2000, the Legislature passed a law authorizing an annual appropriation of \$100 million to fund Everglades restoration projects. While all Americans receive the benefits of these projects, being a federal/state partnership, Florida is expected to cover only 50% of these Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) projects. In FY 2012, the Legislature appropriated only \$30 million for these critical projects, down from \$50 million in FY 2011.

Action Item: Support the Governor's recommendation of \$40 million dollars as a minimum level of funding and work toward restoring the annual \$100 million budget for CERP projects. The Governor's request will help provide funds to craft a settlement to longstanding litigation. Prioritize funds on completing projects underway and on projects within the central Everglades that provide greatest water quality and quantity benefits.

(2) Safeguarding Integrity of Water Management Districts to Secure Water Supply and Implement Everglades Restoration Projects: In 2011, the legislature reduced funding for the State's five water management districts.

Action Item: Revise SB 2142 that restricted the ad valorem revenues of Florida's water management districts to ensure that the SFWMD can accomplish its core mission, including completing CERP projects.

(3) Protecting the Public's Water Supply: Florida's water laws, contained within Chapter 373 Part II Florida Statutes maintain a careful balance between water for consumptive uses – urban, industry and agriculture - and water for natural systems. Under Florida law, water is managed for the benefit of the public. To ensure that water is available for the greater Everglades and other natural systems, balance in Florida's water laws should maintained.

Action Item: Do not support efforts to weaken Florida's water laws by changing the three part test for consumptive use permitting, changing definitions of water, or allowing long term consumptive use permits that cannot be revised.