



For Immediate Release  
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## Donalds Calls For Bolstering Everglades Restoration in FY'26

NAPLES, Fla. – Congressman Byron Donalds joined Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), and a bipartisan delegation of eighteen additional colleagues from the Sunshine State in calling on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to continue its bold vision for Everglades restoration in the FY'26 President's Budget.

Read the full text of the letter [HERE](#) or below:

The Honorable Michael Connor  
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works  
Headquarters, US Army Corps of Engineers  
441 G. Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Dear Mr. Connor:

Since 2019, more than 65 federal, state, and regional projects have either been completed, broken ground, or hit major milestones - including the C-44 reservoir, the Stormwater Treatment Cell 1 in the Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir, and restoration of the Herbert Hoover Dike surrounding Lake Okeechobee. We appreciate your leadership and support for restoration of America's Everglades through the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and as members of the Everglades Caucus, we are excited by the current progress and momentum.

As you know, the Everglades is a national treasure, one of the true ecological wonders of the world, and further efforts to preserve this unique ecosystem is vitally important to its long-term viability. Comprised of the diverse habitats and sweeping watershed that includes over 2.5 million acres of federally protected lands and waters at Everglades National Park, Biscayne National Park, Big Cypress National Preserve, and fourteen National Wildlife Refuges; 2,800 nautical miles of marine habitat at the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary; and environmentally and culturally significant Tribal Lands, its restoration is no small undertaking but is undoubtedly a worthy one.

The real progress being made by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the State of Florida goes hand in hand with the increased investment at both the Federal and State levels. This partnership continues to flourish as we all work together to restore the historic flow of the Everglades which proves vital to Florida's environment, economy, drinking water supply, and quality of life. As the Biden-Harris Administration begins to formulate their budget for USACE Civil Works as part of the FY26 President's Budget, we write today to share our esteemed support for the continuation of funding for the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration line that meet or exceed \$725 million – the amount that has been requested by the Florida Delegation for the past four years. The Everglades is central to Florida's economy; its biodiversity is truly an environmental marvel, home to one of the world's largest wetlands frequented by over a million visitors each year.

We are blessed to have natural treasures like the Everglades National Park right in our backyards, that over eight million Floridians rely on for their drinking water. We hope the FY26 President's budget, with your input, will continue the bold vision for Everglades restoration – a banner example of America's ability to restore the environment, and in doing so support the economy, livelihood, and way of life for millions in Florida.

Thank you again for your leadership and we hope you will consider, within all applicable rules and regulations, our input as you work to generate the Civil Works' portion of the FY26 President's Budget.

Sincerely,

**Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) Member of Congress**  
**Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) Member of Congress**  
**Byron Donalds (R-FL) Member of Congress**  
Scott Franklin (R-FL) Member of Congress  
Maria Elvira Salazar (R-FL) Member of Congress  
Bill Posey (R-FL) Member of Congress  
Darren Soto (D-FL) Member of Congress  
Carlos A. Gimenez (R-FL) Member of Congress  
Gus M. Bilirakis (R-FL) Member of Congress  
Lois Frankel (D-FL) Member of Congress  
Michael Waltz (R-FL) Member of Congress  
Kathy Castor (D-FL) Member of Congress  
Jared Moskowitz (D-FL) Member of Congress  
John H. Rutherford (R-FL) Member of Congress  
Daniel Webster (R-FL) Member of Congress  
Maxwell Alejandro Frost (D-FL) Member of Congress  
Frederica S. Wilson (D-FL) Member of Congress  
Brian Mast (R-FL) Member of Congress  
Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick (D-FL) Member of Congress  
Vern Buchanan (R-FL) Member of Congress  
Neal P. Dunn (R-FL) Member of Congress

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