

July 13th 2026

The Honorable John Kennedy
Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development,
and Related Agencies
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development, and Related Agencies
188 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 2050

Chair Kennedy and Ranking Member Murray,

The undersigned recreational fishing and boating community members, conservation organizations, professional societies, and maritime and angling businesses are committed to protecting and restoring America's Everglades. We appreciate the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies and the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies' long-time support for Everglades restoration and look forward to continuing to work with you to advance vital Everglades and other critical watershed restoration and improvement projects in the FY27 appropriations bills. Together, through robust funding for the programs outlined below, you can play a vital role in ensuring that the Everglades is preserved as a unique ecosystem for all Americans to enjoy while also helping to create sustainable jobs.

Congress has made historic investments to advance Everglades restoration projects, including \$461 million in federal funding for the Army Corps of Engineers' South Florida Ecosystem Restoration (SFER) Program in FY26. America's hunters, anglers, conservationists, and recreational boaters are grateful for the bipartisan support for the Everglades and these landmark investments.

We have a unique opportunity to see the biggest ecosystem benefits of Everglades restoration actualized, with some of the largest and most important Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) projects underway. To keep pace with state investments, Congress should significantly increase funding for Army Corps Everglades restoration efforts over the coming years. Such an investment would allow the Corps to accelerate construction of already-authorized Everglades restoration projects to protect drinking water supplies, enhance wildlife habitat, create thousands of jobs, and provide a much-needed boost to Florida's tourism, real estate, and outdoor economy. Additionally, according to the federal government's own estimates, investing more federal dollars now will save American taxpayers over \$2 billion on the overall cost of Everglades restoration.

To keep pace with state investments, sustain this cost-saving approach, and create conservation-oriented jobs, we request that the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies appropriate no less than \$725 million for SFER in FY27. Annually funding SFER at this amount would allow the Army Corps of Engineers to execute contracts for authorized projects on the CERP Integrated Delivery Schedule. These funding levels would not only lead to timely completion of Everglades restoration projects, but to the creation of over 65,000 jobs, per USACE Jacksonville's estimates.

Recreational fishing and boating alone have a \$31.3 billion economic footprint in Florida and support over 109,912 jobs, and the beating heart of that outdoor recreation economy is the Everglades system. Now more than ever, it is critical that we invest in the restoration of this system and, in turn, provide a boost to this unique and vibrant economy. Your continued support and commitment to the Everglades will ensure a bright future for Florida's outdoor recreation industry and the millions of anglers and boaters from around the world who visit this iconic and productive location. We look forward to working with you to restore and conserve one of America's most unique and diverse ecosystems.

Sincerely,

American Sportfishing Association

Angler Action Foundation

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S.)

Captains for Clean Water

Fly Fishers International

Guy Harvey Foundation

National Wildlife Federation

The Wildlife Society

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

Wildlife Management Institute