

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

December 7, 2021

The Honorable Michael Connor
Assistant Secretary of the Army – Civil Works
Department of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Connor:

Congratulations on your recent confirmation. Pursuant to Public Law 117-58, you are required to produce a Work Plan for the allocation of supplemental funds appropriated to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers no later than January 14, 2022. As you finalize the planning and selection process for efforts that will receive supplemental funding in the fiscal years 2022 through 2024, we request that all proposed and ongoing projects in Florida receive full and fair consideration of their value to local communities, our state, and our nation.

To maintain the historic progress that has been made in recent years towards fully restoring America's Everglades, we strongly urge you to allocate no less than \$1.5 billion in supplemental construction funding for South Florida Ecosystem Restoration (SFER). This level of funding is critical for efforts to advance the expeditious completion of Everglades restoration. It is our expectation that, of the funds allocated for SFER, significant funding for the construction of the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir will be allocated in the supplemental Work Plan. Continuing contract clause authority for CEPP and the EAA Reservoir should be approved in addition to major investment through the supplemental Work Plan to expedite reservoir construction and reduce the long-term cost of the project. Additionally, the CEPP North Validation Report must be delivered as soon as possible so a project partnership agreement with the South Florida Water Management District can be executed no later than May, 2022, to preserve the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) cost-share balance.

We look forward to working with your office, as well as U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Headquarters, South Atlantic Division, and Jacksonville and Mobile District offices, to ensure sufficient resources to fund feasibility studies, preconstruction engineering and design (PED) work, and construction, as warranted throughout Florida.

We specifically support funding to allow the below projects to achieve and sustain significant momentum towards completion:

- **Broward County, FL Shore Protection Project**
- **C&SF Project Flood Control Restudy** – *Proposed to improve the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of South Florida's aging water management infrastructure in concert with*

concurrent efforts to enhance the region's water management and resilience, including through CERP, LOSOM, and the South Atlantic Coastal Study.

- **Caño Martín Peña, PR** – *New start required for an urgently needed ecosystem restoration project with flood control benefits.*
- **Charlotte County, FL**
- **Collier County, FL Beach Erosion Control Project**
- **Dade County, FL Beach Erosion Control and Hurricane Protection Project** – *Incorporate Key Biscayne Shore Damage Mitigation, Key Biscayne, FL as part of this project.*
- **Daytona Beach Flood Protection Project**
- **Duval County, FL Beach Erosion Control Project** – *Next beach renourishment scheduled for 2023.*
- **Florida Keys Water Quality Improvements**
- **Fort Pierce Beach, St. Lucie County, FL**
- **Lee County, FL Beach Erosion Control**
- **Manatee Harbor, FL**
- **Miami Harbor Channel, FL** – *Payments owed to non-federal sponsor.*
- **Miami Harbor Improvements, FL**
- **Nassau County, FL Shore Protection Project** – *Next beach renourishment scheduled for Fiscal Year 2024.*
- **Okaloosa County, FL Shore Protection Project**
- **Palm Beach County, FL Beach Erosion Control Project**
- **Panama City Harbor, FL**
- **Pinellas County, FL Shore Protection Project** – *Includes need to come to an agreement with Pinellas County over easements to allow beach renourishment to commence in Fiscal Year 2022.*
- **Port Everglades Harbor, FL**
- **Putnam County Comprehensive Water Supply Infrastructure Modernization Project (Palatka, FL)**
- **Shingle Creek and Kissimmee River, Osceola County** – *Feasibility Study for ecosystem restoration project authorized in WRDA 2020.*
- **South Atlantic Coastal Study**
- **South Dade Flood Protection Project** – *Study, design, and construction of a comprehensive seepage management solution along the boundary of the eastern Everglades to maintain current levels of flood protection service for landowners subjected to a rising water table.*
- **South Florida Ecosystem Restoration, FL** – *To include:*
 - *Adaptive Assessment and Monitoring*
 - *Bird Drive Basin Conveyance, Seepage Collection, and Recharge;*
 - *Biscayne Bay and Southeastern Everglades Ecosystem Restoration;*
 - *Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands;*
 - *Broward County Water Preserve Areas;*
 - *C-111 South Dade (Design for features authorized in WRDA 2020);*
 - *C-111 Spreader Canal;*
 - *C-43 Caloosahatchee West Basin Storage Reservoir;*

- *Central Everglades Planning Project (including expeditious delivery of CEPP North Validation Report and the execution of CEPP PPA North no later than May, 2022);*
- *Indian River Lagoon-South (C-23/C-24 Reservoirs);*
- *Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration;*
- *Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration;*
- *Picayune Strand; and*
- *Program Level Activities (PLA) Program Management;*
- *Western Everglades Restoration.*
- **St. Augustine Back Bay Study**
- **St. Johns County, FL Shore Protection Project** – *Next beach renourishment scheduled for 2023.*
- **St. John’s River and Lake Jesup** – *Feasibility Study for ecosystem restoration project authorized in WRDA 2020.*
- **St. Lucie Inlet** – *Southern Jetty Improvements*
- **Tampa Harbor Improvements, FL** – *General Re-evaluation Report to support improved channel navigability and reduce increasing annual O&M needs.*

Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) projects are critical to supporting local communities that may not otherwise have the means to complete water resources infrastructure projects on their own, or are not able to compete with larger national projects. We encourage the Corps to dedicate resources and take action to fulfill the goals of the following proposed and ongoing CAP projects in the state:

- **Alligator Creek, Starke, FL (Sec. 205)**
- **Big Fishweir Creek, Jacksonville, FL (Sec. 206)**
- **Ft. George Inlet, Jacksonville, FL (Sec. 111)**
- **Lake Toho Restoration, Osceola County, FL (Sec. 1135)**
- **Lake Worth Lagoon, Palm Beach County, FL (Sec. 1135)**
- **Pahokee Restoration, Pahokee, FL (Sec. 1135)**
- **Porpoise Point Shoreline Restoration Project, St. Johns County, FL (Sec. 103)**
- **St. Francis Barracks Seawall, St. Augustine, FL (Sec. 14)**

We also support the allocation of all necessary Operation and Maintenance funding in the supplemental Work Plan—including legally obligated, yet outstanding, payments owed to local project sponsors to cover the federal cost-share for work completed by those project sponsors—for the following projects:

- **Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, FL** –*Includes the Fernandina to St. Johns River, St. Johns River to Miami, and Miami to Key West segments.*
- **Anclote River, FL**
- **Apalachicola, Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers, GA, AL & FL**
- **Apalachicola Bay, FL**
- **Canaveral Harbor, FL**
- **Canaveral Harbor NOTU Dredging**
- **Central & Southern Florida, FL**
- **East Pass Channel, Destin, FL**

- **Escambia and Conecuh Rivers, FL & AL**
- **Fernandina Harbor – Kings Bay**
- **Fort Myers Beach, FL**
- **Fort Pierce Harbor, FL**
- **Gulf Intracoastal Waterway** – *Includes the Florida portion of the Northern Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and the Western Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (Caloosahatchee River to Anclote River).*
- **Harmful Algal Bloom Demonstration Program** – *Lake Okeechobee*
- **Inspection of Completed Works, FL**
- **Jacksonville Harbor, FL**
- **Jim Woodruff Lock and Dam, Lake Seminole, FL, AL & GA** – *Includes need for shoreline management activities and enhanced aquatic plant control.*
- **Kissimmee River, FL** – *Includes need for post-construction monitoring for recently-completed Kissimmee River Restoration Project.*
- **Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual revision**
- **Manatee Harbor, FL** – *Includes need for reimbursements as directed in Senate Report 116-102.*
- **Miami Harbor, FL**
- **Naples to Big Marco Pass, Collier County, FL**
- **Okeechobee Waterway, FL**
- **Palm Beach Harbor, FL**
- **Panama City Harbor, FL**
- **Pensacola Harbor, FL**
- **Ponce de Leon Inlet, FL**
- **Port Everglades Harbor, FL**
- **Port St. Joe Harbor, FL**
- **Project Condition Surveys, FL**
- **Removal of Aquatic Growth, FL**
- **St. Augustine Harbor, FL**
- **St. Johns River, FL**
- **St. Lucie Inlet Dredging**
- **Suwannee River, FL**
- **Scheduling Reservoir Operations, FL**
- **South Florida Ecosystem Restoration, FL** – *Includes payments owed to the South Florida Water Management District and the Seminole Tribe of Florida for work performed by local project sponsors.*
- **Tampa Harbor, FL** – *Includes need for advanced maintenance funds to ensure short-term navigability of federal channel for post-Panamax vessels.*

Floridians depend on the expertise and diligence of the USACE—often in partnership with non-federal interests—to study, design, construct, maintain, and operate important water resources infrastructure across the Sunshine State. Thank you for your continued efforts in support of these essential projects and ongoing improvements in coordination at all levels of the USACE with non-federal interests in Florida.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'M' and 'R' in a stylized, cursive script.

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the letters 'R' and 'S' in a stylized, cursive script.

Rick Scott
U.S. Senator