

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 5, 2004

Senator Judd Gregg
Chairman
Commerce-Justice-State-Judiciary
Appropriations Subcommittee
S-146A The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Ernest Hollings
Ranking Democrat
Commerce-Justice-State-Judiciary
Appropriations Subcommittee
SH-123
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sirs:

We want to call your attention to a small but important program within the NOAA budget that plays a role in the restoration of the Everglades.

In the past, Congress has approved funding for the South Florida Ecosystem in Coastal Ocean Science, Ocean Resources Conservation and Assessment, National Ocean Service, NOAA. Congress approved \$1.2 million in FY03 and \$1.192 million in FY04. This money has been combined with other NOAA appropriations to fund the interagency science program for the South Florida Project (SFP). The SFP monitors the impact of the water flowing through the Everglades on Florida Bay and other adjacent marine ecosystems, a key indicator of the health of the Everglades ecosystem and the benefits of Everglades Restoration. Unfortunately, no funds for this program were included in either the House or the Senate versions of the FY05 CJS bill.

The reduction in funding for the South Florida Ecosystem within SFP will prevent necessary monitoring programs and, in our view, will undermine the commitment made by Congress when it approved CERP in 2000. We, therefore, hope that you will be able to include for FY05 \$1.2 million for South Florida Ecosystem (monitoring) in the Coastal Ocean Science/NOAA.

We, therefore, hope that you will be able to include for FY05 \$1,200,000 for South Florida Ecosystem (monitoring) in the Coastal Ocean Science/NOAA.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Bob Dobek with Sen. Bob Graham at 224-3041 or Ms. Bridget Nelson with Sen. Bill Nelson at 224-5274.

Sincerely,




