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Date: April 4, 2008

To: Eric Buermann  
Chairman, Governing Board  
South Florida Water Management District

From: Ted Guy, WRAC Representative for the Rivers Coalition

Re: "Investigation of Current Water Management System Capacity to Discharge Excess Lake Okeechobee Water to the Everglades" by Cal Neidrauer

Dear Mr. Buermann:

The Rivers Coalition voted unanimously, at its March meeting, to communicate to you the following: On Wednesday, March 26, 2008, Cal Neidrauer made a fine and highly detailed presentation to the WRAC Lake "O" Committee in response to Newton Cook's request several months ago for a "Let her rip" estimate of Southward flow capacity for excess water from Lake "O" during wet years.

Cal said he had removed legal and endangered species constraints from the modeling, which he did, but those constraints were addressed in his report.

What he did not remove from the modeling were the artificial, man-made or man-induced physical constraints, such as but not limited to the FDOT imposing a 7.5 ft water depth limit in the L-29 canal and "delta" shoaling downstream of the Tamiami Trail culverts which severely limit the designed flow of 14,000 CFS through the culverts.

His conclusions were, in a nutshell, that a flowway South from the Lake ("Plan Six", which would occupy (by fair market value compensation) about 10% of the EAA's 700,000 acres and provide about 210,000 acre-feet of additional storage South of the Lake, thus restoring part of Nature's "River of Grass")) and would reduce damaging discharges to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries by about 50% in wet years. But at the same time, he concluded that, instead of a water cleansing flow way to provide much needed water to the Everglades, more storage capacity is needed in the form of more reservoirs. He cited CERP, which does nothing to reduce damaging discharges to the Estuaries.

The report unfortunately reflects the District's AG bias and its determination not to rely on Nature but instead on overly expensive engineered solutions with tremendous cost over runs that won't get the job done, on top of previously flawed engineered "solutions".

That District bias has resulted, since and before the 1947 C & SF project, in ruining the ecology of South Florida and the Everglades in favor of developing agriculture and Westward housing development encroaching in to the Everglades. Now, two or three endangered species in the Everglades and development interests in Palm Beach, Broward and Dade Counties are causing destruction of 26 endangered species in the St. Lucie Estuary, not to mention those in the Caloosahatchee Estuary, by sending excess water to the East and West, where it never used to go, instead of South as Nature had adroitly arranged before man interfered.

We heard “shared adversity” bandied about. Why can’t the EAA share it? Why do they get to enjoy continued perfect water supply and drainage?

We heard the “bowl effect” words repeated from Richard Punnett’s misleading West to East transect last summer repeated. We’re not proposing flowing water from West to East; we’re proposing flowing it North to South, the way it used to go and still can. We’re proposing flowing down the trough of the “bowl”, which has a relatively even gradient from 12 ft NGVD immediately South of the Lake to about seven feet above the Tamiami Trail and about four feet below it. If Punnett had run his transect North to South, it would show no “bowl effect”. You have been deceived.

We heard a comment that evaporation would be more of a factor with a flow way than it would from reservoirs. But evaporation and evapotranspiration <SP?> are Nature’s way of building rain clouds that rain on South Florida. That’s good, not bad!

It appears that the new study, as well as the old ones, were all purposely commissioned to show why a flow way would **not** work, instead of being commissioned to analyze whether it **could** work without bias toward AG.

We urgently request that the Governing Board ignore the bureaucratic inbred bias toward AG and look in depth at restoring Nature’s plan. We represent, through our 50 member organizations, an estimated 200,000 taxpayer citizens in the SFWMD on the East Coast, plus many more allied on the West Coast.

Save the Estuaries AND the Everglades AND Lake Okeechobee! Otherwise, the District is contributing to their demise.

Sincerely,

Ted Guy  
WRAC Lake “O” Representative for the Rivers Coalition

Cc: Gov. Charlie Crist  
Congressman Bill Nelson  
Colonel Paul Grosskruger