



# Everglades Coalition

1000 Friends of Florida  
Arthur R. Marshall Foundation  
Audubon of Florida  
Audubon of Southwest Florida  
Audubon Society of the Everglades  
Broward County Audubon Society  
Caloosahatche River Citizens  
Association  
Clean Water Action  
Clean Water Network  
Collier County Audubon Society  
The Conservancy of Southwest  
Florida  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Earthjustice  
Everglades Law Center  
The Environmental Coalition  
Everglades Coordinating Council  
Environment Florida  
Florida Defenders of the  
Environment  
Florida Division of the Izaak  
Walton League of America  
Florida Keys Chapter of the Izaak  
Walton League of America  
Florida Keys Environmental Fund  
Florida Native Plant Society  
Florida Oceanographic Society  
Florida Sierra Club  
Florida Wildlife Federation  
Friends of the Everglades  
Izaak Walton League of America  
Last Stand  
League of Woman Voters of Florida  
Loxahatchee River Coalition  
Mangrove Chapter of the Izaak  
Walton League of America  
Martin County Conservation  
Alliance  
National Audubon Society  
National Parks Conservation  
Association  
National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
The Ocean Conservancy  
The Pegasus Foundation  
Sanibel-Captiva Conservation  
Foundation  
Save It Now, Glades!  
Sierra Club  
Sierra Club Broward Group  
Sierra Club Loxahatchee Group  
Sierra Club Miami Group  
Tropical Audubon Society  
The Urban Environment League  
World Wildlife Fund

April 23, 2008

Chairperson Addie Greene  
Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners  
301 North Olive Avenue  
West Palm Beach, FL

Re: *Mining in the Everglades Agricultural Area*

Dear Chairperson Greene,

The Everglades Coalition is an alliance of 49 national, state, and local organizations who advocate for the restoration, protection and enhancement of the greater Everglades ecosystem.

In the last twenty-four months, Palm Beach County has received applications to mine over 15,000 acres within the EAA. Due to the EAA's critical location and the sensitivity of surrounding lands, uses such as mining have the potential to undermine restoration efforts and cause environmental harm. Large scale mines limit options for restoring flow from Lake Okeechobee to the Everglades, can result in seepage from nearby environmental or water management features, and can negatively impact water quality.

In order to provide sufficient water to the Everglades during drought and to reduce damaging high volume discharges to the estuaries, significantly more land than has been identified in the current Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan will be needed in the EAA for water storage, water quality treatment, and conveyance of water south to the Everglades and Florida Bay.

Uncertainties associated with the ability of Aquifer Storage and Recovery – a key component of the restoration plan - to perform to anticipated levels, the need to treat water prior to storage, the high operations and maintenance costs associated with this technology, and the lack of available land for surface storage elsewhere underscore the need to maintain maximum flexibility for restoration alternatives within the EAA. This need, combined with the potential for mines to cause significant environmental effects makes it even more critical to undertake a comprehensive analysis to the understand the system-wide effects of mining on the region.

Given both the importance of the EAA to Everglades Restoration, and the broad range of issues still unresolved regarding the cumulative environmental

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impact of mining to the region, we ask that the Board of County Commissioners deny the approval of new mines and the expansion of current mines in the EAA. Instead, we encourage the Board to work with the Florida Department of Community Affairs to establish a Resource Management Planning Committee to identify strategies for a comprehensive solution to the issues affecting the EAA.

Again, we ask that you *deny* the applications for new mines and for mining expansion in the EAA, in order to preserve our possibilities for true Everglades Restoration. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sara Fain', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sara Fain  
Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Perry', with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

Mark Perry  
Co-Chair