

Everglades Funding Bill Clears Major Hurdle

(March 15th, 2007)

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) - The Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) cleared an important hurdle today by passing the full House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure by a unanimous voice vote. The bill includes important funding for Everglades Restoration, including the Indian River Lagoon-South project and the Picayune Strand ecosystem restoration project. The bill is now awaiting a Floor vote in the U.S. House of Representatives.

"Funding for important Everglades Restoration projects, including the Indian River Lagoon and the Picayune Strand cleared a major hurdle today. This funding is vital to cleaning up the Everglades. Now it is time for Congress to do its duty and pass this legislation. I am committed to working with my colleagues to get Florida the funding we need," said Congressman Tim Mahoney.

The Water Resources Development Act would authorize critical funding for environmental projects throughout the country, including \$1.37 billion for the Indian River Lagoon-South project for wetlands and estuary restoration and \$375 million for the Picayune Strand ecosystem restoration project.

Congress has not passed a WRDA bill since the year 2000.

These funds would be used to restore native habitat in the Indian River Lagoon, reduce phosphorus and nitrogen load, and remove approximately 7.7 million cubic yards of "muck." The Picayune Strand ecosystem restoration plan would help increase freshwater flows to natural areas. Both projects are critical to the success of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

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