

Mahoney Fast Tracks Everglades Projects

Legislation would Authorize Projects for Indian River Lagoon-South and the Picayune Strand

(January 24th, 2007)

(Washington, D.C.) - Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) is an original cosponsor of a bill introduced Monday that would authorize ecosystem restoration projects for the Indian River Lagoon-South and Picayune Strand. Mahoney is already working to make Everglades restoration a priority in the 110th Congress.

"These projects are critical to cleaning up the St. Lucie River and Lake Okeechobee, and to improving water quality throughout the state. I look forward to working with Senator Nelson and the entire Florida Delegation to ensure that both the Indian River Lagoon-South project and the Picayune Strand restoration are fully funded," said Congressman-elect Tim Mahoney (FL-16).

This bill is a backup plan to authorize funding for Everglades Restoration if the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) is not reauthorized into law this year. Senators Nelson and Martinez introduced identical legislation in the Senate Monday.

The bill would authorize \$1.36 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 enacted a WRDA 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.