



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Jeanette Nuñez
Lt. Governor

Noah Valenstein
Secretary

December 7, 2020

The Honorable R. D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
Department of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Room 3E446
Washington, DC 20310-0108

**Subject: Support for SFWMD's Request to Allocate Funds Under Division B, Title IV
of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018**

Dear Secretary James:

Current high-water stage conditions in the regions surrounding Everglades National Park (ENP) have put a spotlight on the ongoing concerns of local communities to the north and east of ENP regarding changing flood risks. More frequent flood events are impacting these communities and are also harming tribal resources and wildlife habitat in Water Conservation Area 3A. To relieve these impacts from current and future high-water stage events, additional flood protection infrastructure for these communities is urgently needed.

In response to these recurring conditions, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), along with other state and federal agencies, are exploring mitigation options, including the concept of a seepage prevention wall along the eastern border of ENP that would hold more water in the natural areas and minimize seepage in the developed areas to the east. Based upon current analysis, this passive barrier would mitigate flood risk in southwestern Miami-Dade County and could provide significant additional benefits to the north of ENP as well. It is also clear that federal participation in this project would supplement and enhance existing cooperative efforts to achieve and sustain the goals of the Central & Southern Florida Project and South Florida Ecosystem Restoration.

As such, I strongly support SFWMD's request to study and implement a South Dade Flood Protection Project, using the authorities and appropriations provided by Congress in division B, title IV of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, to ensure flood protection level of service is met for the communities to the east and north of ENP.

I look forward to your decision and future coordination with you and the SFWMD on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'N' followed by a horizontal line and a small dot.

Noah Valenstein, Secretary



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

December 4, 2020

The Honorable R. D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
Department of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Room 3E446
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Subject: Request to Allocate Funds Under Division B, Title IV of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018

Dear Secretary James:

As the non-Federal sponsor of the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project and your partner in operating and maintaining this system, I write to draw your attention to pressing flood mitigation needs in Florida's South Dade region. Specifically, flood control and seepage management improvements are necessary to maintain and improve current flood control management features. **I respectfully request that you identify funds appropriated in division B, title IV of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 to study and implement a South Dade Flood Protection Project to ensure flood protection level of service is met for the communities to the east and north of Everglades National Park (ENP).**

It is apparent that we must mitigate reoccurring flooding in this region most recently exposed in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and again this year by an extreme precipitation event in October, followed by Tropical Storm Eta in November. While communities to the east are experiencing flooding, it also prevents operations to mitigate flooding of Miccosukee Tribe resources and wildlife habitat north of ENP in Water Conservation Area 3A. The South Florida Water Management District, along with other state and federal agencies, are investigating the concept of a seepage prevention wall along the eastern border of ENP that would hold more water in the natural areas and minimize seepage in the developed areas to the east. Based upon current analysis, this passive barrier would mitigate flood risk. Based on preliminary work, it is clear that federal participation would provide significant additional benefit to the region.

Thank you for considering our request to fund a South Dade Flood Protection Project. We look forward to working with you further.

Sincerely,

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to read "Drew Bartlett", is written over a horizontal line.

Drew Bartlett
Executive Director

DB/mj