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June 25, 2008

Governor Charlie Crist
Office of the Governor
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Crist,

I have been involved in everglades issues seemingly most of my adult life. I have enjoyed a few 'High Moments' and many moments of 'Great Despair'.

The past ten years have been marked by unachieved great dreams. A combination of the failure of every branch of the federal government to make everglades restoration a national environmental goal and an example of how a damaged ecosystem can be restored even if only partially restored have been disheartening.

There have been major disappointments working with the board and staff of the South Florida Water Management District. The great promise that the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Act held up to all Americans lost its impetus and was heading for significant loss of national support.

Governor, your appointments to the Board of the South Florida Water Management District and the selection of Eric Buermann to be its Chairman revitalized the District staff. Significant differences both in working relationships and communications were realized in a very few months. You were very brave in selecting your appointees. Too many former governors were lured into believing that 'balance' was needed which translated into the everglades ecosystem and Lake Okeechobee being the continual loser when it came time for critically important decisions.

Yesterday's announcement of the plan to acquire the land holdings of the U.S. Sugar Corporation is the most significant single action that could be taken by the state to resolve the desperate need to increase water storage, eliminate the continued phosphorus pollution of the everglades system and allowing, in time, the development of alternatives and options for restorative land use that we cannot foresee at this time. This one bold move will attract the attention of the next federal administration and Congress showing both units of government that Florida, under your bold leadership, means to restore the everglades. It sends a signal - loud and clear - that the administration and Congress must honor their commitments and fund the restoration effort.

You have made one of the most impressive starts as our governor. The combination of your open mind and the selection of a superb staff give you the opportunity to make significant

differences as to how our state grows and matures. Yesterday's announcement reflects genuine courage and foresight.

I am forever grateful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathaniel P. Reed". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "N" and a long, sweeping underline.

Nathaniel P. Reed

P.S. Marjory Stoneman Douglas, shortly before her death, bedeviled by the inaction of the board and staff of the South Florida Water Management District to make meaningful changes in the operation of the Everglades Agricultural Area announced that the only solution was 'to buy them out!'

Marjory is looking down on you with a smile on her face.

cc: Kirk Fordham
Everglades Foundation Executive Committee
Thomas Rumberger