



## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

June 5, 2018

BILL NELSON  
FLORIDA

The Honorable John Barrasso  
Chairman  
Committee on Environment and  
Public Works  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Carper  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Environment and  
Public Works  
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper,

I'm writing to update you on the status of an important Florida project under consideration for the 2018 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) bill and to again respectfully request that its authorization be included in the Senate WRDA bill.

Last week, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sent the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) a favorable review of the post-authorization change report for the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP), which would incorporate the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) reservoir component into CEPP. The EAA reservoir project will add much-needed water storage and treatment to help relieve the stress on Lake Okeechobee, its estuaries, and nearby water storage areas. It's my understanding that the Army Corps made changes to improve the project from the state's plan, adding greater reference to the importance of water quality for this project.

While OMB has 60 days to review the project, I am hopeful the agency will send you the report promptly so that it can be included in the Senate WRDA bill.

It couldn't be more critical to residents, fishermen, and business owners in South Florida who fear another "lost summer" plagued by toxic algae blooms in their waterways. Today, Lake Okeechobee's water level is at 14.22 feet, approaching the high end of the Army Corps' preferred management levels, especially as we enter hurricane season.

In the meantime, I appreciate the inclusion of language I requested directing the Army Corps to expedite construction of the EAA reservoir. Thank you for your continued efforts to advance this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Nelson".