

**United States Senate**  
**WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908**

April 11, 2024

The Honorable Michael Connor  
Assistant Secretary of the Army – Civil Works  
U.S. Department of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Connor:

Pursuant to the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024*, you are required to produce a Work Plan for the allocation of funds appropriated to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) no later than May 8, 2024. As you finalize the planning and selection process for efforts that will receive funding in fiscal year 2024, we request that all proposed and ongoing projects in Florida receive full and fair consideration of their value to local communities, our state, and our nation.

Further, it is our expectation that, of the funds allocated for the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration (SFER) program, significant funding for the construction of the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir will be allocated in the Work Plan, for which you recently approved incremental funding clause authority. We thank you for approving this authority and strongly urge you to direct the Army Corps of Engineers to authorize programmatic incremental funding clause authority for the entire SFER program. Doing so for the entire SFER program would expedite the construction of CERP project components and reduce the overall cost of the program.

The *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023* contained supplemental funding for construction, investigations, Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies (FCCE), and operations and maintenance. Some of these funds have not yet been utilized due to the USACE interpretation of Section 103 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, an interpretation with which we disagree. This policy interpretation continues to impede storm risk management projects, including some that have been performed for decades. The WRDA of 2022 directed you to conduct a review of easement policy and submit a report to Congress. With respect to this review, we urge you to reconsider shoreline easement policy interpretation of WRDA 1986 and direct the USACE to issue new policy guidance that will allow these FCCE funds to be implemented to restore hurricane risk reduction project footprints.

We look forward to working with your office, as well as the USACE Headquarters, South Atlantic Division, and Jacksonville and Mobile District offices, to ensure sufficient resources to fund feasibility studies, preconstruction engineering and design (PED) work, and construction, as warranted throughout Florida.

We specifically support funding to allow the below projects to achieve and sustain significant momentum towards completion:

- **Broward County, FL Shore Protection Project**
- **C&SF Project Flood Control Comprehensive Restudy** – *System-wide restudy proposed to improve the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of South Florida’s aging water management infrastructure in concert with concurrent efforts to enhance the region’s water management and resilience, including through CERP, LOSOM, and the South Atlantic Coastal Study.*
- **Charlotte County, FL**
- **Choctawhatchee-Pea River Basin Study, Walton County, FL**
- **Collier County, FL Beach Erosion Control Project**
- **Dade County, FL Beach Erosion Control and Hurricane Protection Project**
- **Daytona Beach Flood Protection Project**
- **Florida Keys, Monroe County, FL Coastal Storm Risk Management Project**
- **Florida Keys Water Quality Improvements**
- **Fort Pierce Beach, St. Lucie County, FL**
- **Jacksonville Harbor, Florida Outer Channel Improvements**
- **Key Biscayne Flood Risk Management Shoreline Protection Feasibility Study** – *Including consideration of an offshore wave attenuation feature.*
- **Kissimmee River, FL** – *Includes need for post-construction monitoring for recently-completed Kissimmee River Restoration Project.*
- **Lake Runnymede, Florida Study** - *Feasibility Study for ecosystem restoration project authorized in WRDA 2022.*
- **Lake Tohopekaliga, Florida Study** - *Feasibility Study for ecosystem restoration project authorized in WRDA 2022.*
- **Lee County, FL Beach Erosion Control**
- **Manatee Harbor, FL**
- **Martin, St. Lucie, and Palm Beach Counties, FL** – *Includes wastewater infrastructure to improve water quality in the St. Lucie River, Indian River Lagoon, and Lake Worth Lagoon authorized in Section 8375 of WRDA 2022.*
- **Miami Harbor Channel, FL** – *Payments owed to non-federal sponsor.*
- **Miami-Dade County, FL Main Beach Segment Coastal Storm Risk Management Project**
- **Northern Estuaries Ecosystem Restoration Study** - *Feasibility Study for ecosystem restoration project authorized in WRDA 2022.*
- **Okaloosa County, FL Coastal Storm Risk Management Project Palm Beach County, FL Beach Erosion Control Project**
- **Okeechobee County, FL** – *Includes wastewater infrastructure authorized in Section 8375 of WRDA 2022.*
- **Orange County, FL** – *Includes wastewater infrastructure authorized in Section 8375 of WRDA 2022*
- **Panama City Harbor, FL**
- **Pinellas County, FL Shore Protection Project**
- **Pinellas County, FL Coastal Storm Risk Management Project**

- **Polk County, FL** – *Includes design and construction of wastewater and stormwater management infrastructure authorized in Section 8375 of WRDA 2022.*
- **Port Everglades Harbor, FL**
- **Port Tampa Bay and McKay Bay, Florida Study**
- **Putnam County Comprehensive Water Supply Infrastructure Modernization Project (Palatka, FL)**
- **Shingle Creek and Kissimmee River, Osceola County** – *Feasibility Study for ecosystem restoration project authorized in WRDA 2020.*
- **South Dade Flood Protection Project** – *Study, design, and construction of a comprehensive seepage management solution along the boundary of the eastern Everglades to maintain current levels of flood protection service for landowners subjected to a rising water table.*
- **South Florida Ecosystem Restoration, FL** – *To include:*
  - *Adaptive Assessment and Monitoring*
  - *Bird Drive Basin Conveyance, Seepage Collection, and Recharge;*
  - *Biscayne Bay and Southeastern Everglades Ecosystem Restoration;*
  - *Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands;*
  - *Broward County Water Preserve Areas;*
  - *C-111 South Dade (Design for features authorized in WRDA 2020);*
  - *C-111 Spreader Canal;*
  - *C-43 Caloosahatchee West Basin Storage Reservoir;*
  - *Central Everglades Planning Project (including expeditious delivery of CEPP North Validation Report and the execution of CEPP PPA North);*
  - *Indian River Lagoon-South;*
  - *Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration;*
  - *Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration;*
  - *Picayune Strand;*
  - *Program Level Activities (PLA) Program Management; and*
  - *Western Everglades Restoration.*
- **St. Augustine Back Bay Study**
- **St. John’s River and Lake Jesup** – *Feasibility Study for ecosystem restoration project authorized in WRDA 2020.*
- **St. Lucie Inlet** – *Southern Jetty Improvements.*
- **Tampa Back Bay, Florida Study**
- **Town of Longboat Key, Florida Study**
- **Volusia County, Florida Study**

Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) projects are critical to supporting local communities that may not otherwise have the means to complete water resources infrastructure projects on their own, or are not able to compete with larger national projects. We encourage the Corps to dedicate resources and take action to fulfill the goals of the following proposed and ongoing CAP projects in the state:

- **Alligator Creek, Starke, FL (Sec. 205)**
- **Big Fishweir Creek, Jacksonville, FL (Sec. 206)**

- **Ft. George Inlet, Jacksonville, FL (Sec. 111)**
- **Lake Toho Restoration, Osceola County, FL (Sec. 1135)**
- **Lake Worth Lagoon, Palm Beach County, FL (Sec. 1135)**
- **Pahokee Restoration, Pahokee, FL (Sec. 1135)**
- **Porpoise Point Shoreline Restoration Project, St. Johns County, FL (Sec. 103)**
- **St. Francis Barracks Seawall, St. Augustine, FL (Sec. 14)**

We also support the allocation of all necessary Operation and Maintenance funding in the Work Plan—including legally obligated, yet outstanding, payments owed to local project sponsors to cover the federal cost-share for work completed by those project sponsors—for the following projects:

- **Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, FL** – *Includes the Fernandina to St. Johns River, St. Johns River to Miami, and Miami to Key West segments.*
- **Anclote River, FL**
- **Apalachicola, Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers, GA, AL & FL**
- **Apalachicola Bay, FL**
- **Brevard County, FL Shore Protection Project**
- **Canaveral Harbor, FL**
- **Canaveral Harbor NOTU Dredging**
- **Central & Southern Florida, FL**
- **East Pass Channel, Destin, FL**
- **Escambia and Conecuh Rivers, FL & AL**
- **Fernandina Harbor – Kings Bay**
- **Fort Myers Beach, FL**
- **Fort Pierce Harbor, FL**
- **Gulf Intracoastal Waterway** – *Includes the Florida portion of the Northern Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and the Western Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (Caloosahatchee River to Anclote River).*
- **Harmful Algal Bloom Demonstration Program** – *Lake Okeechobee.*
- **Inspection of Completed Works, FL**
- **Jacksonville Harbor, FL**
- **Jim Woodruff Lock and Dam, Lake Seminole, FL, AL & GA** – *Includes need for shoreline management activities and enhanced aquatic plant control.*
- **Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual revision**
- **Manatee Harbor, FL** – *Includes need for reimbursements.*
- **Miami Harbor, FL**
- **Naples to Big Marco Pass, Collier County, FL**
- **Okeechobee Waterway, FL**
- **Palm Beach Harbor, FL**
- **Panama City Harbor, FL**
- **Pensacola Harbor, FL**
- **Ponce de Leon Inlet, FL**
- **Port Everglades Harbor, FL**
- **Port St. Joe Harbor, FL**

- **Project Condition Surveys, FL**
- **Removal of Aquatic Growth, FL**
- **St. Augustine Harbor, FL**
- **St. Johns River, FL**
- **St. Lucie Inlet Dredging**
- **Suwannee River, FL**
- **Scheduling Reservoir Operations, FL**
- **South Florida Ecosystem Restoration, FL** – *Includes payments owed to the South Florida Water Management District and the Seminole Tribe of Florida for work performed by local project sponsors.*
- **Tampa Harbor, FL** – *Includes expeditious completion of the Tampa Harbor General Reevaluation Report.*

Floridians depend on the expertise and diligence of the USACE—often in partnership with non-federal interests—to study, design, construct, maintain, and operate important water resources infrastructure across the Sunshine State. Thank you for your consideration of these essential projects.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator



Rick Scott  
U.S. Senator