



**Council on Environmental Quality  
Executive Office of the President**

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### **Statement by Chairman James L. Connaughton**

“The potential purchase of U.S. Sugar Corporation’s acreage south of Lake Okeechobee is a bold move by the State and the South Florida Water Management District under Acceler8 and would open the way to even more rapid and substantial progress in restoring the Everglades. The 187,000 acres of U.S. Sugar holdings under consideration provides a missing piece of the puzzle of how to move water from one end of the system to the other to revitalize one of our nation’s natural treasures.

This purchase would also advance the State’s compliance with federal water quality requirements by removing a major source of phosphorous from the farming operations and providing area for water storage and natural treatment of waters before going into the Everglades.

As this effort goes forward, the Administration is working to secure the President’s Fiscal Year 2009 Budget request, which includes \$25.2 million for design and construction on Picayune Strand Project and \$4.5 million for design on the Indian River Lagoon-South Project. Most elements of the Modified Water Deliveries Project, a project to begin restoration of more natural hydrological water flows to the Everglades National Park, are near completion.”

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