

**A Resolution of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Objecting to the Construction of Coal-fired Power Plants in the Everglades Basin**

**May 22, 2007**

Whereas, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary was established by President George H. Bush in 1990, and

Whereas, the legislation creating the FKNMS found that adjacent to the Florida Keys land mass are located spectacular, unique, and nationally significant marine environments, including seagrass meadows, mangrove islands, and extensive living coral reefs, and

Whereas, these marine environments support rich biological communities possessing extensive conservation, recreational, commercial, ecological, historic, research, educational, and esthetic values which give this area special national significance, and

Whereas, these environments are the marine equivalent of tropical rain forests in that they support high levels of biological diversity, are fragile and easily susceptible to damage from human activities, and possess high value to human beings if properly conserved, and

Whereas, the south Florida region not only is home to the world's third largest coral barrier reef, but it shelters more than 6 million full-time residents and attracts millions of seasonal visitors annually with nearly 4 million traveling to the Keys alone each year, and

Whereas, Florida's reefs are an important "engine" of the region's economic prosperity generating nearly 40,000 jobs annually in Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward Counties, and producing nearly \$3.4 billion in income and sales, and

Whereas, these marine environments are subject to damage and loss of their ecological integrity from a variety of sources of disturbance, and

Whereas, the EPA states that "The Everglades and other south Florida ecosystems already are stressed by the pressures of human development, with global warming adding additional stresses, such as higher water levels, increased salinity and warmer temperatures, and

Whereas, Governor Crist in the Florida State of the State address of 2007 stated that "Global climate change is one of the most important issues that we will face this century", and

Whereas, fossil fuel emissions are the greatest cause of global warming, with 40% of carbon dioxide emissions coming from coal burning plants, and

Whereas, the US EPA reports that coal is the most polluting of all fossil fuel sources of energy, causing more pollution per unit of electricity than any other fuel,

Whereas, 50% of CO<sub>2</sub> released during the burning of fossil fuels is absorbed by the world's oceans changing the chemical balance of the oceans and weakening coral skeletons which reduce the ability of corals and some marine creatures to grow, and

Whereas, Florida became 3°F warmer over the course of the 20th century with more and stronger tropical storms, sea level rise double that predicted by computer models, increased droughts, and warmer, more acidic oceans in recent years, and

Whereas, elevated sea temperatures caused by a warming world are also contributing to severe coral bleaching events, and rendering corals more susceptible to diseases, and

Whereas, 2005 was the hottest year on record globally, and for the waters of the Caribbean producing extensive coral bleaching from Colombia to the Florida Keys, and

Whereas, since 1930 the sea level has risen 9 inches in Key West, and is increasing at about a foot per century, and

Whereas, on barrier islands such as the Florida Keys, a one-foot rise could put water 200 to 2,000 feet inland, and

Whereas, The Federal Government and the State of Florida have been charged to jointly develop and implement a comprehensive program to reduce pollution in the waters offshore the Florida Keys to protect and restore the water quality, coral reefs, and other marine resources of the Florida Keys environment, and

WHEREAS, the proposed placement of the Glades Power Park (GPP) borders Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area, Lake Okeechobee, Nicodemus Slough and the headwaters of the Caloosahatchee River, all of which are vital components of the south Florida Ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, the operation of the proposed GPP will require 26 million gallons of water per day in and near Water Supply Planning areas currently under drought restrictions; and

WHEREAS, the operation of the proposed GPP will generate oxides of nitrogen, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, particulate matter and sulfuric acid mist, all at least five times the threshold for significant deterioration review; and

WHEREAS, the proposed plant is permitted to emit one hundred eighty pounds of mercury per year which will be deposited on marshlands well equipped biochemically to convert it to methyl mercury; and

WHEREAS, published scientific research has demonstrated that mercury fallout occurs

primarily in a 100 km radius of coal-fired electric generating stations; and

WHEREAS, this 100 km radius includes habitat where endangered and other fish and wildlife species already carry a high body burden of mercury; and

WHEREAS, methyl mercury is a highly toxic chemical that can be absorbed in the bloodstream, that has been proven to harm wildlife, and that US EPA estimates is present at potentially harmful levels in the blood of one out of six pregnant women; and

WHEREAS, the plant is anticipated to emit in excess of 13 million tons of carbon dioxide per year, which emission of carbon dioxide will contribute to the accumulation of greenhouse gases, which contribute to global climate change, and according to international scientific consensus, must be significantly reduced by 2050; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BY THE FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL THAT

Section 1: Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council encourages the State of Florida to focus on conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy sources rather than construct more infrastructure dependent upon non-renewable sources, which are harmful to people and wildlife.

Section 2: Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council is particularly opposed to the proposed Glades Power Park project since it increases Greenhouse Gas emissions in the Everglades, with its corresponding pollution and effects on global climate, while irreversibly setting our energy policies in a direction away from conservation, energy efficiency and renewable resource use.

Section 3: The FKNMS staff is requested to send certified copies of this Resolution to the Governor and members of the Florida cabinet; the Secretary of Florida DEP; FDCA; the Executive Director and Governing board members of the SFWMD; Florida Senator Larcenia J. Bullard and Florida Representatives Ron Saunders, Stan Mayfield, Baxter Troutman, and Trudi Williams; and also to send copies to Dirk Kempthorne, Secretary of the Interior, U.S. Department of the Interior; Matthew J. Hogan, Acting Assistant Secretary of Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Fran P. Mainella, Director, National Park Service, all located at 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240; Pat Hooks, Regional Director, National Park Service Southeast Region, 100 Alabama St. SW, 1924 Building, Atlanta, GA 30303; and Fred Gaske, State Historic Preservation Officer, 505 S. Bronough St., Tallahassee FL 32399-0250.

Passed unanimously on this date: May 22, 2007.