

**EXCERPT FROM THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 17, 2010 MEETING OF
FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL FULLY SUPPORTING THE
CONTINUED RESTORATION OF AMERICA'S EVERGLADES
AND ENDORSING THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE'S
RECOMMENDATION TO BRIDGE AN ADDITIONAL 5.5 MILES
OF THE TAMIAMI TRAIL**

August 17, 2010

WHEREAS, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council recognizes that the restoration of America's Everglades is critical to the long-term sustainability of south Florida's economy, quality of life and environment; and

WHEREAS, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council recognizes that key industries and businesses in South Florida, including commercial and recreational fishing, tourism, real estate, boating, construction and agriculture, depend on a healthy America's Everglades; and

WHEREAS, the two-lane Tamiami Trail highway (U.S. 41), constructed in 1928 to link Tampa to Miami, acts as a dam, blocking vital water flows from the greater Everglades into Everglades National Park and Florida Bay; and

WHEREAS the ecological health of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) and Florida Bay are inextricably linked, and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress, the U.S. National Park Service, the Skyway Coalition, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council, and others recognize that in order to protect and enhance the biological resources of Everglades National Park and Florida Bay and fully restore the Everglades, an 11-mile section of the Tamiami Trail bordering Everglades National Park must be bridged to the greatest extent practicable to allow water to freely flow into the Park; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress directed the National Park Service to "immediately evaluate the feasibility of additional bridge length beyond that to be constructed pursuant to the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park Project (16 U.S.C. 410r-8), including a continuous bridge, or additional bridges or some combination thereof, for the Tamiami Trail to restore more natural water flow to Everglades National Park (ENP) and Florida Bay and for the purpose of restoring habitat within the Park and the ecological connectivity between the Park and the Water Conservation Areas" through the 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act (H.R. 1105; Pub. L. 111-008, dated March 11, 2009); and

WHEREAS, the National Park Service has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Tamiami Trail Modification: Next Steps projects, as directed by Congress, which identifies 5.5 miles of additional bridging as the preferred alternative; and

WHEREAS, the National Park Service's preferred alternative, alternative 6E, will provide the largest measurable environmental benefits to the Everglades ecosystem and a significant boost to South Florida's economy; and

WHEREAS, construction of preferred alternative 6E will create jobs in South Florida's engineering, science and construction sectors; and

WHEREAS, preferred alternative 6E will enhance the unique biological resources that attract over one million visitors from all over the world to Everglades National Park each year;

WHEREAS, preferred alternative 6E seamlessly integrates with the one-mile bridge project currently under construction to restore water flow through the historic River of Grass and to provide maximal environmental benefits to Everglades National Park, the State of Florida's Water Conservation Areas and Florida Bay; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council fully supports the continued restoration of America's Everglades and endorses the National Park Service's preferred alternative 6E, as described in the May 2010 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Tamiami Trail Modifications: Next Steps project, which recommends 5.5 miles of additional bridging on the Tamiami Trail.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council, through the Superintendent, recommends:

SECTION 1. The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council, through the Superintendent, will forward a copy of this resolution to Dan Kimball, Superintendent of Everglades National Park and Colonel Alfred A. Pantano, Jr., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

SECTION 2. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

Passed on this date: August 17, 2010.

The Council is an advisory body to the sanctuary superintendent. The opinions and findings of this publication do not necessarily reflect the position of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, or the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.