

October 16, 2023

Dear Colonel Booth,

I hope that this message finds you well. With deep concern for the delicate state of the natural environment in Water Conservation Area 3A (WCA 3A), I write to you on behalf of the Bergeron Everglades Foundation. As we stood shoulder-deep in the waters of WCA 3A yesterday, bearing witness to the quiet disappearance of the wildlife that once thrived here, our hearts remain heavy with the urgency of this plea for immediate action.

This recent visit to the affected area, accompanied by Betty Osceola of the Miccosukee Tribe and other concerned citizens, has brought to light the alarming consequences of the surging water levels. The disheartening disappearance of our indigenous wildlife and the limited access to our cherished public lands are profound issues that demand immediate attention.





We acknowledge the complexity of the situation and recognize the necessity of managing water resources diligently. However, the critical water control structures, particularly 343A, 343B, 333, and 333N, must remain open to alleviate the current crisis. Furthermore, the scheduled closure of S-12 A on November 1st, followed by S-12 B on December 2nd, will likely exacerbate the impending ecological disaster. We kindly request that you and the Florida Department of Transportation reconsider the decision to move forward with these closures.

As we speak, WCA 3A surpasses the regulation levels by one foot, leaving us a mere six inches away from an emergency deviation. Compounding our apprehension is the South Florida Water Management District's forecast of an exceptionally wet fall season. Closure of these vital structures under such circumstances could lead to irreparable consequences for our delicate ecosystem.

We implore you, Colonel Booth, to recognize the gravity of this situation and take immediate action to prevent the irreversible harm to our environment. While we understand the great challenges entailed in balancing water management, we firmly believe that the preservation of our natural world and the responsible use of water



resources should go hand in hand. Your swift intervention is critical in preventing an ecological catastrophe. We look forward to collaborating with you to explore viable solutions that safeguard the balance of our precious, irreplaceable ecosystem and ensure the sustainable future of WCA 3A. We are grateful for your dedicated attention to this very time sensitive, pressing matter.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Diamond Bergeron" with two asterisks at the end.

Diamond Bergeron
Vice President, Bergeron Everglades Foundation

