



EVERGLADES COALITION

A Resolution of the Everglades Coalition Opposing Oil and Gas Exploration and Development in Bahamian Waters

WHEREAS, the Greater Everglades is the largest subtropical wilderness in the United States and is home to plants and animals that occur nowhere else on earth;

WHEREAS, the Greater Everglades Ecosystem is a vast network of wetlands and watersheds, spanning from the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes to the Florida Keys and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico; and is key to the economic success of Florida;

WHEREAS, the Greater Everglades Ecosystem is a national resource, an international treasure, RAMSAR Wetland of International Importance, World Heritage Site, and International Biosphere Reserve;

WHEREAS, the Greater Everglades Ecosystem and Florida's southeast coast includes internationally significant coastal estuaries of the Indian River Lagoon, Lake Worth Lagoon, Biscayne Bay, Florida Bay and their associated beaches; all of which bring immeasurable cultural, ecological, and economic benefits to Florida;

WHEREAS, the Greater Everglades' coastal habitats are intrinsically linked to the offshore reefs that are vital to Florida's fisheries and a major cultural and economic driver of Florida's economy;

WHEREAS, spills and leaks from oil drilling operations are one of the leading causes of environmental impacts from oil and gas operations, particularly impacts to water resources and soils. Ocean oil drilling operations bring about unacceptable risk that is long reaching in distance, depth, and duration;

WHEREAS, the Greater Everglades Ecosystem is currently under serious threats of oil and gas exploration and development, including significant contributions to greenhouse gas emissions and the climate crisis;

WHEREAS, Florida is already too familiar with significant negative environmental and economic impacts from the substantially similar exploratory oil drilling operation of the Deepwater Horizon, which brought longstanding environmental damage, the effects of which are still felt today. The entire state of Florida felt the economic impact for years from the negative press coverage of the oil spill on our beaches;

WHEREAS, the people of the state of Florida responded by banning oil drilling in state waters through a state constitutional amendment which was voted on by the majority of Florida voters;

WHEREAS, the Bahamas Petroleum Company's exploratory well currently being drilled by the Stena IceMAX is about 150 miles from Florida's east coast, nearly the same distance that the Deepwater Horizon was from Florida's panhandle;

The Everglades Coalition is a 501(c)3 alliance of local, state, and national conservation organizations dedicated to the full protection and restoration of America's Everglades.

WHEREAS, Greater Everglades and its associated beaches' protection is vital to protecting Florida's culture, environment, and economy; proactive prevention is the simplest and most effective means of protection;

WHEREAS, an oil spill on southeast Florida's coast would compromise the multi-billion dollar investment in Greater Everglades and its associated beaches' restoration, seriously jeopardizing Florida's culture and economy;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED ON JANUARY 26TH 2021:

The Everglades Coalition, with its sixty-one member organizations committed to the protection and restoration of the Greater Everglades, hereby opposes oil drilling operations and development in Bahamian waters due to the potential significant harm risked with an operation so near to Florida's coast and the Gulf Stream current.



Mark Perry
Co-Chair



Marisa Carrozzo
Co-Chair

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evergladescoalition.org