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## HUNTING AND ANGLING BUSINESSES NATIONWIDE URGE CONGRESS TO TAKE ACTION ON EVERGLADES

NEW ORLEANS, LA - Today, more than 150 fishing and hunting-focused businesses and organizations sent a letter to Congress asking for bold action to address the ongoing crisis in the Everglades and on Florida's coasts.

"Right now in South Florida, many beaches are covered in green slime and important seagrass beds are dying out. We have projects already drawn up that could have helped avoid this tragedy," said Collin O'Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. "But delays in funding and implementation mean we have failed to prevent this utterly preventable disaster. This letter makes it clear that sportsmen and women across the country want Congress to take action right now to address the fundamental problem. These next steps include authorizing the Central Everglades Planning Project and providing strong levels of funding for the restoration of this incomparable ecological jewel."

South Florida is often called the "Fishing Capital of the World," generating more than \$7.6 billion in annual revenue and supporting over 100,000 jobs. The South Florida coast is known for its abundant sea trout, bonefish, snook, redfish and numerous other species. Marinas, hotels, grocery stores, tackle shops, restaurants, boat dealerships, and other businesses throughout the state rely upon anglers who flock to the Everglades' lakes, wetlands and estuaries.

Manley Fuller, president of the Florida Wildlife Federation added, "We could have stopped this toxic algae from fouling South Florida's beaches and bays and smothering its seagrass beds. The solution has been at hand for many years: We need to expeditiously fund and implement critical elements of Everglades restoration such as the Central Everglades Planning Project, Modified Water Deliveries, Tamiami Trail bridging, and to add significant water treatment and flow-through capacity south of Lake Okeechobee by purchasing critical lands in the Everglades Agricultural Area. This purchase will allow for a significant reduction in the catastrophic discharges to our east and west coast estuaries and will allow for critical flows of treated water south into the Everglades and Florida Bay. We could have prevented

this year's crisis, but we didn't. Anglers and hunters across the country are asking us not make the same mistake again."

[The text of the letter can be found online](#) (pdf).

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