



Office of the Mayor and Town Council

Peggy R. Bell
Mayor

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Town Council
From: Mayor Peggy R. Bell
Date: February 15, 2017
Re: Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project Phase II

REQUEST

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CUTLER BAY, FLORIDA, URGING THE UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND THE SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT TO EXPEDITE PHASE II OF THE BISCAYNE BAY COASTAL WETLANDS PROJECT; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project (CERP) aims to protect and recover the largest ecosystem in Florida, which includes preserving shorelines. The preservation of shorelines is of public interest as it protects the adjacent upland coastal developments from storm damage; provides recreational benefits; supports additional tourism and increase in revenues; and maintains the nesting habits of natural species.

The Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project (the “Project”) is a critical component of CERP, as it is intended to restore natural coastal wetlands and marine habitats in Biscayne Bay and Biscayne National Park. This Project will enhance ecological health by helping to reestablish productive nearshore habitat, including nursery habitat for shrimp, shellfish and fish while improving recreational and educational opportunities in Biscayne Bay and adjacent wetlands.

The Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners and the Village of Key Biscayne have adopted Resolutions urging the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the South Florida Water Management District to expedite the planning of Phase II of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project.

The Project is also critical to the Town’s efforts to adapt to the projected climate impacts of sea level rise that will cause additional saltwater intrusion in areas that are already experiencing significant saltwater migration several miles inland. The Project will help hold back saltwater intrusion and further the Town’s Climate Change Element initiative to promote environmental responsibility at the local level.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Town Council adopt the attached Resolution, urging the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the South Florida Water Management District to expedite the planning of Phase II of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project.

