



April 14, 2003

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Southwest Florida Watershed Council is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that the interests and concerns of all stakeholders within the Caloosahatchee and Big Cypress Watersheds are addressed, and to insure that long term management strategies balance the needs of this region's growth and the natural systems upon which our economy and quality of life depend. Established in 2001 by a diverse group of citizens, public officials, students, agency personnel, and representatives of private interests to focus attention on the water resources of this region, our organization has already begun to identify ways to improve coordination and promote integration among the various interests involved in Southwest Florida's watersheds.

We would like to ask for your support of the following initiatives:

- The Estero Bay Nutrient Management Partnership program—a voluntary partnership amongst public and private interests to improve water quality and help insure the long term health of Estero Bay
- Amendments to the Water Resources Implementation Rule (Chapter 62-40, F.A.C.)—specifically, the amendment relating to Reservations 62-40.474. The provisions set out in this new amendment will potentially make it legally possible to prioritize through “reservation” water flows and levels that sustain our water heritage in Southwest Florida. **We are extremely concerned about provisions in H1005 and S2200 that would repeal the existing language in ss. 373.223(4), F.S that allows the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Water Management Districts to use water reservations. Please do not support these bills!**
- The establishment of a statutory water reservation for the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary to provide a source of water for the natural resources that are the economic base of this region.
- The application for water resource project funding recently submitted to the State by the Lower West Coast Service Center of the South Florida Water Management District.

We appreciate your efforts on behalf of the citizens of Southwest Florida and the Southwest Florida Watershed Council.

Sincerely,
Michael R. Bauer, J.D., Ph.D.
Chairman

The mission of the Southwest Florida Watershed Council is to protect, conserve, manage and/or restore the land and water resources of the Caloosahatchee and Big Cypress Watersheds through participation and cooperation of all stakeholders in consensus building, planning, and decision making to meet the economic, natural and cultural needs for this and succeeding generations.