



**Florida  
Oceanographic  
Society**

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## Resolution

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WHEREAS, prior to 1930 Lake Okeechobee waters would overflow South, and move slowly through the 40-mile wide “River of Grass” Everglades to Florida Bay however the construction of the Herbert Hoover Dike around Lake Okeechobee in 1937 stopped this flow to the South; and

WHEREAS, the 700,000 acres of land south of the Lake is drained for agriculture, mainly sugar cane, and designated as the Everglades Agricultural Area while the waters in the Lake are now controlled by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers using a Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule that discharges water to the East and West from the Lake into coastal estuaries, the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico, instead of South to the Everglades, “River of Grass”; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and South Florida Water Management District continue large volume discharges of polluted, sediment-filled water from Lake Okeechobee into the St. Lucie Estuary, Indian River Lagoon and Caloosahatchee Estuary which have State and Federal protective designations including Aquatic Preserves, Essential Fish Habitat, Outstanding Florida Waters, National Estuary and State Preserve Reefs; and

WHEREAS, these discharges cause devastating impacts to the coastal marine life such as oyster reefs, seagrass beds and nearshore coral reefs and also severely impact the health and welfare of the people and the economies surrounding these vital waterways; and

WHEREAS, the mission of Florida Oceanographic Society is to inspire environmental stewardship of Florida’s coastal ecosystems through education, research and advocacy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Florida Oceanographic Society demands the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and South Florida Water Management District stop the massive, destructive discharges from Lake Okeechobee to the St. Lucie Estuary, Indian River Lagoon and Caloosahatchee Estuary.
2. The Florida Oceanographic Society advocates that the State of Florida and Congress amend the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan to include a “River of Grass” project that provides 500,000 acre-feet of water storage south of the Lake in the EAA connecting to 40,000 acres of existing Stormwater Treatment Areas and with a capacity to move 18,000 cubic feet per second of water out of the Lake providing for dynamic, slow movement of clean water from the Lake through the Everglades to Florida Bay in the approximate amount of 1.5 million acre-feet per year.

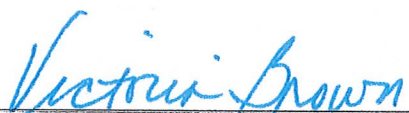
*To inspire environmental stewardship of Florida’s coastal ecosystems through education and research*



3. The Society advocates that the State of Florida use the funds from the 2014 Amendment 1 Land Acquisition Trust Fund to buy the lands necessary for the "River of Grass" project above stated (2) to provide enough storage, treatment and conveyance of water from Lake Okeechobee south to the Everglades and thereby stopping the destructive discharges of Lake water to the northern coastal estuaries.

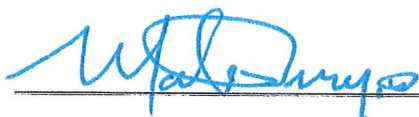
IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, the Board Chair of Florida Oceanographic Society authorizes and forwards this Resolution on behalf of Florida Oceanographic Society by signature below.

DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED THE 24<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF February, 2016.



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Victoria Brown, Chair, Board of Directors  
Florida Oceanographic Society



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Mark Perry, Executive Director, Witness  
Florida Oceanographic Society