

EVERGLADES TRUST

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 30, 2010

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Sugar Cane Growers should be delighted with existing "Third Party" supervision

Recently, the president of Florida's sugar cane coop suggested that the restoration of America's Everglades should be done under the oversight of a "well-intentioned third party to drive a process that is free of politics and self-serving interests." George Wedgeworth should be delighted to learn that just such a party, the Federal Court, is driving the process, and has been for more than two decades.

The Court, overseeing an agreement between the state and the federal governments, has been very clear that the Everglades pollution generated by growers, including the group Mr. Wedgeworth represents, the Sugar Growers Coop, is unacceptable. Water coming off those farms must be cleaned up.

The plan to purchase 72,000 acres of property from US Sugar is a necessary ingredient of the cleansing and represents the most effective and least expensive option for providing clean water and restoring the River of Grass.

"Given the track record of the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative, Mr. Wedgeworth's comments seem to be motivated more out of support for the economic positions of Florida Crystals and their related interests -- and spite for US Sugar than genuine concern over the health of America's Everglades," said Thom Rumberger, chairman of the Everglades Trust.

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The Everglades Trust, Inc. is a 501(c)(4) corporation created to ensure Everglades restoration is completed on time and on budget. The Everglades Trust is the only watchdog group working solely on Everglades issues. It partners with other environmental groups, state and federal officials, citizens and taxpayers to force polluters to stop damaging these vital environmental resources, to pay their fair share for restoration, and to overcome their well-heeled lobbying efforts to disrupt and delay the restoration process. On the web at www.evergladestrust.org.