

From: Williams, Timothy
To: [Howarth, Robert](#); [Downey Magallanes](#); [Bowman, Randal](#)
Subject: Fwd: Invitation letter from Florida Keys Fishing Guides Association to Secretary Zinke
Date: Tuesday, August 22, 2017 6:11:36 AM
Attachments: [Sec. Zinke inv. letter FL Bay 8.15.17.pdf](#)

Dear Secretary Zinke and Assistant Deputy Secretary Cason,

Attached is a letter from the Florida Keys Fishing Guides Association inviting the Secretary on a trip onto Florida Bay in Everglades National Park.

If the Secretary makes it to South Florida or the Everglades we would love to have the opportunity to meet with him to discuss the important issues facing this region and park.

Sincerely,

Peter Frezza

Secretary – Florida Keys Fishing Guides Association

--

Tim Williams
Deputy Director External Affairs
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
Desk: (202) 208-6015
Cell: (202) 706-4982

NOTE: Every email I send or receive is subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act.



August 15, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

RE: An invitation to Everglades National Park and a trip onto Florida Bay from the Florida Keys Fishing Guides Association

Dear Secretary Zinke,

As a Montana sportsman, we know your keen interest in the outdoors. We want to bring your attention to Everglades National Park, one of the most recognized and prestigious of the federally managed lands. The marine waters of this park are in trouble. The largest ecosystem restoration project ever undertaken on earth is needed to try and restore and sustain the ecologic integrity of this wonderful park. However, we would love the opportunity to offer you an outlook from the perspective of fishing guides. Guides observe the waters of this park more closely than any other stakeholder and our clients come from many nations and socio-economic levels. Their common denominator is the love and understanding of the natural world.

Florida Bay, the jewel of this National Park is in a very dire situation. The health of this ecosystem and the fisheries are being plagued by the lack of freshwater that historically flowed here due to decades of water management focused on drainage and flood control. While a plan is in place to mitigate this, the slow pace of Everglades Restoration is not helping. It truly is pivotal that restoration measures be fully implemented as quickly as possible. Progress was recently made with passage and signing of SB 10 by the Florida Legislature, but this will not be nearly enough to rekindle the life of this once vibrant bay.

From the guide's perspective, time is of utter importance. The fisheries within these park waters are in their most precarious state ever. This is confirmed by our guide community, many of which have over 50 years experience. Declining fish abundance, which is plaguing our businesses, is also indicative of the health of the habitat and abundance of other

wildlife, such as the immense flocks of water birds that used to be so prevalent in this bay. These declines in fish and other wildlife, coupled with extensive media attention on massive algal blooms and seagrass die-off are also impacting our economically important industry that brings by far the most visitors to this park.

We would be honored to have the opportunity to meet with you and discuss these issues about the Everglades further. We are offering an invitation to take you out for a boat trip onto Florida Bay. We would be thrilled to take you fishing or wildlife viewing but can also show you the true effects of water mismanagement by the loss of tens of thousands of acres of seagrass habitat resulting from catastrophic rising salinity levels. We are hoping that you could join us and be a strong advocate for Everglades Restoration in Washington. We feel that this would be time very well spent as Secretary, but, as a sportsman, we know that you would find this most enjoyable and leave a lasting memory as well.

Thank you for time.

Respectfully,

The Board of Directors of the Florida Keys Fishing Guides Association



Steve Friedman, Commodore

F.K.F.G.A.

P.O. Box 936

Islamorada, FL 33036

305-393-3474

fkfgacommodore@gmail.com

Ted Wilson, First Vice-Commodore

Peter Frezza, Secretary

Barry Hoffman, Treasurer

Drew Moret, Second Vice-Commodore

Duane Baker, Director

Mike Ehlers, Director

Xavier Figueredo, Director

Brian Helms, Director

Representing all members of the Association