



RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTRAL AND SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT

WHEREAS, there is consensus among the world's leading scientists that global climate change is among the most significant problems facing the world today; and

WHEREAS, Florida is considered one of the most vulnerable areas in the country with respect to the consequences of climate change, with Central and Southwest Florida on the front line to experience the impacts of climate change, including increasing intensity of storms and rising sea levels; and

WHEREAS, the Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership (CHNEP) encompasses parts or all of ten counties and twenty-five cities in Central and Southwest Florida as well as state and federal entities that work collaboratively to protect water and wildlife in the region; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned ten counties in Central and Southwest Florida represent approximately 15% of the total number of counties in the State of Florida, are physically linked one to the other by the rivers that flow to and estuaries that are along the Gulf of Mexico coastline and share some of the world's most renowned natural resources such as the greater Everglades ecosystem and world-class beaches; and

WHEREAS, rising sea levels could limit the effectiveness of critical drainage infrastructure, endanger beaches and coastal natural resources and increase incidents of saltwater intrusion into freshwater surface waters and ground water aquifers —putting at risk the drinking water supply for the entire population of Southwest Florida; and

WHEREAS, local governments, and the region as a whole, must give significant consideration to adaptation strategies designed to protect public infrastructure, property, water resources, natural areas and native species, and basic quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the CHNEP has independently taken steps to address global climate change, and all CHNEP entities recognize that coordinated and collective action needed on this as a defining issue for Central and Southwest Florida in the 21st Century;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COASTAL & HEARTLAND NATIONAL ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP ON THIS DAY OF JANUARY 17, 2020 THAT:

The Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership supports the development of Regional Climate Compact(s) for Central and Southwest Florida.