

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 8, 2016

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Daniel M. Ashe
Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell and Director Ashe:

I write with great concern that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is threatening legal action against the State of Florida, and will ultimately force more water to be discharged from Lake Okeechobee in order to protect 10 snail kite nests. With our waterways being plagued by a harmful algal bloom that is threatening the health and well-being of our people, marine life, and the overall ecology, Governor Rick Scott declared a state of emergency and requested the President declare a federal emergency.

This USFWS directive - to prioritize 10 bird nests over millions of Floridians - is beyond comprehension, and another example of federal bureaucracy run amok. These regulatory decisions are having a real impact on Floridians, our ecology, our economy, and our very way of life up and down the Treasure Coast. I am asking that you immediately reverse this harmful and tone-deaf instruction that, if implemented, will prolong the ecological crisis along Florida's waterways.

I appreciate your immediate attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
United States Senator