

Chuck Todd of NBC News to Moderate Everglades Water Supply Summit

Business, Government, and Conservation Leaders will Gather in Capital to Tackle State's Growing Water Challenges

On January 17th and 18th, 2012 the Everglades Foundation will be hosting a first of its kind event in Tallahassee, Florida. The *Everglades Water Supply Summit* will be filled with informative, thought-provoking events designed to build momentum toward the restoration of a national treasure and to secure Florida's water supply.

The moderator for the event is *NBC News* Chief White House Correspondent Chuck Todd. A Florida native, Todd, is NBC's political director as well as host of the morning MSNBC show, *The Daily Rundown*. Todd appears frequently on the *NBC Nightly News*, *Meet the Press*, and other programs as a political analyst. Before joining NBC, Todd was editor-in-chief of *The Hotline*.

"We are thrilled Chuck is joining us for this significant gathering of leaders," said Paul Tudor Jones II, Chairman of the Everglades Foundation. "He is a respected and thoughtful voice in our nation's political discourse."

Our sense of urgency has never been greater. In 2011, Florida suffered from one of the worst droughts in the state's history. It was the third drought in ten years and meteorologists are predicting another drought in 2012.

Jones said the Water Supply Summit is a unique opportunity for Gov. Rick Scott and Florida lawmakers to discuss with business leaders and concerned Floridians possible solutions to our growing water crisis.

"Anytime you can bring together people who care deeply about Florida's economy, the Everglades and the future of our water supply, you create an opportunity to find answers that will work," said Jones. "If Florida is to prosper in the future, we simply have no choice but to solve this emerging crisis."

Due to the lack of fresh water flowing into the Everglades, saltwater intrusion has begun to threaten South Florida's water supply. Drought-induced toxic algae blooms harmed the Caloosahatchee River and the economy that depends on the river. Earlier this year, the city of West Palm Beach and the town of Palm Beach were within days of running out of water. In Palm Beach County a war over scarce water supplies is looming.

During the Everglades Water Supply Summit, participants will focus on the need to provide a secure and reliable water supply for the 7 million Floridians who depend on the Everglades ecosystem as their main source of fresh drinking water.

Top government officials will join business and conservation leaders to examine long overdue remedies – storing rainwater, cleaning it, and supplying it to those who need it. Prominent voices from across the state will renew the call to restore the Everglades as critical to Florida's economic wellbeing.

The Everglades Water Supply Summit follows the successful 2010 *America's Everglades Summit* in Washington, D.C. that featured top state and federal leaders, as well as hundreds of supporters of the

Everglades. Former NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw hosted a forum on the challenges facing Everglades restoration.

“The success of our Washington summit demonstrated that legislators and policy leaders are eager to participate in discussions about how to improve and enhance our fresh water supply,” said Kirk Fordham, Everglades Foundation CEO. “We look forward to bringing that discussion to Tallahassee at a time when legislators will be in session making critical decisions about the future of Everglades restoration.”

The Everglades Water Supply Summit will be a high-energy, entertaining, multi-media event.

The Water Supply Summit will also feature a performance by recording artist Gavin DeGraw, at The Moon, on the evening of January 17.

“Our approach is to enlighten, educate and entertain,” said Fordham. “We’re particularly excited about having singer, songwriter Gavin DeGraw, perform at The Water Supply Summit. DeGraw’s albums have topped the charts and he will bring excitement and energy to the summit.”