



# EVERGLADES ACTION!

Everglades Action! is our quarterly newsletter providing articles of interest to Foundation stakeholders about restoration developments, water management issues and other ecosystem activities associated with America's Everglades ~ Fall 2010

## EVERGLADES RESTORATION PRODUCES 4:1 RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The Everglades Foundation has released a first-of-its-kind economic study detailing the return on investment generated from funding Everglades restoration projects. The study, conducted by Mather Economics, estimates that restoration will produce an increase in economic benefits of approximately \$46.5 billion that could range up to \$123.9 billion based on an investment of \$11.5 billion.

The report projects the anticipated rate of return for money spent on Everglades restoration as part of the \$11.5 billion Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), over a 50-year period. In addition, the report states more than 400,000 jobs will be created.

"It is clear that Everglades restoration not only produces ecological benefits, but also generates a robust economic boost to our economy. For every dollar spent on Everglades restoration, we are getting four dollars back in the form of higher home values, increased tourism and stronger fishing, boating and tourism industries," said Kirk Fordham, CEO, Everglades Foundation.

The study, including an executive summary and facts sheet can be found on the Everglades Foundation website at [www.evergladesfoundation.org](http://www.evergladesfoundation.org).

## EVERGLADES FOUNDATION PLAYS CRITICAL ROLE IN FLORIDA'S WATER QUALITY FUTURE

### Foundation Scientists Provide Expert Testimony in Key Cases

On August 31, the "Special Master" appointed by a federal judge in a landmark case to oversee progress on meeting water quality standards in Everglades National Park and the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, released a report on his findings to Judge Alan Gold.

The Everglades Trust, Audubon of Florida and the Everglades Foundation science team argued that the state should utilize land acquired from the Talisman Sugar Company for treatment marshes to remove pollutants from water flowing from sugar cane fields into the Everglades.

Florida Crystals, one of the world's largest sugar growers, had been pushing for continued construction of a costly reservoir that would have provided few benefits to the Everglades, but would have served as an abundant irrigation supply for the company's crops.

If Judge Federico Moreno follows the recommendations of the Special Master, they will closely mirror those made in briefs submitted by Foundation scientists Tom Van Lent, Ph.D. and Melodie Naja, Ph.D. "Those on the forefront of water quality issues will come to recognize our expert counsel on these issues as a prime example of the added value the Foundation's highly respected science department provides in driving sound, outcome-based restoration planning," said Kirk Fordham, CEO, Everglades Foundation.



Photo: Everglades National Park

# EPA UNVEILS PLAN TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

Another important ongoing water quality case is the suit brought by the Miccosukee Tribe and the Friends of the Everglades against the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for failing to enforce the Clean Water Act.

Judge Alan Gold agreed, and ordered the EPA to submit a plan that will comply with the Clean Water Act. On Sept. 3, the EPA submitted an "Amended Determination" outlining the plan to clean up pollution from the Everglades Agricultural Area into the Everglades. The state must construct clean-up facilities on 41,300 acres of land. About 18,000 acres of this amount will be constructed on lands acquired as part of the U.S. Sugar Corp. purchase. The state must acquire at least 7,600 additional acres. In addition, the plan has strict criteria for limiting the amount of nutrients coming from sugar fields to the Everglades. This remains a high priority case for the Foundation.



# EVERGLADES FOUNDATION WELCOMES NEW TEAM MEMBERS



The Everglades Foundation recently added two new team members to support its outreach and development efforts. **Vivian Miller** comes on board as the new Everglades education and

outreach director. In her role, Miller will be coordinating Everglades tours and educational briefings for lawmakers and supporters to educate them about the benefits of restoration. Prior to her position with the Everglades Foundation, Miller was director of community relations at the University of Miami. She also worked at Florida International University as the community and alumni coordinator for the College of Architecture and the Arts. She graduated from Florida State University with a bachelor's in anthropology and obtained her masters at the University of Miami.



**Gloria Calle** joins the Foundation as our new development assistant. Prior to her position with the Everglades Foundation, she worked at Excalibur Electronics, Inc., an

international electronics product company. The long-time Miami resident was formerly employed with the multi-national oil and gas company, Cooper Energy Services. She is a graduate of Grace Institute Business School in New York City.

# RESTORATION ADVANCES WITH PROJECT GROUNDBREAKING

The long journey to improve Florida's water management marked another milestone with the groundbreaking at the Site 1 Impoundment/Fran Reich Preserve Project in Palm Beach County recently.

The Hillsboro Canal is a waterway that runs from Lake Okeechobee and passes along the southern border of the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (LNWR). The canal, located partially between Palm Beach and Broward counties, is popular with many Floridians and tourists for recreational boating and fishing.

At present, water from the Hillsboro Canal is not stored and is instead discharged into the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway. When water demands increase during the dry season, the LNWR faces an increased burden to provide much-needed water supply.

The Site 1 Impoundment is a joint U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and South Florida Water Management District project made possible by stimulus funds. It seeks to ease water demands on the LNWR by supplementing water deliveries to the Hillsboro Canal. This is done by capturing and storing excess water. The impoundment will also capture and store excess surface water runoff from the Hillsboro Watershed and releases from LNWR and Lake Okeechobee.



Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Tom Strickland (sixth from the left), and other dignitaries celebrate the Site 1 Impoundment Project Groundbreaking in Palm Beach County.

The \$44 million Site 1 Impoundment is a component of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). Congress authorized the construction of this project in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007.

"This project provides measurable ecological benefits and puts Floridians back to work," said Kirk Fordham, CEO, Everglades Foundation.

This project includes construction of a wildlife wetland area and will facilitate groundwater recharge and prevent saltwater intrusion. In addition, it will reduce water demands from Lake Okeechobee and the LNWR as well as increase drinking water supply and improve water quality.

The project will be conducted in two phases with a final completion date projected for March 2014.

# THE EVERGLADES GETS A GOOD DOSE OF THE "CREEPY CRAWLIES"

A new facility in Davie will be crawling with environmental protectors. Bugs are considered by many, pests, but when it comes to the Everglades, some insects are doing more good than harm.

A new science facility that will raise insects to use as biological control is in the works. These so called 'environmental defenders' will be used to manage the spread of invasive exotic species such as Melaleuca and Brazilian Pepper, which threaten Florida's native plant communities.

This is all part of the Project Partnership Agreement signed by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The facility will be a 2,700-sq.-ft. annex to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) Invasive Plant Research Laboratory in Davie. The facility will be built with \$1.75 million of federal stimulus funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and the SFWMD and the Corps will provide the operations and maintenance funding.

Bugs raised in this new project consist of several types of midges and weevils to target Melaleuca; moths, mites and stem borers that control Lygodium; and



Melaleuca sawfly

sawflies, and thrips that fight Brazilian pepper. All of these insects will be trained and tested by the ARS to target only specific exotic plants. By controlling these foreign invasive plants, these bugs will not only help the Everglades, but all of South Florida's ecosystems.

Construction on the new facility is set for completion by early 2012.

# AMERICA'S EVERGLADES: UNESCO'S DANGER LIST UNDERSCORES THE NEED FOR RESTORATION

*The World Heritage Committee of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) played doctor recently by putting Everglades National Park back on the "List of World Heritage in Danger" sites, a diagnosis that serves as a warning that much work needs to be done to ensure the future health of this treasure trove of biodiversity.*

Everglades National Park and the entire Everglades ecosystem have been on life support for some time. In 1993, the Everglades, the largest sub-tropical wilderness of its kind in the United States, was placed on the list due to damage sustained during Hurricane Andrew. The Everglades was then removed from the list in 2007 as the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) was promoted as the effort underway to save the Everglades.

But as Peter F. Drucker, the American writer and educator notes, "Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work." The initial creation of the CERP in 2000 – the partnership between the state of Florida and federal government designed to save the Everglades – did not produce immediate results. Federal funding did not materialize. These missing dollars were to finance dozens of restoration projects that would alleviate the continued degradation in water quality and reduced water flows that were crippling the Park and ecosystem.

The Everglades should have never been removed from the UNESCO list in the

first place. Senator Bill Nelson and the Obama administration asked the UNESCO committee to put the Park back on the list - a request that underscores the importance of state and federal efforts now underway to restore the famed Everglades ecosystem.

Conventional wisdom suggests there are no short-term solutions available to cure what ails the River of Grass, especially when politics and special interests are thrown into the mix. The prescription to resuscitate this unique wonder of the world that is home to 67 endangered and threatened species calls for quick implementation of the world's largest ecosystem restoration project. While the Everglades remains imperiled, significant progress continues to be made towards saving this great place for future generations.

Over the last two years, things have changed. A stronger state and federal partnership has emerged.

Groundbreakings have occurred on four Everglades ecosystem initiatives. Two of these projects, the C-111 N. Spreader Canal and the bridging of the Tamiami Trail

will provide the sawgrass, mangrove and seagrass habitats of Everglades National Park a much-needed booster shot and deliver improved water flows.

In October, the State of Florida purchased 42 square miles of land that will facilitate the partial clean up of some of the sugar industry's pollution outflows into the Everglades watershed. This vital land acquisition will be a huge leap forward in addressing the water quality problems that plague the Everglades.

There remains a critical need to acquire additional land for wet-season water storage to ensure that Everglades National Park can be sustained during extended dry periods. This new agreement will preserve the state's future option to purchase these additional needed tracts of land. It is the Everglades Foundation's hope that the federal government will also play an enhanced role in partnering with the state of Florida to ensure these lands are acquired and restoration projects are constructed. Until that happens, the ecological fitness of Everglades National Park will continue to be evaluated as being in "critical condition" which justifies its placement on UNESCO's "Danger List."

The Everglades Foundation is dedicated to ensuring a restored Everglades by creating relevant and creative solutions to complex restoration issues.

WWW.EVERGLADESFUNDATION.ORG



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