



WHAT WILL YOUR CONSERVATION LEGACY BE?

All projects listed here are priorities on the Florida Forever list and are eligible for Water and Land Conservation Amendment funds.

The Everglades

Drinking water supply, wildlife habitat, rare species, recreation

Recognized worldwide as a unique and treasured landscape, the Everglades is a vast network of sawgrass marshes, cypress swamps, pine rockland, and mangroves comprising the largest subtropical wilderness in North America. The Everglades is the primary source of drinking water for more than 7 million people—more than one third of Florida’s population—and is home to an extraordinary diversity of animals, including threatened species like the Florida panther, countless wading birds, and hiconic alligator. In 2000, Congress passed the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), putting in motion the largest and most ambitious ecosystem restoration plan in the country. CERP sets forth more than 60 different projects to restore ecosystems, provide flood protection, and ensure clean and abundant water supplies for South Florida's residents. Decades remain before completion.



Shark Valley Observation Deck

Dade County Archipelago

Ecosystem preservation, wildlife habitat, archaeological

On a limestone ridge east of the Everglades, where Miami and Homestead and surrounding farms now stand, were once subtropical pinelands and hardwood hammocks unique to the United States. Now only tiny pieces of these forests remain, the best of which make up the Dade County Archipelago project. In conserving these ecosystems, the project will protect habitat for rare animals and at least 51 rare and endangered plant species found nowhere else in the world. Several of these hammocks also contain significant archaeological sites.

Counties: Miami-Dade

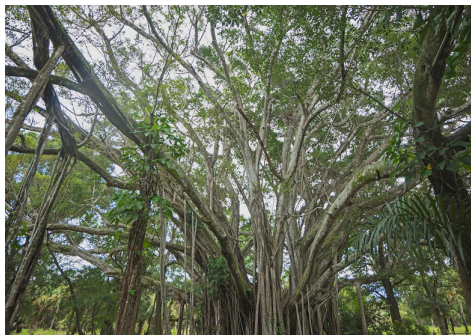


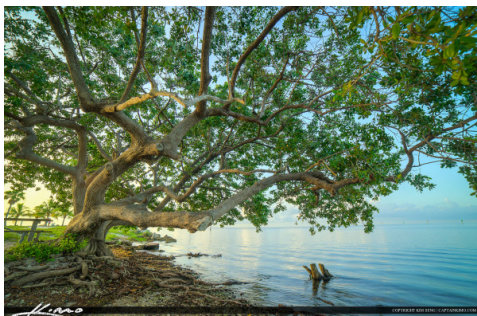
Photo by David Scarola

Miami-Dade County Environmentally Endangered Lands

Water quality, wetlands protection, wildlife habitat, recreation

Concerned about the continuing loss of the last remaining pine rocklands, tropical hardwood hammocks, coastal wetlands, and other natural areas in the county, in 1990 Miami-Dade voters created the Environmentally Endangered Lands Program. Of the nearly 38,000 acres of habitat initially identified through the EEL Program, forty-five percent remain unprotected.

Counties: Miami-Dade



Matheson Park Mangrove at Biscayne Bay, by Kim Seng (Flickr)

Florida Keys Ecosystem

Coral reefs, hardwood hammocks, rare species, recreation

The Florida Keys Ecosystem project will protect the unique tropical hardwood hammocks from South Key Largo to Sugarloaf Key, which shelter rare wildlife, including the Key Deer and Lower Keys Rabbit. It will also help protect the Outstanding Florida Waters of the Keys, recreational and commercial fisheries, and coral reefs around the islands that are an important draw for visitors and residents alike. While the Florida Cabinet recently approved acquisition of nearly 930 acres, nearly half of the project area remains unprotected from rapid development within the Keys.

Counties: Monroe



"Florida Keys Ecosystem," by Jeff Ripple (www.LINC.us)