

Tropical Audubon Society

The Voice of Conservation in South Florida



**14th Water
Information Summit
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Tropical Audubon Society

The Voice of Conservation in South Florida



Purpose

Conservation

- protect the natural world
- stewardship of natural resources.

Education

- promote understanding of nature, the environment, and ecological relationships.

Enjoyment

- Offer hands on experience with nature for everyone.
- Birding!



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Key Environmental Issues in South Florida



Everglades
Restoration



Bird
Conservation



Growth
Management



Biscayne Bay
Issues

**Leveraging Science
in
Advocacy Work**

Leveraging Science in Advocacy

- Science is the bedrock of advocacy
 - Foundation of evidence-based decision making and policy-setting
- Goal: get all parties to agree on the science
 - Focus on identifying and implementing best solution to the problem at hand.

Role of an Advocate

- **Identify Relevant Research**

issue-specific, seek out pre-eminent researchers

- Academic literature (peer-reviewed, independent)
- Government agencies (monitoring, analyze policies)
- Private sector – foundations, industry groups

- **Interpret and Summarize Research Results**

- Message or emphasis will differ depending on audience

Know Your Audience

- **Focus the Message; Always ask for action**
 - Policy-makers, legislators
 - Colleagues/collaborators
 - Grassroots supporters
 - General public
- **Method of communication**
 - Position paper
 - Presentations and leave behind literature
 - Fact Sheet
 - Newsletter, Blogs, website posting
 - E-blasts for quick action on an issue
 - Texting, twitter

Know the Opposition

- Read their sources of scientific proof
 - Understand how their research draws a different conclusion from your own research
 - Sometimes the opposition's position is NOT evidence-based. Make that known
- Be prepared to respond to those who take that counter-point.

Scientific Research in Advocacy Work

- **Public hearings** - enter research documents into the public record
- **Legal action** - supporting information or evidence
- **Fundraising** – show donors and grantors
- **Awareness/education** - of government officials, non-governmental agencies, the public

Use of Science by TAS

Port Miami legal action

- Scientific data persuaded the court to rule in favor of the environment
 - No dredging at dawn/dusk
 - More environmental monitoring



Use of Science by TAS

- Everglades Coalition (57 organizations)



Everglades Coalition

1000 Friends of Florida
Audubon St. Island/ Florida
Audubon of Florida
Audubon Society of Fla
Everglades
Audubon of Southwest Florida
Citrus/Orange Water Conservation District
Broward
Clear Water Area
Clear Water Watershed
Citrus/Orange Audubon Society
County of Duval/Water
Colleges of WFLA
City of Dade/WFLA
Horticulture
Restoration Florida
The Environmental Coalition
Everglades Coordinating Council
Everglades Foundation
Everglades Law Center
Florida Conservation Alliance
Florida Coalition of the Environment
Florida Epa Restoration Fund
Florida Native Plant Society
Florida Geographic Society
Florida Wildlife Federation
Friends of the Audubon St. Island/Lake
WFLA, Polk
Friends of the Everglades
Wade/Chiles Audubon Society
West/White League Florida Chapter
West/White League Florida Epa Chapter
West/White League International Chapter
West/White League of America
Leon Dade
League of Women Voters of Florida
Lombardi River Coalition
Meyers County Conservation Alliance
National Audubon Society
National Public Conservation Association
National Wildlife Federation
National Wildlife Refuge Association
National Resources Defense Council
The Orange Conservancy
The Springs Foundation
XFPF WFLA
Florida Citizens Conservation Movement
Sun n' Sky, Ocala
Sarasota
Sarasota Bay Research Group
Sarasota Bay Conservation Group
Sarasota Bay Coastal Park Group
Sarasota Bay Florida Chapter
Sarasota Bay Land Trust Group
Sarasota Bay Islands Group
The Florida and Southwest Florida
South Florida Audubon Society
Tampa Bay Audubon Society
The Urban Restoration League
Wade/Chiles Pond

2013 Legislative Agenda

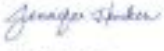
The Everglades is widely recognized as one of the world's unique and spectacular natural wonders. The State of Florida has a compelling interest in protecting and restoring the ecosystem due to its tremendous economic and ecologic value. The Everglades Coalition is an alliance of 57 local, state and national conservation and environmental organizations dedicated to full restoration of the great Everglades ecosystem, from the Restroom Chain of Lakes into Lake Okechobee, through the "River of Grass," onto Florida Bay and the Florida Keys.

The Everglades Coalition urges the state legislature to:

- Provide adequate funding for Everglades restoration, environmental lands, and water quality projects Florida pays for via 59% of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) through legislative appropriations and the South Florida Water Management District budget to encourage formation of economic and environmental benefits. The Florida Legislature should secure former funding levels of \$100 million annually to implement Florida's recently approved Everglades water quality plan and advance construction of vital Everglades projects.
- Promote responsible growth and transportation planning (even in Florida's communities through infrastructure improvements, public transportation, and encourage transit-oriented, and cost-efficient infill development. Planning for new corridors or communities should protect agricultural land flow paths, wildlife corridors, climate resilient and support the restoration of our Everglades.
- Conserve and protect sufficient clean water as an essential public resource for natural systems and economic vitality. One in three Floridians depend on the Everglades for their drinking water. Florida must advance restoration projects that improve water quality and quantity in the Greater Everglades Ecosystem. Water conservation, water quality standards that are safe for swimming and fishing, and ensuring Florida's water remains a public resource, not a private commodity are essential to our economic health.

Thank you for your leadership in protecting Florida's Everglades and Florida's water supply.


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- Develop Legislative Agenda with ‘position statements’
- this is one of the tools used to educate politicians and decision-makers to effect change in policy

Using Science with a Broad Audience

- Everglades Foundation - Fact Sheet

FACT SHEET

EVERGLADES RESTORATION: A 4-TO-1 RETURN ON INVESTMENT

BACKGROUND

The Everglades Foundation has released a comprehensive study detailing the financial return on investment in Everglades ecosystem restoration. Conducted by Mather Economics, the study shows that the country—and the state of Florida in particular—stand to gain significant economic growth and new job creation as a result of America's Everglades restoration.

ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF RESTORING AMERICA'S EVERGLADES

Projections show that investing \$11.5 billion in Everglades restoration will result in \$46.5 billion in gains to Florida's economy and create more than 440,000 jobs over the next 50 years! For every dollar invested in Everglades restoration, \$4 are generated in economic benefits.

ECONOMIC GAINS BY SECTOR

Sector	Percentage	Description
Real Estate	35%	Property values are expected to increase for all 16 counties within the South Florida Water Management District, due to increased quality of drinking and recreational water.
Habitat and Hunting	27%	Restoring the everglades will provide valuable ecosystem habitat. Native wildlife populations will flourish and lead to increased availability of hunting opportunities.
Water Quality	28%	Enhanced availability of freshwater will protect the region's drinking water supply and cut down on costs of purification methods, such as desalination facilities.
Park Visitation	3%	Restoration of the Everglades ecosystem will increase wildlife populations and allow for more recreational opportunities during park visitation for residents and tourists.
Fishing	5%	Recreational and commercial fishing industries will see a significant rebound with the protection of territory and enhanced water quality.
Open Space	2%	Availability of trees and open space will help to offset impacts of sea level rise and global climate change.

EVERGLADES FOUNDATION
evergladesfoundation.org

"Measuring the Economic Benefits of America's Everglades Restoration: An Economic Evaluation of Ecosystem Services Affiliated with the World's Largest Ecosystem," is available in its entirety at www.evergladesfoundation.org.

Focus Message to Specific Audience

FACT SHEET



**EVERGLADES RESTORATION:
A 4-TO-1 RETURN ON INVESTMENT**

Credit: Everglades National Park



evergladesfoundation.org

- Business community of South Florida

Summary of Jobs Results

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Incremental Jobs</u>
Commercial Fishing	6,798
Recreational Fishing	36,868
Residential Construction & Real Estate Services	273,601
Tourism (Lodging, Eating & Drinking, Transportation, Retail, Entertainment)	48,552
Agriculture	(3,724)
Wildlife Habitat & Hunting	80,569
TOTAL	442,664

Source: Measuring the Economic Benefits of America's Everglades Restoration, Mather Economics, Roswell, GA. Bobby McCormick, Ph.D., Principal Investigator. Study Prepared for the Everglades Foundation.

Science Influences Policy

- **Algal blooms** caused by water releases from Lake Okeechobee
 - Need improved policy based on proper Lake water levels and land set aside for containment and nutrient cleansing.
- **Hypersalinity** in Biscayne Bay estuarine habitats
 - Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project was accelerated to release of fresh water into Biscayne Bay
- **‘Surplus’ Lands Protected** - Oleta River State Park
 - Proven environmental services of mangrove forests as habitat for endangered species, storm surge protection, and carbon sequestration

Thank You

Questions?



Thank
you!



NOTES - For slide 'Know your audience'

- Summarize the research
 - Explain why it is important to a given audience (policymakers, grassroots public, fellow agencies/orgs)
 - For legislators, persuade hime/her it is good for their constituents and for their own political standing
 - For grassroots, make it personal about how it impacts the individual, family, friends, community.
 - For fellow non-profits, agencies, orgs. show how it supports their org's position