

Florida State Parks Foundation Sets Goal To Plant 100,000 Longleaf Pines by Earth Day 2021

At least 55-acres of seedlings can be planted

TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, June 23, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Florida State Parks Foundation's Plant a Pine Campaign has been so successful that at least 55-acres of seedlings

can be planted, Foundation President Gil Ziffer, said today.



This campaign has really resonated with the public and for every \$1 donated, we will plant one longleaf pine seedling in a Florida State Park."

Gil Ziffer

The campaign launched on Earth Day and has already raised enough to be able to plant more than 20,000 longleaf pine seedlings, in state parks across Florida. The majority of the first round of seedlings are being planted at Torreya State Park, which was devastated by Hurricane Michael in 2018.

"This campaign has really resonated with the public," he said. "For every \$1 donated, we will plant one longleaf pine seedling in a Florida State Park. People can even dedicate a tree to a loved one. It is a gift that will continue to grow and flourish for many years to come."

The longleaf pine is native to the Southeast and once flourished over a range of 90 million acres. Sadly, it is now endangered, covering less than 3 percent of its original range. They have long been prized for their commercial use in building houses, ships, and railroads and their resin used for making turpentine.

Mature longleaf ecosystems support more than 30 endangered and threatened species, including red-cockaded woodpeckers, gopher tortoises, and indigo snakes. Regular burning to restore their natural rhythms enables longleaf pine to become rich, stable ecosystems. Longleaf pines are fire-adapted and dependent on burning which stabilizes and enriches the soil.

"This campaign has been so successful that we are well on our way to our goal of planting 100,000 trees by Earth Day 2021. The trees are planted in coordination with the Florida Park Service in park areas identified for restoration efforts," said Ziffer.

Groups interested in supporting hands-on tree planting projects can contact the Foundation through its website www.floridastateparksfoundation.org/trees.

The Foundation, founded in 1993 as Friends of Florida State Parks and renamed in 2018, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation whose mission is to support and help sustain the Florida Park Service, its 175 award-winning parks and trails, local Friends groups and more than 20,000 park volunteers.

It does this through programs that preserve and protect state parks, educate visitors about the value of state parks, encourage community engagement and active use of state parks, and advocacy.

The volunteer Board of Directors represents private and public sectors as well as local and statewide interests.

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