

# Florida State Parks Foundation Announces Plan to Plant Another 100,000 Longleaf Pines by Earth Day 2022

*The first round of seedlings were planted at twelve state parks across the state*

TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, April 29, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Florida State Parks Foundation's Plant a Pine Campaign has been so successful that it has been extended for another year, Foundation President Gil Ziffer, said today on the eve of Arbor Day 2021.



This campaign has really resonated with the public and so we have extended it for one more year with the goal of planting another 100,000 seedlings by April 2022."

*Gil Ziffer*

Launched on Earth Day in April 2020, the campaign has just surpassed its twelve-month goal of being able to raise enough money to plant 100,000 longleaf pine seedlings in state parks across Florida. The first round of seedlings were planted at twelve state parks across the state including: Torreya, Ichetucknee Springs, Oscar Scherer, Gold Head Branch and Highlands Hammock State Parks.

"This campaign has really resonated with the public and so we have extended it for one more year with the goal of planting another 100,000 seedlings by April 2022," 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. "The trees are planted in coordination with the Florida Park Service in park areas identified for restoration efforts. Many of these parks were badly affected by hurricane damage over the past

three or four years," said Ziffer.

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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