

Florida State Parks Foundation Welcomes Governor DeSantis' Recommendation To Fully Fund State Parks

Florida's award-winning state parks protect our most precious natural and cultural resources

TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, December 10, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Florida State Parks Foundation welcomed the Governor's recommendation to fully fund Florida's award-winning state parks.

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Tammy Gustafson

“Florida's award-winning state parks protect our most precious natural and cultural resources as well as providing a safe haven for people to recreate and exercise,” said Tammy Gustafson, Foundation President.

“We are delighted that the Governor in his proposed budget released yesterday has allocated \$51.7 million for the Florida Park Service” she said.

\$45 million has been allocated for state park facility

improvements and \$6.7 million for Billy Joe Rish State Park, which includes additional facilities, repairs, and renovations to existing facilities and the removal of access barriers for persons with disabilities. In addition, \$52 million has been allocated for springs restoration and \$100 million from the Florida Forever program for land acquisition. Almost \$1 billion has also been earmarked to continue Everglades restoration.

Florida State Parks represent one of the state's greatest success stories. They are a major contributor to the state's tourism industry, support thousands of jobs, and pour billions of dollars into the state's economy. At the same time, they preserve many of the jewels of our natural environment and Florida's significant historical and cultural sites.

“As the acknowledged premier state park system in the nation, it is vital that Florida State Parks receive full funding. When comparing the \$51.7 million that has been provided in the budget with the \$2.6 billion in economic impact the state parks generated last year from nearly 30 million visitors, it is difficult to think of a better return on the investment anywhere,” she said.

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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