

Florida State Parks Foundation Announces Major Partnership with Duke Energy Florida

Duke Energy Foundation will fund three park projects totaling \$150,000.

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The Florida State Parks Foundation today announced a new collaboration with Duke Energy Florida and the Duke Energy Foundation that will fund three park projects totaling \$150,000.

“We are delighted to be partnering with Duke Energy and its foundation on three separate park projects that will have enormous benefit,” Foundation President Tammy Gustafson said. “It is thanks to our corporate partners like Duke Energy Florida that we are able to achieve so much for our award-winning parks.”



Duke Energy check presentation at Wakulla Springs

The two projects, funded by Duke Energy Florida, involve a new ADA-accessible playground and all-terrain beach and trail wheelchairs. Additionally, the Duke Energy Foundation provided a \$50,000 grant to enhance the Florida Park Service's strike team trailer to assist in emergencies.

The new ADA-accessible playground will be built at Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park which hosts thousands of children each year. The current, outdated playground is not ADA accessible. The new, accessible playground will feature wheelchair-inclusive swings, sensory activities, and ground-level play activities to ensure access for all.

The second project is the purchase of six all-terrain power beach and trail wheelchairs for use at parks statewide. These chairs give people with mobility limitations the freedom to get out on the beach and unpaved trails - places where their own wheelchairs could not go.

The Florida Park Service has several highly trained strike force teams ready to jump into action when disaster strikes, whether fighting wildfires or clearing up after a hurricane. Grant funds will provide new equipment, which will increase the team's effectiveness. The trailer provides for the



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*Melissa Seixas, Duke Energy
Florida state president.*

hauling of large equipment and also includes an enclosed space for power tools, safety gear, and other supplies.

The projects will be completed by the Florida State Parks Foundation Services, LLC, a Florida limited liability company affiliate of the Foundation.

"At Duke Energy, we are strong supporters of diversity and inclusion," said Melissa Seixas, Duke Energy Florida state president. "Through our Duke Energy funding and the Duke Energy Foundation grant, we are proud to support the Florida State Parks Foundation and the amazing work they do to preserve and protect Florida's natural resources and expand access to outdoor recreation opportunities for

all Floridians."

Duke Energy Florida, a subsidiary of Duke Energy, owns a diverse generation mix of natural gas, coal, and renewables, providing about 10,200 megawatts of owned electric capacity to approximately 1.9 million customers in a 13,000-square-mile service area.

The Florida State Parks 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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