

# Florida State Parks Foundation Announces 2022 Small Grants Program Awardees

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, May 3, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Five Florida State Parks Friends groups have been awarded funding through the Florida State Parks Foundation small grants program for 2022. Launched in 2021, the Foundation allocates \$25,000 annually to its small grants program, which awards up to \$5,000 to Friends groups, or citizen support organizations, that advocate for their local state parks and provide direct park operations assistance.



These small grants allow Friends groups at Florida State Parks to complete projects that enhance visitor experience, as well as support accessibility projects and park improvement efforts.”

*Tammy Gustafson, Florida State Parks Foundation President*

The list of this year’s grant recipients includes Friends of St. Joseph State Parks, Friends of Fort Cooper, Friends of Silver Springs State Park, Friends of Collier-Seminole State Park and Friends of the Islamorada Area State Parks.

“These small grants allow Friends groups at Florida State Parks to complete projects that enhance visitor experience, as well as support accessibility projects and park improvement efforts,” said Tammy Gustafson, Florida State Parks Foundation President. “Since the launch of our small grants program, diverse projects have been funded that

make a positive impact at state parks locally and ensure the continued award-winning experiences visitors know and love at Florida State Parks.”

Friends of Collier-Seminole State Park, in Collier County, received nearly \$3,000 to construct an accessible path through a newly created butterfly garden. This will allow visitors who would not otherwise be able to access some of the interpretive trails to experience this recreational and educational opportunity.

Friends of St. Joseph State Parks, in Gulf County, received \$5,000 to purchase a volunteer golf cart to be used by resident volunteers who maintain the campground and cabins. Previous equipment used by volunteers was lost in 2018 when the park suffered significant damage from Hurricane Michael.

Friends of Fort Cooper, in Citrus County, received \$5,000 to reconstruct and restore the state park’s fort wall, which will preserve a piece of Florida’s history. Visitors to Fort Cooper State Park receive a historical experience and learn about the local heritage, with the fort wall being an

important part of this interaction.

Friends of the Islamorada Area State Parks, in the Florida Keys, received \$5,000 to purchase a motorized wheelbarrow that will allow for movement of crushed rock onto narrow and remote areas of trails. In 2020, Windley Key Fossil Reef Geological State Park began adding gravel to its trails, reducing trip hazards and offering a more comfortable and less bumpy ride for all-terrain wheelchair users. The wheelbarrow will allow for the completion of this project, as well as for the ongoing maintenance of trails, and will be available as a resource to nearby state parks.

Friends of Silver Springs State Park, in Marion County, received \$5,000 to purchase a used electric golf cart. Volunteers assist with maintenance of the campgrounds and the golf cart will allow for easier access and transport to the areas for upkeep.

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. These grants are through the Florida State Parks Foundation Services LLC, which is a limited liability company affiliate of the Foundation.

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