

Florida State Parks Foundation celebrates first anniversary of 'Explore Our State Parks' license plate

License plate sales directly benefit Florida's award-winning state parks

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- The Florida State Parks Foundation today celebrates the one-year anniversary of the "Explore Our State Parks" specialty license plate, which debuted on March 28, 2022.



The "Explore Our State Parks" specialty license plate.

In its first year in a crowded market for specialty plates, the "Explore Our State Parks" plate has been an overwhelming success. The plate, designed by Tallahassee-based artist Steve Leacock, has sold more 7,500 units, ranks 72nd among 150 specialty plates in Florida and has generated more than \$185,000 to benefit Florida's award-winning state parks.

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Not only are these plates unique and beautiful, but they also have created an amazing new way for Floridians to support their state parks, trails and historic sites.”

Tammy Gustafson, Florida State Parks Foundation President

Each plate sold contributes \$25 to the Florida State Parks Foundation, the official nonprofit support organization for Florida State Parks.

“The first year of the 'Explore Our State Parks' specialty license plate has exceeded all expectations,” said Tammy Gustafson, president of the Florida State Parks Foundation. “Not only are these plates unique and beautiful, but they also have created an amazing new way for Floridians to support their state parks, trails and historic sites.”

Thanks to an effort spearheaded by Sen. Dennis Baxley and Rep. Allison Tant, Gov. Ron DeSantis signed the

enabling bill to authorize a specialty license plate to benefit Florida State Parks in June of 2021.

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles requires new specialty plates to presell 3,000 units before beginning production and allots two years to reach this goal. The “Explore Our State Parks” plate reached 3,000 presales in just 34 days and came to full fruition a few months later.

“We are so thankful to have bipartisan support for Florida State Parks, and for the Florida Legislature’s assistance in making this plate a reality,” said Julia Gill Woodward, CEO of the Florida State Parks Foundation. “Our state parks are the best in the country, and this plate will help to ensure they stay that way for all future generations.”

It took less than six months for funds generated through the “Explore Our State Parks” plate to benefit parks across the state. In December, the Foundation announced that plate sales had contributed \$25,000 toward the purchase and installation of 121 water bottle refilling stations at 85 parks and trails from the Florida Panhandle to the Keys.

The stations, funded in part through a partnership with Duke Energy Florida, are designed to reduce single-use plastics in state parks and encourage park visitors to think of easy ways they may reduce their environmental footprint. The Foundation next month will unveil further plans to leverage specialty plate revenue into environmentally conscious projects throughout Florida’s state parks.

“We are happy with the positive impacts of the specialty license plates,” said Chuck Hatcher, director of Florida State Parks. “The Foundation is using the proceeds from the plates to help our state parks with important projects. It’s good to see so many people display the pride they feel for state parks on their vehicles. I even have them on my personal vehicles.”

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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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