

# Florida State Parks Foundation applauds another successful legislative session

*Florida's award-winning state parks to receive \$37.4 million for improvements from Florida Legislature*

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, May 5, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Florida State Parks Foundation today celebrates "sine die" by applauding the Florida Legislature's decision to allocate \$37.4 million for improvements in Florida's state parks.



Our state parks are the best in the nation, and we are grateful that our legislators are committed to giving them the resources required to stay that way."

*Tammy Gustafson, Florida State Parks Foundation President*

Including today's newly approved budget, Florida lawmakers have granted more than \$300 million to Florida State Parks over the last three years, a figure that includes two consecutive years of record funding in 2021 and 2022.

Florida State Parks welcomed more than 30 million visitors and generated nearly \$4 billion in direct economic impact on local communities during the most recent fiscal year,

and Florida is the only four-time winner of the National Recreation and Park Association's National Gold Medal Award.

"Our state parks are the best in the nation, and we are grateful that our legislators are committed to giving them the resources required to stay that way," said Tammy Gustafson, president of the Florida State Parks Foundation. "Our dedicated park staff work every day to maintain and improve these amazing natural treasures, and this year's allocation will help to ensure that Florida's state parks are at their very best."

In addition to funding for maintenance, repairs and renovation, the 2023-24 budget also includes two new full-time employment positions, as well as funding for new Other Personnel Services (OPS) positions.

Full-time park staff will also receive a 5% salary increase for a second consecutive year as part of an approved compensation increase for all full-time state employees.

"Florida's state parks are among our state's greatest success stories," said Julia Gill Woodward, CEO of the Florida State Parks Foundation. "Our state parks, trails and historic sites preserve,

protect and maintain the places and wildlife that make Florida unique. At the same time, they create thousands of jobs, generate billions in direct economic impact for the state and attract visitors from around the world.

“This year’s funding, which comes on the heels of record allocations in each of the last two years, will support park staff and help to ensure our state parks remain a source of pride for all Floridians.”

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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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