

# Duke Energy Foundation grant provides new strike team trailer for Florida State Parks in time for hurricane season

*Trailer will support Florida State Parks strike teams and recovery efforts across the state*

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, June 12, 2023

/EINPresswire.com/ -- The Florida State Parks Foundation and Duke Energy Florida teamed up to provide a new trailer and equipment that will allow Florida State Parks' strike and recovery teams to efficiently mobilize and respond to major storms and other severe weather events.



The Duke Energy Foundation provided \$50,000 for the purchase of a new Florida State Parks strike team trailer.

The trailer, purchased through a \$50,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation, is based in Lake Kissimmee State Park but will be available for deployment wherever necessary. The 2023 hurricane season began on June 1 and will run through Nov. 30.

"Florida State Parks strike teams are brave, skilled and resourceful, and our state parks are fortunate to have these dedicated people on the scene after major storms," said Julia Gill Woodward, CEO of the Florida State Parks Foundation. "The Foundation is proud to support these amazing men and women and make their difficult jobs just a little bit easier."

Florida State Parks strike teams are composed of park managers, rangers, specialists and volunteers who travel from their home parks to aid parks in need of assistance. Strike teams may remove downed trees and heavy debris, clear roads and support park staff directly affected by a storm. They also often assist partner agencies in recovery efforts.

After Hurricane Ian made landfall in Southwest Florida last fall, strike teams from across the state worked in shifts to help parks safely manage storm damage and reopen as quickly as possible.

“Our strike teams are some of the finest in the world. We count on them to do whatever is necessary for our parks following a storm, and they always deliver,” said Florida State Parks Director Chuck Hatcher. “We are grateful to the Florida State Parks Foundation and Duke Energy Florida for recognizing what our strike teams do for the state of Florida, and for helping them continue to do what they do best.”

The Florida State Parks Foundation last fall provided a \$50,000 relief fund for Florida State Parks staff and volunteers who suffered extensive hardship from Hurricane Ian. The funds were distributed in increments of \$1,000 and were available just days after the storm made impact.

The Foundation has previously partnered with Duke Energy Florida on a variety of park improvement, accessibility and sustainability projects, including major contributions to the Foundation’s Greener Initiative. Since, 2021, Duke Energy Florida and the Duke Energy Foundation have worked with the Florida State Parks Foundation to provide \$325,000 to Florida’s award-winning state parks.

“We love collaborating with the Florida State Parks Foundation, and it is an honor to work together to support hurricane recovery in our state parks,” said Melissa Seixas, Duke Energy Florida state president. “These strike team workers are inspiring in their selflessness and commitment, and we are glad that we can support them with this new trailer.”

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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. This project has been completed by the Florida State Parks Foundation Services LLC, which is a limited liability company affiliate of the Foundation.

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