

Florida State Parks Foundation partners with Sea Turtle Grants Program for UTVs at Cayo Costa and Fort Pierce Inlet

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, August 7, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With the 2024 sea turtle

nesting season in full swing, the Florida State Parks Foundation today announced the latest element in a longstanding partnership with the Sea Turtle Conservancy's Sea Turtle Grants Program.



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Chuck Hatcher, Florida State Parks Director

Through this partnership, Cayo Costa State Park near Fort Myers and Fort Pierce Inlet State Park in Fort Pierce will each receive a new utility task vehicle (UTV) to assist with sea turtle care and management.

A grant of \$31,370.85 from the Sea Turtle Grants Program secured the purchase of both UTVs.

Forty of Florida's 175 award-winning state parks are home to a combined 12,000 sea turtle nesting sites. Florida State Parks partners with a variety of conservation and wildlife

organizations, including the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), to track sea turtle populations, measure the success of conservation efforts and develop turtle management policies.

"Sea turtles are among our state parks' most beloved residents, and our rangers do great work every day to provide safe nesting areas for these amazing creatures," Florida State Parks Foundation CEO Julia Gill Woodward said. "The Sea Turtle Grants Program has been a generous, reliable partner for many years, and we are so grateful for their support."

UTVs allow park rangers and biologists to quickly and efficiently manage sea turtle tasks along beachfronts. These activities may include nest patrols, care for stranded sea turtles, gear transport, litter and debris removal, and travel across miles of beaches to monitor nesting sites, among others.

The Sea Turtle Grants Program has previously funded the purchase of UTVs at John D. MacArthur

Beach State Park and Dr. Von D. Mizell-Eula Johnson State Park in South Florida, turtle-friendly lighting at Sebastian Inlet State Park in Melbourne Beach, and innovative, reusable sea turtle education kits for use at nine parks across the state.

Since 2023, the Sea Turtle Grants Program has generously contributed more than \$100,000 to sea turtle efforts within Florida State Parks.

“Our park rangers work to protect and care for sea turtles every day, having these new UTVs will be a tremendous help to staff at Cayo Costa and Fort Pierce Inlet,” Florida State Parks Director Chuck Hatcher said. “We’re thankful to the Sea Turtle Grants Program for their support of our award-winning state parks.”

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A new UTV provided to a Florida state park through a partnership between the Florida State Parks Foundation and the Sea Turtle Grants Program.

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