

## Florida State Parks Foundation, Live Wildly to Host Second 'Explore the Corridor Week' in 10 Florida State Parks

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The Florida State Parks Foundation and Live Wildly today announced the second "Explore the Corridor Week," a statewide drive to encourage volunteerism and exploration across 10 of Florida's award-winning state parks from Oct.19-26.



Explore the Corridor Week' provides several great opportunities to explore our state parks, connect with the Florida Wildlife Corridor and make a real difference in our state's natural spaces."

Julia Gill Woodward, Florida State Parks Foundation CEO Seven of the 10 parks fall within the Florida Wildlife Corridor, an 18-million-acre network of public and private lands stretching from the Florida Panhandle to the Everglades.

The second "Explore the Corridor Week" comes on the heels of the first, in which more than 300 volunteers contributed over 1,200 hours of service in January 2024.

"The first 'Explore the Corridor Week' was an overwhelming success, and we can't wait to see the great things that come out of it this time around," said Julia Gill Woodward,

CEO of the Florida State Parks Foundation.

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The parks included in "Explore the Corridor Week" span from Pensacola to Lignumvitae Key, and each park will host events designed to "Activate!" "Educate!" or "Inspire!" participants.

Example events include a paddling trail cleanup at Blackwater River State Park (Bring your own boat!), guided hikes or tours at Lignumvitae Key Botanical, Tomoka and Highlands Hammock state parks, and invasive plant removal at Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park.

Individuals, families, students, companies and community groups are all invited to participate.

Space at each event is limited. Visit the official "Explore the Corridor Week" website for a full list of opportunities.

"Participating in "Explore the Corridor Week" is an excellent way to visit the Florida Wildlife Corridor with friends and family, "Live Wildly CEO Lisa Shipley said. "We hope that these events will create memories and positive experiences that will foster a love for wild Florida that is handed down to future generations."

Overall, Florida's system of 175 state parks, trails and historic sites are supported by more than 10,000 volunteers who contribute more than 1 million hours of service each year.



"Volunteers play an important part in all aspects of our mission, and we appreciate all that they do every single day," Florida State Parks director Chuck Hatcher said. "Our park rangers are excited to host new and returning volunteers and share some of what makes their parks so special."

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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 is being completed through the Florida State Parks Foundation Services LLC, which is a limited liability company affiliate of the Foundation.

Live Wildly is a public visibility campaign to raise awareness of the Florida Wildlife Corridor; educate citizens on its value and importance to the state's economy, ecology and overall way of life; and, to help jump-start a movement for its long-term protection.

Live Wildly and the Florida State Parks Foundation invite individuals, artists, corporations, and

organizations who share their vision to join this transformative partnership and support the critical work being done to safeguard and protect wild Florida.

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