

Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Funds Commit \$500,000 to Accessibility in Florida State Parks

Delores Barr Weaver named first Florida State Parks Foundation Accessibility Champion

TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, October 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ --

The Florida State Parks Foundation today announced that Jacksonville philanthropist Delores Barr Weaver has made an historic, transformational gift that will create and enhance accessible features, experiences and amenities in Florida's award-winning state parks.



Through the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Funds at the Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, Weaver has committed \$500,000, to be distributed in amounts of \$100,000 per year for the next five years, to the Florida State Parks Foundation's accessibility initiatives.

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We are simply amazed by and grateful for [Mrs. Weaver's] gift, and we look forward to putting it to use so that everyone may enjoy the natural wonders found in our state parks.”

Kathleen Brennan, Florida State Parks Foundation board president

It is among the largest individual gifts received in the Florida State Parks Foundation's 31-year history.

In recognition of Weaver's generosity, Florida State Parks Foundation Board President Kathleen Brennan today also designated Weaver as the Foundation's first ever "Florida State Parks Foundation Accessibility Champion.”

“Mrs. Weaver has been an incredible supporter of Florida's state parks for several years, especially in the area of accessibility,” Brennan said. “We are simply amazed by and grateful for her gift, and we look forward to putting it to use so that everyone may enjoy the natural wonders found in our state parks.”

Including today's gift announcement, the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Funds has contributed nearly \$750,000 to Florida State Parks since 2021.

Previous gifts include \$150,000 toward the 1738 fort reconstruction at Fort Mose Historic State Park in St. Augustine and \$90,000 toward the first ever fully accessible glass-bottom boat at Silver Springs State Park in Ocala.

"It is so very important that our state parks are accessible by everyone. I am proud to partner with our Florida State Parks Foundation in this effort. I am also proud to be the Foundation's first accessibility champion and I look forward to the many others that will join me as CHAMPIONS," said Weaver.

Florida's state parks in recent years have added several features to make the state's beaches, trails, springs and green spaces more accessible. Highlights include:

- Fully accessible river tour boats at Silver Springs State Park and Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park.
- Beach-accessible wheelchairs at every coastal state park.
- Beach matting at several popular beachside parks.
- Wheelchair-accessible electric trams at a selection of parks.
- An accessible fishing pier at Oscar Scherer State Park and accessible viewfinders at Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park.

"The Foundation is constantly seeking to identify and implement ways to expand accessibility in our state parks," Foundation CEO Julia Gill Woodward said. "Mrs. Weaver's incredible gift will create a generational impact as we continue striving toward this goal in the years to come."

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About the Florida State Parks Foundation

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. All projects are completed through the Florida State Parks Foundation Services LLC, which is a limited liability company affiliate of the Foundation. The Florida State Parks Foundation is supported by a grant from the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Funds. The volunteer Board of Directors represents private and public sectors as well as local and statewide interests.

About the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Funds

Delores Barr Weaver has an extraordinary legacy of philanthropy in Northeast Florida since moving to Jacksonville as co-owner of the Jacksonville Jaguars in 1993. Since her historic gift of

\$50 million in 2012 establishing the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund, she has partnered with The Community Foundation on her philanthropy through numerous, multi-million dollar gifts, including the Foundation's largest-ever gift of \$61 million in 2023. She has established designated funds for more than four dozen nonprofits, including 20 that receive ongoing annual support through the Delores Barr Weaver Forever Event Fund, est. 2015. Today, her grantmaking exceeds \$209 million, with support for more than 300 organizations in Northeast Florida and beyond.

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