

Florida State Parks Foundation, Florida Power & Light provide three strike team trailers for storm relief in state parks

Two grants totaling \$215,000 will support recovery efforts across the entire state

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EINPresswire.com/ -- In response to a historic 2024 Atlantic hurricane season and in anticipation of potential future storms, the Florida State Parks Foundation and Florida Power & Light Company today announced a joint initiative to provide three new trailers and equipment that will allow Florida State Parks strike and recovery teams to efficiently mobilize and respond to severe weather events.



The new trailers are funded with two grants totaling \$215,000, including \$140,000 from FPL's charitable arm, the NextEra Energy Foundation, and \$75,000 from the Florida State Parks Foundation's Disaster Relief Fund.

"These past few weeks have highlighted just how fortunate we are to have the Florida State Parks strike teams in the aftermath of a major hurricane," said Julia Gill Woodard, CEO of the Florida State Parks Foundation. "There is truly no recovery task that these amazing people can't handle, and the Foundation is honored to support them whenever possible."

Like much of Florida, the state's award-winning parks system was still recovering from Hurricane Helene when Hurricane Milton arrived near Sarasota in October. Nearly 150 of the state's 175 state parks, trails and historic sites were closed as Milton approached.

The 2024 Atlantic hurricane season began on June 1 and will run through Nov. 30.

"At FPL, we know firsthand the hard work that goes into recovering after a storm impacts our

state and its people,” said Kate MacGregor, FPL vice president of environmental services. “As Florida works to recover from hurricanes Helene and Milton, we are proud to donate these trailers and equipment to the Florida State Parks strike and recovery teams and to play a part in helping them reopen our parks safely.”

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 offer support for park staff directly affected by a storm. They also often assist partner agencies in recovery efforts.

Strike team trailers serve as a mobile headquarters for recovery operations and have ample storage for heavy equipment, machinery and other resources.

“Our strike teams work nonstop to safely reopen state parks following a storm,” said Florida State Parks Director Chuck Hatcher. “These new trailers are welcome additions and will be of great use for our strike teams for years to come.”

The Foundation last year partnered with Duke Energy Florida to provide \$50,000 for a similar strike team trailer based at Lake Kissimmee State Park near Orlando. In 2022, the Foundation distributed \$50,000 to assist Florida State Parks staff and volunteers who suffered extensive hardship from Hurricane Ian.

The Foundation’s Disaster Relief Fund is dedicated to storm and natural disaster relief. Anyone who wishes to support these efforts may [contribute online](#).

“Hurricanes are a fact of life for all of us here in Florida, and that includes our state parks and all of the dedicated people who work in and for them,” said Kathleen Brennan, president of the Foundation’s board of directors. “We are proud to be there for our parks before, during and after major storms.”

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

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