



Amendment One Press Conference, Nov. 4, 2019
Comments by Paul Owens, President, 1000 Friends of Florida

At 1000 Friends of Florida, we believe in managing our growth to preserve our environment, economy and quality of life.

One of the most effective tools to protect Florida's communities from the harmful impacts of irresponsible development is strategic land conservation. Taking environmentally valuable land off the table for development helps direct growth to where it makes sense – urban areas with the infrastructure in place to handle it.

This explains why Nathaniel Reed, one of Florida's premier environmentalists and one of our co-founders, was a leader in launching two of our state's most ambitious land conservation programs: Preservation 2000 and its successor, Florida Forever.

It also explains why we joined with the partners represented here today to support the passage of Amendment 1 in 2014, and why we rejoiced when it was approved by nearly three quarters of voters that year.

Amendment 1 cemented land and water conservation as a priority in the Florida Constitution, and provided the funding to carry it out.

The more acres we preserve through Florida Forever, the Rural and Families Lands Program, Florida Communities Trust and other land protection programs, the better job we'll do in maintaining our water supply, our wildlife, our farms and our way of life.

Three years ago we published a report, Florida 2070, that showed if we fully utilized these land protection programs, we could preserve millions of acres from development, even as Florida continues to grow. But every year that we fall short is a missed opportunity to save more of what makes our state special.

We look forward to working with legislators to provide full funding for land and water conservation so that the mission so clearly laid out by voters in 2014 can be fulfilled.