From the President

Business as usual came to a halt this past spring when the COVID-19 pandemic struck. But for 1000 Friends of Florida, “business” since then has continued at a brisk pace, often in new and different ways.

After pursuing our legislative agenda in person at the Florida Capitol throughout the 2020 session, we followed up with vigorous virtual campaigns to preserve funding for conservation and water protection, and stop a damaging bill that would have weakened the ability of counties to limit development in rural areas. Both campaigns succeeded. Rather than rest on our laurels, we’re already planning ahead for the 2021 session, coordinating strategy with allies and contacting key legislators.

Meanwhile, our active participation in evaluating the three proposed M-CORES toll roads continued, as in-person meetings for the three task forces moved online. Our representatives on the task forces pushed for policies to protect the sensitive environmental assets and unique rural communities in harm’s way. And our campaign to educate the public intensified, with a report on the high costs and lack of accountability for the M-CORES program.

We continued our outreach to Florida counties facing development pressure, but transitioned to an online model that wouldn’t raise the safety risks of in-person workshops. And our monthly webinars, though online from their inception in 2011, became more popular than ever — a sign that Floridians working from home are an even more eager audience for presentations on conservation, cutting-edge planning topics and the latest from the Legislature.

As we adapted to the new models for leadership on public policy during a pandemic, we also launched a campaign to urge local governments to embrace a wide range of technological tools to preserve citizens’ rights to participate in the planning process. We released a report spotlighting city and county governments that have risen to that challenge.

In sum, our work has been changing in many ways, but not slowing down. So we will keep counting on your generous support to pursue our priorities of smart growth and conservation. We’ll hope for a healthier 2021. But with your help, we’ll be ready for whatever comes.

Paul Owens
President
**2020 Legislative Highlights**

1000 Friends of Florida successfully led a state-wide campaign calling for Gov. DeSantis to veto the damaging SB 410, which was passed by the 2020 Florida legislature. This bill would have curtailed the authority of most county governments across Florida to manage growth within their borders.

The effort paid off, and we thank all of you who signed 1000 Friends’ petition and flooded the Governor with emails and calls urging the veto of this harmful legislation. It turned out to be just one of four bills from the session that the Governor vetoed.

Additionally, several priority bills passed this legislative session. We were pleased with the passage of SB 178 because it prohibits state-financed construction of certain structures in coastal areas without first conducting a sea level impact projection study. Likewise, the passage of the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act will make great strides towards protecting vulnerable property that has been in families for generations from real estate speculators.

For more information on what passed and failed, visit 1000 Friends’ legislative wrap up page at 1000fof.org/legis/legis-2020. Please also sign up for 1000 Friends’ email alerts at 1000fof.org/alerts and we will keep you abreast of upcoming legislative and other critical issues facing our state.

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**PHOTOGRAPHER IN FOCUS: Molly Bartels**

Growing up near Lake Michigan, I’ve always felt most at home living and working near the water. With a desire to explore and see new places, I eventually received a master’s degree in journalism from the University of Missouri. For more than two decades, I worked as a photojournalist for various Scripps and Gannett newspapers, documenting news, sports, politics, and the arts in communities throughout the United States. In my time with the Treasure Coast Newspapers, I worked on a variety of stories about climate change, algae blooms and habitat loss for native species. I also spent time with alligator hunters, lobster divers, fishing guides, bird banders, developers and conservationists.

All of those diverse experiences made me acutely aware of the issues that face the environment and, by short extension, humanity. I became more passionate about documenting the state’s varying ecosystems and am currently working on a personal project that details the changes in the micro-environments along the route I use for my daily walks. I believe that education, political involvement, and exposure to all that nature provides is the best way to help protect it for future generations.

You can keep up with my work on Instagram @abstracteye or on my website at: www.mollybartels.com.
Sara Sinclair Ellenburg considered herself “a proud Florida Cracker.” Born in St. Augustine, she moved as a young child with her family to Miami in 1925, where she lived the rest of her 97 years before passing away on July 19, 2019. “Her love for Florida was lifelong,” said Francine Horwich, a lawyer from Coral Gables who was a dear friend and surrogate daughter, as well as a caretaker for the last six years of Sara’s life. Francine remembers Sara fondly as a whip smart, independent and generous woman of “quiet strength” who remained active well into her nineties. She was still bowling at 95.

Sara was married nearly 49 years to Jimmy Ellenburg, who was known as the “Mayor of Stiltsville,” the iconic community of wood stilt houses on the edge of Biscayne Bay in Miami-Dade County. The couple had a weekend house there; their regular guests in the 1950s included then-Gov. LeRoy Collins. Sara and Jimmy, who passed away in 1994, owned and operated Jimmy’s Hurricane Restaurant, a popular eatery in Miami during the 50s and 60s. The couple were dedicated fans of the University of Miami Hurricanes football team; Sara attended or watched their games for more than 70 years. She also loved the arts, gardening, animals — she volunteered for decades at Zoo Miami — and dining with friends.

Most significantly for 1000 Friends, she supported historic preservation and conservation causes, and was a donor to us during her life. After her passing, we were notified that she had chosen to leave part of her estate to us, which came as a wonderful surprise. Sara’s extraordinary gift will fortify 1000 Friends’ financial foundation for the future, and provide us additional resources every year to invest in innovative and ambitious projects chosen at the direction of our board. It will advance our mission — more important than ever — of protecting Florida’s environment, economy and quality of life as our state continues to grow.

We have heard from other members this year who have also chosen to include 1000 Friends in their estate planning. They have urged us to keep fighting to protect Florida’s environment and promoting smart growth. That’s a commitment we’ll gladly honor.

We encourage other members to consider legacy gifts. They represent the most far-reaching investments in 1000 Friends and our mission to keep Florida special for our children and grandchildren.

We’re humbled by Sara Sinclair Ellenburg’s trust in us. It makes us even more determined to do all that we can to preserve the unique environment and quality of life in Florida that Sara so clearly cherished.
Make 1000 Friends of Florida a Part of Your Charitable Giving this Year!

Sustain our important work by making a lasting commitment that will help protect the unique and special places in Florida for generations to come.

By including 1000 FRIENDS OF FLORIDA in your estate plan today you will create a legacy of keeping Florida healthy for tomorrow.*

For more information please contact Operations and Development Director Toni Russell at trussell@1000fof.org

Please Consider Gifts of: Cash – Stock – Life Insurance

* Consult your attorney or financial advisor when considering gift planning options.
Brevard 2070: Planning Today for a Better Tomorrow

Looking back at the last half century, Florida’s unfettered growth and sprawling development trends have led to discouraging consequences for our lands, waters and wildlife. Using county-specific growth projections from the 2016 Florida 2070/Water 2070 study, we work with communities across Florida to cooperatively outline a path towards a more sustainable future.

At the time of writing, our Brevard 2070 workshop is right around the corner, rescheduled from the April in-person workshop dates to a virtual format on October 28. Home to Florida’s Space Coast, Brevard County encompasses a range of coastline, renowned for many natural gems including the northern section of the Indian River Lagoon, habitat for more than a hundred threatened or endangered plant and animal species, and over 62 miles of public use trails. All of these features and more make Brevard a special place to live and work. 1000 Friends continues our partnership with the Brevard Indian River Lagoon Coalition and a diverse array of community stakeholders invested in Brevard’s future. The workshop results and event recording can be found on our website at 1000fof.org/county/brevard.

Looking ahead to the next fifty years, to 2070, we have the opportunity to dig deep and insist on the policy changes needed to protect wild Florida and create vibrant, sustainable communities. We can prioritize a vision for 2070 that includes more compact development patterns, supports local and state land conservation programs, and embraces intentional and citizen-led community planning. Brevard 2070 joins the list of counties where we’ve introduced the Florida 2070/Water 2070 project, along with Palm Beach, Martin, Walton and St. Johns.

Are you interested in bringing the 2070 project to your county? Contact Outreach Director Haley Busch at hbusch@1000fof.org for more information.
Check Out the Upcoming Dr. John M. DeGrove Webinars

It was a banner year for the Dr. John M. DeGrove webinar series, with more than 4,600 attendees for the 2019-2020 season. We have been busy planning the upcoming season to engage even more citizens, elected officials and professionals to promote a more sustainable future for Florida. As in the past, webinars will be provided at no cost, with free professional certification credits for planners, attorneys, landscape architects and more.

Here is what is being planned:

- **November – The Car-Optional Neighborhood: How Should It Be Designed?** Victor Dover, FAICP, shares essential strategies for designing and retrofitting neighborhoods that support all the ways of moving around.

- **December – M-CORES: What’s Next?** A panel will address the M-CORES toll road task force process, as well as legislative and other M-CORES priorities for the coming year.

- **January – 2021 Florida Legislative Preview.** Get a sneak peek of planning, conservation, transportation, community design and other legislative issues likely to be covered during the upcoming session.

- **March – 2021 Florida Legislative Update.** Find out what is being considered and how you can make a difference.

- **May – 2021 Florida Legislative Wrap Up.** What are the implications of legislation that passed and failed during the session?

Register now at www.1000fof.org/upcoming-webinars

Dr. John M. DeGrove 2020-2021 Sponsors

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Please consider sponsoring the webinar series at 1000fof.org/donate so we can continue to offer these informative and engaging events at no cost to attendees.
M-CORES Toll Roads Threaten Rural Florida

Planning for 330 miles of new toll roads through swaths of Florida’s remaining rural lands continues. The Florida Department of Transportation’s three M-CORES toll roads task forces are wrapping up their deliberations, with final reports due to be transmitted to the Governor and Legislature on November 15.

These roads – extending from Jefferson County in the Panhandle south to Collier County – would traverse significant aquifer recharge areas essential to Florida’s water supply, prime agricultural lands, habitat vital for the survival of threatened wildlife, and rural Main Street communities. To date, no formal determination of the need for or economic feasibility of these roads has been established.

Senate Bill 7068 authorizing the M-CORES toll roads passed in 2019, despite vehement opposition from 1000 Friends and others. The legislation established that representatives of several leading conservation organizations – including 1000 Friends – serve on the three task forces.

1000 Friends’ representatives include former 1000 Friends Policy & Planning Director Thomas Hawkins on the Suncoast Connector, President Paul Owens on the Northern Turnpike Connector, and Board Member Andrew Dickman on the Southwest-Central Florida Connector. At the numerous task force meetings, they have raised concerns about the process, impacts on conservation lands and the rural quality of life, and potential for the roads to stimulate sprawling and costly development.

Communications Director Vivian Young spearheaded an extensive outreach effort, including detailed recommendations for the task forces, citizen primers, natural resource maps, op eds and more. Most recently 1000 Friends and Sierra Club Florida collaborated on M-CORES: Detour Around Accountability, covering the serious economic impacts of these roads on taxpayers and current toll road users, and the potential to siphon money away from other priority transportation projects across the state.

M-CORES will be one of our top legislative priorities during the 2021 session and we commit to remaining engaged as the process moves forward. Transportation need and financial feasibility must be demonstrated before spending hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars on these roads, and any plans must protect environmental resources and vulnerable communities.

To find out more, visit 1000fof.org/mcores, receive alerts on this and other topics at 1000fof.org/alerts or contact Communications Director Vivian Young at vyoung@1000fof.org.
Virtual Public Participation in the Community Planning Process

Since our founding, 1000 Friends has firmly believed that citizens must play an active role in their communities’ planning process in order to create sustainable and livable communities. Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, citizen participation now looks very different due to health concerns about large gatherings in public places. As public hearings and meetings have shifted to virtual settings, 1000 Friends closely followed local governments’ adjustments to using communications media technologies (CMTs) in counties and municipalities across the state. In July, we heard from members who saw the rapid implementation of virtual meeting technologies such as Zoom or Go-To-Webinar in their communities. We were also notified of unfortunate instances where citizen participation procedures were left out of new governing procedures.

In response, we created Best Practices for Citizen Participation in Community Planning to advise both citizen advocates and local government leaders how to ensure meaningful public participation opportunities are preserved or enhanced during times when in-person meetings are considered unsafe. Some of our recommendations include local governments adopting or updating a public participation ordinance with guidelines for CMT use and robust participation options; meetings emulating real-time, in-person assemblies; and supplementing traditional forms of participation with virtual and in-person hybrid approaches incorporating modern engagement tools and technologies. We followed up the Best Practices guide with Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic, expounding the creative examples and innovative approaches we have been seeing adopted by local governments across the state.

We will continue to learn from this period of history in the months and years to come and believe some of public participation adaptations should be here to stay for the long-term betterment of civic engagement.

To check out our citizen participation resources, visit 1000fof.org/citizens. We continue to encounter innovative ideas for expanding citizen engagement, and welcome you to share your experiences with Haley Busch at hbusch@1000fof.org.
In addition to the legislative victories outlined on page two, 1000 Friends is actively advocating on other statewide, regional and local issues. Below are but a few.

**Legal Challenges**

1000 Friends continues our legal challenge to the provision enacted by the Legislature in 2019 that threatens citizens who file challenges to development orders with financial ruin if they lose. The case is currently pending on appeal at the First District Court of Appeal.

**Regional and Local Issues**

Collaboration has been key to our success in many of the issues that we weigh in on at the regional level. In Martin County, we connected with the new Growth Management Director and staff to continue our efforts with the Guardians of Martin County to monitor and provide meaningful input on development in the western part of the county.

1000 Friends Policy and Planning Director Jane West was recently appointed to the Everglades Coalition board. Collaborative efforts continue to gain momentum with the Everglades Coalition to maintain the urban boundaries that protect the River of Grass from the expansion of SR 836 and incompatible land uses that would be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

We are actively engaged on the FORCE (Free the Ocklawaha River Coalition – Energized!) Legal & Policy Committee, which is garnering widespread enthusiasm to remove the Rodman Dam and restore a free-flowing Ocklawaha River through policy initiatives, education and science-based research.

We have also embarked upon an exciting new watershed project with North Florida Land Trust and the Matanzas Riverkeeper that will analyze the impacts of growth on the Matanzas River and Guana, Tolomato, Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve. That effort is an ideal “next step” stemming from the results of the St. Johns County 2070 workshop.

In Sarasota County, 1000 Friends advocated for an innovative citizen-based Comprehensive Plan Amendment process that provided for more robust public input on local growth management decisions.

Please contact Policy and Planning Director Jane West at jwest@1000fof.org if you would like more information on any of these issues.
Protecting water quality for drinking water and the environment is integral to responsibly managing growth in Florida. Earlier this year, SB 712 passed and was signed into law by Gov. DeSantis, including a provision directing the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to initiate rulemaking to update Florida’s stormwater design and operation regulations.

Ahead of formal rulemaking, 1000 Friends of Florida Outreach Director Haley Busch worked with a group of fellow conservationists to coordinate recommendations. Nineteen organizations signed on, calling for critical updates to the state’s stormwater regulations to reflect advances in our technological and scientific understanding of hydrologic and climate systems. Recommendations included the protection of existing stringent local stormwater regulations, and improvements to policy that take into account the impacts of increasing growth and development on stormwater runoff.

As our state continues to grow, 1000 Friends remains committed to promoting sound water policy for all Floridians.
Preventing for the 2021 Session

While the upcoming Florida Legislative Session is not slated to start until March 3, 2021, 1000 Friends is already busy establishing priorities, drafting recommended provisions, and reaching out to key legislators for support.

Our priorities are listed below, with the understanding that we stand ready to address other critical issues as they arise:

1000 FRIENDS TAKES LEAD

Growth Management — Repair damage done to citizens planning rights in 2019’s HB 7103; make other improvements in law to elevate planning and citizen participation; require continued use of remote participation, prerecorded statements, text statements, etc. in planning and other public meetings even after the pandemic has subsided.

M-CORES — Suspend funding during pandemic and its aftermath; require additional accountability and taxpayer protections.

Community Water Conservation — Raise standards and adopt incentives for water conservation by public and private water utilities.

Water Quality — Build on 2020 Clean Waterways Act, focusing on pollution from agriculture, biosolids, septic tanks and fertilizer; enforce Basin Management Action Plans; increase funding for water quality improvements.

Affordable Housing — Bar sweeps from Sadowski trust funds; enact legislation to provide flexibility for local governments, incentives for developers to expand workforce housing.

Free the Ocklawaha — Direct state agencies to breach Rodman Dam to restore free-flowing Ocklawaha River.

Home Rule — Enact measures to limit pre-emption of local government authority.

Visit 1000fof.org/legis/2021session for updates as the 2021 Florida Legislative Session approaches, and sign up for alerts at 1000fof.org/alerts.
**DONOR HIGHLIGHTS**

**THANK YOU to Our Donors Who Contributed During the Period from February 15 to September 15, 2020.**

We appreciate the many foundations, corporations, organizations, and individuals supporting our work over the years. Recent gifts have been provided by:

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* Member for 30 or more years
Jennifer Johnson Duke is one of 1000 Friends of Florida’s most generous and steadfast donors. She and her husband, Joseph Zachary Duke III, have long been among Florida’s top environmental leaders and patrons. They have served on multiple boards of directors and contributed abundantly to conservation causes.

The Dukes have a home in Hobe Sound, and Jennifer says she first became interested in 1000 Friends because of a fellow Hobe Sounder — “our great leader Nathaniel Reed.” She and 1000 Friends’ late co-founder served together on the board of The Nature Conservancy. Joseph Duke served with him on the board of the Everglades Foundation.

Jennifer has lived in Florida her entire adult life, traveled throughout the state, and cherishes “the out of doors life” here. “Beach and river trips with friends and family have been the best part of my life,” she says. “Being able to raise my family in our beautiful state was a joy.”

Jennifer counts “springs, rivers, the Everglades and beaches” among her favorite parts of Florida, but also enjoys “the cities and restaurants.”

“My fondest hope,” she says, “is that we can have it all” — a hope that aligns well with 1000 Friends’ dual goals of saving special places and building better communities throughout Florida. Success in both goals will ensure that future generations of parents will continue to experience the joy of raising their families in a beautiful state.

We salute Jennifer’s life of leadership, we share her love for Florida, and we’re very grateful for her extraordinary support for 1000 Friends.