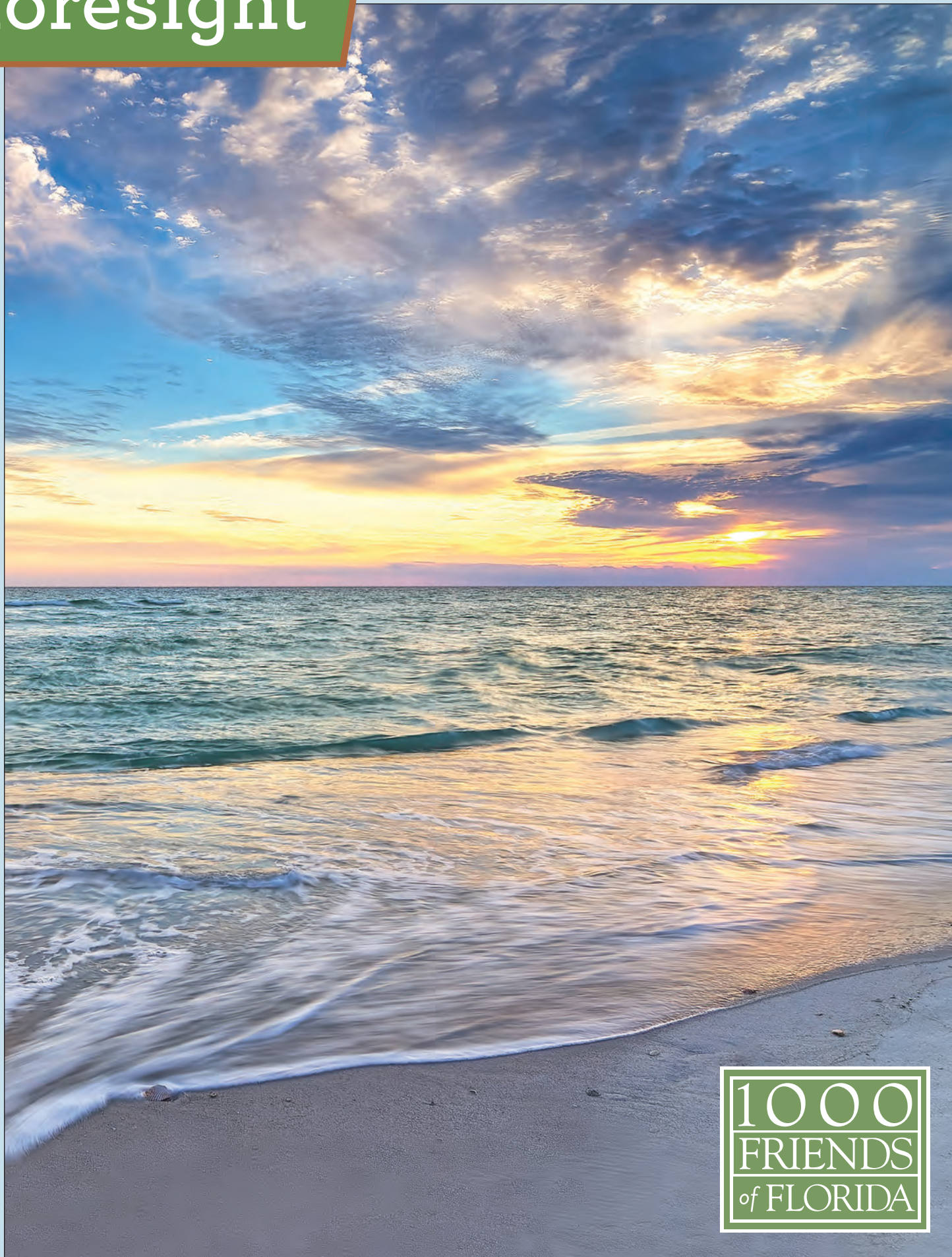


# foresight

*The Newsletter of 1000 Friends of Florida*



SPRING 2023 VOLUME 35 NUMBER 3



*BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES • SAVING SPECIAL PLACES*



## From the President

When Governor DeSantis issued an executive order on environmental policy in January, the headline was the bottom line: a pledge to put \$3.5 billion over the next four years into Everglades restoration and water resource protection, which we applaud.

But our attention was also drawn to another part of the executive order: the Governor's direction to the state Department of Environmental Protection to partner with the state Department of Economic Opportunity and local governments "to improve local government long-term comprehensive planning that ensures sustainable growth while protecting our natural resources."

That objective has been at the core of our mission at 1000 Friends of Florida since our inception. In a state growing as fast as ours, good planning at the state and local level is critical to protecting not only the environment, but the quality of life and healthy economy that depend on it.

In addition to its benefits for the environment, good planning creates more livable and prosperous communities, expands options for housing and transportation, and enhances property values. It's the most effective and efficient way to provide public services, which minimizes the tax burden for families and businesses.

Chronic water quality problems and traffic congestion are among the most visible consequences when communities don't properly plan for growth. And as Hurricanes Ian and Nicole so painfully reminded us last year, there may be no more obvious example of poor planning than developing in coastal high-hazard areas and floodplains. This poor planning puts property, public dollars and lives at risk.

Regrettably, Florida lawmakers have scaled back long-term comprehensive planning over the past decade. We hope the Governor's clear direction from his executive order will help persuade them to strengthen, rather than weaken, this critical tool in protecting the Florida we all love.

We will continue to do everything we can to reinforce this objective, through the full range of our advocacy and educational activities, including our website, webinars, workshops, reports and email alerts. We're grateful for your support, which makes it all possible.

*Paul Owens*

Paul Owens  
President



Paul Owens



Awestruck

Photo Courtesy of Bill Chambers

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Post Office Box 5948  
Tallahassee, FL 32314-5948  
Phone: 850-222-6277  
E-mail: friends@1000fof.org  
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## *A Brilliant Warrior for Land Use Planning:* **Thomas G. Pelham**

**W**e mourn the passing on February 21, of Tom Pelham, who twice served under Republican governors as the Secretary of the state's former land planning agency, the Florida's Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

During his first stint as Secretary under Governor Bob Martinez from 1987 to 1991, Tom had the challenge to develop state policy and work with local governments to implement the landmark Growth Management Act, adopted in 1985. In his second stint under Governor Charlie Crist from



Thomas G. Pelham

2007 to 2010, Tom dealt with the impacts of the Great Recession and battled ongoing efforts to weaken Florida's planning process.

"Tom was a visionary advocate for community planning whose principles and policies helped promote environmentally and fiscally responsible growth in the Sunshine State," notes 1000 Friends of Florida President Paul Owens.

To find out more about Tom and his legacy, please visit <https://conta.cc/3m43ncN>.

## *PHOTOGRAPHER in FOCUS:* **Bill Chambers**

**B**ill Chambers is a professional nature photographer based out of Milton, Florida, and the owner of Simply Nature Art. Born and reared in Alabama, he moved to Gulf Breeze in 1983, and has called Florida home ever since. He can usually be found photographing the beautiful beaches of Santa Rosa Island or the marshes and swamps in the Panhandle and Central Florida.

He shoots what pleases him, in a style that he finds comfortable. It's very important to him to stress the fragility of nature, especially here in Florida. Bill notes, "Our beautiful beaches have been ravaged by development, nature's fury, and lack of human understanding. Our natural springs



Bill Chambers

Photo Courtesy of Bill Chambers

are suffering greatly under the strain of nitrate pollution, over-pumping for irrigation, and from over development. We lose more and more of natural Florida every day and soon enough there will be precious little remaining."

Bill pleads for everyone to become involved in saving what remains of the REAL Florida. He is a proud member of both Nature

First and the North American Nature Photography Association, which promote strong ethical behavior in terms of prioritizing the well-being of nature, animals, and the environment over photography.

You may visit his site at [www.simplynatureart.com](http://www.simplynatureart.com).

## 2023 Florida Legislative Update

**A**s the fastest growing state in the nation, Florida faces intense development pressure that puts at risk our environment, economy, and quality of life. Our state must have visionary and balanced leadership to ensure new development doesn't overcrowd our roads, pollute our waters, kill our wildlife, and cost taxpayers millions.

In Executive Order 23-06, Governor Ron DeSantis called for key state agencies and local governments to work together “to improve local government long-term comprehensive planning that ensures sustainable growth while protecting our natural resources.”

Unfortunately, proposals this legislative session could undermine this order and deal the worst blow to sound community planning in more than a decade. 1000 Friends is mobilizing against these threats.

**We are opposing a series of bills that would result in more traffic, more pavement, more runoff — and more problems.**

- SB 540/HB 359 could shut down challenges to amendments to local growth plans from citizens or public interest groups.
- HB 439/SB 1604 would remove much of the statutory basis for local governments to oppose sprawling developments, clear the way for subdivisions in agricultural enclaves, and remove the lack of infrastructure — such as roads, schools and police stations — as an obstacle to development approvals.
- SB 856/HB 41 would prohibit a local initiative or referendum on any land development regulations, cutting off another opportunity for citizens to challenge poor growth decisions.

**A few planning bills have our strong support.**

- SB 816/HB 843 would reduce the financial risk for citizens and public interest groups in challenging development orders by preventing developers from collecting their legal costs if they win.
- SB 192/HB 175 would require land-use

changes within two miles of the Everglades Protection Area to receive a higher level of state review to prevent adverse impacts.

- SB 288/HB 499 would provide tax credits for rehabilitation of certified historic structures.

**In the wake of hurricanes Ian and Nicole, we welcome bills that support community resilience.**

- SB 484/HB 325 would require sellers of residential and commercial properties to disclose information to prospective purchasers about the risk of flooding prior to the sale.
- HB 111 would protect taxpayers by expanding a requirement for a study of the impact of sea-level rise before public investment in construction projects to all areas at risk.

**A pair of key bills would provide badly needed upgrades to water quality standards in Florida.**

- HB 423 would carry out key unfulfilled recommendations of Governor DeSantis' Blue-Green Algae Task Force, including periodic inspections of septic tanks, and measures to strengthen pollution control plans near impaired waterways.
- SB 172/HB 177 would create a series of notification and closure requirements when public bathing places are contaminated with dangerous levels of fecal bacteria.

### TO FIND OUT MORE:

- Visit our **Legislative Webpage** at [1000fof.org/legis/2023-legislative-session](https://1000fof.org/legis/2023-legislative-session) for an overview of these and other bills
- Sign up for our **free April 19 and May 17 webinars** on the session at [1000fof.org/upcoming-webinars](https://1000fof.org/upcoming-webinars)
- Get our **email alerts on how you can participate** at [1000fof.org/alerts](https://1000fof.org/alerts)
- Help us **advocate on your behalf** at [1000fof.org/donate](https://1000fof.org/donate)

## Florida's Rising Seas: Mapping Our Future

**F**lorida has and continues to face unrelenting population growth. This growth puts major stress on our lands and waters, communities, infrastructure, pocketbooks, and quality of life. But as we look to the future, the impacts of climate change – and sea level rise in particular – will dramatically compound the situation.

Building on the earlier *Florida 2070/Water 2070* studies, 1000 Friends of Florida and the University of Florida's Center for Landscape Planning have partnered on *Florida's Rising Seas: Mapping Our Future*. This includes GIS-based analysis on how Florida could develop in the coming decades, given moderate population growth and intermediate sea level rise predictions.

- By 2040, Florida is projected to lose 1 million acres of land to sea level rise, with more than 200,000 residents needing to relocate.
- By 2070, the projection is 1.7 million acres of land lost due to sea level rise, with almost



1 million residents needing to relocate.

Using this as a foundation, *Florida's Rising Seas* includes two future scenarios each for 2040 and 2070:

- **The Sprawl Scenario** assumes Florida continues to grow following previous patterns of development, albeit on less total land.
- **The Conservation Scenario** assumes Florida will protect all state priority natural land and future growth will be more compact.

This project is intended to guide Floridians to a clearer understanding of the vulnerability of our state's lands, waters, and communities to the combined impacts of population growth and sea level rise.

It also represents a call to action, because we need to make significant changes to the way Florida grows and develops now to ensure a more sustainable future for our children and grandchildren.

To find out more, visit [1000fof.org/sealevel2040](http://1000fof.org/sealevel2040)

## Sea Level 2040 Maps



Baseline



Sprawl 2040



Conservation 2040



## Sea Level 2040 Graphs

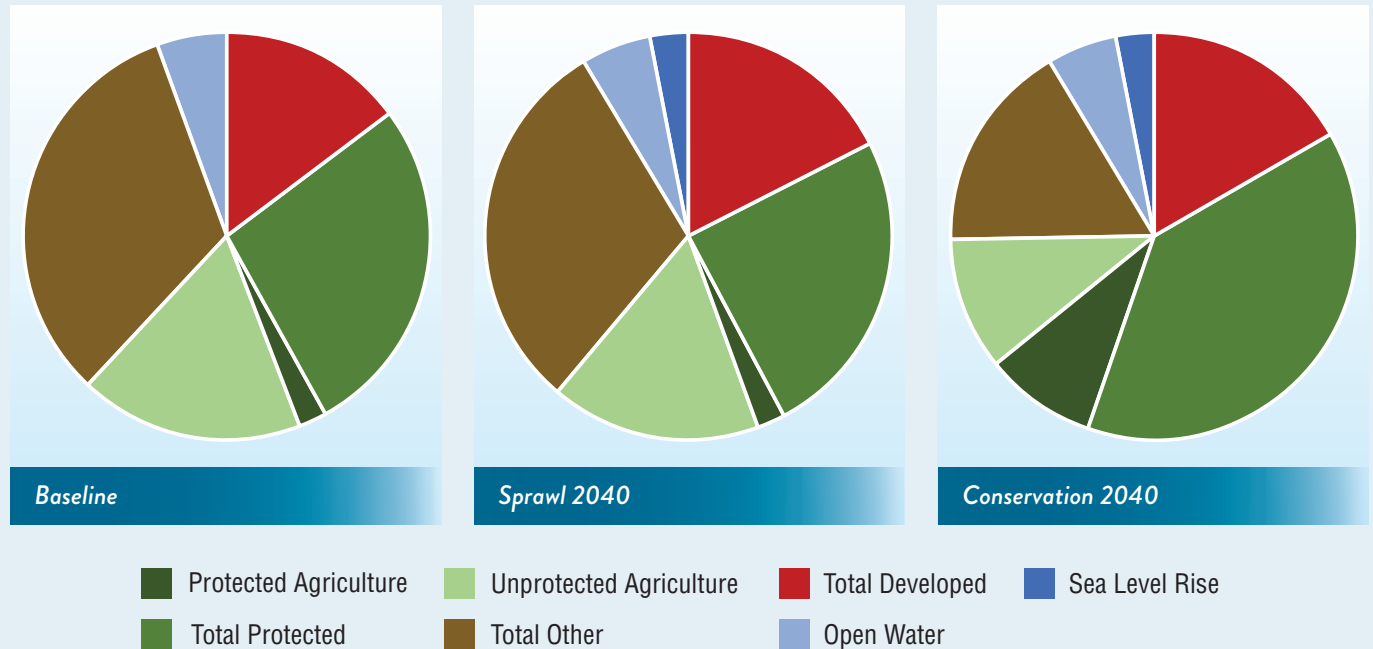


Photo Courtesy of Bill Chambers

# The Florida Wildlife Corridor

The Florida Wildlife Corridor (FWC) represents a vision to protect a landscape-scale ecological corridor throughout much of the state. The FWC includes all currently protected and identified future Florida Forever Lands, and other currently unprotected land within Priorities 1, 2 and 3 in the Florida Ecological Greenways Network. Dr. Tom Hctor of the University of Florida and nature photographer Carlton Ward spearheaded the concept, with more information available at [floridawildlifecorridor.org](http://floridawildlifecorridor.org).

The FWC builds on two major state initiatives for conservation land acquisition and greenways planning launched in the 1990s. 1000 Friends was proud to be an integral part of each.

Our co-founder, Nathaniel Reed, played an instrumental role in the creation of Preservation 2000, the state's first major land conservation bond initiative, upon which Florida Forever was also based.

In partnership with the Conservation Fund, in 1991 1000 Friends of Florida launched "The Florida Greenways Project," to stake out a vision and start planning for an integrated trails and greenways system linking protected lands and identifying additional priorities. 1000 Friends coordinated this project until, in 1995, the Legislature passed the Florida Greenways and Trails Act, with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection taking the lead on planning initiatives. This resulted in the



creation of the Florida Ecological Greenways Network on which the FWC was based.

1000 Friends now is partnering with the University of Florida's Center for Landscape Conservation Planning, led by Dr. Tom Hctor, Michael Volk and Dr. Dan Farrah, on Florida's Rising Seas (see page 5) which includes scenarios with full protection of the Corridor. Our staff also serves on several Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation committees, including President Paul Owens and Outreach Director Haley Busch on Corridor Compatible Communities, and Policy and Planning Director Jane West on Strategic Corridor Communications Collaboration and Summit Program.



*The Godfather*

Photo Courtesy of Bill Chambers



## Lake County 2070

**1**000 Friends President Paul Owens, Policy and Planning Director Jane West, and Outreach Director Haley Busch led our eighth 2070 workshop in Tavares in December. *Lake County 2070* is part of Phase 1 of the Joint Planning Area Visioning and Implementation Framework headed by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council and approved by the Lake County Commission to encourage intergovernmental coordination in future land-use decisions.

Why is it important to work together when making growth and development decisions? Because our rivers, lakes and forested areas don't follow man-made boundaries, and land-use impacts on one property can have far-reaching environmental effects on surrounding areas. A cooperative approach between cities and the county to plan for future growth includes coordinated planning on annexation decisions to ensure that growth is aligned with local visions for the future and will help protect agricultural lands and rural community character.



*1000 Friends' Jane West, Paul Owens, and Haley Busch at the Lake County 2070 workshop.*

As *Florida 2070/Water 2070* demonstrates, the cumulative impact of multiple small land-use changes over time determines the future landscape of Florida. If growth continues as it has in the past, the amount of agricultural and undeveloped lands converted to urban areas in

Lake County will double by more than 180,000 additional acres. Currently about 26% of Lake County's lands are developed, and this would increase to 55% by 2070. When conducted in silos, small, individual annexation decisions can inadvertently result in a patchwork of suburban sprawl, threatening what makes Lake County unique.

1000 Friends continues our engagement in Lake County by attending quarterly joint planning agreement meetings with county and municipal staff and by working with citizen groups to keep our eyes on future growth and development trends in this rapidly growing area.

Find out more at [1000fof.org/county/lake-county](http://1000fof.org/county/lake-county).



*Cypress Trio*

*Photo Courtesy of Bill Chambers*



*Morning Grace*

*Photo Courtesy of Bill Chambers*



## A Clean Sweep! Land Referenda Approved in Alachua, Brevard, Indian River, Nassau and Polk Counties

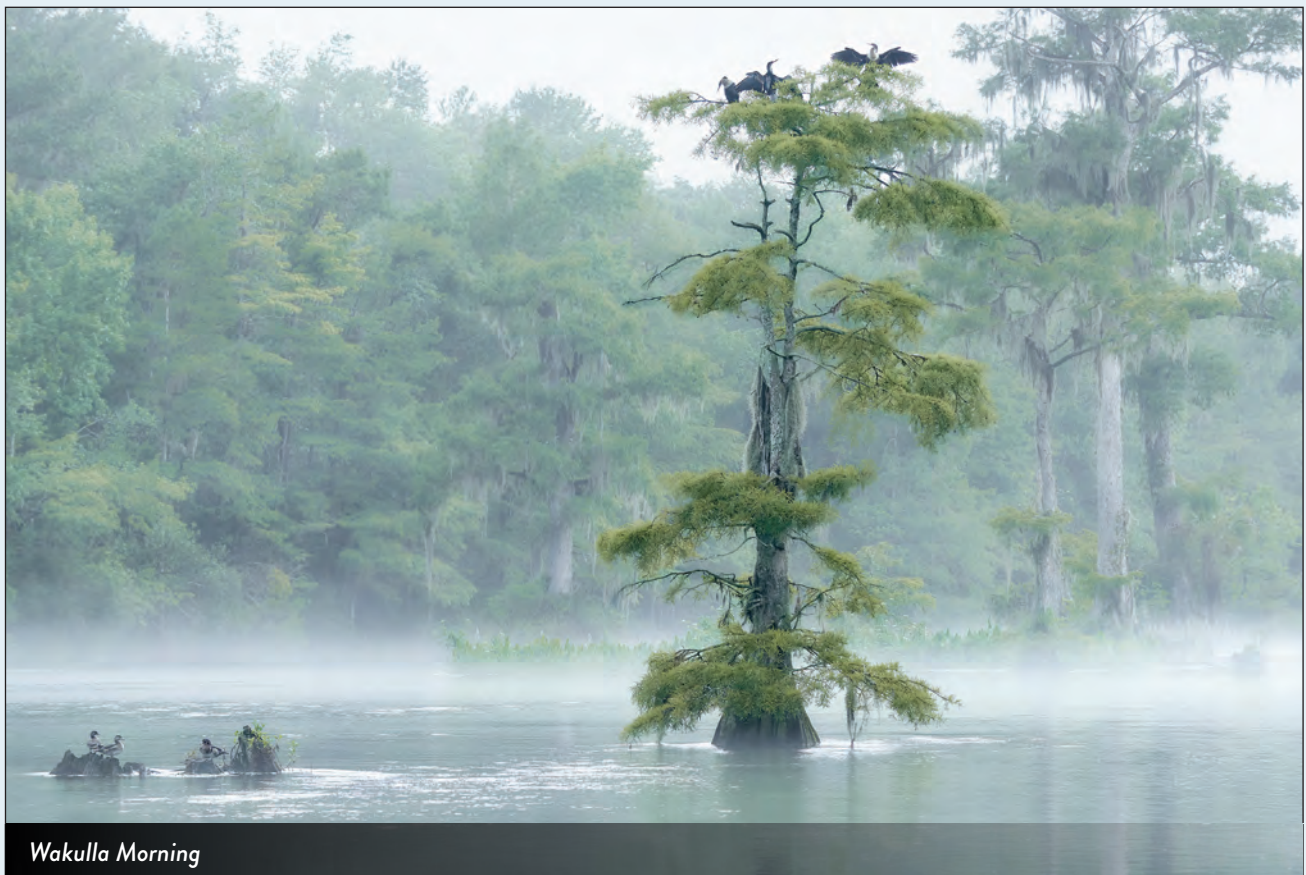
In a clean sweep for conservation, we are pleased to report that voters in five counties — Polk, Brevard, Alachua, Indian River and Nassau — VOTED YES to support conservation measures on their ballots on November 8 last year. This reflects the passion for and commitment to land conservation in our state, and 1000 Friends was proud to endorse these local initiatives.

Each of these counties will add or keep a local revenue stream dedicated to protecting environmentally sensitive land. And each will be in a better position to multiply their investments in land conservation by attracting matching state, federal and private funding.

1000 Friends of Florida has long been a proud supporter of state and local land conservation programs. Our co-founder, Nathaniel Pryor Reed,

played a leading role in establishing the landmark state Preservation 2000 program which, together with its successor Florida Forever, have protected more than 2.6 million acres of precious natural lands across our state. These programs are complemented by county ballot initiatives such as these, which authorize local governments to secure local funds to match with state dollars to protect valuable lands.

We hope any other counties in Florida that are considering launching or maintaining their own programs to protect land will be encouraged to move forward, whether it's through a new line item in their budgets or a future ballot measure. The results of the 2022 election show that public support for land conservation in Florida is strong and bipartisan.



Wakulla Morning

Photo Courtesy of Bill Chambers

# 1000 Friends Welcomes New Board Member Vivienne Handy

In January, 1000 Friends welcomed a new member to our Board of Directors, Vivienne Handy of Wimauma in Hillsborough County. Vivienne is president and principal ecologist of Quest Ecology, Inc.

As a certified professional wetland scientist with over 30 years of experience in natural resource management and environmental permitting, she brings impressive technical knowledge to the Board. As a Tampa Bay resident, she closes a geographical gap in the current membership. Vivienne's recent focus has been on habitat conservation plans, preparing and implementing ecosystem management plans, and the development and permitting of wetland mitigation banks.

Vivienne is a well-known community advocate who



Vivienne Handy

participated in the development and updates to the Wimauma Community Plan and is a member of the Wimauma Community Development Corporation. She also serves as a commissioner on the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission and as a member of the Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission's Environmental Feedback Group. She's a former member of the Transportation Planning Organization's Citizens Advisory Committee. She enjoys hiking, traveling, and the company of her family of rescue dogs.

## Welcome to Spring Intern Alex Smock

A proud Gainesville native, Alex Smock spent her childhood exploring Florida's Atlantic coast or scuba diving around the state. After graduating from the University of Florida with a B.A. in Economics and a B.A. in Sustainability Studies, she is now pursuing her J.D. at the University of San Francisco School of Law with an interest in environmental litigation and water law. For her internship at 1000 Friends, Alex is conducting research on the interplay between Florida's private property rights and efforts by local governments to implement managed retreat policies.



Alex Smock



Sea Biscuit Detail

Photo Courtesy of Bill Chambers



### — Ways to Support 1000 Friends —

1000 Friends of Florida is deeply grateful for the generosity of our donors. Because of you we are able to continue to pursue our important mission of building better communities and saving special places throughout Florida. 1000 Friends offers a variety of options for donors to support our work. Some of the most common ways to make a gift are to donate through:

- Check or Credit Card
- Donor-advised Funds
- Monthly Giving
- IRA Qualified Charitable Distributions
- Stock Donations
- Matching Gift Programs

If you are planning your legacy, we encourage you to consider making a planned gift to help 1000 Friends in the future. Other ways to support 1000 Friends include participating in our free webinars, attending one of the many workshops held around the state, subscribing to our email alerts or spreading the word of our activities to your friends and colleagues and through social media platforms. We owe our success to your support. THANK YOU!

For more information on ways to give to 1000 Friends, please contact Development Director Toni Russell at 850-222-6277 ext. 101 or [trussell@1000fof.org](mailto:trussell@1000fof.org).



Photo Courtesy of Bill Chambers

*Focused Energy*

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## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Douglas Head

**D**ouglas Head of Orlando was a political and civic leader and successful business executive who cared deeply about his community and his state. A mentor and an inspiration to many, he was admired for his philanthropy and fearless advocacy for his principles. He was a “bulldog” in his beliefs, according to colleagues, but also polite and empathetic.

Doug passed away in November 2021 at age 74. Six months later, 1000 Friends of Florida learned that he had named us among the beneficiaries of his estate. Other beneficiaries included nonprofit organizations dedicated to environmental protection, government ethics and public broadcasting — an insight into the causes he held dear.

Doug earned an economics degree from Lawrence University, a small liberal arts school in Wisconsin. He then joined the Peace Corps and



Douglas Head

served in Latin America. Returning to the United States, he made a successful career in the hospitality and financial industries. An active member of the Democratic Party, he became the Orange County chairman from 1992 to 2004, and later served as the county party’s state committeeman from 2016 to 2020. Between his stints as a party official, Doug chaired a citizens’ watchdog group, CountyWatch, that promoted

greater transparency and accountability in Orange County government.

At his memorial service, held in January 2022 at Orlando’s City Hall, Doug was hailed as “a man who changed the political and human landscape of Orlando, Central Florida and other communities.” His generosity will strengthen 1000 Friends’ efforts to protect the environment and quality of life in Central Florida, where he made his home, and throughout the state. We’re grateful for support from donors like Doug Head.