

foresight

The Newsletter of 1000 Friends of Florida



1000
FRIENDS
of FLORIDA

BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES • SAVING SPECIAL PLACES

From the President

“Above all, we strive to give citizens a meaningful role in shaping the futures of their communities and state.”

That’s a direct quote from our 1000 Friends of Florida’s mission statement. It means, of course, that we often support state and local legislation that strengthens the planning rights of citizens and oppose bills or ordinances that weaken them. But it also means we aim to make citizens themselves into more effective public policy advocates through our educational efforts.

These efforts have reached a higher gear in recent months.

In March, we released a pair of reports, Sea Level 2040 and Sea Level 2070 in conjunction with “Florida’s Rising Seas: Mapping Our Future,” a joint project with our partners at the University of Florida’s Center for Landscape Conservation Planning. This project, led for us by Communications Director Vivian Young, is described on page 3.

We have delivered several presentations at events across Florida based on these reports, and there are more to come. And there are other milestones ahead from this project that will further enhance its considerable educational value. They include another set of reports that will forecast the impact in 2040 and 2070 of sea-level rise, population increase and development patterns on Florida agriculture.

There’s high interest in these topics. Our Dr. John M. DeGrove webinar series is becoming highly popular, with close to a thousand attendees at both our March Sea Level 2040/2070 and May 2023 Legislative Wrap Up events.

Meanwhile, our website, which draws tens of thousands of visits a year, is a cornucopia of timely and practical information on planning, conservation and public policy. Our regular email alerts on important issues and upcoming events go out to thousands of our followers. Our social media platforms share timely news articles with thousands more.

Floridians are hungry for information and eager to engage on decisions that will affect them, their families and their communities. The more we can do to meet that need, the better future we can build together.

Paul Owens

Paul Owens
President



Paul Owens



Long Pine Sunrise

Photo Courtesy of Joseph Filer

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Sea Level 2040/2070 Unveiled



Close to a thousand people attended 1000 Friends' March Dr. John M. DeGrove Webinar unveiling *Florida's Rising Seas: Sea Level 2040/2070*. This GIS-based analysis by the University of Florida Center for Landscape Conservation Planning and 1000 Friends of Florida explores the intersection between projected population growth, sea level rise, and future development patterns.

Between now and 2070, Florida is projected to grow by 671 people per day but could lose 190 acres of land a day to development. At the same time, Florida could lose 92 acres of land a day to sea level rise.

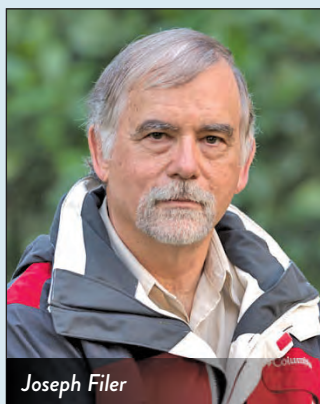
The bottom line? Florida will have more people on less land. Sound decisions on where and how to develop are critical if Florida is to protect its essential conservation and agricultural lands and create livable communities for future generations.

Please visit 1000fof.org/sealevel2040 to review and share the materials. The website includes planning reports on the findings, recommendations, resources, and downloadable statewide and regional maps. County maps and data and more information on agricultural lands will roll out over the coming months.

PHOTOGRAPHER in FOCUS: Joseph Filer

I remember as a young boy asking my mother to let me take a photo of the fort at St. Augustine, Florida with our Kodak Brownie camera. When we got home and had the film developed, the fort appeared just like I had remembered it, resulting in a feeling of accomplishment and the planting of a seed that has grown into a passionate love for creating fine art photography.

I have been doing professional landscape and wildlife photography since 2007, traveling to 23 states in the U.S. and to 8 other countries. As a Florida-based photographer, I have spent many weeks roaming the state looking for



Joseph Filer

unique compositions and images.

My fine art landscape and wildlife photographs go beyond the literal representation of a scene or subject to capture the emotional connections of the location. My fine art photos convey not only what I was seeing but what I was feeling when the camera shutter clicked.

I strive to provide the highest level of personal customer service to clients who purchase my prints. I am available to answer any questions and discuss all purchase options. You can see and purchase prints of my images at www.josephfiler.com.

2024 Florida Legislative Update

Slated to convene on January 9, the 2024 Florida legislative session is just around the corner. Each year, the session holds both promise and peril for planning and conservation, with impacts reaching throughout the state. That explains why we engage every year, and encourage robust citizen participation.

In the 2023 session, the promise was illustrated in a bill 1000 Friends helped draft to strengthen protections against incompatible development on 16 miles of the barrier island in southern Brevard County, a major turtle-nesting area. The bill passed unanimously and became law with Governor DeSantis' signature. It stands now as a model for protecting other treasured environmental resources. Find out more in the article on page 6.

The peril was reflected in another bill, passed and signed into law amid opposition from us and dozens

of legislators, that will shut down citizens' legal challenges against approved comprehensive plan amendments that may be inconsistent with local growth guidelines. This law increases the importance of early engagement in local consideration of development proposals.

Preliminary meetings have begun for the 2024 session, and 1000 Friends is once again engaged. 1000 Friends President Paul Owens and Outreach Director Haley Busch have been attending county delegation meetings to advocate for our funding and policy priorities, outlined on page 5. Once again this year we will also provide an array of resources through our website and email alerts to promote and assist citizen participation, also outlined on page 5.

Working together on legislative advocacy is the best hope for protecting Florida's environment and quality of life for future generations.



Surrounded

Photo Courtesy of Joseph Flier



Florida Legislative Priorities

1000fof.org/2024-fl-priorities

- At least \$1 billion in funding for Florida Forever, the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program, Florida Communities Trust and other programs to protect priority lands in the Florida Wildlife Corridor and other critical natural and agricultural areas. An investment of \$1 billion would match the funding approved in the 2023 session, and account for less than 1% of the state budget. Florida is anticipating a \$7 billion surplus in the upcoming budget year.
- An investment matching or exceeding the Governor's pledge to spend \$875 million annually on Everglades restoration and water quality projects throughout Florida.
- Full funding for historic preservation grants, additional support for Florida Main Street and other community revitalization programs, and creation of tax credits to rehabilitate historic structures and compete with dozens of other states that provide those credits.
- Full funding for affordable housing from the state's trust funds and the second, \$150 million installment from a 10-year commitment for that purpose.
- Legislation and funding to promote fiscally responsible land-use planning that enhances community resilience, prioritizes home rule, empowers citizens, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and promotes sustainable, equitable communities.
- Stronger water quality protections and enforcement, and incentives for water conservation.
- Mandatory flood disclosure and other safeguards to discourage irresponsible development in coastal high hazard areas and floodplains to save lives, property and taxpayer dollars.
- Stronger protections against incompatible development and measures to ensure new development occurs in areas with the infrastructure to support it.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES:

You can make a difference! Check out the resources available at www.1000fof.org/legis/2024:

- Links to identify and contact your state senator and representative.
- A schedule of county legislative delegation meetings.
- Links to register for our upcoming legislative preview, update and wrap up webinars.
- A sign-up for our email alerts so you can receive regular updates on bills and budget issues throughout the legislative process.

Brevard Barrier Island Area of Critical State Concern Created

We celebrate the signing of the Brevard Barrier Island Area of Critical State Concern (HB 1489 / SB 1686), which passed without a single vote of opposition from either the House or Senate during the 2023 Florida legislative session. Representative Thad Altman worked with 1000 Friends' outgoing Policy and Planning Director, Jane West, to craft this legislation. Jane coordinated lobbying efforts with our friends at the Sea Turtle Conservancy, and local organizations like the Barrier Islands Preservation and Protection Association (BIPPA).

The legislation designates the southern Brevard Barrier Island as an Area of Critical State Concern (ACSC), enhancing protection for resources and public spaces of major statewide significance from damage due to uncontrolled development.

This area's beaches, dunes, coastal scrub, and maritime hammock areas represent one of the most fragile and endangered natural upland communities, not only in the state but nationwide. The barrier island is bordered by the Indian River Lagoon, and, by placing constraints on irresponsible development, the legislation will also help protect the water quality and ecological productivity of the lagoon. This area is also home to critical nesting grounds for threatened and endangered sea turtles, including boasting the largest

nesting aggregation of loggerhead sea turtles in the world.

Florida has five other areas designated as ACSCs, including the Florida Keys, Key West, Big Cypress, the Green Swamp, and the Apalachicola Bay area. The ACSC Program was created as part of the 1972 Florida Environmental Land and Water Management Act, one of the early bills shaping Florida's system of managing growth. The ACSC designation requires a layer of state review of local development orders for consistency with comprehensive plans and regulations.

We applaud local and state supporters of HB 1489/SB 1686 for recognizing the value of protecting an area that is critical for resiliency against hurricanes and flooding, a home to endangered wildlife species, and necessary for restoring water quality in the Indian River Lagoon. We are also grateful for our many supporters who contacted state senators, representatives, and ultimately the Governor, helping this bill become law.

Even after this resounding victory, there is more to be accomplished through conservation and responsible planning to protect other environmental treasures in our state from uncontrolled development. With your continued support, we will build on our success with HB 1489 for years to come.



Toho Sunbeams

Photo Courtesy of Joseph Flier

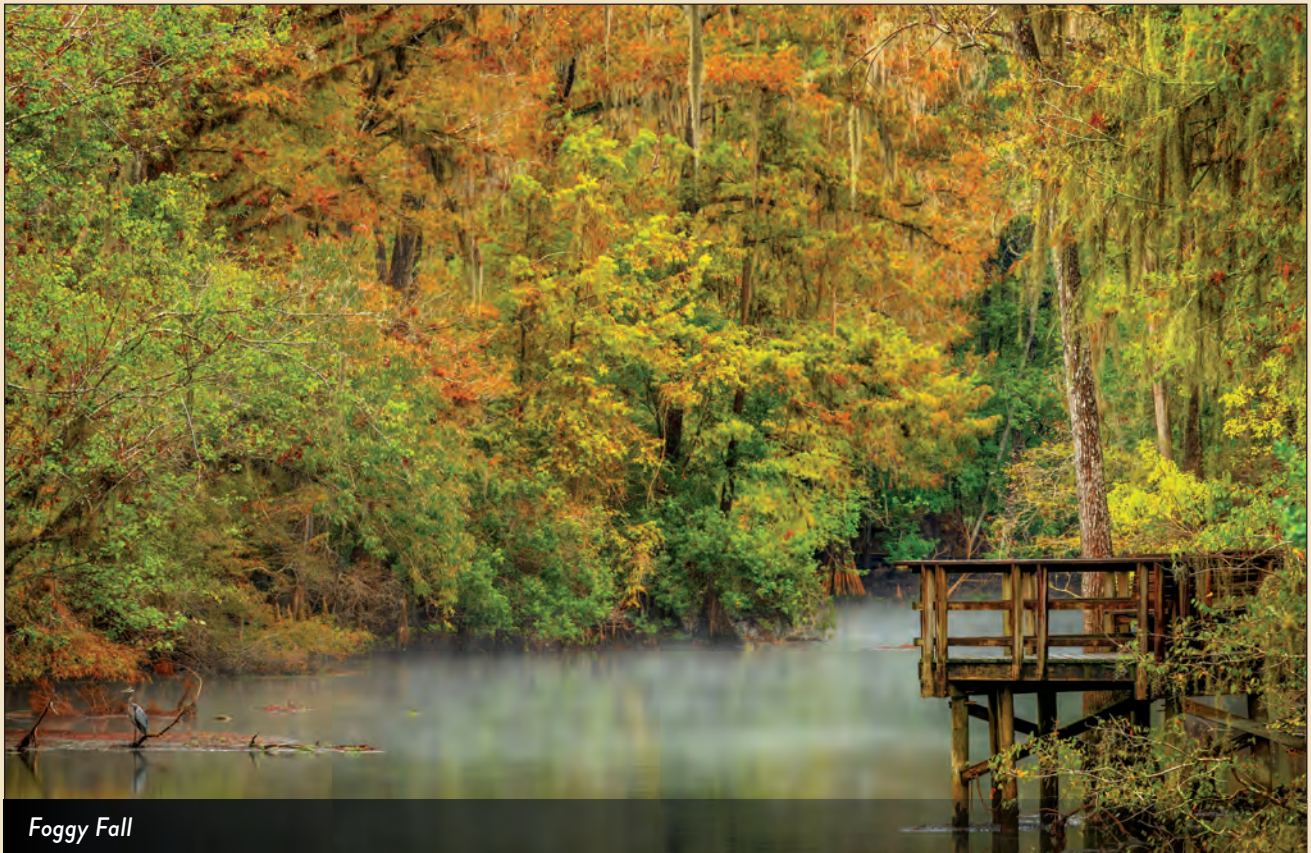
Unanimous Support for Seminole Forever

Like much of our state, Central Florida is a hotspot for population growth. In a 2021 workshop 1000 Friends of Florida conducted in Seminole County, we shared University of Florida projections that the county, with a current population of just less than 500,000, would grow to more than 700,000 residents by 2070. This is a compelling argument for preserving undeveloped land in Seminole — before it's too late.

Under the leadership of Seminole Commissioner Lee Constantine, who is also a member of 1000 Friends' Board of Directors, the county recently approved a groundbreaking new local land conservation program called Seminole Forever. Unlike most local land conservation programs, Seminole Forever will not depend on local voters' willingness to approve successive local tax increases. Instead, it will be built into the county's budget, with a dedicated share of local tax revenues. This innovative approach is based on the principle that land conservation is a core responsibility of local governments, not an add-on subject to the uncertainty of periodic voter renewal.

Seminole Forever is modeled after Florida Forever, the hugely popular state land conservation program that Constantine helped launch as a legislator more than two decades ago. Like Florida Forever, Seminole Forever will be overseen by a committee of citizens and officials from environmental, wildlife and agricultural agencies. It will expand opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and other outdoor recreation. The funding committed by Seminole County to this program could leverage even more money from private, federal, and state sources, including Florida Forever.

Constantine worked with county staff and conservation advocates, including 1000 Friends, for more than a year to refine and build support for Seminole Forever. President Paul Owens testified four times before Seminole commissioners to urge them to enact the program. When the final vote came in August, it was unanimous — a victory for Constantine, conservation and Seminole residents for generations to come.



Foggy Fall

Photo Courtesy of Joseph Flier

Martin County Updates Comp Plan

Every seven years, local governments in Florida are required to update their comprehensive plans -- a community's blueprint for growth and development -- in a process known as the evaluation and appraisal report, or EAR. While local governments must at minimum make any amendments necessary to comply with state laws, the EAR can open the comp plan to more extensive revisions.

With a public hearing in August, Martin County launched its latest EAR process. For decades, the county's award-winning comp plan has been its constitution for responsible, compatible growth. The plan was originally drafted in 1982 by a group of visionary leaders that included then-Commissioner Maggy Hurchalla, the charismatic and courageous environmental advocate who passed away last year. 1000 Friends of Florida assisted in updating the comp plan in 1990 and has defended it ever since.

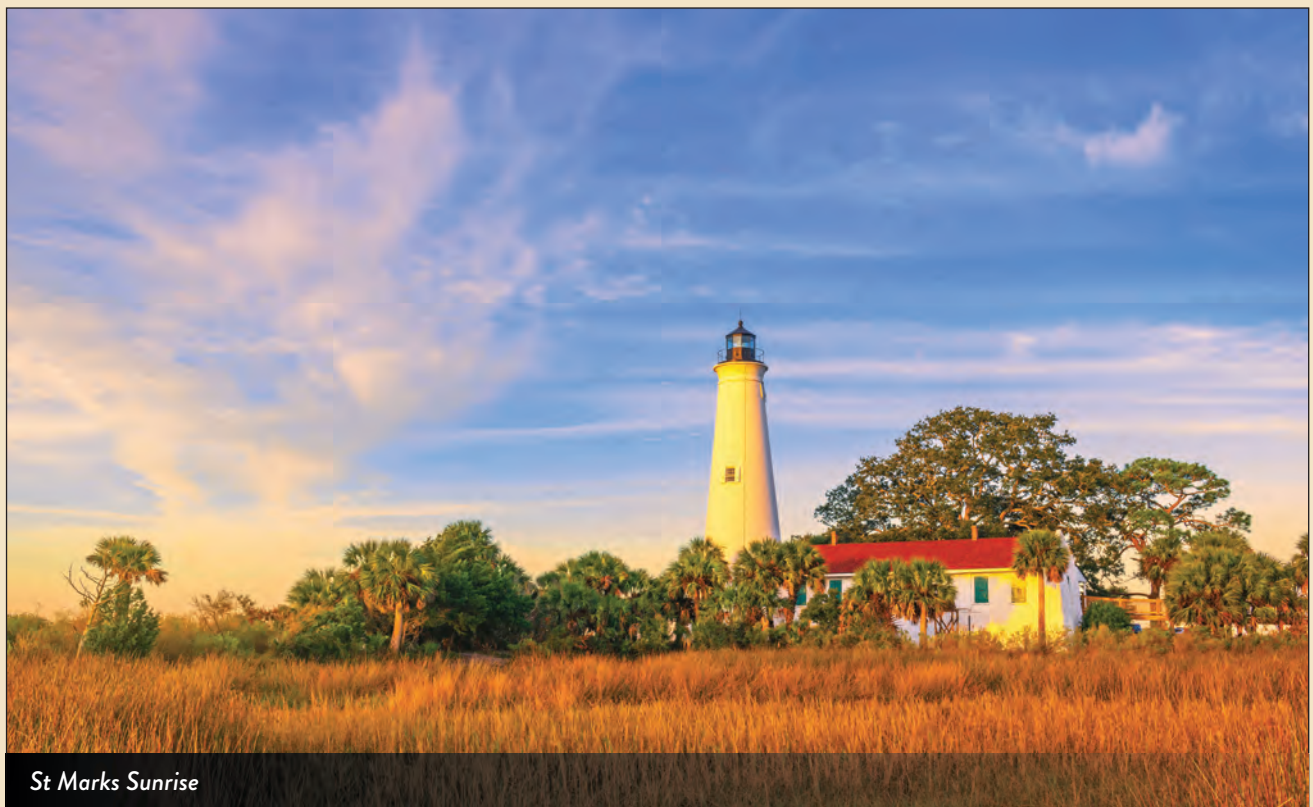
This EAR presents an opportunity to strengthen Martin County's comp plan and address community concerns on emerging threats to environmentally and fiscally responsible growth. But previous proposed revisions to the plan, ultimately rejected, would have

eliminated the county's four-story building height limit and strong wetlands protections.

We urged Martin County residents to let their leaders know their interest in strengthening the plan, not weakening it, by attending public hearings and completing an online survey on EAR. 1000 Friends President Paul Owens and former Policy and Planning Director Jane West put forward practical proposals for strengthening the plan, including provisions from our model property rights element.

Paul also attended one of Seminole County's EAR public hearings, complimenting county planning staff for proposing to strengthen conservation measures in the plan, and urging them to incorporate provisions from 1000 Friends' model property rights element.

Communities throughout Florida are under increasing development pressure. It is essential during the EAR process that local residents make clear their support for maintaining or improving their plans. More information on 1000 Friends' Model Property Rights Element is available at 1000fof.org/property-rights.



St Marks Sunrise

Photo Courtesy of Joseph Flier



2023-2024 Dr. John M. DeGrove WEBINAR SERIES

Find Out More and Register Now at 1000fof.org/webinars

We hope you'll find out why 1000 Friends' webinars have attracted more than 37,000 attendees since 2012 by joining us at one of our free upcoming events! If you've already attended our webinars, we thank you.

For more than a decade, 1000 Friends has been proud to offer informative and engaging webinars featuring strategies to build better communities and save special places in one of the fastest growing

states in the nation. Offered free of charge, the webinars are also approved for professional certification credits for planners, attorneys, landscape architects, and others.

September's webinar focused on the intersection between community design and public health, followed by an October presentation on innovative planning and landscape architecture involved in The Underline in Miami.

Upcoming Webinars

Held on Wednesdays, from Noon to 1:30, Eastern

November 8, 2023 — Land Application of
Biosolids in Florida: Challenges,
opportunities, and equitable

December 13, 2023 — 2024 Florida
Legislative Preview

January 2024 (*Details Coming Soon*) —
Agriculture 2040/2070

February 14, 2024 — 2024 Florida
Legislative Update

March 20, 2024 — 2024 Florida Legislative
Wrap Up

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Corridor Compatible Communities and the Florida Wildlife Corridor

The 18 million acres that comprise the Florida Wildlife Corridor link natural and agricultural lands and waters to support interconnected wildlife habitat, water resource protection and other ecosystem services. About half these acres are protected, and lawmakers have recently provided significant funding for more conservation in the Corridor, but obviously not all land or development rights can be purchased.

1000 Friends is participating in the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation's "Corridor Compatible Communities" committee, which focuses on how best to direct development to avoid or at least minimize impacts to the Corridor. Our President, Paul Owens, is a member of a subcommittee identifying natural lands that are a priority to remain largely undeveloped. Outreach Director Haley Busch serves on a subcommittee recommending community design strategies to maintain natural lands.

The Corridor concept has evolved over decades. In 1991, 1000 Friends and The Conservation Fund



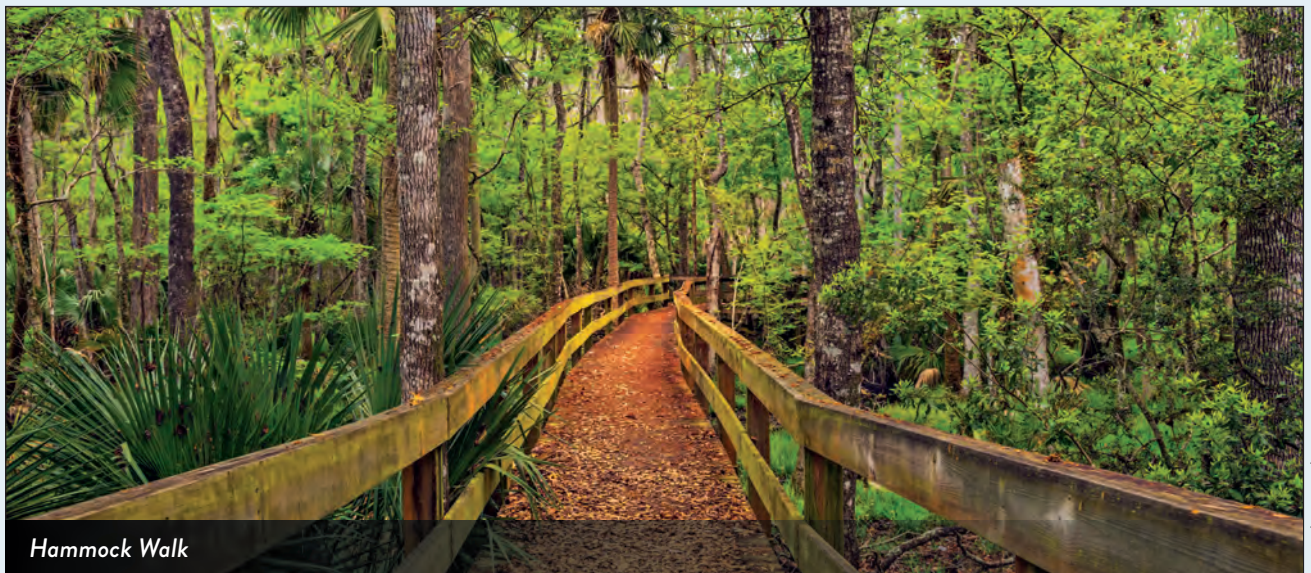
partnered on the visionary "Florida Greenways Project," calling for landscape-scale conservation. 1000 Friends shepherded planning efforts until the mid-1990s, when a greenways office was established in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Meanwhile, Dr. Tom Hctor and his team at the University of Florida's Center for Landscape Conservation Planning provide the scientific foundation for

today's Corridor. Dr. Hctor's work in defining and refining the Florida Ecological Greenways Network (FEGN) over the past 30 years has provided the ecological framework for the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

Reflecting 1000 Friends' longstanding commitment, Paul, Haley, and Communications Director Vivian Young attended the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation's September summit to engage with others committed to protecting the Corridor.

We support the Corridor Compatible Communities committee by doing what we do best: standing up for smart planning and community design principles while promoting the permanent protection of sensitive natural and agricultural lands.



Hammock Walk

Photo Courtesy of Joseph Flier

C. Allen Watts Young Leaders Program

We are honored to introduce the C. Allen Watts Young Leaders Program to support aspiring young professionals committed to promoting the mission of 1000 Friends of Florida through student internships. Allen, a founding member of 1000 Friends and Board of Directors member from 1994 to 2013, passed away in 2015. Our late co-founder, Nathaniel Pryor Reed, noted: "He was a wise, calm, confident thinker who I admired beyond adequate words. His love of our state's resources was one of his hallmarks."



C. Allen Watts

A longtime chair of our legal advocacy committee, Allen played an instrumental role in 1000 Friends' many landmark legal challenges to uphold the state's system growth management. He was a highly respected government and land-use attorney who took a special interest in mentoring new lawyers, inspiring his family to launch this program in 2022 in his honor.

The C. Allen Watts Young Leaders Program will allow for paid internship opportunities to further the mission of our organization. It is funded by 1000 Friends Board member Mark Watts, his sister, Kristi Putnam, and C. Allen Watts' widow, Margaret Morris, in memory of their father and husband.

Roy L. Rogers Family Park

Earlier this year the Pompano Beach City Commission unanimously approved renaming the Hillsboro Inlet Park in honor of Lighthouse Point resident and 1000 Friends of Florida Emeritus Board Member Roy Rogers, in recognition of his decades of public service. The not-for-profit Shipwreck Park, Inc., submitted the request for the renaming due to the role Roy and his family played in helping to create an artificial reef system, and funding for the Wahoo Bay project. This project will offer children an



Roy Rogers

interactive underwater experience to learn more about marine ecosystems.

Among Roy's many contributions, he also helped establish and fund Butterfly World in Coconut Creek. He spent years overseeing the development of Robert Trent Jones golf courses all over the world. With the Arvida Corporation for 16 years, he was part of the team that helped create the City of Weston. He served on 1000 Friends' Board for many years and remains engaged as a Board Member Emeritus.



St Johns Sunset

Photo Courtesy of Joseph Flier

We Thank Our Interns . . .

Melissa Gallo

This summer we welcomed intern Melissa Gallo, now in her third year at the Florida State University College of Law. Melissa analyzed SB 250, “Natural Emergencies,” which passed during the 2023 legislative session. SB 250 addresses state and local disaster preparation and emergency response activities, but also includes a number of troubling measures preempting local planning decisions. On behalf of 1000 Friends she prepared a special report with a section-by-section summary of SB 250, a discussion of the fiscal impacts, and a review of the legality of retroactive provisions. *An Analysis of SB 250: Natural Emergencies, as passed by the 2023 Florida Legislature* is available at 1000fof.org/outreach/reports.



Melissa Gallo

Michael Grant

Michael Grant joins us as he begins his first year in the University of Florida’s Master of Urban and Regional Planning program. Michael received his UF undergraduate degree in Sustainability Studies and worked in UF/IFAS laboratories on both genetic engineering and agroecology projects. This semester Michael is assisting 1000 Friends in our Agriculture 2040 / 2070 project by researching agricultural preservation and protection provisions in local comprehensive plans and land development regulations. Michael’s passions include environmental urban planning, urban forestry, watershed management, living shorelines, coastal resilience, and tactical urbanism. A Gainesville native, Michael spends his free time kayaking and cycling around the state.



Michael Grant

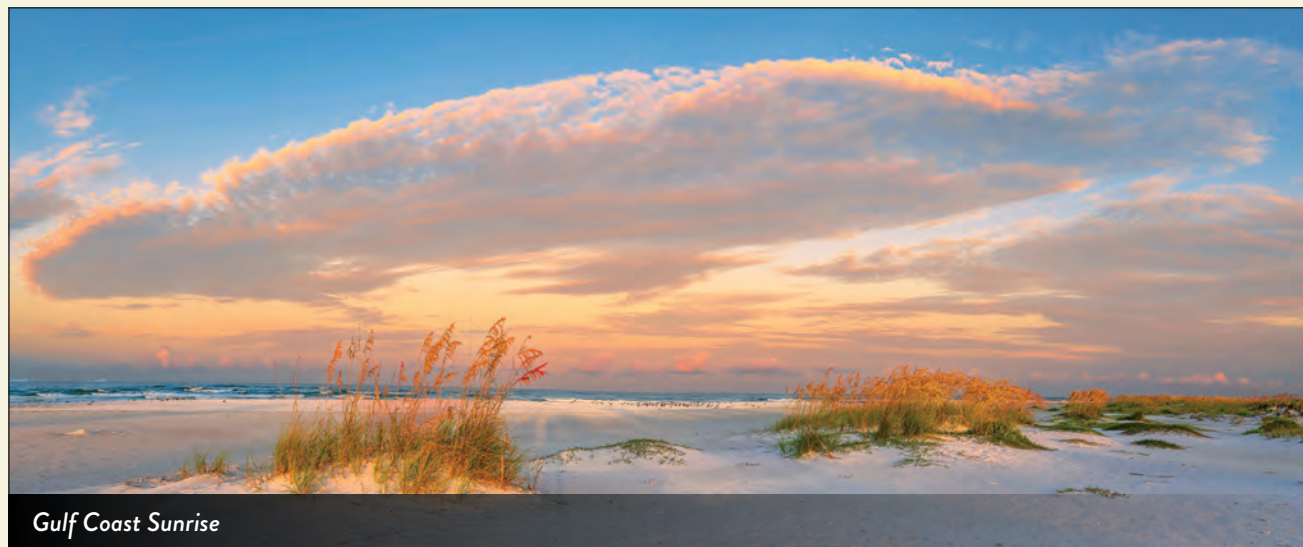
Camari Simpson

We welcome back Camari Simpson, a Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) student who joined us for a spring legislative internship and continues his work with us as we prepare for the upcoming 2024 session. Camari is assisting Haley and



Camari Simpson

Paul in legislative tracking activities. He is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice with an interest in pre-law programs. An Orlando native, Camari has worked on electoral and advocacy campaigns for a variety of coalitions and causes. During the past session, Camari shadowed 1000 Friends President Paul Owens and outgoing Policy Director Jane West at the State Capitol to learn more about the legislative committee process.



Gulf Coast Sunrise

Photo Courtesy of Joseph Flier

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