

July/August 2010



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The Journey to Restore America's Everglades

A partnership of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, South Florida Water Management District and many other Federal, state, local and tribal partners.
www.evergladesplan.org



**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jacksonville District**
701 San Marco Blvd.
Jacksonville, Fla.
32207-8175
1-800-291-9405 or 904-232-2568
www.saj.usace.army.mil

Another 5.5 miles in bridging proposed for Tamiami Trail

The **Department of the Interior** (DOI) has proposed another 5.5 miles of bridging for the Tamiami Trail. If successful, this will allow for restoration of up to 100 percent of the historic fresh water flow to Northeast Shark River Slough in Everglades National Park.

In May, the DOI released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for a series of alternatives to expand the bridging on the Tamiami Trail. A public meeting was held June 24 in Miami-Dade County, and a 60-day public comment period ended July 27. A final Environmental Impact Statement will be completed Dec. 17.

The Tamiami Trail is an east-west roadway that blocks the flow of water into **Everglades National Park**. Culverts were built many years ago to improve this flow, but they cannot recreate historic water flow conditions.

In 1989, Congress approved the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park project, to improve water flows to the Park's parched northeast area. Several road raising and bridging options were proposed in the intervening years. In 2005, a 10.7-mile bridge was proposed as one alternative (also known as a skyway). Due to cost, this was reduced to a one-mile bridge in 2008, now under construction by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The cost is \$81 million.

In 2009, Congress directed the DOI to develop additional concepts for bridging for the Tamiami Trail in order to fully restore flows and ecological conditions in **Northeast Shark River Slough**. The DOI and Everglades National Park worked closely with technical staff from the Corps of Engineers, along with Federal, state and local governments and the other stakeholders to develop the report, known as a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

The DEIS presents a variety of bridging options. It recommends alternative 6E, which calls for an additional 5.5 miles of bridging and other construction elements. Four bridges ranging from a third of a mile to 2.6 miles will replace sections of the historic road, beginning about one mile west of Krome Ave. in Miami-Dade County. The projected cost is \$324 million. If authorized by Congress, construction could begin in 2013 and would take 3.7 years.

This will result in 6.5 miles of bridging in a 10.7-mile stretch of Tamiami Trail. When coupled with other restoration projects, the additional bridging will provide conditions for unconstrained flow to Northeast Shark River Slough. The increased volume and flow will reestablish seasonal water depths and flooding durations that are critical to the survival of many fish and wildlife species, including the Federally-listed wood stork, Everglade snail kite and Cape Sable seaside sparrow, and the state-listed roseate spoonbill.

The public meeting and comment period are integral to a thorough review of all alternatives and their potential effects. "My staff and I are committed to developing a final plan that substantially improves ecological conditions in Everglades National Park and Water Conservation Area 3, while maintaining access to the many important Tribal areas and private facilities located along the Tamiami Trail," reported **Dan B. Kimball**, Superintendent of Everglades National Park.

The DEIS can be viewed online by clicking [here](#).



The 80-year-old Tamiami Trail roadway serves as a dam, blocking the flow of fresh water south to Everglades National Park.

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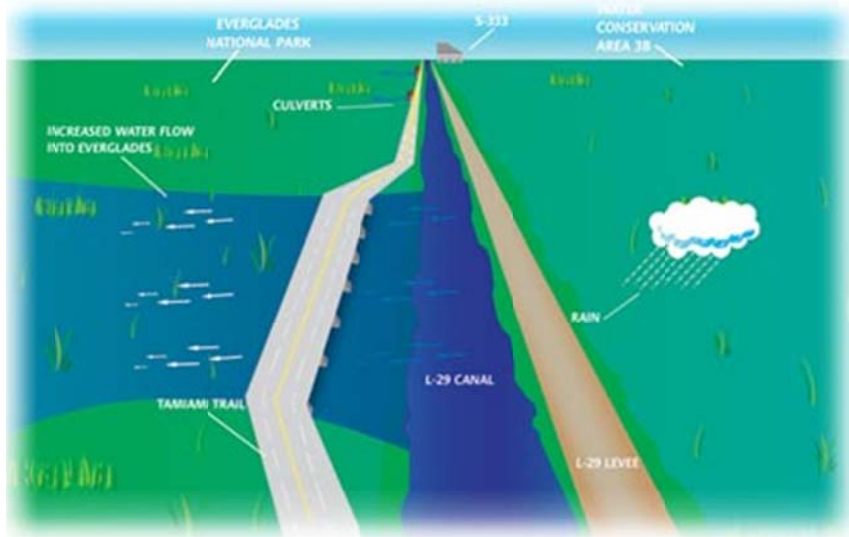
Construction continues on one-mile Tamiami Trail bridge

As additional new bridging is being contemplated, construction is continuing on the one-mile bridge along the Tamiami Trail. Construction began in February 2010 and is expected to conclude in 2013.

The **Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District** is building a bridge to replace one mile of roadway, and is raising and reinforcing another 9.7 miles. This will allow much greater water flow into the northern Everglades National Park, improving the hydrology and habitat for plants and animals in 63,000 acres of the Park.

Kiewit Infrastructure South Co. is constructing the bridge project and is utilizing local workers when possible. Current activity includes driving of test piles. This test pile program includes the installation of 34 piles at 160-foot intervals along the length of the bridge, or at every other bent and/or pier. Data and analysis will reveal the geotechnical characteristics in each location and will help establish criteria for driving the remaining 440 production piles. The pile installation process will continue through October 2011.

For more information, please click [here](#)



The one-mile bridge will allow more fresh water to flow into Everglades National Park.



Construction on the one-mile bridge started in February.



The first of 34 test piles is installed for the Tamiami Trail bridge project.

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Everglades returns to World Heritage ‘Danger’ list

The **United Nations** has added Everglades National Park (Park) to the **List of World Heritage in Danger**. This symbolizes both the United States’ commitment to the restoration of the Everglades ecosystem and the Obama administration’s efforts to restore the role of sound science in decision-making.

The Park has been on the World Heritage List since 1979. After Hurricane Andrew, UN committees placed the Park on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1993. The Park was removed from the danger list in 2007 at the request of the previous administration. The Obama administration asked the committee to put the Park back on the list, which it did July 30.

“The Everglades remains one of our world’s most treasured – and most threatened – places,” said **Ken Salazar**, Secretary of the Department of the Interior. President Obama has substantially increased Federal support for Everglades restoration, the largest ecosystem restoration in history.

The superintendent of Everglades National Park is understandably happy. “We are very pleased with today’s action by the World Heritage Committee to place Everglades National Park back on the List of World Heritage in Danger,” reported Dan Kimball. “We look forward to working with the Committee later this year in developing criteria, such as the completion of specific ecosystem restoration projects, that will serve as the basis for removing the Park from the danger list.”

The 21-nation World Heritage Committee oversees the list of World Heritage Sites that are of significant cultural or natural importance to the common heritage of humanity. Sites that are deemed to be in jeopardy are placed on the danger list.

For more information about the World Heritage Site program, please click [here](#).



Everglades National Park sustains a unique diversity of life.

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Conference brings together Everglades scientists and policy-makers

The fifth GEER conference was held in Naples this past July, bringing together Everglades scientists and policy-makers from around the state, nation and world. The **Greater Everglades Ecosystem Restoration** (GEER) conference is held every other year. This year's event was attended by more than 620 people.

It is the only event of its kind focusing exclusively on science and the Everglades. Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District commander, **Col. Alfred A. Pantano**, gave a keynote speech about the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). He reflected on the challenges CERP has had over the years. "Everglades restoration is war," he said. "But it's not always easy to know who the enemies are."



Col. Alfred Pantano, Jacksonville District commander, gave a keynote address about CERP.

Pantano pointed out that it has been 10 years since CERP was developed as a

partnership between the state of Florida and Federal government, designed to restore the River of Grass. He itemized a list of funding and policy issues that continue to haunt CERP, but insisted that relationships, like the ones forged and nourished at conferences such as these, are imperative to keeping the Everglades restoration plan moving forward. "That's what gets this done or where it fails," Pantano said.

Stu Appelbaum, chief of the Corps restoration division and an attendee of GEER, agreed that the interaction of participants at GEER is one of its most important aspects. "The heart is the exchange of information among agency scientists," he said. "It's a good gathering of people involved in Everglades restoration at all levels," he added.

Dr. Ronnie Best, co-chair of GEER and U.S. Geological Survey Everglades science coordinator, said important issues are brought to light at GEER. "Many emerging topics gain a foothold at the Everglades conference," Best said. Several recent examples include the effects of climate change and sea level rise on the Everglades, the significance of water flow to Everglades restoration and, more recently, the opinion that the historic Everglades was wetter than once thought.

This year's conference was held July 16 to 20. Attendees had their choice of 31 sessions, 226-sub-sessions, and two technical workshops spread out over five days. There were 17 Corps speakers or moderators and other Corps staff members attending as participants, among the many attendees.

For information on this year's event, please click [here](#). For information on past conferences, please click [here](#).



Terrence "Rock" Salt, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), spoke about the Tamiami Trail project at GEER.



*The GEER conference is about science for Everglades restoration.
(Photos by Tyler Jones - UF/IFAS)*

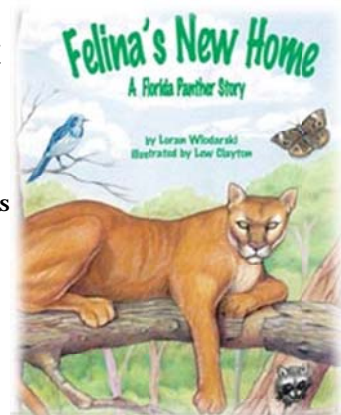
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Panther storybook captivates children

This summer, more than 500 elementary school students delighted in the story of a Florida panther that is relocated to a new home.

The students participated in summer reading programs in Palm Beach and St. Johns counties. The story was brought to them by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District.

Felina's New Home, A Florida Panther Story is written by **Loran Wlodarski** and illustrated by **Lew Clayton**. It describes a Florida panther living in a wilderness area that is being rapidly encroached upon by civilization. She experiences challenges with highways, her prey eating food put out by humans, and recreational use of land. Felina is in need of a new home and the story has a happy ending.



*Felina's New Home is ideal
for children ages 4 to 8.*

The Corps received permission from **Sylvan Dell Publishing** to incorporate the story into an interactive PowerPoint presentation. Corps' Outreach Program Specialist **Erica Robbins** read the storybook to seven summer reading program groups: six in north Florida and one in Palm Beach County. All children received a mask of one of seven of the animals featured in the book. The students then participated in fun and engaging activities about the Florida panther, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, gopher tortoise, Wood Stork, American Crocodile, Florida manatee and Texas puma. Students learned about Florida panther habitat, other animals that live in panther habitat, and how many species share similar problems.



Students have fun while learning about the animals that live in panther habitat.

For more information, please call Ms. Robbins at 561-683-1577, ext. 32.

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Interns tour ASR pilot project



College interns from the Arthur R. Marshall Foundation toured the Kissimmee River Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) facility June 14. Corps of Engineers' ASR Technical Lead Dr. June Mirecki (in white) and Lead Facility Operator Jeff Watson of R2T Inc. (at right) describe how surface water from the Kissimmee River is recharged to and recovered from the Floridan Aquifer. Key features at the facility include the pressure media filter (white unit in the back of photo), appurtenances for water distribution, and sensors to monitor water flow and quality during all stages of operation. The five interns are from the University of Florida and the New College of Florida, and spent the summer at the Marshall Foundation in West Palm Beach working on an academic project, assisting with tree plantings, and learning about the Everglades. (Photo provided courtesy of Paul Gray of Audubon of Florida.)

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